

actual danger, with those experienced among the floating ice of the polar regions. Neither the iron-bound coasts and devouring whirlpools of the temperate, nor the thunder-storms and tornados of the torrid zone, can equal the terrific situation of the mariner, who finds himself driving helplessly before a gale among a shoal of drifting Icebergs. In no situation, if we may believe the hardy voyagers who have returned from these fearful enterprises, is danger so acutely felt by the bravest; because in none is the utter inability of human skill to exert the slightest influence over the event, so overpoweringly manifest. And yet, even the desperate chances of such a struggle, must be a comparatively harmless prospect to the seaman who has beheld the vessel imbedded in a field of ice; while the short summer is rapidly passing away, and every day is diminishing his hope of escape from the horrors of a Polar winter.

Few voyagers have experienced more of these formidable encounters within a short period than Captain Wilkes. On New Year's day, 1840, the Flying-fish parted company from the Squadron. The insufficient size and accommodation of the Tender had excited the surprise of her visitors at Sydney; many of whom, with more concern for the safety of their American friends, than consideration for their feelings, had not hesitated to predict the fate of Sir Hugh Willoughby, for her crew. These disadvantages were now severely felt; and her commander was at length compelled, by the failing health of his men, to abandon the intention of rejoining his consorts. The Flying-fish altered her course to the northward, on the 2d of February, and reached New Zealand on the 9th of March. On the 10th of January, the Vincennes, Peacock, and Porpoise fell in with the first iceberg, being then in the 62d degree of south latitude; and in a few days they were constantly surrounded with floating pieces of ice. On the 16th, land was clearly discovered from all the vessels, in the shape of a large round-headed mountain, altogether different in shape and color from the intervening Icebergs. They were now off the coast of the great southern continent, at a point nearly to the south-south-east of Van Diemen's Land. On the 20th, the Peacock and Porpoise were directed to part company from the Vincennes, and to explore to the eastward; and on the 24th the former vessel met with an accident, which rendered her immediate return to Sydney a measure of absolute necessity. After penetrating the tract of floating ice, which forms a bulwark to every coast in these latitudes, and enduring several dangerous collisions, by which her rudder was entirely disabled; the ship was at length driven stern foremost against a large iceberg, with a violence which threatened instant destruction. Fortunately she rebounded from the shock without sucking fast; but scarcely had she moved her own length, when a vast mass of ice and snow, which the blow had loosened, fell close to her stern with a crash, which, had it taken place one second sooner, would have crushed her to atoms. A more tremendous instance of the risks attending this perilous species of navigation, was probably never witnessed by any voyager who survived to relate it; and such were the injuries inflicted upon the vessel, that it became a doubtful question, not whether she could continue her cruise, but whether she could hope to reach a port in safety. She immediately stood to the northward, upon getting clear of the floating ice; and on the 21st of February, being favored by the weather, arrived in a very shattered state at Sydney. The Porpoise reached New Zealand on the 20th of March, having continued exploring the coast until the 14th of February.

We now return to the Vincennes. She entered the icy barrier a few days after her separation from her consorts, and commenced exploring the coast to the westward. On the 29th of January she encountered one of the most formidable dangers to which the Polar voyager is liable—a gale of wind among floating icebergs. For several hours she continued to drive rapidly through a heavy sea, surrounded on all sides by these fearful companions—now dimly seen through the mist and sleet,—now heard crashing and plunging in the darkness; but always close to the vessel, and threatening to overwhelm her at every moment. When the night closed in, without any diminution of the tempest, or dispersion of the ice, the situation of the Vincennes became so perilous as to be nearly desperate. All hands were on deck, and Captain Wilkes acknowledges, that he repeatedly gave up every hope of escaping destruction. They were often warned of their narrow escape from striking on an iceberg, by the sudden calm which the invisible monster produced, as the ship passed under his lee;

