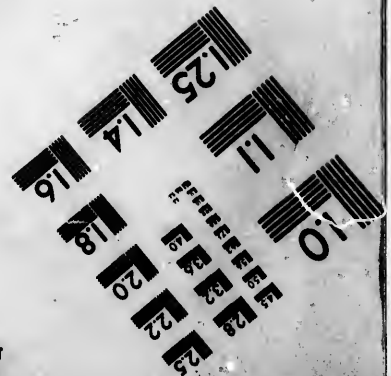
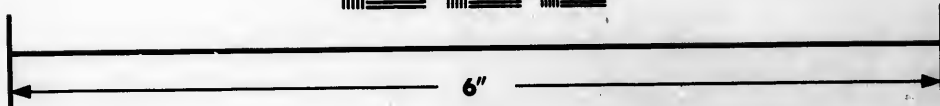
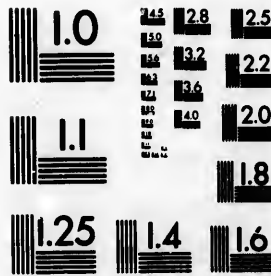


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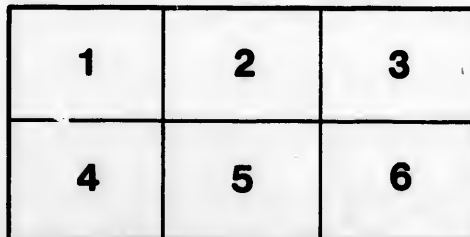
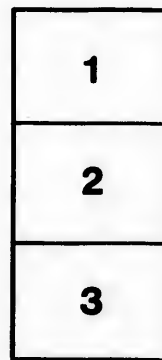
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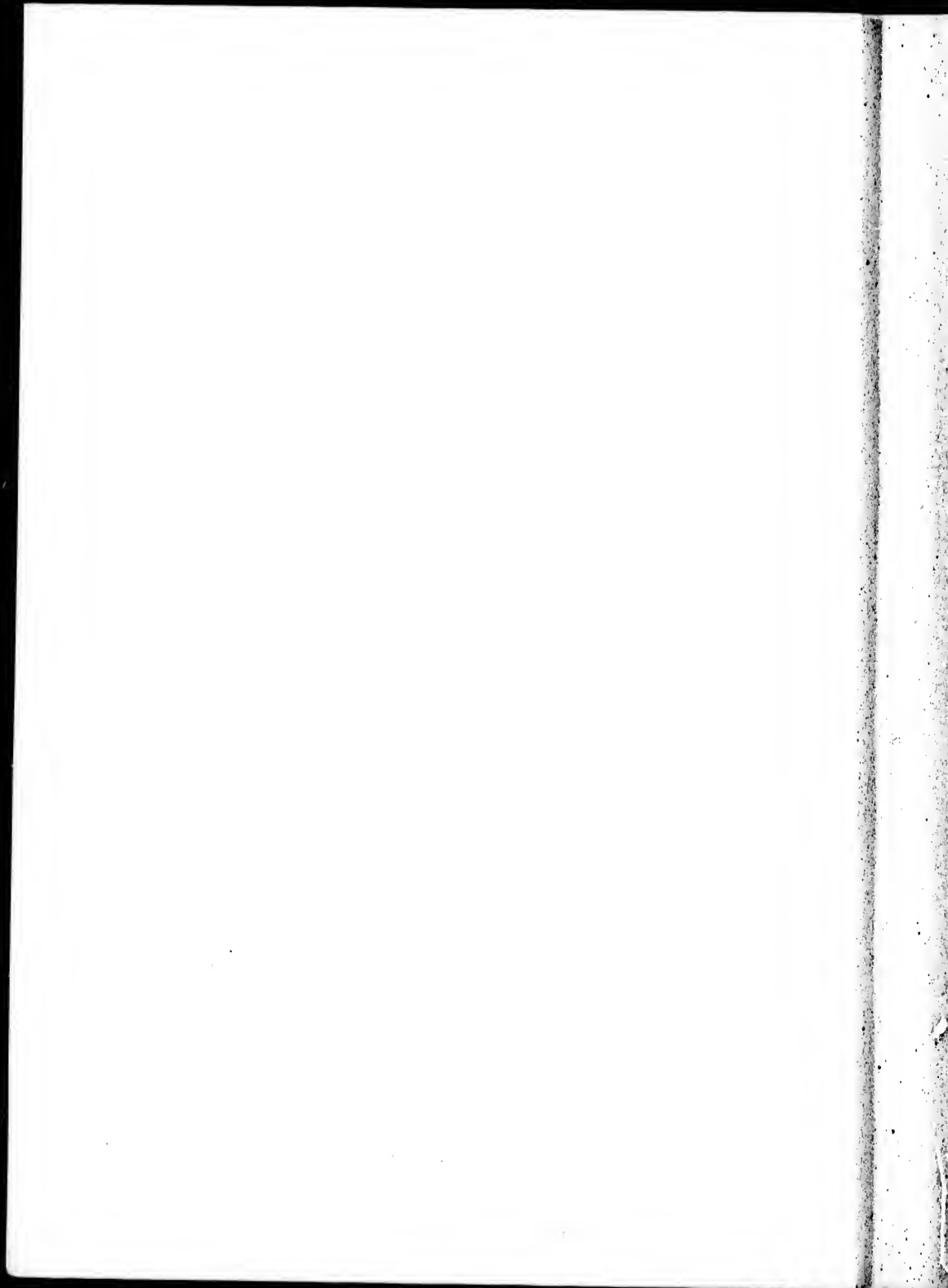
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A LETTER

TO

JOHN BARROW, Esq. F.R.S.

ON THE LATE

EXTRAORDINARY AND UNEXPECTED

Hyperborean Discoveries.

by Captain Heywood R.N.

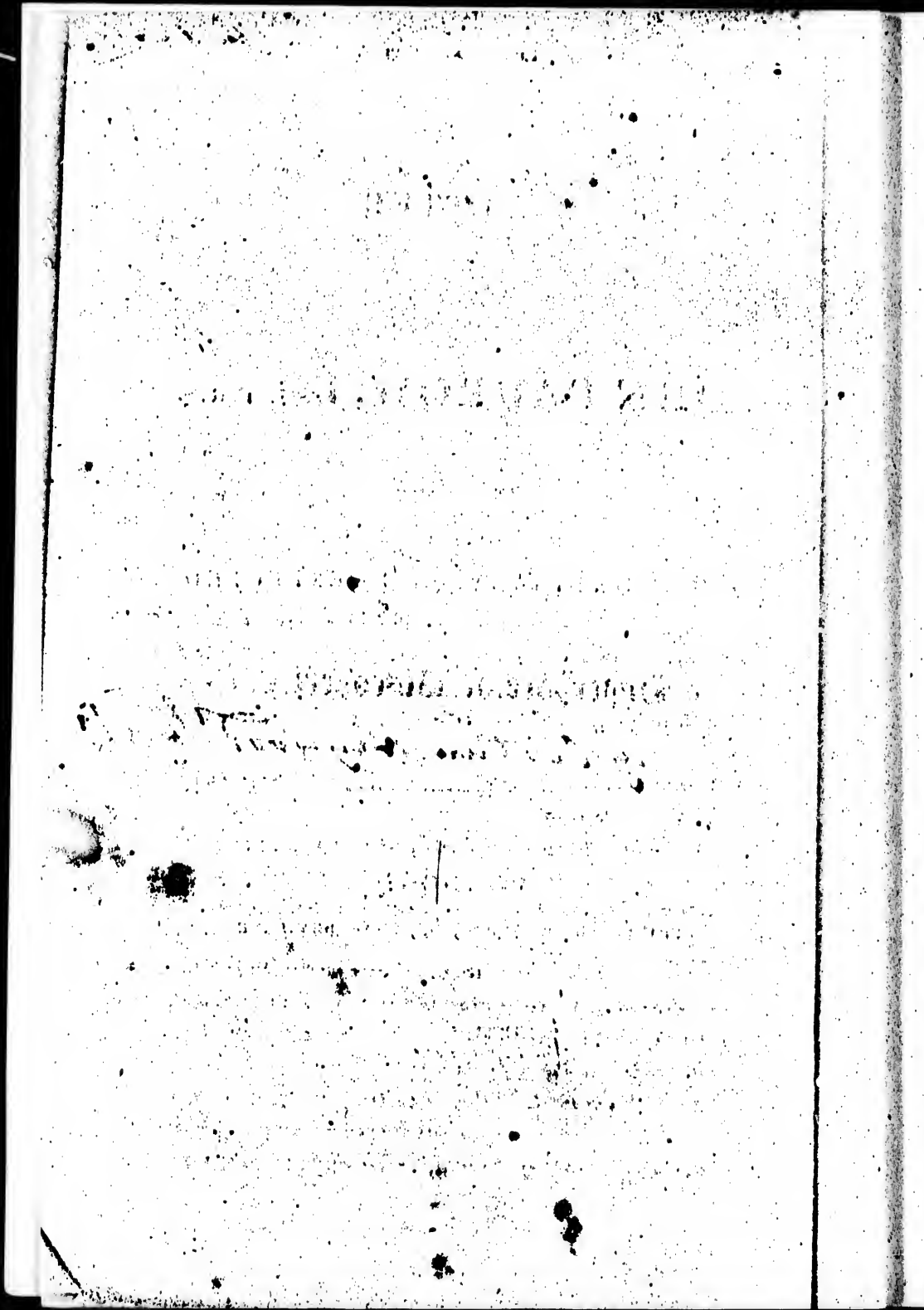
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A LETTER

