

5

VESSELS IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 4 June 1852 ;—for,

“COPIES of COMMUNICATIONS between the ADMIRALTY and any PUBLIC AUTHORITIES at Home and Abroad, in reference to certain VESSELS observed on an Iceberg in the *North Atlantic* in 1851, and supposed to have been Abandoned.”

(Sir R. H. Inglis.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 22 June 1852.

COPIES of COMMUNICATIONS between the ADMIRALTY and any PUBLIC AUTHORITIES at Home and Abroad, in reference to certain VESSELS observed on an Iceberg in the *North Atlantic* in 1851, and supposed to have been Abandoned.

Sir,

Admiralty, 19 June 1852.

WITH reference to your letter of the 8th instant, transmitting copy of a Resolution of the House of Commons, dated the 4th instant, respecting the laying before The House copies of any communications between the Admiralty and any public authorities at home and abroad, in reference to certain vessels observed on an iceberg in the North Atlantic in 1851, and supposed to have been abandoned, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit to you a Return, which has been prepared in conformity with the terms of the said Resolution, and the request conveyed in your letter.

Papers numbered
from 1 to 49.

I am, &c.

Sir William G. H. Jolliffe, Bart., M. P.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) J. H. Hay,
Pro Secretary.

No. 1.

Her Majesty's Ship "Sampson," Portsmouth,
20 March 1852.

Sir,

AFTER mature deliberation, I am of opinion that it is my duty to acquaint their Lordships with the following particulars in reference to Sir J. Franklin's ships.

About the beginning of the present month, I was in company with a merchant captain, of the name of Story, who is a native of Tynemouth, and at present residing there; we were talking about ice, &c., when he made the following statement, which I give in his own words:

"In reference to icebergs, I know a captain, at present in Shields Harbour, who told me that when proceeding to North America in the spring of 1851, the mate, who had the morning watch, reported an iceberg in sight ahead of the ship.

"On a nearer approach, the ice, under the water, could be observed shelving out to a considerable distance at the lee side, thus acting like a vane in keeping that part to leeward. On passing as close as prudence would allow, two three-masted vessels were observed close to the berg, but out of the water; they were regularly housed in, with their topsail yards and topgallant masts down. No human beings could be seen."