

ply of provisions in each ship in case of falling in with the missing expedition.

Another important circumstance, which should not be lost sight of, is the early sailing of the relief expeditions, so that the ships may take advantage of the first opening in the ice to push westwards.

It is evident that the period during which the Arctic seas can be navigated is exceedingly variable, and we can have no better proof of this than the records of the Scandinavians having fished in Lancaster Sound during the month of May.

You are aware that, among the numerous schemes for communication with Sir John Franklin, the employment of balloons has been strongly recommended. Parties have been sufficiently daring to volunteer ascending in a balloon from the Arctic seas, by which means, supposing an elevation of one mile were attained, a very extensive panoramic view would be gained; and, presuming the balloon to be retained captive, I see no reason why this method should not be adopted.

The utility of messenger balloons, however, is so obvious that I am happy to say the Admiralty purpose sending about 50 of the kind of balloons constructed by Mr. Shepherd, who proposed their adoption, in each relief ship.

That gentleman is now present, and has kindly prepared one of these balloons on a smaller scale, which he will elevate at the conclusion of the lecture, when you will have an opportunity of seeing it*. For

* A balloon was accordingly sent up, carrying a match and numerous bundles of messages, which fell among the audience, as the lighted match was consumed.