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NEW LAND

THE FIRST CROSSING OF GREENLAND.

By FRIDTJOF NANSEN.

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**THE NORWEGIAN NORTH POLAR
EXPEDITION, 1893-1896.**

Scientific Results.

Edited by FRIDTJOF NANSEN.

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LONDON, NEW YORK, AND BOMBAY.

Alfred Lundberg

NEW LAND

FOUR YEARS IN THE ARCTIC REGIONS

BY

OTTO SVERDRUP

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN

BY

ETHEL HARRIET HEARN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

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PREFACE

OF those who have a claim on my thanks there is one—HERR ULRIK MÖRK, 'Cand. Mag.,' Official Shorthand Writer to the Storting—whom I would especially name. I thank him warmly for his untiring care during the many weeks of work.

To those helpers also whom I do not mention by name I beg to offer my hearty thanks.

OTTO SVERDRUP.

CHRISTIANIA,
June 24, 1903.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THE miles used in the English version of this book are English statute miles.

When translation of place-names is omitted it is usually because the name in question is a well-known one in Norway.

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NEW LAND

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE September morning in 1896, a few days after our return from the first Norwegian Polar Expedition, we were lying out in Lysaker bay, unloading the 'Fram,' when Dr. Nansen came on board.

'Do you still wish to go on another expedition to the North?' he asked me.

'Yes, certainly,' I answered, 'if only I had the chance.'

He then told me that Consul Axel Heiberg, and the firm of brewers, Messrs. Ringnes Brothers, were willing to equip a new scientific Polar Expedition, with myself as the leader.

I cannot say otherwise than that I was pleased at this flattering offer. There were still many white spaces on the map which I was glad of an opportunity of colouring with the Norwegian colours, and thus the expedition was decided on.

Together with Dr. Nansen and my owners, I agreed on the following route, which was to be up Smith Sound and Kane Basin, through Kennedy and Robeson Channels, and as far along the north coast of Greenland as possible before wintering. From thence we were to make sledge-expeditions to the northernmost point of Greenland, and as far down the east coast as we could attain. There was no question of trying to reach the pole.

My owners, who guaranteed all expenses, each paying one-third, did everything in their power to equip the expedition in the best possible manner. We agreed to obtain the co-operation of a staff of capable young men of science; a number of costly instruments were ordered, that the scientific work might be rendered more easy; and the provisions, which, according to our plan, were to be

sufficient for two or three years, increased so much during the equipment that before we started we had enough for five.

During the course of a conversation with my owners, I happened to remark that the conditions in the north might compel me to deviate from the route originally fixed on, and they immediately gave me a free hand, saying that I might sail whither I would. With such owners as these a polar expedition becomes almost a pleasure trip!

In the spring of 1897 the Government was petitioned for the loan of the 'Fram' for the voyage, and the request was granted. A sum of 20,000 kroner, or about £1100, was furthermore granted by the 'Storting' for the necessary alteration of the vessel, and so, during the course of the spring, she was towed down to her old builder, Colin Archer, at Larvik, who carried out the alterations in the same thorough-going way in which he had originally built her. Then, in the month of October, began the equipment, which was entirely on the lines of that of the former expedition, though naturally with the alterations and improvements which experience had taught us were necessary. The equipment of a polar expedition is a lengthy business; there are a thousand things to be remembered and done and arranged before the anchor can be weighed, for when the hour comes, in order to ensure the probability of a safe return and accomplished task, nothing must be wanting, nothing likely to fail. Both winter and spring passed by before it could be said that we were in any way ready to start.

During this equipment period choice was made of the future members of the expedition. Applications from persons wishing to join us came in from all parts of the world. After careful consideration, the following men were chosen:—

1.—Victor Baumann, the second in command of the expedition. He was born at Christiania in 1870, became a naval cadet in 1889, and was promoted to the rank of first lieutenant in 1895. He had also studied electricity for a period of two years at the Berlin High School.

2.—Oluf Raanes, mate on board the 'Fram.' He was born in the Lofoden Islands, in 1865, and was for long a fisherman. Later he passed his mate's examination, and among other

occupations had been in the employ of the Vesteraalen Steamship Company.

3.—Gunerius Ingvald Isachsen, the cartographer of the expedition, was a first lieutenant in the cavalry. He was born at Dröbak, in 1868, and has been in the army since 1891. Subsequently to the latter date he had passed through the Central School of Gymnastics.

4.—Herman Georg Simmons, the botanist of the expedition, is a Swede, and was born in Skaane, in 1866. He graduated at the University of Lund, and has since distinguished himself in his branch of knowledge by several scientific treatises, chiefly on a botanical expedition which he undertook to the Faroe Islands in 1895.

5.—Edvard Bay, the zoologist of the expedition, was born in Jutland, in 1867. He took his degree at the University of Copenhagen, and is known for his previous study of the zoology of the Arctic regions, having been a member of Lieutenant Ryder's expedition to the east coast of Greenland in 1891.

6.—Johan Svendsen, the doctor of the expedition, was born at Bergen, in 1866. After taking his medical degree, in 1893, he was appointed doctor at the lazaretto in Bergen, at a time when an epidemic of small-pox was raging there. He afterwards practised in the district of Lyster, and for a short time was doctor on one of the Hamburg-America liners. He also practised for some years in the Lofoden Islands, where he was greatly esteemed.

7.—Per Schei was born in Snaasen, in 1875, and graduated at the University of Christiania in mineralogy and geology in 1898. He was the geologist of the expedition.

8.—Peder Leonard Hendriksen was born at Tromsö, in 1859, whence he sailed for many years walrus-catching in the Arctic Ocean. He was a member of the former 'Fram' expedition.

9.—Karl Olsen was born at Tromsö, in 1866. He passed through the School of Engineers, where he passed an examination with distinction in 1893. He was our chief engineer on this expedition.

10.—Jacob Nödtvedt was born in the parish of Manger, near Bergen, in the year 1857. He had had experience as a smith in

workshops, and as stoker on various steamships. He was second engineer on board the 'Fram.'

11.—Ivar Fosheim was born in Valdres, in 1863, and became a student in 1883. He has been the proprietor of a sanatorium in his native place for several years, and is well known as a sportsman and expert hunter.

12.—Adolf Henrik Lindström is from Hammerfest. He was born in 1865, and from his earliest youth had been to sea as a steward, a position which he also held on the expedition.

13.—Sverre Hassel was born at Christiania in 1876. After serving on the training-ship 'Kristiania,' and passing his mate's examination, he was for several years constable in the naval corps at Horten.

14.—Rudolf Stolz was born at Christiania, in 1872. He had been a clerk, and later a broker.

