

depth below the surface is supposed to be three times that above. Some of these masses were at least 900 feet in thickness. Assuming the fall of snow to average an inch daily, or 30 feet each year, it would require thirty years to form one of these blocks, which are found floating here in such numbers.

Their specific gravity varies very much, as might naturally be expected; for while some are of a porous and snowy texture, others are in a great measure composed of blue flinty ice. This difference is occasioned by the latter becoming saturated with water from the rain and fogs, which afterwards freezes. * * *

Feb. 23rd.—Clear blue sky and bright sun, weather calm and pleasant; steaming amongst vast numbers of magnificent icebergs, some like fairy palaces of alabaster, with numerous caverns and arches through which the sea dashed its spray. The evening was beautifully fine, and a very brilliant sunset illuminated the horizon, shedding golden rays which were again refracted from the pack. We are now within 20 miles of the position assigned by Wilkes as land, but with a clear horizon none was visible.

Feb. 24th.—This morning, instead of being able to approach the pack, we were in a fearful gale of wind, with a heavy and constant fall of snow which completely hid the surrounding dangers from us; for being in the vicinity of such vast numbers of bergs