TO

JOHN BARROW, Esq. F.R.S.

SIR,

If what has been rumoured, and even published, be true, to you belongs the credit of having revived the question of the practicability of a passage for ships between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; to you the honour of having *prevailed* on authorities to equip the late successive naval expeditions to put it to the test.

On the same questionable authority, it has been asserted that articles previously published in the *Quarterly Review*, explanatory of the author's views of that question, and the reasons (such as they are) which led him to declare his belief of such passage, were written by you. Other critiques, since published in that *Review*, on the same subject, have also been attributed to you.

As to this report of you and the writer of some, or at least of some parts of those articles, being one and the same person, I am inclined to doubt

it, for the honour of the *True Blue*. For although, properly speaking, Sir, you are not one of the cloth, yet being officially connected with it, it is a pity you should be made answerable for the absurdities of blundering critics. I am, therefore, disposed to lend you a hand if you will accept it, to help you out of the scrape into which these Reviewers, and Captain Parry's discoveries together, seem to have gotten you : that is, if you ever have really condescended to lend your pen and the authority of your respectable name to those 'long shore gentry of the quill. But I say I doubt it, on account of your high reputation among the best judges in the literary world, at least (if not in the *naval*, which *produceth none*) for "*depth of learning and scientific research;*" and because it may be presumed, that long practice, must have rendered a correct methodical arrangement of ideas, and a consistency in your view of any subject, quite habitual and familiar to you.

With such qualifications as these, I am sure *you* would have displayed as sound a judgment in matters of arctic inquiry as you have proved it to be in African geography. But those qualities appear to me to be so wanting in these articles in the Review, that *if* you really *did not* write them, I would humbly advise you to disavow the whole, for the sake of your share of that posthumous fame, which must be of infinitely more value than the fleeting popularity of the day. For after all, it is but "*the eulogy of fools,*" and, of course, despised by the wise few.

The successive voyages of Ross and Parry, and

especially the third and last, have gone far to undermine the foundation of the flimsy edifice attempted to be raised by these critics—to annihilate by positive experience *their* “circumvolving current from West to East.” This said current, they pourtrayed in a pretty little diagram in the Quarterly Review, No. 31; for the information, I suppose, of that abundant class of readers whose *eyes* are generally brighter than their understandings, on *such subjects*. It has been minutely described, and repeatedly pressed on the notice of the public, in that popular vehicle of sound doctrine. I wish as particularly to press it on *yours*, by quoting some of the passages where it is mentioned. For incessantly occupied as your valuable time must be, you may not have had leisure to read even this distinguished Periodical with the attention it deserves.

To begin then—In No. 31, page 215, you will find this passage: “The direction of the current, as marked in the *Great Polar Basin* of the diagram, is, *of course, conjectural*; but *not so, that* which sets into this basin through Behring’s Strait, and out of it into the northern Atlantic. By these two openings, a *constant* circular motion and *interchange* of waters between the Pacific and the Atlantic, seem to be kept up in the northern, *as* they are known to be round the Capes of Good Hope and Horn in the southern hemisphere.”

This I am sure, Sir, could never have been written by one of your experience, who have travelled so far—doubled the Cape—and sailed for it, as Jack says: because you must know that north

is not south; and that the two cases, as *thus* stated, have little analogy; although he who wrote the passage uttered truth in *part*; and, from a partly true fact, has, either through ignorance or inadvertence, drawn a decidedly *false conclusion*, as will be proved hereafter, either by me, or still better authority.

In No. 35, for June 1818, the Quarterly Reviewer, "in discussing the points on which the probability of the success of the expeditions *then* pending, might be calculated," thought "it would *mainly* depend on *two circumstances*—the existence of a circumvolving current from the North Pacific into the Atlantic, and of a great Polar basin free from land; two positions very difficult, we admit, of direct proof:" and a very prudent admission it was, as Captain Parry has already shewn with regard to the *first*; and as it is just announced in the Quarterly Review, No. 68, that this officer is bound to the North Pole either by land, by water, or by ice, we must wait for the proof of the other till he brings it back. But we will touch on this trip to the Pole after we have disposed of the Reviewer's circumvolving current, and now go on with our extracts from the *infallible Guide*.

In the same No. 35, the Reviewer assured us he had "traced the waters of the Pacific through Behring's Strait, along the *two* shores of the Polar basin" (it was not *surrounded then*) "down Davis's Strait, and the Sea of Spitzbergen, into the Atlantic;" and adds, "we have been thus circumstantial with regard to the current" (*from West to*

East, mind you), "as *its existence* affords, in our opinion, the *best hope* for the success of the expeditions now engaged in exploring a passage into the Pacific."

Deeming this current so important, it is not to be wondered at that the Reviewer could not get it out of his head, even after Captain Parry returned and published the account of his discoveries as far as Melville Island. Nay, in his review of Captain Parry's second voyage, he still speaks of a "*perpetual* current from the westward"—says, "Captain Parry has now ascertained the *important fact*, that a *perpetual* current (from the West) sets through the Strait of the Fury and Hecla;" and again, speaks of a "rapid tide, independent of the *permanent current* which sets through" that Strait. "The question then," says he, "that naturally occurs, is, from whence does the Polar sea, SURROUNDED as it is by *land*, receive a sufficient supply of water to provide for the *perpetual discharge* that takes place through the Strait of the Fury and Hecla? *It cannot* be from the torrents of melted ice and *snow* in the sea, and *surrounding shores* and islands. Neither can it be from the *melting* of the ice on the Polar Sea. The current *must*, therefore, originate *out* of the limits of the Polar Sea, which *we always thought* was the case, and, in fact, has now been *proved* to be so."

Now, will you believe it, Sir, all this must, I suppose, have been written with that immense *heavy* Quarto under his very nose, in which you will find the following passage, published by Captain Parry himself, at pages 354-5:—"From

this concluding observation on the tides in this part of the Strait of the Fury and Hecla; as well as from all our preceding remarks, and especially the more regular ones of Mr. Crozier; I believe there can be no doubt that the flood tide here comes from the westward. That there is besides this, *during a great part* of the summer, a permanent current setting from the same direction, is also sufficiently apparent; and the joint effects of these two causes appear to account satisfactorily for the various irregularities observed, as well in the set of the stream as in the rise and fall of the water by the shore. The natural inference with respect to the *current*, seemed at the time to be, that it is OCCASIONED by the MELTING of the *snows* upon the shores of the Polar Sea, for which this Strait affords the only outlet leading to the *southward* within, perhaps, some hundreds of miles. And this supposition appeared the more reasonable, from the *circumstance* of its *having just now* (about 20th September) *ceased*, when the streams from the *land* were once more arrested by the frost of the approaching winter."