15.—Ove Braskerud was born in the district of Solør, in 1872. Like Fosheim and Stolz, he made himself generally useful on board, and, together with the latter, acted as stoker.

On St. Hans' Day, June 24, 1898, we were ready for sea. The fjord was grey and sad-looking, and memories of the former 'Fram' expedition came back to me. Then, too, we sailed on St. Hans' Day, and, as now, in the same cloudy weather. I wondered what the voyage would bring this time. The only thing that made it a little warm around one, was the crowd which had collected to see us off. The quays were tightly packed with people, and every height and point was black with them; while the fjord was covered with rowing-boats, sailing-boats, and small steamers which had come to see the last of us and wish us a safe return home.

On board the 'Fram' everything still lay pell-mell; cases, packages, animals, and people in the wildest confusion, although the crew had been working for two days to get things ship-shape. At last, at half-past eleven in the forenoon, we got under way, and steamed down the fjord, through the shouting and the swarm of boats, until the waving mass of people vanished in the fjord mist. The slight breeze which had been blowing when we started increased by degrees to a moderate gale, and by the time we

reached Dröbak, we were compelled to anchor in Vindfangerbugten, where we said farewell to our last guests. During the course of the evening, when the wind had gone down a little, we weighed anchor, and slipped down to Horten, where we finally got ready for sea.

On Sunday, June 26, we reached Christiansand, where we were to ship some things which had come for us from England. On Monday morning I sent off the last letters and telegrams, among them telegrams to the King and the 'Storting,' and at three o'clock of the same day the 'Fram' got finally under way, and set a course for the southernmost point of Greenland. Soon we lost from sight the last Norwegian haven, and with the night the blue coast of Norway sank into the sea and disappeared from view.

There was many a one of us who, now that land had faded from sight, thought how strange was the sensation, and who now and then stole away to gaze across the wake which our craft left behind her. But we knew before we started that we had the Norwegian people behind us, and that gave the backbone to the expedition; and so each of us made a promise in his mind that we would not return without having done, at any rate, so much that our land and folk should not be put to shame.

Wind and weather were favourable to us at first; the breeze was fresh, the waves broke briskly round the bows, and the crew were in capital spirits. As the day went on, however, the old 'Fram,' in spite of the overhauling she had recently had in Larvik, began to roll as badly as she had ever done before. The usual consequences were not wanting; the members of the expedition who were not much used to the sea turned very white and looked extremely serious. They trooped to the doctor and complained of various symptoms; some had headache, some shivering fits, and some pains in the stomach, which they had contracted they knew not how; but none of them mentioned the malady by its right name. The doctor, however, came to the conclusion that the complaint with the many different aspects had a single and fairly simple name, to wit, sea-sickness; and for it there was but one and an equally simple remedy, dry land. Unhappily, we had

forgotten to bring any with us in our otherwise so well-equipped expedition, but there was hope that it might be found somewhere north in the Arctic Ocean, and this appeared to console the sufferers.

On July 1 we sailed in fair weather along the Orkney Islands, through the sound by the beautiful Fair Isle. It was like a breath from Norway, and I can well understand that the Norsemen of old were fond of these islands, and were loth to give them up.

A fresh breeze from the south sprang up during the afternoon of the same day, and soon the last glimpse of Europe faded from our eyes. On July 3 the breeze went over to a gale from the north-west. The seas were high; the 'Fram' dipped her nose in the waves till her whole hull quivered, and we nearly lost one of our boats, which was saved, however, at the last moment. In the 'tween decks, cases, chests, zinc buckets and other paraphernalia chased one another from windward to leeward, amid deafening noise from men and dogs. When we went down to dinner on July 6, the food had left the saloon, and we found it again in Baumann's cabin, and also, partially, on the floor and walls of the first-mentioned apartment.

The bad weather had taken us right up to lat. 62° 30' N., and we had therefore to alter our course considerably to the southward. The storm lulled by degrees, but wind and weather were against us the whole of the voyage, and we had a long crossing.

The time went quickly enough, however, for there was always plenty to be done on board, and every one lent a hand, the men of science as well as the others. The relations between the members of the expedition were good from the very first; we soon felt like friends; and the work went swimmingly—that is to say, when they were not a prey to sea-sickness. In such circumstances their faces wore an entertaining expression of sadness; and even the dogs were silent, and hung their ears.

In fine weather, on the other hand, our four-footed sea-folk throve and increased in weight every day, and they fought so energetically that at last we had to separate them with the hose,

for water is as good a remedy for bad temper as land for sea-sickness.

On July 13 we had a great day of it coaling, and every man lent a hand. To protect themselves from the dirt, many of them appeared in the most extraordinary guise. The botanist looked for all the world like an Italian fisherman, the doctor wore sea-boots and a long operating-coat, while some had on hardly anything at all, except boots and a coat of oilskin. All, however, were in high good humour, and the coaling went off successfully, with the sing-song formalities peculiar to it, according to the custom of all good sea-folk.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE DRIFT-ICE OFF THE COAST OF GREENLAND.

WE first became aware of the proximity of land on the afternoon of Sunday, July 17, after a day's bad rolling, as the result of a gale and high sea during the previous night. Far away in the west, on the horizon, we observed a light shining in the sky, sulphur-yellow in colour and visible under a dark bank of clouds. It was the reflection of the 'Inland ice,' the so-called ice-blink; and deep below it lay Greenland with its ice desert and eternal snows.

Next morning, towards the end of middle watch, we could with certainty discern land, and a few hours later a high mountain-top rose out of the sea, while farther to the south was visible a somewhat lower mountain-range, with glaciers, peaks, and valleys.

This first sight of our promised land certainly made an impression on the members of the expedition; they all stood gazing expectantly at the ice-blink, as I can imagine Leif Erikssön and his men gazed long ago, when they caught the first glimpse of the Vineland coast.

It was not long before we discovered the presence of ice shining in the distance, and soon we were in the midst of the drift-ice, which the strong polar current carries southwards down the east coast of Greenland. This was the sea-ice itself, which appears in enormous masses, and covers the sea with a belt extending several miles from the shore.

Millions of small floes and hummocks came floating heavily along; hundreds of icebergs were among them, and all were shaped by the magic touch of frost and sea. Every colour imaginable was playing on them as they passed in an endless confusion of fantastic

forms, and I am prepared to say that there is not a thing between heaven and earth whose counterpart is not reproduced by the mighty fantasy of the cold.

