

Having now quitted our last touching point, all our attention was directed to preparing for our winter sojourn. Warm clothing was distributed; cloaks and socks of the fur-seal skin made up, and ice gear fitted and inspected. In anticipation of boat expeditions crews were appointed, and their several supplies apportioned, strong hopes being entertained of doing something before being frozen in.

Some fine meteors were seen early in September, and black gull and whale birds observed in considerable numbers: a plover flew on board, a goodly omen, and dolphins gathered round the vessel. On the 9th we saw stormy petrels and sea swallows; and the former, true to their popular reputation, proved harbingers of a heavy gale. The weather moderating, the nautilus was seen outspreading his tiny sail.

Towards the end of the month the presence of numerous birds, as well as quantities of sea weed, indicated the proximity of land; on the 27th, at no great distance from Madenoi or Copper Island,—with the exception of Behring's Island, the westernmost of the group,—we passed between the Aleutian or Fox Islands, and the main-land of Kamtchatka.

As these islands were among the first-fruits of the discovery from the west of the western coast of the North American continent, it may not be inappropriate