Here, then, is destruction at once to the *perpetual* flow of current in this place, from *West* to *East*; and only a temporary local cause inferred by Captain Parry himself for the limited periodical current observed on the spot. The cause, too, which he assigns, happens to be *within the limits* of what he considers to be the *Polar Sea*. By whom then, it may be asked, has that current, whether perpetual or periodical, been "*proved to originate out* of the Polar sea?" Why by the

Reviewer himself to be sure. For if the Polar Sea "be surrounded by land," (^{constituting} ~~consisting~~ of what may be termed the rim of his ^{Parry's} ~~brain~~), we cannot, well conceive how it can provide for "the perpetual discharge that takes place through the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, and, therefore, it cannot originate in his Polar Sea; and if it be not produced as Captain Parry supposes, all I can say is, that it may have its origin in that rare "wide ocean having no bordering land whatever," which was mentioned by a learned "modern Athenian" in the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal for October 1824.

What presumption in a Reviewer, thus to set at nought even this highest authority, and to contradict Captain Parry in direct terms. But what will he say to Captain Parry now, who in giving an account of his third and last voyage, and stating *certain facts*, sums up the result of his experience "during eight successive summers," in these memorable and decisive words, at page 176:—"These facts when taken together, have long ago impressed me with an idea, that there must exist, in the Polar regions, some general motion of the Sea towards the West, causing the ice to set in that direction, when not impelled by local and occasional currents." Now, Sir, only consider for a moment, if the authority of this Officer, on account of his dear bought experience, is to be taken as the best, which I suppose the Reviewer will not now dispute, whatever you or I might do, what will become of his perpetual current from West to East?

But let us see what even this hitherto *unquestioned* authority amounts to; and if the opinion or judgment of Captain Parry himself, on the general direction of the current in those parts of the North Polar regions he has visited, can be implicitly relied on. Of course, *even his testimony can only apply, as yet, to those parts.*

The results of Captain Parry's experience during his *first* voyage through Davis's Strait, Baffin's Bay, Barrow's Strait, and what *he calls* "part of the Polar Sea," as far west as Melville Island, are given in the Appendix, No. 5, p. 146, of that voyage, in these words:—"It appears to me, upon the whole, that the *southerly* current, which we have been enabled to detect in Davis's Strait and Baffin's Bay, is not more than may be *caused* by the balance of the *northerly winds*, added to the annual dissolution of large quantities of *snow*, which finds the readiest outlet into the Atlantic." There is no allusion here, in this summary, to any motion of the Sea to either the East or the *West* in *Davis's Strait* and *Baffin's Bay*, but only "to the *southward into the Atlantic.*" And he says, "in the *Polar Sea* to the westward of Barrow's Strait, *no current* has been found to exist beyond that which is *evidently occasioned* by the different winds." Neither do we here find any mention of a "general motion of the Sea to the westward," or to any other particular quarter, but only temporary and local currents, as variable as the winds which "*occasion*" them.

It does not appear that Captain Parry, in the course of his *second* voyage, mentions having

made any such discovery as that of "a general motion of the Sea towards the west;" but, on the contrary, he found a current *from* the westward in the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, the *nature* of which he has minutely detailed, as we have just seen. It does not appear from any thing Captain Parry *published* in the narrative of the second voyage, that, up to the time of his quitting the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, the "idea" of a general motion of the Sea to the westward had made *so much impression* on him, as that of the Reviewer's *perpetual current from* that quarter. So implicitly indeed did Captain Parry seem to believe this current *from* the westward, in the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, to be part of the *Reviewer's circumvolver*, that in the face of his own declaration of its *having* "CEASED" to flow about the 20th of September, he says, at page 489 of second voyage, "*it coincides with that observed by Captain Franklin, and by the Russians to the westward.*" Coincides! how? as to *direction* of flow, 'tis true. But as the current in the Strait *ceased* to flow, *that fact* at once destroys its *identity* with the *perpetual* current of the Reviewer, as well as "with that observed by Captain Franklin, and by the Russians to the westward." But from the above extracts it may fairly be presumed that Captain Parry, *at that time*, believed *them all* to be *one* and the same identical perpetual current from Behring's Strait to that very spot where one of them *ceased* to flow! As yet, however, we have had no proof whatever of any connection between them. Another passage, at

the next page, 490, is *tolerably* decisive of Captain Parry's *faith* in such perpetual current *from* the westward; as he speaks "of the ice being almost constantly pressed by the *westerly* current against the western mouth of the Strait."

This necessarily renders the "idea of a general motion of the Sea *to* the westward," within the space from Behring's Strait to that of the Fury and Hecla, impossible! But perhaps this space is not within Captain Parry's limits of the Polar regions.

Whether this stream from the westward through the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, be perpetual, or only temporary, as Captain Parry says; he tells us—"It is more than *probable* that the obstacles which finally arrested our progress in the Strait, are to be attributed mainly to the current we found setting *to the eastward* through it." Probable? why what can be more *certain*? when he adds, "this stream, in finding its way through the Strait, *would undoubtedly have the effect* of keeping the ice *close home* upon its *western* mouth, so as to *prevent the egress* of a ship in that direction."

Now, Sir, a Quarterly Reviewer, of common sense, (*believing* in the *perpetual* flow of a current *from* the westward, through waters encumbered with ice) would have been able to *anticipate this effect*, without the aid either of *your* learning and sagacity, or even the necessity of dispatching Captain Parry to make that discovery, and be enabled on his return, to report, that "on *this account* the navigation of that Strait will seldom,

if ever, be practicable! Yes; all this might have been, nay it *was* anticipated, notwithstanding Captain Parry tells us "circumstances *beyond the reach* of any previous speculation, combined to oppose an insurmountable barrier to our entrance into the Polar Sea, by the route lately pursued." Why, Sir, *you* anticipated such result, and it is surprising that *your* judgment had not more weight; for your opinion was very clearly expressed at page 373 of your "Account of Voyages into the Polar Regions," in these terms: "Field ice fixes itself on shallow coasts, *in Straits, Bays, and Inlets*, where each field becomes a nucleus for an increased accumulation, as in the Straits of Bellisle and Behring, for instance, and in *every part of Hudson's Bay*, down to the latitude of 50°." The Quarterly Reviewer, too, in No. 35, p. 217, attributed the *failure* of "*every* former attempt of navigators proceeding on discovery, to their having *entered these Straits*, and had to struggle *against* the ice, and currents, and tides, on the *Coast of America*." He, therefore, took special care to let it be known, *publicly*, that *he* had no hand in advising a course to be pursued which he had thus so decidedly condemned; and in No. 49, p. 207, told his readers, "that the attempt was to be made, as *recommended by Captain Parry*, in a more southern latitude, close on the Coast of America." "Captain Parry has recorded his opinion in favour of its accomplishment, and *his suggestion* has no doubt been *adopted* on the present voyage."

As this very route, then, was the one adopted at the *recommendation* of Captain Parry, we may safely conclude that the "circumstances" mentioned by him which combined to *oppose* an insurmountable barrier to his entrance into the Polar Sea, by that route, had undoubtedly been *beyond the reach* of any previous speculation of his. As *advisers*, therefore, both you and the Reviewer are out of the scrape, and Captain Parry alone can claim the honour of having pointed out a route which led to a discovery of more *real value* than any made before or since, in the arctic regions; the discovery of an *honest man*, by the proof of *Middleton's veracity*—a discovery highly honourable to his memory, after he had been calumniated above 80 years.

This man of integrity was not believed by the Admiralty Board of his day, who, it may therefore be presumed, were not *qualified* to judge whether the truth lay with Middleton or Dobbs; for no man of common nautical ability, and *unprejudiced* mind, could read the controversy between the two, without being convinced of Middleton's veracity with regard to Repulse Bay. But the measure of the *nautical* knowledge of the Authorities, whose approbation Middleton sought in vain, may be estimated by what even you mention at page 286 of your Voyages to the Polar Regions.