There sails a church with tower and spire, and rainbow colours from out the deep-set windows; there a giant ogre with his head under his arm, fast frozen to his floe; there lies a sleeping princess in a snow-white garb, outside a dangerous blue grotto, while a little farther off sits a wolf on guard. Far away, touching the sky, rises the ice-king's castle on steely blue and green-glinting pillars, and near it a huge dragon thrusts up his strange head from the murky sea. To windward drifts a time-old pressure ridge like an enormous relief-map of the primeval ice-period; to leeward is an Alpine landscape in miniature with tapering peaks, black abysses, and sunny green valleys. Round about, among these colossal figures, Nature, with her inexhaustible creative power, has scattered all sorts of smaller objects. Gigantic fonts, pillars such as are used to decorate our Norwegian storehouses, sculptured figures in white marble, the heads of polar bears and wolves, all drift and eddy round each other in cheerful confusion. Divan tables and sugar-basins, sofas and chairs; and, as if Dame Nature were mocking us, even a horrid huge 'akvavit' bottle on a tray floats by in the distance. But lest it should be said she had forgotten the more substantial good cheer, a bullock's carcase, with all four legs in the air, drifts past to the right of us, and there on the floe close by is a horse-mushroom!

Across the whole of this desert fairyland the sun shone golden and warm. The floes were bright emerald green under water and upwards as far as they were reached by the wash of the sea, while above the water-level was the glittering white snow. As we advanced into the ice, the floes became closer, bigger, and more uniform; sometimes they were of a dirty-grey colour, arising, I think, from their having formed the bottom of freshwater pools, where deposits of various kinds are apt to collect.

At this time we began now and then to see seals. They lay singly or in couples, basking on the larger floes. A large harbour seal or 'snadd,' so-called by the Norwegians (*Phoca fætida*), was shot

from the deck of the 'Fram' as we steamed past, but as we were hauling it on board the rope snapped, and it sank to the bottom before our very eyes. The flesh of most kinds of seals, especially that of the young animals, is excellent in taste, so that it was hardly with blessings that we watched the animal sink to its grave. Soon afterwards, I fired at a large bladder-nose, which was sunning itself on a floe without noticing the vessel which passed quite near to it. It made an attempt to dive, but a wild yell from the 'Fram' stopped it in the act; we then put another bullet into it, and tried a still worse yell; but, notwithstanding, it dived into the water and we thought it had escaped. To the astonishment of everybody, it came up again and scrambled on to the foot of a floe close by, and there received its quietus.

The bladder-nose seal (*Cystophora cristata*), the 'klapmyts' of the Norwegian sealers, is a large animal. It is as much as two men can do to haul one across the ice, so that they must weigh from four to six hundredweight. It is by far the most agile of all the different kinds of seal; and as a proof of its immense power, I may mention that it can jump out of the water, right over a boat, and up on to a floe, the edge of which is as much as six feet from the surface. The male bladder-nose varies from nine to ten feet in length; when roused it is a ferocious animal, and astonishingly quick in its movements. This the Eskimo know to their cost when attempting to capture it, for frequently it capsizes their *kayaks*, in which it bites a hole, and thus causes them to founder. It has received its name from the enormous bladder, situated on the nose, which it can distend to great size, and it usually does so when it is provoked or must defend itself. This hood or bladder has such an extraordinary power of resistance that a blow from an ordinary seal-hook does not injure it in the least, even when wielded by the brawniest arm.

The bladder-nose, unlike others of its kind, does not keep to the banks, but is to be found far out at sea. It is fond of sunshine, and takes to the water in rainy weather; during the moulting-season it seldom leaves its floe, particularly after it has lain there so long that its coat has become dry. With regard to its need for sunshine, it is possible that this may have something to do

with its physical conditions of warmth. When capturing the bladder-nose, the 'watchman,' if possible, should always be shot first, as then the others are bewildered, and the whole herd can be made an end of without difficulty. On the other hand, if one of them be wounded only, the 'watchman' immediately takes to the water, and all the others follow after it.

Fosheim shot his first bladder-nose in the evening, and next morning he killed a second one. He used a Krag-Jørgensen rifle of .256 bore, and a long hard-nosed bullet. He blazed away at the unfortunate animal several times before he was able to kill it, and we came to the conclusion that for bladder-nose long expansion bullets are the best; they are absolutely certain, and make terrible wounds, especially when they meet bone. Fosheim's second bladder-nose finally writhed itself into the water, and, enraged by its wounds, made straight for the vessel with inflated bladder, and uttering hoarse roars. But we saw that it had had enough and left it alone whilst we lowered a boat; we then threw a line round its body, just behind the flippers, and hauled it aboard. It was a male of medium size.

Bay, too, shot his first bladder-nose on this occasion, and we could easily have shot more the following day, but we had not much time for sport, and therefore bade them good-bye. They just raised their heads and gazed wonderingly at us as we passed by, and then lay down again to bask in the sunshine.

The greater part of the flesh we preserved for the dogs, in barrels and boxes, but the steward undertook to serve a bladder-nose steak from the best parts, and in some mysterious manner managed to turn out an appetizing dish. The dogs, on the other hand, did not seem very keen about their unusual food. They were Norwegian elk-dogs, which I had bought in Indherred, as I wished to try how they would do as sledge-dogs, and it was the first time they had had their teeth in seal-flesh. They looked much offended and made every possible excuse, but by degrees the meat disappeared, and soon they began to eat it with avidity.

The following day, Tuesday, July 19, we were again surrounded by huge floes of ice as far as the eye could see. Between the floes were lanes of smooth water through which the 'Fram' had slowly

and carefully to wind her way. At this juncture we were obliged to put two men to the wheel, and the word of command was never ceasing. When the ice was at its worst, and the navigation most difficult, I found it necessary to command the ship from the crow's-nest, a hundred feet above the deck of the 'Fram.' In clear weather, one can see a great distance from this height, and it is therefore easier when in ice-bound waters to fix a course from it than from the deck.

In these difficult circumstances it is needless to say that we did not make much progress, but the weather was fine and the water as smooth as a mill-pond. The seals slept on the floes around us, gulls and kittiwakes circled round the vessel, and all on board were in high spirits.

About eleven in the forenoon we moored the 'Fram' to a big floe, and went 'ashore,' to take in water from a large freshwater pool in the middle of it. All the members fell to work with zeal, and many of them enjoyed the sensation of having 'dry land' underfoot after the long voyage across the Atlantic.

In the afternoon we started off again, to discover that the ice was jamming hard. Every moment the floes struck against the ship: the smaller ones she haughtily thrust aside, but for the larger she was compelled to give way and go out of her course, heavy as she is in build. Towards evening the ice became still closer, but early the next morning we got into open water south of Cape Farewell, and therewith our sojourn in the drift-ice was over for the present.

