

Accordingly you will exercise your own discretion after seeing the condition of the ice, sea, and weather, whether the two vessels shall here separate, one for Cape Walker, and the other for Wellington Strait, or whether they shall both proceed together for the one place or the other.

Should you find it impossible on account of the ice to get through Barrow Strait, you will then turn your attention to Jones's Sound and Smith's Sound. Finding these closed or impracticable, and failing of all traces of the missing expedition, the season will probably then be too far advanced for any other attempts. If so, you will return to New York.

Acquaint Passed Midshipman Griffin before sailing, and from time to time during the voyage, fully with all your plans and intentions; and, before you sail from New York, appoint a place of rendezvous; change it as often as circumstances may render a change desirable; but always have a place of rendezvous fixed upon, so that in case the two vessels of the expedition may at any time become separated, each may know where to look for the other.

Nearly the entire Arctic front of the continent has been scoured without finding any traces of the missing ships. It is useless for you to go there, or to re-examine any other place where search has already been made, you will therefore confine your attention to the routes already indicated.

The point of maximum cold is said to be in the vicinity of Parry Islands.

To the north and west of these there is probably a comparatively open sea in summer, and therefore a milder climate.

This opinion seems to be sustained by the fact, that beasts and fowls are seen migrating over the ice from the mouth of Mackenzie River and its neighbouring shores to the north; these dumb creatures are probably led by their wise instincts to seek a more genial climate in that direction, and upon the borders of the supposed more open sea.

There are other facts elicited by Lieutenant Maury in the course of his investigations, touching the winds and currents of the ocean, which go also to confirm the opinion, that beyond the icy barrier, that is generally met with in the Arctic Ocean, there is a polnia, or sea free from ice.

You have assisted in these investigations at the National Observatory, and are doubtless aware of the circumstances which authorize this conclusion, it is therefore needless to repeat them.

This supposed open sea and warmer region to the north and west of Parry Islands are unexplored; should you succeed in finding an opening there, either after having cleared Wellington Strait, or after having cleared Parry Islands by a northwardly course from Cape Walker, enter as far as in your judgment it may be prudent to enter; and search every headland, promontory, and conspicuous point for signs and records of the missing party. Take particular care to avail yourself of every opportunity for leaving, as you go, records and signs to tell of your welfare, progress and intentions.

For this purpose you will erect flagstuffs, make piles of stones, or other marks in conspicuous places, with a bottle or banana buried at the base, containing your letters.

Should the two vessels be separated, you will direct Passed Midshipman Griffin to do likewise.

Avail yourself of every opportunity, either by the Esquimaux or otherwise, to let the department hear from you; and in every communication be full and particular as to your future plans and intended route.

If by any chance you should penetrate so far beyond the icy barrier as to make it, in your judgment, more prudent to push on than to turn back, you will do so, and put yourself in communication with any of the United States naval forces, or officers of the Government, serving in the waters of the Pacific or in China, according to your necessities and opportunities. Those officers will be instructed to afford you every facility possible to enable you to reach the western coast of the United States in safety.

In the event of your falling in with any of the British searching parties, you will offer them any assistance of which they may stand in need, and which it may be in your power to give. Offer also to make them acquainted with your intended route and plans, and be ready to afford them every information of which you may have become possessed concerning the object of your search.

In case your country should be involved in war during your absence on this service, you will on no account commit, or suffer any one of the expedition to