

was seen, after leaving Holstenburg, by the Danish schooner the "Lucinde." The Island of Omenak, upon which is the Danish settlement, is about 50 miles up the fiord of Omenak, and whilst the "Fortuna" was lying at anchor, about a cable's length from the rocks, in 65 fathoms water, a gale sprung up, and in the course of 12 hours numerous large icebergs drifted towards the schooner, which would have crushed her had they not grounded ahead of her; had they been smaller ones, and not grounded, the schooner could not have escaped being driven against the rocks; but when the wind shifted the icebergs drifted out of the little bay in which she was anchored. When they left the harbour at Skinderwalden, the schooner was towed out by a large seal-skin boat, rowed by 12 women, double banked, and steered by a man with a paddle; these boats will pull eight or ten miles per hour, and perform a voyage of 40 or 50 miles per day. They can carry sail off the wind, but the boats are too light to sail on a wind, as they only draw about three or four inches, with 12 women and two men. The size of these boats is about 24 feet length, four feet breadth, and from two feet and half to three feet depth; the Esquimaux call them "umiak." They have also the "kaiak," a boat for one man, in which he can paddle at the rate of 10 miles per hour, and perform with ease a distance of 60 miles per day, continuing it for a week if necessary.

The Esquimaux of Greenland are very peaceable; they have no implements of war, and never fight. My son has frequently travelled miles along the coast with several Esquimaux, and does not believe they would be guilty of any treachery. It is the opinion that Adam Beck's tale is a fabrication, to enable him to return home, as he would not like to reside in a vessel deprived of his accustomed food. The Esquimaux are very averse to performing work different from their usual occupation; they could not be prevailed upon to carry black lead two miles to the beach, although provided with seal flesh, and well fed and paid; but they would not hesitate going in their boats 100 miles with messages, or letters, &c.

That the Esquimaux is capable of inventing a plausible tale to suit his own purposes they had many proofs of. On one occasion they made an extempore song, on a fat and lean Danish sailor; and Adam Beck, having seen the Danish Governor and the officers of our ships with epaulettes, would not have been at a loss to concoct his ingenious tale.

Had the crews of the "Erebus" and "Terror" landed without ammunition, as he states, and found no means of subsistence, they would in all probability (as they had provisions) have proceeded in their boats up one of the numerous fiords abounding along the coast, in search of seal and fish, leaving marks which would not have been disturbed by the natives. That boats did land is certain, and a sudden gale or ice drifting in, might have caused them to leave with such precipitation as not to observe the two shirts and nails, which were therefore left behind; the piece of hawser, about 14 inches long, might have been cut to make fenders for the boats or oakum; these things might have been concealed by snow from the Esquimaux, if any of them had visited the tents, and when uncovered by the sun, were first seen by our people. Stone boundaries for tents may be seen in many places along the coast of Greenland, some of them appearing 20 or 30 years old; these places are the summer residences of the Esquimaux, and they generally build a small one close by for the purpose of cooking; it is possible our people may have found these stones ready placed, and pitched their tents upon the spot; but my son states, that any one acquainted with such constructions could tell at sight if the stones were built up by the natives or Europeans unaccustomed to it. Our boats may have landed for many purposes; repairs, fresh water, or washing clothes, but that the natives destroyed them there is not the least foundation for the belief; if the men landed with muskets, provisions, tents, &c., why not with ammunition, which is always ready in the arm-chest? The tents of the Esquimaux are about 12 feet diameter, and several are frequently pitched together.

From the information I have received from my son, and his remarks in his diary, which is very interesting, as to the habits of the Esquimaux, the nature of the country, its resources in food, and mineral productions, and his description of the deep fiords running into the country, 200 miles in some places, I do not think it likely that the ships sent out will discover any traces of Sir John Franklin and his crew.

Had his vessels been wrecked and cast upon the shore opposite the large ice-

No. 11.
Letter from Rear-
Admiral Tayler,
C. B., to Captain
Hamilton, R. N.