

equable temperature for the use of the clocks, &c. The observatory is in N. Lat.  $74^{\circ} 47' 10''$ , and W. Long.  $110^{\circ} 48' 15''$ .

It was a happy circumstance that we gained this harbour when we did; for on that very night, the 26th September, the thermometer fell to  $1^{\circ}$  below zero on the beginning of the scale, although the wind was NNW. off the land, and the weather was moderate and fine. The day before it fell only to  $7^{\circ}$  and the day after to  $5^{\circ}$  both above zero.

In the morning of the 27th the sea, as far as could be seen from a neighbouring hill, exhibited one continued frozen mass, without a single perceptible spot of open water. The land around us presented also a dreary scene, being every where coated with snow of different depths as it was drifted by the wind.

A week after our arrival we had a trial, and a satisfactory one it was, of the excellence of the station we had found for the ships; for a heavy gale coming on from the southward, the external ice was found to have squeezed up the ice at the mouth of our harbour, while that within remained solid, and the vessels wholly unaffected.

We had not been long in our winter quarters when we began to have sight, if not visits, of several animals inhabitants, for a time at least, of the island. On the 1st of this month one of the artillery-men on board being on shore, was followed by a formidable white bear over the ice up to the Hecla, from which several shots were fired, and he was certainly wounded, but he escaped. That he was struck was evident from the blood which stained his fur. Being pursued by a party over the ice, he slipped out of their hands by swimming over a narrow opening of water near the land, where he soon again began to change his white colour in consequence of his wounds. Skulls and other parts of the white bear have been found in the island; but this was the first living animal of that kind, and a noble formidable animal he really was, that has come within our view in this quarter. The white fur of this bear was remarkable, when it is considered that it was contrasted with the snow on the ground; for I am told that in general it has a faint yellowish tinge: perhaps he was very young, although of a large size.

On the same day some of the people had the good fortune to shoot a rein-deer, all white excepting a brown spot toward the tail. The carcass without the skin weighed nearly 150 pounds. On the 10th a herd of deer were seen on the shore, and a party went after them. One was shot, and another wounded, but he made off. In pursuing him eagerly (for fresh meat is no doubt to people in our situation an acquisition of great value) the party were drawn to a considerable distance; so that they could not get back to the ships in proper time to comply with an order