

might give way, and Hobson forbade his men to leave the factory, as they might be drifted away before they were aware of it.

The animals seemed more keenly alive than ever to approaching danger; they gathered yet more closely round the firmer part, and after the disappearance of the fresh-water lake, they came to lick the blocks of ice. They were all uneasy, and some seemed to be seized with madness, especially the wolves, who rushed wildly towards the factory, and dashed away again howling piteously. The furred animals remained huddled together round the large well where the principal house had formerly stood. There were several hundreds of them, of different species, and the solitary bear roamed backwards and forwards, showing no more hostility to the quadrupeds than to men.

The number of birds, which had hitherto been considerable, now decreased. During the last few days all those capable of long-sustained flight—such as swans, &c., migrated towards the Aleutian Islands in the south, where they would find a sure refuge. This significant and ominous fact was noticed by Mrs Barnett and Madge, who were walking together on the beach.

"There is plenty of food for these birds on the island," observed Mrs Barnett, "and yet they leave it—they have a good reason, no doubt."

"Yes," replied Madge; "their instinct of self-preservation makes them take flight, and they give us a warning by which we ought to profit. The animals also appear more uneasy than usual."

Hobson now decided to take the greater part of the provisions and all the camping apparatus on board the raft, and when that was done, to embark with the whole party.

The sea was, however, very rough, and the waters of the former lake—now a kind of Mediterranean in miniature—were greatly agitated. The waves, confined in the narrow space, dashed mountains high, and broke violently upon the steep banks. The raft tossed up and down, and shipped sea after sea. The embarkation of provisions, &c., had to be put off.

Every one wished to pass one more quiet night on land, and Hobson yielded against his better judgment, determined, if it were calmer the next day, to proceed with the embarkation.

The night was more peaceful than had been expected; the wind went down, and the sea became calmer; it had but been swept by one of those sudden and brief hurricanes peculiar to these latitudes.