

record of our proceedings and a notice that letters had also been left on Littleton Island were placed magnetic north of this lower cairn.

"We had now spent the best period of the navigable season in our endeavours to regain this depôt, and in proportion as the difficulty of doing so had seemed to increase, so had the necessity appeared to arise for re-examining the cask, and the conviction that it had contained the despatches forced itself upon me, notwithstanding that I had fully weighed the improbability of any sledge party having been sent to the entrance of Smith Sound last spring, if the Expedition had succeeded in attaining the high latitude contemplated.

"Although all our efforts had thus resulted in not finding here any despatches of this year, we had at least deposited some letters at the appointed place, and I had the gratification of now feeling assured that the Polar ships had been so far successful as to reach such a distant position in the North as to render it inadvisable to send a sledge party to Cape Isabella for a merely secondary object.

"I again bore away to the northward under canvas. It was very dark and thick, but sufficiently clear to enable us to avoid the heavy ice. By 9 A.M. we were again up to Leconte Island, where we were stopped by a fog until eleven o'clock, when I could see from aloft that the main pack still extended across the straits into Rosse Bay. We were in a lake of land water, with close packed and heavy ice all round, from south to north, and again closing on the land from the eastward. Our only chance of moving seemed to be through a narrow lead or slack place, running first to the E.N.E., and then again apparently towards the east coast. We entered the pack, and succeeded by 5 P.M. in again escaping into the land water in Hartstene Bay.

"The navigable season was now fast drawing to a close, but it seemed too early to retire from the straits. I had decided to remain as late as possible, and as long as I could manœuvre the ship, although there was now no possibility of a boat party arriving, but I still had hoped that the Polar ships were on their way down, and that the ice might open and admit of their passing out. As, however, we could not move the ship in any direction excepting to the south, and being very fatigued, I ran for Pandora Harbour, which we found to be full of drift ice, and so we anchored in the bight outside.

"On the following morning, the 26th, the south-west pack was driving into Hartstene Bay, and threatening to shut us in; so I weighed anchor and proceeded out, and we lay-to under the glacier by Cape Alexander all that day and night.

"On the 27th, still blowing hard from S.S.W., the ice continued to