and they more than once, when apparently driving directly upon a field of ice, escaped through openings so narrow as to have been unperceived in the darkness. At length early in the morning of the 30th, the vessel entered a small open tract of sea, where she lay to in comparative safety, until the bad weather was over;—having certainly, to judge from the calm and unadorned narrative of Captain Wilkes, passed a night of as frightful danger, as we can remember in the annals of naval adventure. For nearly two months longer, the Vincennes continued her toilsome progress along the coast of the Antarctic Continent,—constantly surrounded by ice, and liable at every moment to a renewal of the awful scene from which she had been so wonderfully extricated. The weather was, however, upon the whole favorable; but her crew suffered severely from cold and fatigue, and it was not without remonstrance from his medical officers that Captain Wilkes completed his cruise. The ship was constantly in sight of the land, but in no instance do any of her people appear to have succeeded in reaching it. Several views of its appearance are, however, inserted in Captain Wilkes' work, and more wild and desolate scenes can scarcely be imagined. It presents a long undulating range of snowy mountains, stretched inland to the horizon—mountains which, in all probability, no living creature has ever trodden since the climate of our globe assumed its present temperature. At length on the 21st of February, after having explored the coast from east to west, through nearly sixty degrees of longitude, the Vincennes put her head to the northward. Her passage was favorable, and, on the 11th of March, she arrived safe at Sydney, with all her crew restored to health.

DRUNKARDS VOTING "NO LICENSE."—It is a fact, and one that cannot be mentioned without emotion, that hundreds, and probably thousands of drunkards, at the late election in this State, voted "No License." The reason is obvious. There are hours of reflection when the drunkard feels his chains and longs for deliverance, but the temptation that meets him at every turn, is too strong, and he falls a prey to it. Often he cries in bitterness of soul, "O that I could not get it!" and the prospect of driving intoxicating liquors beyond his reach was hailed with joy by many an intemperate man, who held out firm in his purpose, and in spite of the persuasions of the seducer, deposited his vote in favour of "no license." It was a mystery to the rumseller. He could not understand the cause of it; there were his best customers voting away his business, and some went from his counter to the polls, declaring as they went that they were going to vote against rum. This will account for the fact that in some places where it was supposed as a matter of course that the "license" party would succeed, they were signally defeated. The drunkards and drinking men were counted in favour of license, but many of them voted against it. They voted in self defence. They knew, for they had felt the evils, and they roused themselves to one effort to save themselves and others from ruin. The triumph of temperance principles in this State, calls for the most devout gratitude to God, while it should animate the friends of the cause here and abroad to redoubled energy in the prosecution of the good work, until the empire of intemperance is completely overthrown. Now that we are to have no war with England, let us have a war of extermination against intemperance. The good men of the country, the patriots, the philanthropists, the ladies, the poor and perishing will be with us; and faith and perseverance will give us the victory.—*N. Y. Observer.*

CHEAP LITERATURE.—Those only who travel are in any measure aware to what an extent the "cheap," and too often licentious literature of the day is flooding the community. A correspondent of the *American Messenger*, writing from Saratoga, says:—"On our way to this place I was surprised at the assiduity of the *Colporteurs* at the several railroad depots and steamboat landings. They were not, however, colporteurs of the American Tract Society, but were evidently employed by some association for making money by corrupting the morals of the community. I was struck with the impartiality of their zeal; for every passenger in the cars was urged, and urged repeatedly to take a copy of the 'Wandering Jew,' the 'Mysteries of Paris,' 'Life of Maria L. Bickford,' or some kindred work. One of our party opened a package of the 'Elegant Narratives' of the Tract Society, and, to improve his assortment, furnished one of these colporteurs with the 'Duryman's Daughter,' and the 'Shepherds of Salisbury Plain.'"

STEAM-BOATS.—In 1814 there was but one steam-boat belonging to the British empire. During thirty years the number has increased to about 1000 British steam-boats, which are now navigating to and from all parts of the kingdom.

CONGRESS OF ARCHITECTS.—Architects from all parts of the world talk of holding a general convention of architects once every three years, the first to take place at Athens.