We then set a course westward, and afterwards north-west and north, along the west coast of Greenland, keeping well out at sea to avoid the icebergs, which were continually in sight.

An iceberg is not a thing to be trifled with; many of these were as much as a hundred feet above the surface of the water, and as every cubic foot of ice above water corresponds to seven cubic feet below, it is no difficult matter to calculate the size of these monsters. One of them was so large that Peder Hendriksen, who was a great hand at telling 'true stories,' tried, though needless to say in vain, to make his companions believe we were passing a newly discovered island.

On the morning of July 25, we were off Godthaab, with its many pleasant memories of our winter there in 1888-1889, with Nansen and the other members of the Greenland Expedition. The weather was clear, and I easily recognized the mountains, Sadlen and Hjortetakkerne, with their fine peaks and crags. The broken Alpine landscape at Godthaab extends northward beyond 'Sukkertoppen,' where I had originally thought of putting in, but, as the pack-ice was so thick under the coast, I gave up all idea of spending time and coal in forcing a way through it.

On July 28, we stopped at some low islets and rocks outside Egedesminde, where it had been arranged that we were to call for some sledge-dogs which the Royal Greenland Trade Service had kindly undertaken to buy for the expedition. As there was a thick fog at the time I would not risk going in farther before we had a pilot on board, so I fired off several shots during the course of the night. With daytime, however, the weather cleared, and we then steamed slowly up the fjord, between islets and icebergs. One of the latter, in particular, was very beautiful, with a large bluish-green grotto, where the sea washed in and out.

We soon perceived a boat rowing towards us with the Danish flag fluttering gaily in the wind. This contained the pilot and six other Greenlanders, among whom were a half-grown boy, an old man, and a young girl, all of mixed race. These hybrids are always called Greenlanders in contradistinction to the true Eskimo, with whom they dislike to be confounded. The occupants of the pilot's boat all appeared to be good-natured people, modest, and amiable. Some of them had undoubtedly more European than Eskimo blood in their veins, as could be seen from the shape of their faces as well as from their complexion. We took a photograph of them in a group, and the pretty young girl blushed with timidity when she was told to place herself beside one of our men.

Within a fairly large and well-sheltered bay lies Egedesminde, so called from the Norwegian pastor and missionary, Hans Egede, known as the Apostle of Greenland. The colony numbers about one hundred and fifty persons, and at the time of our visit was governed by Herr Mathiesen, who lived with his family in a comfortable little house surrounded by a garden.

We announced our arrival by a salute of ten shots, a ceremony that was received with immense appreciation by the native population. Egedesminde answered by saluting from some guns on the beach, and simultaneously the Danish flag was run up at the Superintendent's house. From behind a little island darted one *kayak* after another, and there were soon five or six of them splashing round the 'Fram.'

A Greenlander, when in his *kayak*, becomes a sort of aquatic animal; the water is his natural element, and packed into his light canoe, he weathers seas that would be fatal in any ordinary boat and even ventures far out to sea. In it he attacks seals and walrus, and generally comes off the conqueror, except when his prey manages to capsize the boat, when he is hopelessly lost; though this is a thing which seldom happens.

As soon as we had cast anchor in the harbour, Baumann and I rowed ashore to call on the Superintendent. We were received on the quay by quite a crowd of beaming, laughing Eskimo, of both sexes, dressed in their best, to do honour to the *Kablunaks* (Europeans). The women had piled their raven locks in high topknots, twisted round by a coloured braid, and round their necks were their pretty multi-coloured bead necklaces. On their bodies they wore an *anorak* or blouse of textile material, and trousers made from the mottled skin of the common seal (*Phoca vitulina*)—the most expensive seal-skin in Greenland—and trimmed with fantastic embroideries. As foot-gear they wore *kamiks*, which were also made of seal-skin, trimmed with fur round the tops, and with strips of skin, dyed red, yellow, and dark blue.

As we rowed ashore, we became painfully aware, at some distance off, of a train-oil factory which was situated on a little island close to the settlement. The odour could hardly be called fragrant, but one gets used to everything in this world. The Superintendent's house was situated in the midst of the closest group of houses, and not far from it was the school, a gabled building, which was also used as a mortuary chapel and a ball-room. It had never occurred to anybody to feel shocked at this extraordinary rotation of utility; the one condition was inevitable, and, as for the other, poor humanity must have its amusements. A little

way from the mortuary chapel lay the parsonage, and to the left of it the church, which looked like a house of one storey, and had a simple wooden cross on the gable.

The parish of a Greenland pastor is an extensive one, and although he has a 'catechist' to assist him, it often happens that he is unable to perform his various clerical duties at the right time. The 'catechist,' who is both school-teacher and clerk; is empowered to conduct funerals, but marriages and baptisms can only be performed by the pastor himself. It is, therefore, not unusual that, with 'married couples' in outlying parts of the settlement, the wedding ceremony is long deferred; and it has even happened that one or both of the parties have been dead before the pastor came his rounds and could marry them.

But things seem to go on very well, all the same. The Greenlander is absolutely open and naïve in his sexual relations, and even now there is still much that is heathenish among the people. Nobody is ashamed of having children outside the marriage-tie; in fact, I might almost say that just the contrary is the case. The conditions of this country, with its scattered population and slow growth, are such that a child in itself is looked upon as capital, particularly if it happen to be a boy. A widow with two sons is regarded as wealthy, while a girl with children is far surer of being married than one who has not any.

Among the married people, too, their manner of conducting themselves is very primitive. From heathen times these folk have been in the habit of striving for their food in union, of dividing their catches without particularly caring as to their allotment, and this indifference extends to the right of ownership in marriage.

The game of 'exchanging wives,' in which the lights were extinguished, and each man took his wife in the dark and in serious earnest, is a reminiscence of these rude times; and the simple brutality which the true Greenlander showed in regard to marriage, also characterized him in other relations. It is an old belief that the house in which a death has taken place must be pulled down, or some misfortune will ensue. Whether this belief originated when small-pox was prevalent in the country, or is descended from ancient times, I do not know; but it is a fact that, when parents

became old, or any one was expected to die, they, without more ado, sank them alive in the sea. The ceremony was a simple one; a rope was fastened round the person in question, and he was dragged, with his clothes on, out of the house and down to the shore, where stones were attached to his head and feet, and he was quietly sent to the bottom. The whole proceeding was practical and straightforward.

