

it continued to blow very fresh ; constantly tacking between land and ice. Ship got several very severe knocks ; so severe, indeed, that a considerable quantity of copper has been torn from her bottom.

Saturday, July the 18th. Weather continues squally, with dense fog. Still tacking about between land and ice. Uncertain of our situation, the captain not being able to make any observation. Also uncertain of our course, in consequence of the extraordinary variation of the compass.* The ship became so leaky this day, in consequence of the injuries received from the ice, that we were obliged to keep the pumps constantly at work.

Sunday, July the 19th. Weather much improved ; occasional sun-shine. About twelve, the captain was enabled to make an observation ; found that we were in latitude $61^{\circ} 26'$. We were now quite satisfied that the land in view was Resolution Island.

Four o'clock. Haze and mist completely dispersed : steady sun-shine. Wind much more moderate ; patches of fine blue sky here and there present themselves. It is inconceivable with what joy we beheld the first gleam of sun-shine ; its-cheering beams appeared to diffuse cheerfulness and good-humour amongst us all. About six, we were completely surrounded with ice ; the wind, however, became so moderate, that we ran no risk by venturing in amongst it. Several icebergs in view. Just as we had done dinner this day, the steward came into the cabin with word that the King George and Eddystone, the two vessels already mentioned, were in sight. Nothing could possibly have afforded us greater gratification than this intelligence. We all immediately went upon deck, when, to our very great surprise, we saw the George about thirty yards from us. The Eddystone, owing to the ice, could not get quite so near. In a short time the George got so close that we were able to get on board by merely crossing a

* The exact cause of this extraordinary variation is, I believe, not well ascertained. The most generally received opinion, however, is, that which attributes it to the influence of some enormous mass of metallic matter contained in the bowels of the earth. By the early navigators, this phenomenon was ascribed to the cold air situated between the needle and the point of its attraction. Ellis asserts, that when the compasses were brought into a warm room, they recovered their proper action and direction ; i. e. when brought down to the cabin it pointed with much greater accuracy. I may remark, that we found the same effect produced by bringing the boxes down to the cabin. Perhaps, in this case, the cold acted by congealing the moisture contained in the air which surrounded the needle, and in this way presented a mechanical obstruction to its motion.—The subject is curious.