

"The Governor of Upernivik came off to meet us, and informed me that the last ship had sailed on August 16, and he held out no hopes of our finding a ship for Europe at this late season in any of the more southern colonies.

"As we had now no opportunity of communicating with home, and considering that it would only complicate matters were we to be unavoidably detained the winter without the means of informing their Lordships, I anchored ship in the Danish harbour, and reluctantly gave orders to fill up with fresh water, and to refit for our return to England, according to our original intention, if nothing should occur to render it necessary for us to winter in the North.

"During our stay in Smith Sound we had taken every opportunity of sounding with Negretti's, or the Millér-Casella, thermometers attached, whenever practicable. The greatest depth was found in the middle of the straits, in the parallel of Cape Isabella, where it is 600 fathoms, and on this occasion a beautiful *Asterias*, measuring three feet in diameter, with the arms extended, was brought up from the bottom; it was quite alive, but very sluggish upon being landed on the deck.

"The ice we met in Smith Straits consisted of those solid pieces apparently formed near the shore in strong currents, and much pressed up by the action of the tides. These were intermingled with large and small floes, and much oceanic or Polar ice; the whole, from its deep draught of water, forming a pack of the heaviest description, and so unyielding as to render it unsafe to strike with any force, and consequently the more difficult to manœuvre a ship among it.

"With reference to the currents; after a month's constant cruising we arrived at the conclusion that there is a permanent current flowing northward on the east side, and southward on the west side, but not sufficiently strong to check the tides, the stream of the flood being always north, and of the ebb south, on both sides.

"We left Upernivik on the 11th, and arrived at Godhavn (Disco) on the night of the 15th, remaining there until the 21st, when I sailed for England, as I considered that if the ships were on their return home now they had already passed down Davis Straits.

"On our passage homeward we experienced calms, and light, variable winds during the first week, making but little progress; however, the weather soon changed, and set in with strong south-easterly and southerly gales, which continued almost without interruption until October 26, when we were 300 miles off the north-west of Ireland.

"We had, on the 1st of October, in Davis Straits, most unexpectedly met a quantity of heavy Spitzbergen drift ice in lat.  $64^{\circ} 31' N.$ , long.