It may, perhaps, be thought that a little more politeness might be shown in such circumstances. The old or dying person might have been carried out of the house, before he was abandoned. This, however, would be attended with difficulty. The entrance to a Greenlander's house is very low, being about three feet, or less, in height, and, in order to keep in the warmth, it is often about forty feet long. This necessitates crawling in and out; and as old and dying people are not able to crawl, there was nothing for it but to drag them out. This reasoning, too, is as straightforward as it is heathenish.

For all that, the Greenlanders are a good-natured and peaceable people, who would not willingly hurt a fly. They settled their differences by the so-called drum-dance, in which the strongest expression of dispute was abuse, and he who heaped the worst abuse upon his adversary was considered the victor. Murder is extremely rare. During the whole time of the Danish possession, as far as I know, there have not been more than a couple of murders in Danish Greenland. The case is otherwise on the east coast, near Angmak-salik, where the people are far more quarrelsome. It is related of a man from Angmaksalik, who went on a voyage to Danish Greenland for tobacco, that he made up his mind to kill one man in every settlement he came to on his way south; and did so with great accuracy. But when he and his men were approaching Danish Greenland, his comrades, who had been there before, felt that this would not do on Danish soil. They therefore determined to kill him, in order to prevent further unpleasantness, and immediately carried out their intention.

Notwithstanding the unfavourable natural conditions in which he lives, the Greenlander is well developed. He is short, broadly built, and well proportioned. He subsists chiefly on meat and

blubber. Vegetables are a rarity, the only things of the kind at his disposal being berries in the summer, and the contents of the paunch of the reindeer, which is his favourite dish. He puts pieces of blubber into a fresh reindeer-paunch, which is full of acid vegetable substances, and leaves it to ferment. This he considers a real treat, and next to tobacco, the best thing in the world.

It may be true of the Eskimo that he is simple, but he is certainly not stupid. There is a story with regard to this from Egede's time. Hans Egede, who was an imperious man, required of the Greenlanders implicit belief in what he taught them. A whale-catcher, who had come on a visit to the zealous pastor, listened with patience to what Egede said, and did not move a muscle all through his long harangue. But when Egede had finished, he rose and said: 'Now I have something to relate. I was in the ice far north, and came to a large fjord, where I met a bear that was so enormous that ice lay perpetually upon its back.' Hans Egede, who did not see his drift, grew angry, and rebuked the man; whereupon the latter said: 'If you require me to believe you, you must also believe me,' and left him.

The country round Egedesminde is somewhat flat, with rounded hills and slopes, and among them a number of small tarns. Wherever one turns, there is nothing but rock, with thin grass here and there, and occasionally some diminutive creeping willow and dwarf-birch. But among the stones were flowers in such abundance that you might imagine yourself in Norway. It warmed one's heart to come across all these old friends here in a strange country, and our botanist had his time fully occupied in greeting them and making new acquaintances.

The following day we took the dogs on board, thirty-one in all, most of them strong animals in their prime. I ought really to have had thirty-six, but three of them had been killed and eaten by their companions, while they were living loose on an uninhabited island, and two had run away. The Superintendent of the settlement, however, most kindly made good this loss by presenting me with his own capital kennel, consisting of six strong, handsome animals.

There are two indispensable adjuncts to the carrying out of polar research, and these are 'ski' and dogs. To obtain with these the best results, it is necessary to take lessons from the two races of Nature's children who have learned their use by the experience of centuries, namely, the Lapp and the Eskimo. For my own part, I am inclined to believe that an adaptation of the Lapp 'ski' is the most practical type for polar 'ski,' and the Eskimo dog an ideal companion on a polar expedition. I have had opportunities of seeing the action of dogs of various breeds upon the polar ice, but none of them comes up to the Eskimo dog. It has the persistence and tenacity of the wild animal, and at the same time the domestic dog's admirable devotion to its master. It is, so to speak, the wildest breath of Nature, and the warmest breath of civilization. As a draught animal, it surpasses all other breeds. I will not even mention the Norwegian, or, rather, Swedish elk-dogs,*—they proved utterly useless as sledge-dogs; but even the Siberian dogs, which I had an opportunity of trying on the first 'Fram' expedition, are not up to the standard of the Eskimo dog. I will not venture to say wherein the difference lies, but I fancy that the question of food has a good deal to say in the matter. The West Siberian dogs are fed exclusively, or nearly so, on fish; while the Eskimo dog's principal food is oleiferous meat. To illustrate the significance of diet, I may also state that bitches that are fed on fish bear, as a rule, a majority of female puppies, just as it has been observed that tribes which live upon fish can boast of great numbers of girls among their children.

If it may be said that polar research without 'ski' is extremely difficult, it may safely be said that without dogs it is impossible; and, so far, they are right who say that the question of reaching the pole is simply and solely one of dogs. But the matter is not quite so simple. The number of dogs, for instance, cannot merely be doubled or trebled, and a relatively better result be immediately obtained thereby. My experience is that one man cannot manage more than eight dogs. Thus, the number of men must be increased in proportion to the number of dogs, or, in other words, many dogs, a large expedition; and a large expedition means a large

* Must not be confounded with the true Lapp dog.

vessel, or several vessels. That is the sledge-road to the North Pole.

On the afternoon of the same day, Friday, July 29, we left Egedesminde, and the next morning, at about three, cast anchor off Godhavn, on the extreme point of Disco Island, the largest island on the coast of Greenland. Just outside Godhavn the sea breaks in huge rollers; but the harbour itself is exceedingly sheltered, lying, as it does, encircled by islets and rocks.

Towards the north, on the other side of the bay, rises a chain of steep mountains, which reach a height of 2000 feet. Several valleys run from the sea, far up the steep mountain-slopes, and down them rush foaming torrents of snow-water. One of these valleys, the so-called 'Lyngmark,' lay right opposite to us, its beautiful verdant appearance reminding us of Norway. Some immense icebergs had run aground in the sounds to the west, and ten or twelve of them towered above the narrow isthmus that separated the harbour from the sea on the east. From time to time they calved with tremendous crashing and turmoil, throwing up clouds of spray, and raising huge waves on all sides. It is therefore best to take your ship out of the way when you catch sight of such wayfarers. They look very steady and reliable as they approach; but if they take to calving, or capsizing, or splitting into a thousand pieces, as if they had been blown up with dynamite, it is advisable, even for a large vessel, to keep at a distance.

At Godhavn we took in dogs, coal, and water, so it was some time before we got away. Our scientific men, however, made good use of their time by exploring the neighbourhood. Bay and Schei went on a long boating expedition, and came back with various spoils, among them being some valuable fossils. In the mean time, we had got almost ready to start. Of the sixty tons of coal that the Greenland Trade Service had kindly conveyed hither, we took only forty, leaving the remaining twenty tons for use on the homeward voyage.

