

entire concurrence in the opinion expressed by the late Arctic Committee (in their Report, dated 20th November 1851) on your own conduct, and on that of the officers and men employed under your orders during your search for Sir John Franklin and the officers and crew of Her Majesty's ships "Erebus" and "Terror."

My Lords further desire to express to you their thanks for your humane and arduous exertions whilst engaged on that service.

I am, &c.
(signed) *A. Stafford.*

No. 55.

LETTER from Mr. *W. Penny* to the Secretary of the Admiralty.

102, Great Russell-street,
2 November 1852.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of their Lordships' thanks of this day, and beg you will convey to his Grace the Duke of Northumberland and the present Board of Admiralty my sense of gratitude for that act of justice, which could alone set my mind at rest upon a point of honour.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Wm. Penny.*

No. 56.

LETTER from Mr. *W. Herschel de Griesbach* to the Secretary of the Admiralty.

Ottersberg, near Bremen,
22 November 1852.

Sir,

FEELING satisfied that any circumstance tending towards the elucidation of the fate or the present whereabouts of Sir John Franklin and his associates, will be received with interest by my Lords of the Admiralty, I cannot resist the impulse of acquainting them, through your medium, with the following:—

In a letter dated Tromsøe (in upwards of $69\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. lat.), in Finnland (properly Finmark), 18th September 1852, it is stated that our Spitzbergmen (vessels, not men) have returned, and all have had more or less success. It is a remarkable fact, that a great many of the reindeer skins which they have brought with them have cuts (slits) in their ears, although the reindeer of Spitzbergen live in a perfect wild state. Hence it is concluded that these animals (those with slit ears) may have separated from the tame deer of Nova Zembla, and proceeded to Spitzbergen across the ice.

How such a distance? This is barely possible, and altogether improbable. But how, provided these deer, with slits of long standing in their ears, and which have clearly been cut with knives, did not proceed from Nova Zembla across the ice to Spitzbergen?

The answer to this query might, I would humbly submit, be, "that precisely in the same manner as the commander of a late expedition in search of the missing ships caused a considerable number of Arctic foxes to be taken alive, and after fastening printed bills or cards to various parts of their bodies and limbs, set them again in freedom, for the obvious purpose of creating a chain of communication with the parties sought after, provided any one single fox were caught or shot by the party in question;" thus making local animals the vehicle of communication or correspondence; so might Sir John Franklin, or any member or members of his party, have availed themselves of the same local facility (merely substituting the reindeer for the fox, and being, of course, without the possibility of using printed cards or bills, or even written ones) of communicating to the world without, that within the dreary, and in all probability ice-bound and pent-up fastnesses of Spitzbergen, there existed men in possession of knives, and endowed with sufficient intelligence and means to catch or entrap the wildest animal of the region involuntarily inhabited by them, alive, and then trusting to Providence for the result, turning them loose in hope.