

of 1850, after a very backward and severe summer, with winter fast closing in upon us. We saw long flights of birds retreating from their summer breeding-places somewhere beyond the broad fields of ice that lay athwart its channel. We wondered at the numerous shoals of white whale passing, from some unknown northern region, southward to more genial climes. We talked of fixed ice, yet in one day twelve miles of it came away, and nearly beset us amongst its fragments. We heard Captain Penny's report that there was water to be seen north of the remaining belt, of about ten miles in width. We were like deaf adders; we were obstinate, and went into winter quarters under Griffith's Island, believing that nothing more could be done, because a barrier of fixed ice extended across Wellington Channel! We were miserably mistaken.

The expedition under Lieutenant De Haven was then drifting slowly over the place where we, in our ignorance, had placed fixed ice in our charts; and to them likewise the wisdom of an all-merciful Providence revealed the fact of a northern sea of open water, that they might be additional witnesses in the hour of need. We cannot do better than read the plain unvarnished tale of the gallant American—a tale of calm heroism under no ordinary trials, which stamps the document as the truthful narration of a gentleman and a sailor. He says, after describing the being beset by young ice in the mouth of Wellington Channel, and drifting northward, owing to southerly winds,—

“On the 18th September we were above Cape Bowden. . . . To account for this drift, the fixed ice of Wellington Channel, which we had observed in passing to the *westward*, must have been broken up, and driven to the southward by the heavy gale the 12th (September).

“We continued to drift slowly to the N. N. W. until the