Dobbs, like other projectors of the present day, believed in the probability of a "*practicable* North-west passage," which you have *liberally* said "Middleton either *would* not, or from *igno-*

rance, could not discover." Dobbs, too, fancied that the discovery of this passage would gain him a *name*, or advance his own interest in some way, and succeeded in persuading authorities as credulous as himself, to believe it would "be of great benefit and advantage to the *trade* of the kingdom." That fascinating object being placed in the fore-ground of a picture, no doubt highly coloured, did wonders among the gaping public of *his* day, and has been tried with equal effect even with our own. But the discoveries of recent date have destroyed *that* illusion; and "benefit and advantage to science," are now wisely substituted to keep up an interest in the spectators of hyperborean exhibitions.

But the route pursued by Captain Parry on his second voyage, led to a still more wonderful discovery; that "however unsuccessful had been the two expeditions employed under his orders, they were *unquestionably* directed to the *right place*, viz. the Strait of the Fury and Hecla. He does not merely *assert* this, but gives what doubtless appeared to him, at the time, to be a *sound reason*; because those "endeavours at least served the *useful purpose* of shewing *where* the passage is *not to be effected*." Yet at page 488 (written *after* his second failure) we are assured, that "with the limited geographical information possessed *before* he sailed, *no other* route than that pointed out (which led to the *right place*, where the passage is *not to be effected*) "could possibly have been pursued with any "reasonable hope of success!! With what reasonable hope then, it may

be asked, was a route, rejected then as *hopeless, pursued afterwards without any additional "geographical information?"* The failure of the third attempt, by way of Prince Regent's Inlet, thus *acknowledged* to have been made "*without any reasonable hope of success, and certainly with no additional "geographical information,"* (appertaining to that route) has, however, given Capt. Parry an opportunity to prove himself to be as *true a prophet in this case,* as you and the Reviewer were with regard to the route by Hudson's Strait. His third failure has also had effects as extraordinary on his judgment as the two former had. For at page 184 of the third voyage, he says, that "the views he entertained on the practicability of the enterprise, of the means to be adopted, and the route to be pursued for its accomplishment, (as mentioned at the close of the second narrative, and just commented on), *remain wholly unaltered,* except that some additional encouragement has been afforded by the favourable *appearances of a navigable sea* near the South-west extremity of Prince Regent's Inlet;" and, therefore, he recommends that "any future attempt should be directed to that point. In short, the route which before "*could not be attempted, with any reasonable hope of success,*" is now the one *most likely* to lead to the ultimate accomplishment of an undertaking which Captain Parry believes "to be well within the *reasonable* limits of practicability, and that will, one day or other, be accomplished."

Then, with "appearances" so favourable, and hopes renovated by disaster, it is to be hoped, Sir,

that *you*, who have taken so lively an interest in these arctic exploits, and are said to have so much *influence*, will not, now "the ice is broken, the door opened, the threshold passed, and the first stage of the journey accomplished," relax in your endeavours to get this great undertaking completed, for the sake of science at least. For it may be supposed, *you* are not now quite so sanguine in your expectation as the learned Reviewer was, of "the incalculable advantage our *commerce* would derive from the discovery of a North-west passage into Cathay and Lands Orientall." But, indeed, we are now informed by the Reviewer, in No. 68, at page 387, that "he would fain hope, that the prosecution of this great *national* object has only been *suspended* till the issue of Captain Franklin's expedition shall be known." But why wait for that? *If* there be what Captains Parry, Franklin, and the Reviewer believe *there is*, "an uninterrupted water communication," what possible light can Captain Franklin throw on its practicability from Prince Regent's Inlet to Behring's Strait, unless *he navigate it*? His proving the whole northern coast of America to be *unconnected* with any other land, will *but prove* what the Reviewer and his disciples have never *doubted*. His not seeing a particle of ice along the whole extent of that coast, will not prove the *whole space, beyond his vision*, to be equally *unobstructed* by it.

The Reviewer says, "No one can *now* dispute how much easier the accomplishment of the passage must be *from* Behring's Strait to Prince Re-

gent's Inlet, than the contrary way; but *this* could only be known since the discovery of an outlet through Lancaster Sound into Baffin's Bay. No doubt this discovery would now facilitate the passage of a ship homeward from the south-entrance of Prince Regent's Inlet, if advanced so far, from Behring's Strait. But what do we know now of that yet unexplored space between Behring's Strait and the Inlet, than we did seven years ago? But you know, Sir, as well as every rational man must, that the Reviewer is quite mistaken: for the facilities of *this western half* of the passage have been disputed by its projectors themselves, because two successive expeditions were directed to proceed by the "contrary way" after that "discovery" was made in 1819. Its practicability has been doubted, else why send land expeditions? And the present suspension of the prosecution of the enterprise, is in itself a proof, not of doubt merely, but of the apprehension of some impediment supposed to be ascertainable by pedestrian travellers.

I trust it will appear evident even to you, Sir, that our examination of Captain Parry's first and second voyages, as far as we had gone before this digression, has tended rather to disprove, than to prove, the existence of the perpetual current from the westward (imagined by the Reviewer) in every part of the arctic regions he visited during those voyages. If, in addition to this, the "idea" Captain Parry now has, be correct, that "there must be a general motion of the Sea towards the West," and we can find in his evidence, sufficient to esta-

blish the fact; then that fact *must* confirm the proof of the *non-existence* of such perpetual "current" *from* the westward. For the idea of the *co-existence* of two *opposite* superficial, perpetual, or general currents, in the *same place*, certainly requires the imagination of a "genius" of no common order to conceive it, and the brains of a Quarterly Reviewer to understand it.

Although Captain Parry's assertion may be considered by some, as sufficient confirmation of a proof, ample enough in itself, even if no such idea had ever entered his head; yet I am curious to find out, if I can, how and *when*, it got there; and whether, on the evidence of the facts he adduces in support of his opinion, there necessarily "*must*," or even *can be*, "a general motion of the Sea towards the West in the Polar regions." Let us, then, carefully examine those facts.

"The western sides of seas, or inlets, having a trending at all approaching to North and South, are, at a given season of the year, generally more encumbered with ice than the shores which have an opposite aspect." The instances in proof of it are the following:—1st. The eastern coast of Greenland. 2d. The west side of Davis's Strait, from about lat. 61^o to the parallel of at least 70^o. 3d. The eastern shore of Melville Peninsula; and 4th, the western shore of Prince Regent's Inlet: all these having an *eastern* aspect.

That in *these* four instances it is generally the case, may be admitted, without admitting the cause to be what Captain Parry supposes, viz. "some general motion of the Sea towards the

West, *causing* the ice to set in that direction, when not impelled by contrary winds, or local and occasional currents, until it butts against those shores." But *he* must also *admit*, on the testimony of himself and his officers, (see page 472 of the second voyage), that *some* shores with a *western aspect*, have likewise been found equally, if not *more encumbered* with ice, than *any* within the scope of *his own experience*; for the east coast of Greenland is not. For instance, the *west side* of Melville Island, and the *west sides* of Cockburn Island and Melville Peninsula, or at least, at the *western entrance* of the Strait of the Fury and Hecla, *where* "ice, interminable to the sight," had been "impelled until it butted against *those* shores;" by *what* cause it is needless for *me* to say; because Captain Parry himself has already explained it (see page 490 of the second voyage), thus:—"The ice being almost constantly *pressed* by the *westerly current* against the *western mouth* of the Strait." *Here*, then, I presume, that "general motion of the Sea *to the west*, was not discovered, which he assigns as the *cause* of the encumbrance of shores having an *eastern aspect*."

It is somewhat singular that Captain Parry's experience "during eight successive summers," should not have led him also to notice *as* particularly, a fact still more *striking*; that every shore (without *one* exception) explored *by him* in the Polar regions, having an *aspect to the North*, is *always most* encumbered with ice, and those facing the South, the least so. But to return to this general motion of the Sea towards the West.

—Some definite observations which Captain Parry adduces in confirmation of "his idea," are referred to. The first is, at page 78 of the second voyage where he says, "he has shewn in how remarkable a manner the ships were set *to the westward*, towards Southampton Island, *instead of being carried* in a direction *opposite* to a strong wind." This was on the 2d of September, 1821. "On that morning the wind was from the *North westward*, and increased to a fresh gale, which continued to blow during the night; notwithstanding which (says Captain Parry) I was in hopes that the immense floe to which the ships were attached, would have enabled us to retain our station tolerably. It was mortifying, therefore, to find, on the morning of the 3d, that we had *drifted* more than I ever remember to have done, in the same time, and under the same circumstances. It was remarkable, also, that we had *not been set exactly to leeward*, but past Bassin's Island towards the two remarkable hills on Southampton Island."

