

plaint. This diminution of strength, which we considered to be principally owing to the want of sufficient sustenance, became apparent, even after a fortnight, in the lifting of the bread-bags and other heavy weights ; and I have no doubt that, in spite of every care on the part of the officers, as well as Mr. Beverly's skilful and humane attention to their ailments, some of the men, who had begun to fail before we quitted the ice, would, in a week or two longer, have suffered very severely, and become a serious incumbrance, instead of an assistance, to our party. As far as we were able to judge, without further trial, Mr. Beverly and myself were of opinion that, in order to maintain the strength of men thus employed, for several weeks together, an addition would be requisite of at least one-third more to the provisions which we daily issued. I need scarcely remark how much this would increase the difficulty of equipping such an expedition.

I cannot dismiss the subject of this enterprise, without attempting to explain, as far as I am able, how it may have happened that the ice over which we passed was found to answer so little to the description of that observed by the respectable authorities quoted in a former part of this volume *. It frequently occurred to us, in the course of our

* See Introduction.