Here, too, I had the good fortune to get thirty-five good dogs, but I did not take them on board until the last moment, for the terrible noise such a pack can make, when they really begin, would, in any case, be heard only too soon.

On August 2 we shaped our course from Godhavn to Upernivik, which we reached on the evening of August 4. On the way we saw our first whale, which the members had a good opportunity of observing closely. The scenery at Upernivik is as desolate and wild as at most places in Greenland, and the settlement lies right out on the open sea, exposed to wind and weather. Its mean temperature in May is nearly three degrees Fahrenheit lower than that of Copenhagen in January, and the sun does not rise for seventy-nine days in the year. Even in July the mercury may fall to freezing-point; snow falls at all seasons of the year, and in April the thermometer often shows four degrees below zero; but, then, Upernivik lies rather far north, in lat. $72^{\circ} 55'$.

According to Dr. H. Rink, the settlement brought in annually, about the years 1850 to 1860, an average of 868 barrels of blubber, 4840 seal-skins, 942 reindeer-skins, 30 bear-skins, and from 100 to 200 lbs. of eider-down, merchandise to the value of 20,000 rix-dollars. On the western end of the island, on which Upernivik is situated, is found the largest nesting-place in North Greenland. The birds are said to breed there in fabulously large numbers, and great quantities of eggs are collected annually. From Rink's figures will be seen what are the Greenlanders' most important avocations, both here and in the other settlements. At some places, however, fishing is also carried on.

In Upernivik, too, the Trade had bought up about thirty dogs for us; but as there had been infectious disease among them in the winter, I thought it would be too great a risk to take any of them.

Next morning we steamed northwards. The sea was perfectly calm, and the sun was shining brightly, as if it meant to make up for its neglect earlier in the summer. While we were standing on deck, thoroughly enjoying existence, we saw some whales appear just ahead of the vessel. They were grampuses, a small species of whale renowned for its rapacity and boldness. It will attack the largest whales, tearing great pieces of blubber out of their sides with its formidable teeth—whence its Norwegian name of 'spækhugger,' or 'blubber-

snapper'—and so maltreating them that often they die in consequence. It is the terror of the seals. No sooner do the latter perceive their mortal enemy than they make a hasty escape on to an ice-floe, or land; but the grampus is not so easily daunted. If the edge of the ice, or land, is not very high, it simply flings up its tail and sweeps the seal into the sea, where it is done for in the twinkling of an eye.

We first saw three or four of these whales on the starboard side, and then five came from the port side, making straight towards us; they dived, swam under the vessel, came up again far away on the other side, and finally disappeared in the direction that the others had taken. They kept always in a single straight line, and all at an equal distance one from another. They dived simultaneously, and came up again simultaneously, as if by word of command. A German regiment could hardly have gone through their manoeuvres with greater precision.

The following day we had the same calm, brilliant weather, and at a speed of five knots we glided on smoothly and quietly northward. On our right was the so-called 'Devil's Thumb,' a high rock in the shape of a dark finger pointing upwards; and we were soon inside the notorious Melville Bay. Many a vessel has here had a hard fight with the ice which presses down in great masses from the sounds on the north and west, and from the numerous glaciers on the east of the bay. Some of these vessels have got adrift, others have been crushed to pieces, and have sunk with all hands on board; while others, again, have been beset as early as the month of August, and have drifted southwards all through the winter.

Early on the morning of August 7 we got into quite compact ice. During the night, young ice formed about half an inch in thickness. Thin as this is, it yet retards progress, as it prevents the floes from drifting together when thrust aside by the ship; and at half-past three in the morning we had to stop and wait for slacker water.

There are usually plenty of bears in Melville Bay. We had seen their tracks during the night, but had hitherto not been able to discover any, although we kept a sharp look-out on all

sides. We then began to burn blubber, until the pungent smell penetrated all over the vessel. No bears, however, allowed themselves to be enticed by this delicious odour, greatly to the disappointment of those of the 'Fram' men who had not yet made acquaintance with the polar world's noblest beast of prey.

We did our best to while away the time of waiting by shooting seals, also black guillemots and little auks, which were migrating

AN IDYL ON THE ARCTIC OCEAN.

from the north in flocks, and sometimes settled in the channels in the ice near the vessel.

The ice was thin and fragile, so that in order to get any distance we had to take the 'pram' with us; but it was almost impossible in this way to get within range of the wary seals. In a large channel to the north-west, however, Bay succeeded in killing a harbour seal; but, as we so often found afterwards in shooting seals or walrus in the water, if the animal was not exceedingly fat, it sank to the bottom like a stone, and that was what happened in the present instance.

Vexed at the loss of his quarry, Bay turned back, and on his homeward way was so unlucky as to fall into the water up to his waist. This unexpected ducking did not seem to have inconvenienced him in the least; on the contrary, he was in high good-humour, and I have since found by experience that he is never

'GAMMELGULEN,' 'LASSE,' 'SVARTFLEKKEN,' 'BASEN.'

in better spirits than when now and again he takes an unusually cold, impromptu bath such as this.

Towards evening of the first day, the fine weather of the last few days came to an end. Fog came rolling in upon us thick and damp, and we lay still several days in sleet and wet snow, waiting impatiently for a favourable opportunity to get on northwards. Up to August 12, conditions were altogether unchanged, except that some slight jamming of the ice had made it still closer and more

impenetrable. 'How long is this very unwelcome captivity to continue?' we sometimes involuntarily asked ourselves, as we watched wearily for a change in the ice, and brighter prospects for our advance.

Nor were the dogs very happy in this uncomfortable, raw weather. One mournful howling concert succeeded the other, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we kept them in check, so that the watch below could enjoy their rest in something like peace and quiet.

During our stay here, one of the dogs, 'Vesta' by name, gave birth to five fine puppies, and a couple of days later, another, 'Sussaberet,' to a similar number of young ones. In the prevailing circumstances these little events brought some variety into our monotonous life, and we bestowed much attention on the poor little helpless creatures as they lay sprawling and whimpering in their boxes of straw. But one fine day this peaceful idyl was interrupted by a harrowing drama. 'Vesta' seized a favourable opportunity to steal one of her neighbour's puppies, and although she could not have been hungry she devoured it as completely as if it had been some great delicacy. After this, both the mothers were chained up to prevent the repetition of such scenes. We might, moreover, require the puppies as draught animals.

The continued thaw had by this made the new ice so rotten that in the evening I determined to make an attempt to force our way through it. From the crow's-nest, moreover, I had seen open water to the west, and it was thither we had to make our way. The 'Fram' now started at full speed, boring and shouldering herself a passage, brushing one ice-floe here and another there. In this manner we soon forced our way out into a large lead, but it was not long before we were once more in the midst of the drift-ice, and the same troublesome manœuvring had to begin again. It was slow work with this continual boring, but at last we came out into open water on the morning of August 16, after having been detained six days in the ice.