At the next page, 79, Captain Parry writes:—"On the morning of the 5th, we cast off from the floe with a fresh breeze from the South-east, and made sail," &c. "As we advanced to the northward, we found less and less obstruction, the main body of the ice having been carried to the southward and *eastward* by the late gale, which had in so extraordinary a manner *drifted us* in the *same direction*." Here we have three facts:—

1st. With a fresh gale from the northward and westward, the ships and the floe of ice together, were drifted, between the 2d and 3d of September,

more than Captain Parry ever remembered to have done, &c.

2d. They were *not* set exactly to *leeward*, (that is, to the *South-eastward*, as the wind then was), but past Baffin's Island.

3d. The main body of the ice *was* carried to the *South-eastward* by the late gale, which had in so extraordinary a manner *drifted* the ships in the *same direction*.

We are referred to these in proof of the ships being set to the *westward* by "a general motion of the Sea towards that quarter!" Fortunately, we have a much *clearer* authority to consult; the chart drawn under his immediate inspection by the late *Lieutenant* Bushnan, who, it may be presumed, was *most* qualified for *that* work. If Captain Parry will again inspect that chart, he will find, that on the 3d of September, the ships were 23½ miles to the southward, and one mile to the *eastward* of the noon position of the 2d; and on the 4th, they were 51½ miles to the southward, and six miles to the *eastward* of the noon station on the 1st of September: thus confirming the truth of his own remark made on the 5th, as to the main body of the ice being "carried to the *South-eastward*, and the *ships* along with it, "in the *same direction!*"

Although I do not say there *was no local current*, or *tide to the westward*, in this instance, but admit there might have been; and, if so, the *further drift*, of the ships *to the eastward*, was doubtless *checked* by it. Yet surely there is no proof of it *here*, and still less of its nature and cause.

Our next references are, to pages 481-2, of the second voyage. On the 11th of September, Captain Parry says—"It was now observable, as on a former occasion, (the one just commented on) that the ice did not carry the ships in the direction opposite to the wind, but much more towards Southampton Island:" and at the next page—"I cannot help here remarking, how closely the band of packed ice appears to keep to the shores, both of the Continent and of Southampton Island, unless driven off the land by North-westerly breezes." This we are more particularly assured of by Captain Parry, at page 35 of his second voyage. On the morning of the 12th of August, when between Baffin's Island and Cape Welsford, he observes—"The good effects of the North-westerly gale were very apparent, for although we had drifted back two or three leagues to the eastward, the main body of the ice had gone much faster, leaving a large space of water" (between it and the land) "for us to work in." "It may be observed, that in the course of our endeavours to get to the westward, as well in this voyage as in 1819, 20, a westerly wind, though blowing directly against us, was always found, ultimately, to be the most favourable to our purpose, as it brings away large bodies of ice from that quarter, and, consequently, leaves a considerable interval of open water," to windward, of course. "But the ice invariably closes again after the change of wind," and on its "springing up from the eastward." Again, page 37—"The wind shifted to the westward, and increased to a strong breeze in the night, in consequence of

which, we had, on the morning of the 15th, unavoidably *drifted* back five or six miles *to the eastward*. This temporary loss of ground, was, however, as usual, more than compensated, by a large space of clear water now seen *in shore*. We were here within a league of Cape Bylot."

As floating ice, then, *is thus driven* to the eastward by gales of wind from the North-west and West, *even against* Captain Parry's "general motion of the Sea *towards* the West, does it not follow that the same ice must be driven *to the westward* by an easterly wind springing up after the other, even if the Sea were in a *motionless state*? If so, then the aid of an ideal "general motion of the Sea towards the West, is not needed by a seaman to account for the ice closing again after a few hours' change of wind from North-west to East. Nay, it may be shewn, by simply reasoning on Captain *Parry's own facts*, that this tendency of the ice to close with "the shores of the Continent and of Southampton Island," *would* be observed even in a perfect *calm*, if there were *no such* "ideal motion," as he supposes, to impel it.

That there may have been some *other cause*, or causes, than the one Captain Parry has *supposed*, for *this effect* on the ice, and its being kept *so close* to these particular shores, is not to be doubted. And if I am not mistaken, the evidence of Captain Parry himself will be quite sufficient to *prove* it to any seaman of ordinary capacity.

The following remark occurs at page 19, of Captain Parry's second voyage, soon after he entered Hudson's Strait:—"On the 27th (July), we

continued to gain a great deal of ground (to the westward), the ebb tides appearing to obstruct us very little; indeed, from the very entrance of Hudson's Strait, but more especially to the westward of the lower Savage Islands, it was matter of constant surprise to find our dull sailing ships make so much progress, when beating against a fresh wind from the westward; and *I have no doubt* of the *accuracy* of the remark made by our early navigators, that the floods run *stronger* than the ebb on this coast."

This flood, it appears, sets to the West-north-west, till it is "met by the flood coming from the northward, down the great opening leading to Fox's Farthest," occasioning "an irregularity near the Mill Islands." By the meeting, or *junction*, of these two floods, (each doubtless, having one and the same origin), the course of both is *altered* more to the *westward towards* the shores of the Continent and of Southampton Island, part setting through the Frozen Strait of Middleton, and down Sir Thomas Rowe's Welcome, and part along the east side of Southampton Island, into Hudson's Bay.

And as it is a *fact*, that these two flood tides are *both stronger and longer* than the ebbs, an encumbrance of *those* shores with drifting ice *must* be the inevitable consequence; and especially the Northern part of Southampton Island from Cape Bylot to Cape Welsford; exposed as it is by its trending to the ices brought down to it "by a flood tide from the northward, *aided* also by a current of *above fifteen miles per day*, from the same quarter;

rendering its stream both stronger, and of longer duration, than that of the ebb." Captain Parry has also remarked, at page 476, "that in the course of the summer of 1823, an unusual proportion of southerly and easterly winds were experienced," which, of course, must have tended to keep the ice closer than usual on those shores.

An examination of nearly the whole of the published Records of the Winds in the parts of the North Polar Regions yet visited, shews them to prevail, generally, in the following proportions to each other:—

Winds which blow from the Northward of East and West,	36.3.
..... from the Westward of North and South,	34.2.
..... from the Eastward of North and South,	25.3.
..... from the Southward of East and West,	23.3.

It must be observed, that the register of the winds in Port Bowen, has been omitted, on account of the undue proportion of east winds; that anomaly being, no doubt, owing to local causes, as Captain Parry has observed, at page 69; and Appendix, No. I. p. 15.

When the above facts are taken into consideration, and we add to them this general prevalence of northerly winds in every part of the Polar Regions, it would certainly be much more difficult for a rational man to imagine, that shores, so situated as the two in question, would not be encumbered with ice, than to assign a simple and true reason for their being so.

The shores forming the west side of Davis's Strait and Baffin's Bay, trending nearly North-west and South-east, being lee shores, with regard to the

prevailing winds, must also, of necessity, be most encumbered with ice driven to it by those winds, together with that "considerable set to the southward in this part of the Polar Regions," which, however, Captain Parry says, is not more than may be caused by the balance of "northerly winds, added to the annual dissolution of large quantities of snow, which find the readiest outlet into the Atlantic." This western side of Baffin's Bay, was, however, so little encumbered with ice, when Captain Parry returned along it in the *Alexander*; that on quitting Lancaster Sound on his second return, he seems to have anticipated little or no obstruction from the ice on that coast. For, on the 30th of August, 1820, he says, at page 269 — "I determined to keep as close to that shore, during our passage down, as the ice and wind would permit; as the experience of the former voyage had led us to suppose that this coast would be almost clear of ice during the whole of September."

