

The most wonderful good fortune attended the outset of his voyage. The season proved to be extremely favourable—the openest known for many years. Captain Hall had the rare good fortune to cross Melville Bay and reach the North Water with very few impediments from the ice. On entering Smith's Sound he found open water, and met with but few ice-packs, and these of no great extent. The same good fortune attended him as he steamed rapidly up Kennedy Channel, and passed Cape Constitution, from which Morton and Hans saw what they concluded was an open Polar sea. But instead of finding this open sea, Captain Hall, after crossing the mouth of a Bay which he named afterwards "Polaris Bay," found himself in a narrow channel, about forty-five miles in length, and which he named Robeson's Channel, after the Secretary of the American Navy. On September 1st he found himself in lat. $82^{\circ} 16'$, the highest reached by any expedition or any individual. The land on the Greenland side now trended eastward, and from the appearance of a water-sky in this direction, Hall concluded that another bay or sound opened here. On the American side Grinnel Land, as far as eighty-three degrees, could be plainly distinguished.

What a wonderful position for a man to find himself in, after such a rapid run, and having encountered so few impediments—within four hundred and sixty miles of the Pole! What a glorious opportunity for winning the laurel crown!—for being

"The first that ever burst
Into that lonely sea."

Unfortunately, instead of pushing on, and daring everything, taking fortune at the flow, Captain Hall paused, perhaps startled by his very success, perhaps dreading to take his ship farther so late in the season, made fast to an ice-floe, began to drift south, and the golden opportunity of reaching the pole, which may not recur in the present century, was lost. Ice was met with, but it was far from being an impenetrable pack when Hall stopped. How much farther he might have advanced it is impossible to say.

His discoveries, however, are of high value. He has made it certain that Greenland does not terminate, even at $82^{\circ} 16'$ in the southern shore of an open Polar sea, but stretches away towards the pole, and may be prolonged right over it; but at present, it is only certain that the land extends to the northern extremity of Robeson's Channel, and that there another indentation of the