It had originally been my intention to go in to Cape York to barter with the Eskimo, and to set up a memorial to Eivind Astrup, in the shape of a marble tablet that one of his friends had

sent out with us. As things had now turned out, this was impossible, and we continued our course northwards to Smith Sound. On the afternoon of the following day, we passed the Carey Islands, near which the unfortunate Swede, Björling, ran aground six years ago with his poor little vessel, and was lost.

On the way to Foulke Fjord, in Smith Sound, the weather was unusually warm, and we suffered no hindrance from ice. The spirits of the men, which for these reasons were high, rose still higher when the afternoon brought an opportunity for walrus-catching. Four of these animals were seen lying sunning themselves on a small floe, and instantly the boat was lowered with four men in her.

Quietly, and with cautious strokes, they approached the animals, which showed no sign of uneasiness. Peder Hendriksen was, as a matter of course, 'boss' in this kind of sport. He sat in the bows of the boat with his gun loaded, and a harpoon ready for use beside him. In the shelter of a hummock they came within easy range of the animals, and rapid firing from Peder's, Baumann's, and Fosheim's rifles ensued. Two animals were killed, and a third turned over into the water badly wounded, and was immediately harpooned and shot. The 'Fram' now came alongside the floe, which was moored to the vessel, and the skinning was begun on, and, as all hands helped, we soon had both skins and meat on board.

This was food of the best kind for our Eskimo dogs, which hitherto had had to be content with dog-biscuit and dried fish.

CHAPTER III.

IN FOULKE FJORD.

FOULKE FJORD is known to be particularly interesting both as regards its botany and its zoology. Kane and Hayes state that it is also a good place for sea-birds, walrus, and reindeer. We therefore determined to go round that way, though we met a great deal of ice drifting southwards at a good rate in the fresh wind.

At the mouth of the fjord a number of hummocks had been heaped up at low-water, and they now rested on the bottom, giving from a distance the impression that the fjord was blocked, and it was not until we were close in that we discovered the numerous channels that cut through them in all directions.

Being an old Arctic voyager, Peder Hendriksen was deputed to keep a look-out from the crow's-nest with the big telescope. When we had got a little way up, he shouted to us that he could see a number of reindeer on shore. The rejoicing on deck was great at this, especially among those who had not been reindeer-shooting before. A little while after, Hendriksen called down that there were no bucks, but only does. Well, we thought, that did not matter. We sounded our way to an anchoring-place, and, with as much speed as possible, lowered the boat and set off. It was already late in the day. Baumann, Peder, Isachsen, and Bay went to capture walrus for the dogs, while Fosheim and I started to shoot reindeer on the north side of the fjord, where Peder had seen the large herd. The scientific men also went off, each in a different direction, to make the most of our short stay. They did good work on land that night, and like the rest of us, did not return until well on into the morning.

When Fosheim and I had got up so far that we might have expected to catch a glimpse of Peder's large herd of reindeer,

we saw some hares. Of course we never imagined that it was hares Peder had seen through the glass, and we wandered about all night without seeing any sign of reindeer, though we saw numbers of hares almost everywhere. When at last we were convinced that he must have been mistaken, we turned our attention to the hares, and shot seven brace that night.

We then thought of returning to the ship, but we had not taken the tide into our reckoning, and the boat lay high and dry upon a steep, rocky crag, with sticky blue clay below it. We had to wait patiently for an hour, but found this no great hardship, for it was a bright, sunny morning, and there was plenty to look at while we sat on the shore and waited. At the mouth of a stream a number of eider-duck lay chattering comfortably while they made their morning toilet. The whole fjord swarmed with little auks, swimming and diving and paddling round and round incessantly, like a whirlpool, while the water bubbled and boiled as in a caldron. From time to time, flights of them passed out of, and in to, the fjord; and as they flew whirring away, they were like great, black clouds, and almost darkened the sun. There was a confusion and crowd of many kinds of birds, which reminded us of the varied bird-life on the northern coasts of Norway. The breeding-places of these thousands upon thousands of birds were up in the perpendicular mountain-side around us.

The other party had been no more fortunate than ourselves. Tired of their vain search for walrus, they at length put in to shore on the south side of the fjord. The first thing they saw was a flock of white animals; these Peder examined through the glass, and as soon as he had brought them into his field of vision, exclaimed with great decision, 'They are swans.' But Peder's swans had to share the fate of his reindeer; for they, too, turned into hares. However, hares are not to be despised, and during our short stay we must have shot at least fifty.

We now steered for Littleton Island (in Eskimo, Etah), where we deposited records of the expedition, and found the cairn that Allan Young erected in 1877, when he was searching for the 'Alert' with Nares' expedition on board.

From the top of this island, we had a good view northwards,

but things did not look very hopeful for our advance. The sea was full of great masses of polar ice drifting south. Nevertheless, we continued our way along the coast of Greenland, but as the ice lay immovable close in to land, and a breeze began to blow from the south, we were obliged to turn back on the night of August 17.

In doing this, we passed Lifeboat Cove, where the American steamer 'Polaris,' with Hall's expedition, was stranded in a sinking condition on October 16, 1872, with fourteen men on board; the rest of the members, consisting of twelve men, two women, and five children, had been left on the ice the day before. The vessel had suffered much from pressure, so that most of the provisions, clothing, boats, etc., had been brought out on to the ice. Between nine and ten in the evening, while all were busy there, the ship's moorings suddenly gave, and she was carried away by the strong wind that was blowing at the time. All through the winter these people drifted about on an ice-floe, suffering great want and hardship. With their scanty store of provisions, their prospects would have been hopeless had it not been that two Eskimo, Joe and Hans Hendrick, were on the floe with their *kayaks*. They harpooned seals, and thus kept the whole party alive until April 30, when they were picked up near Newfoundland. They had then drifted from lat. $78^{\circ} 30' N.$, long. $73^{\circ} W.$ to about lat. $53^{\circ} 30' N.$, long. $55^{\circ} W.$ In the mean time, the fourteen who were carried away in the 'Polaris' wintered in Lifeboat Cove. They built two boats out of the woodwork of the vessel, in which they rowed southwards along the coast of Greenland. On June 23 they were picked up by a whaler in Melville Bay.