From hence it may be fairly presumed, that, at this period, Captain Parry's idea of a "general motion of the Sea towards the West," in *Davis's Strait* and *Baffin's Bay*, or in *Lancaster Sound* and *Barrow's Strait*, as far as *Melville Island*, had not struck him. For (as before noticed) he has declared, that "in the Polar Sea, to the westward of *Barrow's Strait*, no current had been found to exist beyond that which is evidently occasioned by different winds." Nay, so particularly desirous was he when there, to get hold of any fact tending to prove the imaginary perpetual current from the westward, of the Reviewer, that when there had

happen to be a set towards the West, he appears to have considered it quite an anomaly; and was not a little puzzled to account for it, "when a contrary current might have been anticipated!" He, however, supposed it to be "caused by the re-action of the water, which had been forced to the eastward in the early part of the late gales."

Captain Parry does not seem to have been aware, that the assigning of *re-action* as the *cause*, proves what he certainly did not, then, intend to prove—the *impossibility* of a *perpetual* flow of current *from the westward*: for *re-action towards the West, whence water flowed perpetually, to fill up the space previously occupied by the quantity so "forced to the eastward," is an impossibility.* But when the west wind subsided, "which had forced the water to the eastward," then *re-action would take place, if there could be no supply.* In fact, the case stands thus. There *was* a temporary current setting to the westward, off Cape Hay, on the 16th and 17th of September, 1819. *If re-action was its cause, that fact destroys the perpetual current there from the West.* It also proves the possible existence, *at the time, of some yet undefined enclosed space westward of Melville Island; for, without that, re-action could not take place.*

Thus we can find nothing recorded in Captain Parry's first and second voyages, to shew the least tendency in his mind to believe in this "general motion of the Sea towards the West;" or that it impelled the ice in that direction, which was found to encumber the eastern shores of certain lands in the Polar Regions. Nay, if he had not told us, in

the account of his third and last voyage, it had engaged "his attention for eight successive summers," and that "the impression had been made *long ago*," one could hardly suppose he had seriously entertained any such idea with regard to the *eastern* portion of "the land called North Somerset," forming the *western* side of Prince Regent's Inlet, until *after* it had proved so fatal to the last expedition. For on the 20th of July, 1825, when Captain Parry left Port Bowen, he says, at page 95 of the last voyage—"On standing out to sea, we sailed with a light southerly wind towards the *western* shore of Prince Regent's Inlet, *which* it was *my first wish to gain*, on account of the *evident advantage* to be derived from coasting the *southern* part of the land, called in the chart, 'North Somerset,' as far as it might lead to the westward, which, from our former knowledge, we had reason to suppose it would do, as far at least as long. 95°, in the parallel of about 72½°."

If, indeed, Captain Parry *had* already *reached* the South-east point of North Somerset; and supposing its "southern coast" to trend well westward from it, there can be no doubt that the experience of his former voyage *must* have taught him to expect "evident advantage" from coasting the *southern* part of that *land*. But, *first* of all, he had to make *SOUTHING* along its *EASTERN* shore. And although it may not strike you as any thing out of the *common* way, yet any seamen will naturally put this question to himself—Why did this navigator prefer *that side* of Prince Regent's Inlet, for the purpose, in the very face of his own former ex-

presence in that inlet, and with the known and acknowledged fact before him, that it must be "*more encumbered with ice*" than the *other* side?

Even the chief Manager of the Arctic Exhibitions, does not seem to be over-satisfied with the performance in this third act of the piece; for, in the Quarterly Review, No. 68, p. 385, he says— "When we are told by Captain Parry, that during the time the *Fury* and *Hecla* were made fast on the coast of Prince Regent's Inlet, the ice was setting to the southward, sometimes at a rapid rate, full seven days out of ten, on an average, we cannot help expressing a wish that both vessels had been shut up in the midst of it, instead of being in a situation, where they were almost every instant liable to be squeezed between the huge masses and the unyielding shore, where the former was finally crushed and wrecked."

In the narrative of the first voyage, on the 8th of August, 1819, when nearly as far to the southward as Cape Kater, Captain Parry says, at page 41— "The distance which we had sailed in this Inlet, was about 120 miles; and although the whole of the western horizon, from North round to South-by-east, was completely covered with ice, consisting of heavy extensive floes, beyond which no indication of water was visible from the mast head; yet he *saye no reason to doubt the practicability of ships penetrating much farther to the southward, by watching the openings of the ice.*"

Now, this progress to the South, was made in little more than two days; but it was made on the eastern, not the western, shore of the Inlet, along

which, Captain Parry, however, preferred to try his luck the last time; no doubt for some better reason than the one given in his narrative. But, in all human probability, had he endeavoured to get to the southward, along the eastern side of the Inlet, even at so early a period of the summer, he might have found as little ice to obstruct his passage from thence to Cape Garry, as he found in crossing over to Neill's Harbour, at the close of the month of August, after the loss of the *Fury* on the western side.

Captain Parry concludes his remarks on this supposed "motion of the Sea to the westward in the Polar Regions," by suggesting, for the consideration of others, "whether such a tendency of the Sea may not have some connexion with the motion of the earth on it's axis." If, Sir, he had mentioned this suggestion to you, I dare say you could have informed him, if he *did* not know it, that both Fabricius and Admiral Lowsonne, entertained this same notion long ago, when attempting to account for the descent of the ices from the Polar Sea, through that of Spitzbergen towards the Atlantic. But as this "suggestion" of theirs has met with so little attention from the learned *Bodies*, perhaps it would have shared the fate of St. Pierre's Theory of Tides, or the Reviewer's grand speculation (the *first-born* of a very numerous modern *upstart family*) for facilitating the transit of British commerce, through a North-west passage, to the "Lands Oriental;" or, lastly, of the idle and thoughtless project of Captain Scoresby, of *travelling to the North Pole*,—if it had not been adopted

by one of such science. It was to be expected that coming to us, thus highly recommended, it *would* be seriously considered by one, whose writings in the Quarterly Review have cast so brilliant a light over the Arctic stage, on which British officers, seamen, and Esquimaux ladies and gentlemen, have been exhibiting, under his magical management, for the amusement of unlearned *souls* of high and of low degree. And we are glad to find, in No. 68, p. 384, that he has considered it. His answer to Captain Parry's question is very concise.

"Philosophers, we believe, have long ago *settled* this point; and are agreed, that the Sea, as well as the *Atmosphere*, partake of the Earth's motion, and accompany it very peaceably in its daily revolution, without striving either to *precede* or *fall behind* it!!" Indeed! Then the waters of the Ocean, it seems, are at *rest in themselves*, and, like the *mountains* of the earth, have *only* a revolving motion with it. At this rate, there is *no current* on this globe, either to the East or to the West. But, if this were the *fact*, it would at once annihilate the Reviewer's own "perpetual current *from West to East*," in the Polar Regions, as well as Captain Parry's *long discovered* "general motion of the Sea *towards the West*," in the *same Regions*. However, perhaps the Reviewer does not identify *himself* with these "Philosophers," who have "long ago settled the point" in this way; unless he has lately become a convert. For when, in the year 1818, he was trying to prove the perpetual current from the Northern Pacific *into* his Polar Basin, and out of it into the northern Atlantic,"

he said—"By these two openings, a constant *circular* motion and *interchange* of waters between the Pacific and the Atlantic, seem to be kept up in the northern, as they are known to be round the Capes of Good Hope and Horn, in the Southern hemisphere. Here he stated that *known fact*, of there being a general motion of the Sea from West to East in *certain parts* of the globe, but misapplied it, in his anxiety to persuade the ignorant to believe an absurdity.

It is an indisputable fact, that there is, between certain parallels in the Southern hemisphere and its pole, a general circumvolving current from West to East (except where land intervenes), having, at the same time, a tendency *northward*. On the same principle, and from the same causes, there must be *what* the Reviewer supposed, but, perhaps, not *where*, a similar general circumvolving current from West to East (subject to the same exceptions); having, at the same time, a tendency *southward*; and, therefore, a general motion of the Sea *to the westward* in the North Polar "Regions," would be quite as great an anomaly as a general movement of the waters of the Pacific *towards the North*. But I shall leave Captain Parry, and the Reviewer, to reconcile these recorded contradictions.

