

Enclosure
No. 2.

board, and the weather being quite fine and apparently settled, I anchored the ship as close in as I deemed prudent in 17 fathoms, and lay with banked fires, steam ready at short notice and a slip on the cable, and commenced coaling at once.

9. Mr. Smith now quitted the ship in his boat (which we had towed) to return to Ritenbenk settlement, distant 30 miles; a copy of a letter is annexed which I thought it right to address to Mr. Smith, the Danish Government Inspector. At 6.15 p.m. the Arctic ships were observed to the northward to haul their wind on the starboard tack and beat to windward for the purpose of communicating, but a fog came on at 8 p.m. and they were lost sight of, and when it cleared off at 11.45 p.m. they were no longer in sight. I have no doubt Captain Nares altered his intention in consequence of the fog and bore up for Upernivik.

10. The 18th, being Sunday, I discontinued coaling. At 1.30 p.m. I despatched a cutter in charge of Navigating Lieutenant Broad to examine the harbour at Atanekrdluk with a view to taking shelter there in a gale from north to south. During his absence from the ship it came on to blow from the S.W. we did not feel it much in the ship being under the shelter of the land, but the cutter found some difficulty in getting back through the ice for it was blowing furiously on that side of that strait, and I am convinced that an ordinary cutter would have been capsized or swamped; ours are life boats fitted on Sir W. K. Hall's principle; they are stiff under sail and very buoyant and pull well; I have formed the highest opinion of them. Mr. Broad reported that the northern harbour was very deep and well sheltered from the sea with South, S.E. and S.W. winds, but at that time quite unapproachable for ice, and not free from the danger of being sealed up in, for a large berg drifted right into it whilst he was there coming right in against a violent gale. The southern harbour was crammed full of bergs, as seeking shelter in either of them with the ship, even supposing it were possible to get to them through the quantities of ice then in the straits, was not to be thought of.

The movement of the ice in the strait seems to be governed by the direction of the wind. It sets to the northward from the Tossukatek Glacier, keeping along the eastern shore of the Waigat with south and south-west winds, but coming over to the Disco or western shore with northerly and easterly winds and so crowding in upon the coast which is steep-to, that no ship could avoid being forced ashore did she remain at anchor too long, and possibly not be able to get out if she got under weigh.

11. On the 19th I recommenced coaling at 4 a.m. Berg and loose ice was passing up the strait in vast quantities and several large bergs passed close to the ship drifting to the northward and others grounded close-to. I continued coaling throughout the day, but at 4 a.m. 20th a strong breeze having set in from the S.W. with heavy squalls, shifting to S.S.E. the appearance of the weather threatening and the surf on the beach rendering coaling dangerous, I recalled everybody and hoisted up the boats; during the afternoon the wind and sea moderated and I continued the coaling operations; during the first watch we had to get under weigh to avoid a large berg that was drifting down upon the ship, I then anchored close in shore in 10 fathoms. On the 21st we got in a good deal of coal, and with fine weather and no ice could soon have filled the ship, which I was most anxious to do as it would be far better ballast than stones, but during the day the wind shifted to the N.E. and the ice began immediately to set over to the western shore and to fill with small bergs, with bigger in their wake, the slight indentation in the coast in which we were at anchor. I had determined to continue coaling as long as prudent and then to go to sea by the northern end of the strait instead of by the southern, as though a little out of our way it was a shorter distance to the open sea and therefore safer in case of fog setting in with a northerly wind which was to be expected, and I should be sooner clear of ice small and great, both dangerous neighbours to a paddle-wheel vessel in a fog, but my intention was hastened by a large berg drifting down upon the ship at 10.40 p.m. which I was obliged to get under weigh to clear and with some difficulty avoided coming into collision with, as half the men were out of the ship; finding I had to remain under weigh to avoid other drifting bergs, and the ice continued to set across from the eastern shore, I gave up all hope of getting more coal, recalled every one, hoisted up boats, and proceeded to the northward at 12 p.m. threading our way through berg ice which now covered the whole of the strait.

12. I had succeeded in procuring 105 tons in the 88½ hours that we were able to work but left the place eventually with only 88 tons (equal to less than (¾) 58 of English coal) having consumed the remainder whilst at anchor with steam ready, making with 129 tons of English coal left on our arrival at Ritenbenk 187 tons.

13. I made a considerable detour round the north end of Hare Island, though the channel between it and Disco is seven miles broad, Mr. Smith, the inspector, having stated that there were sunken rocks and reefs somewhere between, but he could not