

the reservoir, and opening the cock, let the condensed air escape, walking round the ice wherever it was melting.

Every one was astonished at the effect produced. Wherever the air was projected by the astronomer, the fissures filled up, and the surface re-froze.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" shouted all with one voice.

It was tiring enough to work the pumps, but there were plenty of volunteers. The edges of the ice were again solidified, as if under the influence of intense cold.

"You have saved us, Mr Black," said Lieutenant Hobson.

"Nothing could be more natural," replied the astronomer quietly.

Nothing, in fact, could have been more natural; and the physical effect produced may be described as follows:—

There were two reasons for the relegation:—First, under the pressure of the air, the water vaporised on the surface of the ice produced intense cold, and the compressed air in expanding abstracted the heat from the thawed surface, which immediately re-froze. Wherever the ice was opening the cold cemented the edges, so that it gradually regained its original solidity.

This went on for several hours, and the colonists, buoyed up by hope, toiled on with unwearying zeal.

They were nearing the coast, and when they were about a quarter of a mile from it, the bear plunged into the sea, and swimming to the shore, soon disappeared.

A few minutes afterwards the ice ran aground upon a beach, and the few animals still upon it hurried away in the darkness. The colonists "disembarked," and falling on their knees, returned thanks to God for their miraculous deliverance.