And now let us see what the Reviewer says to the icy encumbrance on the Western Shores of Seas and Inlets. It is thus explained, and in so familiar manner, that no doubt his readers will understand him at once. The superior warmth of one (the eastern shore) melts the ice in contact

with it; while on the opposite (the western), it remains undissolved." A simile, highly appropriate, at least in name, is then made use of, as the eyes are great helps to some understandings, and Regent Street stands before us to represent Prince Regent's Inlet. As you look up the street, to your right, is the eastern side, of *superior warmth*, which, "in wet or damp weather, will frequently be found entirely dry." On your left, is the western, or *coldest* side, "which, in the same kind of weather, will remain completely wet." But we have not yet come to that grand obstacle to the solution of Arctic Problems—the ice. Now, look again to the "eastern side of *superior warmth*." That side, during winter, with which we associate the ideas of frost and snow, will also "be frequently found entirely dry," while, the western side, of *greatest cold*, remains completely wet," even though it be hard frost, I suppose. I confess, I am not much the wiser for this, whatever you may be, Sir; but, at least, we can put *this* theory to the test of experience, if we should have a hard winter. At all events, this street will be a delightful lounge for the male and female dandies of the Metropolis; especially its eastern side, from being *so dry in all weathers*. This circumstance would, of course, insure it *their* preference; but, perhaps, Captain Parry would scorn its "evident advantages," and prefer to encounter the icy impediments on the *western*.

With a degree of modesty, highly becoming, the Reviewer, I observe, has not claimed any share in the honour of having brought *this* project to bear.

And as both he and Captain Parry consider the enterprise of such "easy accomplishment;" and as *glory* obtained, *ought to be in proportion* to the unusual difficulties and dangers encountered and subdued, to the *utility* also, and not to the mere novelty or singularity of any exploit, perhaps the Reviewer may despise the little which *success* in this case *can confer*. He says—"Captain Parry knew that a project had been entertained by another able and indefatigable officer, of proceeding from Spitzbergen to the North Pole;" and, "he knew that such a man as *Franklin*, was not likely to *suggest* and adopt a measure that did not carry with it a fair chance of success." This passage would lead the public to believe that this project was *first suggested by Captain Franklin*, which is not the case. As you are, no doubt, well acquainted with all that has been written and published on the subject of Arctic enquiry, I dare say you recollect, that this project is, as nearly as it can be, the one *suggested by Mr. Scoresby*, and given at some length in the *Memoirs of the Wernerian Society*, Vol. 2, page 328. This scheme did not at all chime in with the notion the Reviewer had, of that Polar Basin he was at *that time* very busily constructing in his noodle; and, therefore, in the *Quarterly Review*, No. 36, in a foot-note, at page 451, he says—"Captain Scoresby might well anticipate that *his idle and thoughtless project* of travelling over the ice of the Sea to the North Pole, may be deemed the *framed speculation of a disordered fancy*." We regret that a young man, of some talent, should have been betrayed by a desire, for

make the vulgar stare, into such an inconsistency. But it has served Malte-Brun for an argument, such as it is, *against* the existence of a *Polar Basin*. One would have thought that a person of his reading and sagacity, might have seen the *absurdity* of such an idea; and that even supposing the Polar Sea to be frozen, it would present a surface so rugged and *mountainous*, as to make it an *easier task* to drive a broad-wheeled waggon over the summit of Mont Blanc, than a rein-deer *sledge* to the North Pole."

Captain Scoresby alludes to this project of "*his*" in the first Volume of his "Account of the Arctic Regions," at page 54.—"The expectation of reaching the Pole *by sea*, must be altogether chimerical; yet I imagine, notwithstanding the objections which have been urged against the scheme (by the Reviewer, probably), that it would by no means be impossible to reach the North Pole by travelling across the ice from Spitzbergen. As the journey would not exceed 1200 miles, (600 each way, it might be performed on sledges drawn by dogs or rein-deer, or even on foot. The journey would occupy at least *two* months; but, with the assistance of dogs, it might probably be accomplished in a little less time. With favourable winds, great advantage might be derived from sails set upon sledges, which sails, when the travellers were at rest, would serve for tents. Small vacancies in the ice would not prevent the journey, as the sledges could be adapted so as to answer the purpose of boats; nor would the usual unevenness of the ice, or the depth or softness of the snow, be an

insurmountable difficulty, as journeys of nearly equal length, and under similar inconveniencies, have been accomplished."

About four years after this, when three successive expeditions had failed, by routes, each holding forth "the most sanguine hopes of success," the Reviewer, with that consistency of view, and goodness of *memory* so peculiarly his own, says, at page 271, of No. 59, in a foot-note—"To reach the North Pole, from the north part of Spitzbergen, with the united aid of a couple of boats, half decked, and sledges, to carry each other in turns, as ice or water may occur, would, we conceive, neither to be *so difficult*, nor so dangerous an enterprize, as that which was undertaken and performed by the Russian officer, Baron Wrangel, on sledges alone. From Hackluyt's Head Land to the Pole, is only 600 geographical miles. Allowing a speed of only 15 miles a-day (of 24 hours, always light), it would only require 40 days. So that if a little vessel, like the Griper, which has already been at Spitzbergen, should arrive there in the beginning of June, the boats might reach the Pole, and return to her, *with ease*, by the end of August. *So little is this of a visionary project*, that Captain Franklin *proposed to undertake it*." Yet in what does it differ from the "idle and thoughtless project of Captain Scoresby?" Does it not contain every feature of it? Nay, it is so entirely the same, that no difference appears between it and the plan which the Reviewer has detailed in the Quarterly Review, No. 68, at page 389, except in the use of one or two *different* terms to express

the same things. In fact, it is the very *same* project, which was condemned and decried as idle and thoughtless, when *suggested by Scoresby*; but not at all visionary when "*Franklin proposed to undertake it.*" In common candour and justice, then, Mr. Scoresby ought to have, at least, the credit of the *suggestion*. Whilst the Reviewer will, perhaps, transfer to Captain Parry a moiety of the distinguished honour of *his* contempt, for having been "betrayed by a desire to make the vulgar stare," into the *adoption* of "so idle and thoughtless a project," should he, unexpectedly, be so unfortunate as not to obtain, by success, that enviable distinction conferred by the public; equally, it seems, on the man who attempts, or who performs feats unattempted before. Whether useful or useless in their consequences, is of little importance; for, whether a man dance a jig on the highest pinnacle of St. Paul's, or, like the "little robin red breast, he perch upon a pole," he will be equally entitled to notoriety, and the honour of having his name and exploit recorded in the annals of fame. On this score, Capt. Parry need have no doubt; for as he has already been *thus* distinguished, after having failed in three successive attempts to *discover a North-west Passage* (as, no doubt, any other man would), he will, as a matter of course, be *so* rewarded again, whether he reach the North Polar Axis of the Globe or not. However, Captain Parry has very little doubt *of success*; and the Reviewer has kindly favoured us with the chief grounds upon which he expects it, and which are these following:—

In the first place, Captain Parry says—"The practicability of reaching the Pole, appears to me to turn *wholly* on the question of *resources*. This *being the case*, it would very soon become a matter of *scientific* calculation, whether or not the object was within reach of the resources, with which the party was furnished, so that they might at any time proceed or return, according to circumstances."

2d. "The summer temperature of the Polar Regions is by no means uncomfortable."

3d. "If open water should frequently occur, it is *always sure to be smooth*; and, if otherwise, a boat hauled up on a floe of ice, is as secure as on shore."

4th. "The more open water is found, the more easy would be the accomplishment of the enterprise; and, taking the chances of such *occasional assistance*, I cannot but entertain a confident hope, that the whole might be completed by the end of August."

Turns *wholly* on the question of *Resources*! If that is the case, nothing can be *so easy* and certain *as success*; for it is but making sure of having a *sufficient quantity* along with him, and *adequate means of conveyance*.

