

adventures; I am therefore used to any climate, however warm or cold, and having spent four years and a half in Greenland, I have of course acquired not a little knowledge of the manners of the natives, which I hope may not be without its use on such an expedition. I am still young and hearty, and can undergo a good deal of fatigue without complaining; and as to my courage, I bear a name that never yet during centuries was ever sullied. Poor dispenser of words as I am, and necessarily also a poor letter writer, I could almost be eloquent when I think that I possibly might have been spared from severe hardships and dangers to render my services on such an occasion; but I daresay you are heartily tired of this already, and I will therefore break off at once.

I have seen Petersen (the interpreter to Penny), but do not put any great confidence in him, for reasons I possibly some day may impart to you. He is not the man I would recommend; there is none like a native.

(Some hours later.) I return this instant from a visit I paid the English minister, who declares that he has not received the deposition of Adam Beck, on which you say the setting out of the expedition will for a great part depend, and that he never heard of its existence. I showed him your letter, and he told me to write immediately, and let you know that when the deposition did come, he would endeavour to get it translated, though he did not know how; on which I told his Excellency to forward it to me, when I would have it translated in the shortest time possible. As to the contents of the deposition, they are well known here in Denmark. I have seen a copy of it in the possession of Mr. Möldrup at Godhavn, and it certainly went to say that the writer, Adam Beck, on his oath declared that he had seen and spoken some of the natives in Melville Bay or thereabouts, who had told him that two ships were wrecked there several years back; that the natives had provided their crews (some of whom wore uniforms) with the means of living for some time; but the bad season coming on, had discontinued to supply them, on which the Europeans had taken their provisions by force, and that eventually the natives had risen and killed all the strangers. It is not at all any improbable or unlikely story.

His Excellency having kindly offered to forward this along with his own despatches, and the time allowed me to write being nearly up, I am forced to conclude with a heartfelt expression of gratitude for your last letter, so kind and welcome; and assuring you once more that I am yours, soul and body, in this or any other enterprise you might undertake.

Pray write me soon, and believe me

Admiral Sir John Ross, c. B.,
&c. &c. &c.

Yours, &c.
(signed) *L. Platon.*

Memo. of Rear-Admiral Houston Stewart, on the foregoing letter of Mr. Platon's to Sir John Ross:—

See No. 2.

“To be annexed to Sir John Ross's letter, requesting to have the command of an expedition to explore the East Coast of Baffin's Bay.

“*H. S.*”

— No. 2. —

Sir,

267, Strand, 17 January 1852.

I AM to request you will be pleased to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that in the event of their Lordships being desirous that the east coast of Baffin's Bay, north of Uppernavick, and the inhabited part of the west coast, should be examined to determine the fate of the missing ships, I am a volunteer to perform that important service, which from the fact of my being the only naval officer who understands the Danish language, I am undoubtedly the best qualified to perform, as the Esquimaux of Greenland understand no other language but the Danish and their own.

I am to request that you will also inform their Lordships my belief of the ships under Sir John Franklin being lost in Baffin's Bay, is strengthened by the fact, that Adam Beck, the interpreter, has deposed that the words “3rd of September, 1846,” were on the tin plate which was lost, as appears by the translation