

state of mind ; but when I counted the full number of the party I was comparatively easy. It appears that on the night of the 13th, finding the ice closing on them, they managed to get the boats on to the floe, and fancied themselves safe, although drifting to the northward. The ice continued to press in towards the land, crushing the floe, and piling it up to nearly twenty feet in height ; and at length the floe gave way beneath them, and the gig was partly filled with pieces, and could not be withdrawn further towards the land. The whaler, a lighter boat, was also stove ; and as she could not be brought further, the whole party were obliged to make the best of their way to the shore before the ice should ease off, as it seemed inclined to do, and leave them on detached pieces. Fortunately the danger, so imminent, was of that slow, though overwhelming nature, that they had time to provide themselves with three days' preserved meats, and their arms and ammunition, with which they were enabled to reach the ship. I have forwarded Lieutenant Vernon's journal, which will show their Lordships how that officer and his companion, Mr Gordon, acquitted themselves on the occasion ; and I have much satisfaction in mentioning the high terms in which he spoke of the conduct of the crews, not a man of whom expressed his opinion until they had decided on deserting the boats, when, from their manner, he concludes they thought it high time ; and he further describes them as obedient, cool, and intrepid from the commencement of the danger until their return on board. The loss of the ship's boats was a heavy misfortune ; but when it was considered the whole party had found their way safely to the ship, we were too much rejoiced to give a look of regret after the boats, which could not have been saved.

Two days after the return of the boat-party I had serious thoughts of despatching another in a native u-mi-ak, to keep our appointment at Cape Lisburne ; but on weighing the matter maturely, I gave up the idea, as by no means in