Now, if there be no land between Spitzbergen, and the Pole (the Reviewer says, and he, of course, knows *best*, or *as much*, as any one), there *can be no ice*. This *was* his opinion in 1813, and, therefore, Captain Buchan was dispatched in a *ship*, to proceed by way of the *Pole*, towards Behring's Strait, under the belief of there being *no ice*, and that the Sea would be *navigable* to the Pole. But,

now, it is deemed *wiser* to make the attempt in *smaller craft*. Yet, if the winds and current should happen to *prevail* from the *northward*, it will be a work, not of *plain*, but of *traverse* sailing for about 600 miles; and, therefore, the resources in *boats may fall short* before they reach the Pole. And as the frequent occurrence of "open water," (if there should be ice), is expected by Capt. Parry to be "occasional assistance," and the *more open water* is found, the *easier* would be the accomplishment of the enterprize," *even in boats* furnished with sledges: *he evidently hopes* to find, (what the Reviewer *expects he will find*), an expanse of sea without ice at all, if possible; or, at all events, the *less the better*. Thus clearly *preferring water* to ice, as a *medium*, and *sledge boats* to a *ship*, as a *mode of conveyance* for his party and resources. But, UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, what seaman does not see, at once, that the service would be performed with more facility, dispatch, and certainty, in a *ship*, than in these vehicles? For, if the practicability of reaching the North Pole really turns (as it appears to Captain Parry) "wholly on the question of Resources," those in a ship might surely be *so ample*, as to render the "scientific calculation" needless!

Since the return of the *Dorothea*, in 1818, there may, for aught I know, have been some *new light* thrown on the space to be passed from Spitzbergen to the Pole; yet, as no one has been *there*, it cannot be the light of *experience there*, but a change of opinion, founded only on the observation of facts *elsewhere*. But, conclusions, though

right in themselves, and fairly drawn from certain facts observed in one place, may be quite inapplicable to a locality, and circumstances *widely different*. The worth of an opinion depends on the judgment of the person who gives it, and the quantum of his experience and knowledge to form that judgment by, correctly.

Captain Parry has hitherto navigated in the Polar Regions, only in narrow and confined spaces, surrounded almost by land, where the water must, consequently, be always smooth. Presuming on this local and confined experience, he has been tempted to assert, in positive terms, that "if open water" should frequently occur (in the Sea of Spitzbergen, and between that land and the Pole), "it is always sure to be smooth." But this is mere assertion. He has ventured beyond the limits of his experience. It is an assertion, too, quite at variance with the local experience of hundreds who have navigated in the Spitzbergen Sea; but we need only instance Mr. Scoresby and Captain Buchan. Did the former find it so, when, (at page 349, of his second Volume, of his "Account of the Arctic Regions,") he thus describes the effects of a gale of wind from the South-south-east in that Sea?—"The Sea was so mountainous, that the mast heads of some accompanying ships, within the distance of a quarter of a mile, were intercepted, and rendered invisible by the swells; and our ship frequently rolled the lee boats in the water, that were suspended with their keels above the roughtree rail; at the same time, we were rapidly approaching a

body of ice, the masses of which, as hard as rocks, might be seen at one instant covered with foam, the next, concealed from sight by the waves, and, instantly afterwards, reared to a prodigious height above the surface of the sea." Did Capt. Buchan find the water there, "always sure to be smooth?" Let his Log-book tell!

With these facts before us, can it be rationally expected that a boat, hauled up on such ice, under *possible* similar circumstances, would be as secure as on shore? Can it be expected, that if the space beyond Spitzbergen extend, without the intervention of any land, as far as those semi-surrounding the Pole, it will always be smooth, as to surface, and without any swell, like the comparatively safe, mill-pond-like navigation, Captain Parry has hitherto been used to in Lancaster Sound, Barrow's Strait, or even in Baffin's Bay, and Hudson's Strait? Had Captain Parry been furnished with these sledge boats on his first voyage, indeed, where the water *was smooth* between the floes, or entirely frozen over, perhaps a large extent of space to the westward of Melville Island, might have been explored, or to the southward, towards the Coast of America. A sea of such extent, if without ice, and exposed to the full power of winds from any quarter, certainly cannot "be always smooth;" and, *therefore, a ship would be fitter* for its navigation, and the performance of this public service, than boats.

And if, as the Reviewer now says (since he has received the *New Light*), the probability is, that it will be found to consist of both water and ice,

I think, Sir, you will agree with me, that the ice will not be found *quite* so tranquil as that in the Strait which is *honoured* by your name; and on which ice, there can be no doubt but a boat, "hailed up, would have been quite as secure as on shore."

I have extended this letter much beyond my first intention; and yet a volume might be filled with the absurdities, inconsistencies, and self-contradictions of the Reviewer. Indeed, some of them are so gross, that it is hard to say, whether his own ignorance of his subject, his boldness, or his apparent thorough contempt for the memories and understandings of his readers, is the greatest. One, however, has just met my eye, in No. 68, at page 395-6, which I beg leave to notice.—"This voyage of Mr. Weddell will assist us in correcting an erroneous and unfounded notion, that has, *some how or other, got abroad*, and passes current, like many other "vulgar errors," that the Southern Hemisphere is considerably colder than the Northern one, in the corresponding degrees of latitude; in so much, that *ten degrees of latitude, at least*, must be added to the latter to produce an equality of temperature." "This, *we venture to affirm, is not the case*, whether on land or on the ocean." "Instead of this difference being equal to 10° of latitude in *favour* of the Northern Hemisphere, we should rather be inclined to think that the *contrary* is nearer the truth." And, after adducing some examples, he adds—"These examples, which might be greatly multiplied, are sufficient to shew the absurdity of

making any general comparison, and to prove, *how unfounded* is the *vulgar* notion, that the *Southern Hemisphere is colder*, in corresponding latitudes, than the Northern one."

Now, Sir, as you are doubtless one of his readers, and have all the numbers of the Quarterly in your library, you have only to refer to No. 36, and at page 449, you will find *he* had some hand in propagating this "vulgar error," and must have believed it *himself*. For, among certain queries put by him, as to the *causes* of facts *known to exist*, you will find the following:—"Why is there a difference of temperature in the two hemispheres, equal, at least, to ten or twelve degrees of latitude?"

Yet this writer, by profession, is the *oracle* on all matters of Arctic enquiry; and whose incongruous notions, are said to have great weight where certainly they ought to have none!

I would beg to have it distinctly understood by you, Sir, that although I have thus combated opinions, and questioned the judgments of writers, generally believed to be *infallible* on these subjects, and, perhaps, gone far enough to shew you, or any unbiassed man, that they are *not quite so*; yet I have not "done this with the least desire to raise my feeble objections, or to start eternal difficulties against *all* daring enterprises of this nature." On the contrary, I quite agree with the Reviewer, that "they tend to raise Great Britain in the eyes of every civilized nation." And that while a spot remains untrodden by the foot of man, *her* subjects should be engaged in exploring

it; and her flag be the first to wave over the most remote, and hitherto inaccessible parts of the globe, from the Equator to the Pole. But all enterprises should have in view something more than the mere gratification either of *personal* or even *national vanity*, and useless curiosity. Those for the discovery of a *practicable* North-west Passage, although productive of utility, could never have the *result anticipated*. Each has been undertaken, and may again be prosecuted, under the *delusive expectation* of its becoming a *practicable* route for *British Commerce*. This has been publicly set forth as their chief object—and an object, *believed* by the most *enlightened Maritime Nation* in the world, to be *attainable!* Can ultimate failure in this, raise Great Britain in the eyes of every other nation? No; but the pains she has taken, at a great expense, to *explore the Arctic Regions*, must, and will, have that effect. The successive attempts have thrown some light on Science, and extended our Hydrographical knowledge. To *promote these ends* would have been, at the *first*, a *sufficient*, (and as events have proved, and will prove,) a more wise and judicious reason to have given out, for dispatching them all—and a reason, too, quite sufficient in itself to justify the intended attempt to reach the North Pole, and *fifty* more expeditions to *any quarter of the globe requiring survey*.

I have deemed it a duty to endeavour to dispel what has appeared to me to be delusion, with regard to this subject; by trying to extract truth from the errors it has been mixed up with, by

exposing false principles, and false conclusions, and by not giving to the merit of failure, quite so much as would be due to success.

But now, Sir, I shall take my leave of you, at least, for the present.

I have only given you a few facts, as I have found them scattered about in the works whence they are extracted. But, yet, I trust they will be quite sufficient to convince you, or any matter-of-fact reasoner, how perfectly clear and consistent have been the ideas and views of their authors, from first to last, on the "interesting question" of a North-west Passage.

I have the honor to be,

Sir, your obedient servant,

Your very humble,

ALMAN.

London, October 20th, 1822.

W. Peck, Printer,
67, Chancery Lane.

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