

In the execution of this necessary resolution, it was some consolation to reflect, that from the nature of Captain Franklin's instructions, it was almost certain that by this time he had either commenced his return or taken up his winter abode. He had been directed to return to his winter quarters on the 15th of August, if he found the prospect of success was not such as to ensure his reaching Icy Cape that season, and if it should prove impracticable to winter at an advanced station on the coast. We were justified, therefore, in supposing that he had already been either compelled to pause or to turn back, as, in the event of the successful prospect anticipated in his instructions, it could hardly happen, considering the open state in which we had found the sea to the northward, that he should not have reached Kotzebue Sound by the time the Blossom left it.

In taking our departure from these seas, some general observations on the country, the natives, the currents, meteorology, and other subjects, naturally present themselves; but as we returned to the same place the following year, and extended our experience, I shall defer them until a future opportunity.

Up to this period of the voyage, my instructions had been a safe guide for my proceedings; but between our departure from these seas, and our return to them the following year, with the exception of touching at the Sandwich Islands, there were no specific directions for my guidance, and it became me seriously to consider how the time could be most usefully employed. It was necessary to repair to some port to refit and caulk the ship, to re-

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