

—No. 5.—

I.
Expedition to Lancaster Sound and Barrow's Straits.The Ness, Stromness, Orkneys,
29 August 1848.

Sir,

By the arrival of the "Bee," James Wildon, master, from the cod-fishery in Davis's Straits, I am furnished with the following information respecting the expedition under Sir J. C. Ross. Her Majesty's ships "Enterprise" and "Investigator," commanded by the above officer, were safely anchored in Lively Harbour, Disco Island, on the 2d July last. This information Mr. Wildon received from the American whaler "M'Lellan," of New London, about 18th July last. May I beg that you will acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of this; and

I have, &c.

(signed) *John Robinson.*The Secretary of the Admiralty,
London.

P. S.—Sir J. C. Ross has left despatches with the Danish governor of Disco, to be sent by the first vessel for Europe; but I hope my information will precede his.

(signed) *J. R.*

—No. 6.

Her Majesty's ship "Enterprise,"
(lat. 72 deg. 48 min., long. 55 deg. 54 min.)
Uppernawick, 12 July 1848.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that Her Majesty's ships "Enterprise" and "Investigator" arrived at this place on the 7th instant.

From the masters of the whale ships named in the margin, which we fell in with on the evening of the 4th instant, I learned that, having waited five weeks in lat. 73 deg. north, and finding the ice still firm and unbroken; they had abandoned the attempt of getting round to the north of the main pack, and were intending to proceed south, and try to cross in a low latitude. On the 10th instant all the rest of the whale ships (with the exception of two that are beset to the westward and unable to return) have passed to the southward.

From the Danish governor of this settlement I have learned that the winter was unusually severe, the fixed ice extending about 25 leagues from the land, and that the spring has been later than usual; which combined with a long continuance of light southerly winds and very calm weather; have prevented the breaking up of the ice to the north.

Under these circumstances I should probably have made an attempt to cross in a more southern latitude, had any number of the whale ships determined to pursue the northern route; but as they have nearly all gone to the southward, I consider it more imperatively necessary that the "Enterprise" and "Investigator" should persevere to the north; for otherwise, if the "Erebus" and "Terror" should, in running down the west coast, find the ice so close in with the land as to oblige them to take the pack, they would most likely endeavour to return and round the north end of it, rather than incur the risk of being beset and detained in it for another winter: there would be no vessel to meet them, or if in their boats, to receive their crews on board; whilst if they should succeed in getting down the west coast to the south, they cannot fail to fall in with some one of the many ships that will be prosecuting their fishing along that shore until a late period of the season.

So soon, therefore, as the strong south wind which is now blowing shall have sufficiently moderated, I intend to proceed to the northward; and although I cannot but regret that I am unable to give a more satisfactory account of the present state of the ice, I beg leave to observe that it is still early in the season, that the ice though not broken up is, near the land, in a very decayed state, and that a strong gale from the northward would probably in a few hours totally alter the aspect of affairs, and perhaps open for us a clear passage along the land. At any rate, we know there is plenty of space for the ice to drift to the south-

"Truelove," of Hull.
"Lady Jane," of Newcastle.
"John Green," of Peterhead.
"Alexander," of Dundee.