

into a sort of bay or inlet, that further progress was difficult, and the ship was held off until a more southerly and less obstructed harbour was reached, and not while yet in the Strait, as one might infer from Lieutenant Gordon's statement. Again, he says that in making in for the land the ship's propeller was broken, but that the harbour was reached with the stumps. Only one blade of the screw was broken, so that the steamer was readily taken in with the other; and, I may add, that the break was wholly due to inexperience. Captain Sopp had left the bridge, and gone below for a minute, and just as the vessel was passing through a stretch of heavy ice, and entering the open water, Lieutenant Gordon ordered her a-port, and signalled for increased power. The result was that her bow, coming rapidly round, brought her stern and propeller against the ice in such a manner as to produce a horizontal strain on the weakest part of the blade, and it broke off. If the ship had not been brought about until clear of the ice, the accident would not have happened, and Captain Sopp regarded the whole matter as inexcusable. Had he been on the bridge at the time the mishap would not have taken place.

In speaking of the Arctic ice met with in the neighbourhood of Nottingham Island, Lieutenant Gordon says:—"Viewed from the top of a hill on Nottingham Island the sea in every direction was one vast ice field, and to the southward, between South-east Point and Cape Digges, we saw four vessels fast. This ice was altogether of a different type to what we had hitherto met with. Some of it was over forty feet thick of solid blue ice, not field-ice, which had been thickened by the piling of pan on pan, but a solid sheet of ice, which had evidently been frozen just as we saw it. Much of it was twenty feet thick, and for the general average of all the field we passed through coming into harbour I estimate that the thickness would have been upwards of fifteen feet. The question as to the origin of this ice and whether it will be frequently met with in the west end of the Strait is an important one; for in such ice, when closely packed, a vessel even of the build and power of the *Neptune* was perfectly helpless. I do not consider that it is possible for ice to form in Fox channel to a greater thickness than ten feet in a single