

In returning to our position off Chamisso Island, I anchored off Spaforeif Inlet, on the south side of the Sound, and sent my boats up it. Here we were more successful; we found a native who could converse fluently with the interpreter; he had only just arrived, after a hunting expedition to the northward.

He described his distance as a long way north, where the sea came close to the land, and that there were no ships seen or heard of.

He said that there were some white men, like us, inland, one of them with a band on his cap, pointing to ours; that they were southward to us, nearer Norton Sound.

While at Michaelouski the Russians informed us of there being six Americans in their vicinity trading for skins; how they came they could not tell; I suppose them to be part of the crew of some American whaler, who have absconded with a boat from her.

These natives could not be induced, by presents or promises, to come to the anchorage at Chamisso Islands, although so short a distance.

I sent boats to the ice cliff in Eschaltz Bay, to collect any fossils that might be exposed since the "Blossom's" visit; we were very successful in quantity and size, but none of them different, I fear, from those obtained by Captain Beechey.

They endeavoured, also, to fall in with another party of the natives, at the entrance of the Buckland River, but in this we failed; the Esquimaux had evidently retired somewhere for the winter.

The weather had now become excessively cold; the sea had suddenly cooled down to 28 deg.; the whole face of the country covered with snow; all the lakes and springs frozen, so that we could not water from them, and a constant west or north-west wind blowing. These evident indications of the winter having set in, determined me to sail the first favourable opportunity.

Up to the 26th September we had, in Kotzebue Sound, most delightful weather; I should say that this had been an unusually fine open season. On Chamisso Island we found some of the beeches, and other shrubs, budding a second time. The weather was so mild that there were many sanguine hopes we should yet meet Sir John Franklin's ships.

After the 26th, the weather suddenly became so bad and threatening, that I weighed on the morning of the 29th September, and beat out of the Sound, passing the Straits on the evening of the 2d October, in a heavy snow storm.

On the morning of the 16th I again arrived at Petropauloski, but found that the "Plover" had not been there during our absence. I cannot divine what can have become of her, unless their Lordships have recalled her, that she failed in getting round the Horn, or that she went to Panama to meet me; in either of which cases I could not have fallen in with her*.

At Valparaiso, Panama, and Oahu, the only places she was likely to touch at, I left information for her as to my movements, in all of which I pointed out, most distinctly, Petropauloski as a certain rendezvous.

At Petropauloski I landed our interpreter, a very respectable, good man, having ordered the paymaster and purser to remunerate him for his services at the rate of one dollar per diem, and to supply him in addition with some few articles of clothing necessary for so rigid a climate.

I should have conveyed him back to Norton Bay, but did not like taking the ship down on a lee shore, where no shelter can be found from the violent westerly winds prevalent at this late period of the season.

I lost one man (our fiddler) by death on this long and arduous voyage; with this exception, the health of my crew has been very good until within a few days of making this port, when we had many cases bearing slight symptoms of the presence of scurvy.

I cannot in any way account for the appearance of this disease; there could not possibly have been better provisions than we issued, in addition to which Sir George Seymour sent me a very large and ample supply of preserved meats, which I ordered to be served out twice instead of once a week, as ordered by their Lordships' circular; of which I trust their Lordships will be pleased to approve.

On my first visit to Petropauloski there was no salt meat issued, the men having

* The "Plover" was at Callao on the 8th July.