

On the west coast of Hudson's Bay, it is well known, that the sea has retired considerably since the first establishment of the settlements; as at Churchill, the Indians remark, that canoes have passed within their remembrance over rocks, where the highest tides do not flow at present by several feet; and Mr. Duncan, whose voyage has been noticed at page 52, found such evident marks of the sea having retired, that although he is fully convinced of the authenticity of De Fonte's account, from his observations on the other side of the continent, yet he thinks the sea might have retired so as to leave the route impracticable in the present day. But it should be observed, that he formed this opinion from his survey of the Chesterfield Inlet, where the Company sent him to endeavour to find out the passage in De Fonte's Lake; as he found a large bed of cockle shells on the banks of the

"themselves from the cold, would find here but very bad lodging." It has been observed, that the ice is heaped up along the coast of Spitzbergen, forming what are called Icebergs, and those who have penetrated into the country have observed, that the mountains consist of gravel, and flat stones, like grey slate, heaped upon one another, which are raised by the wind, and form new appearances every year. Now I should apprehend, the mast found so far inland, might have been part of the wreck of some vessel lost in the ice, and the field on which she was wrecked, being afterwards grounded near the shore, in process of time would be covered by the loose gravel and slates before mentioned, and succeeding seasons forming fresh icebergs without it, it might, without digging below the surface, be supposed to have been raised above the sea. This opinion seems to be confirmed by some of these icebergs, which have the appearance of land, being sometimes broke from the shores by hard gales of wind, as appears by the collection of Dutch voyages in the north, where there is an instance of a ship being moored to a field of ice, during which time the men climbed up to the top of it, which was 10 fathoms above the water, where they found it covered with earth, and the birds had laid their eggs. The colour of the ice was a fine azure blue, and totally different from the other fields. This circumstance gave rise to various speculations, some imagining it to be the effect of the ice, and others thought the whole was a mass of frozen earth.

*Vide Troisième Voyage des Hollandais, par le Nord, Vol. 1, page 46.*