When we were abreast of Littleton Island, we steered across to Ellesmere Land, and kept along its coast northwards; but just north of Cape Sabine, between Cocked Hat Island and Pim Island, we were stopped by impenetrable masses of ice, and were obliged to anchor. A stiff breeze from the south prevented us from rowing to land until a little after midnight on the night of August 18. We made an excursion eastwards along the shore of Pim Island to look for Greely's camping-ground, Camp Clay; but as we had found no trace of it after an hour's tramp we returned on board again.

SUMMER IN RIOE STRAIT.

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Being still early in the year, we were in hopes that there was a chance that the ice might yet slacken, and so enable us to proceed to Kane Basin ; but when the wind went down the whole mass of the pack-ice began slowly to drift inland, though without slackening, and there was, therefore, no possibility of further advance. Not many hours afterwards, we were obliged to weigh anchor to avoid being pressed ashore by the ice, and subsequently we

A QUIETED BEAR.

anchored again, in Rutherford Bay. From here, too, after the lapse of a few hours, we were obliged to take a hasty departure, and at last found a safer place of anchorage in the northern part of Rice Strait. The drift landward ceased a day later, and we then steamed out to find a mooring in the ice north of Cocked Hat Island. We knew that we should have a good view from there, and be able to keep a look-out for the slackening of the ice, which was better for us than being in harbour. No movement of the ice occurred, however ; and day after day it lay as closely packed as ever, entirely cutting off our progress.

CHAPTER IV

WALRUS-CATCHING IN RICE STRAIT.

ON Sunday, August 21, Baumann, Fosheim, Schei, Simmons, and last, but not least, Bay, went ptarmigan-shooting on Rutherford Peninsula, where they greatly enjoyed themselves and experienced several small casualties. Bad going and a tendency to stoutness do not always quite harmonize, but on this subject I will say no more.

On Monday a breeze sprang up from the north, and during the night we found it necessary again to take refuge in Rice Strait, in the northern part of which we found a little sheltered bay, which was subsequently our winter quarters for the first year. We named it 'Frams Havn,' or 'Fram's Haven.'

When it was proved beyond a doubt that it was impossible for us to proceed farther that year, we set seriously to work walrus-catching, in order to provide food for the dogs; and for a long time two boats were out every day, sometimes in Rice Strait, sometimes in the direction of Cocked Hat Island. There is a good deal of excitement connected with this sport, and we were all very keen about it. Even the scientific men, particularly Bay, threw themselves into it heart and soul, when they could do so without neglecting their scientific work, which now consisted chiefly of dredging. We kept at it as long as there was open water, and when Frams Havn was frozen over, walrus-catching being still practicable, though it was impossible to convey our booty back to the ship at once, we started a depot on the northernmost point of Pim Island, which we named the 'Meat-heap' ('Kjöthaugen'). When the ice was strong enough, we packed the meat on sledges, and drove it on board.

Harpooning walrus usually takes place from an open boat, and as two or three days', or even a fortnight's, absence from the ship must be counted on, it is necessary that the boat should be a strong one, and also such as to afford protection against the animals themselves, as well as against the weather. For cooking purposes, a fire is lighted, according to circumstances, either in the boat itself, on the ice, or on land. Large quantities of drift-wood are to be found where the walrus is usually captured, and this is especially the case near Nova Zembla.

The boat is a whited sepulchre. On account of the sanguinary nature of the operations it is painted red inside, but outside, in order to be as invisible as possible, it is white, as are also the oars, and the clothes of the crew. In addition to the usual tackle of a boat, each one carries a cooking-pot, a coffee-kettle, a small chest of provisions, an oak barrel containing fresh water, a hatchet for chopping wood, an extra large and strong axe for removing the tusks from the head of the walrus, one or two lances for despatching the animals, one or two twofold purchase-tackles for hauling them up on the ice for skinning, four seal-hooks, two loose harpoon-shafts of white pine, twelve to fourteen feet in length, and eight harpoons with a line twelve to fourteen fathoms in length.

The crew consists of four men; one of whom is the harpooner, one the coxswain, and two the rowers. The harpooner's place is in the bows of the boat, in which he is the most important man; he is the tacksman when they are under sail, but even then he has full command of the boat.

As soon as a herd of walrus is sighted, the men start off rowing as hard as they possibly can until the harpooner with both hands has thrown his harpoon, and shouts that he has 'got fast' an animal. Then the oars are shipped, and the walrus takes in hand the further transit of the boat in his strenuous efforts to keep up with his comrades. The performance is accompanied by loud music from the herd, and the pace is such that the spray flies from the bows of the boat. All this time it is the coxswain's duty to steer the boat in such a manner that the rowers, who are now standing up amidships, each with his seal-hook in his hand, may be able to fish up the shaft of the harpoon, which is made to fit

loosely, and floats off on to the surface of the water with the shock of impact. If the shaft is not picked up, it is always the coxswain's fault, and he it is who gets all the blame, no matter how impossible it may be to recover it.

The harpooner is never a moment unoccupied. One harpoon thrown, he immediately seizes the other shaft, and rams it into a second. This is repeated until all the harpoons have been used, and when the eighth is out, both the shafts should be in the boat.

It is at this juncture that the fun begins. The walrus are despatched by turns. The harpooner is the presiding genius, and, with the help of his lance, sees to the work of butchery. As soon as an animal is captured, it is hauled astern, the harpooner cuts a loop in the back of its neck and passes a rope's end through it. The walrus is then lashed close in under the boat's side, so that its neck is under the stern, and the harpoon is cut out. The instant the harpoon is freed, the harpooner runs to the bows with it, thrusts it into the shaft, coils the line, and 'gets fast' another animal. Then astern to despatch number two, and so on, backwards and forwards, until the whole herd has been captured.

A herd is sometimes so large that the wounded animals are not able to tow the boat along quickly enough, with its long train of dead. The catching then comes perforce to a standstill, and it is time to make for the edge of the ice, haul up the walrus, and set to work to skin them.

I must admit that this is not a very exemplary way of treating animals; but it is the one in use, and which has been proved on the whole to be the most satisfactory. To shoot walrus is even worse; far more animals are wounded and lost than are captured.

Walrus-catching is often a perilous enterprise. The procedure is only as peaceable, as above described, when the herd consists entirely of cows, and not always then. As a rule, no males are to be found in company with the females; they are generally out at sea. But, all the same, it daily happens that the entire herd advances to an attack. This is particularly the case when there are young ones with it. As far as the walrus-catcher is concerned, it is then merely a question of chopping, hitting, and

shooting as best he can. If you see a great beast swimming sullenly and warily under the boat, and about to turn belly upwards, the only thing to be done is to row off with all speed, before the irritated animal has time to ram a hole in the bottom of the boat, which otherwise it is pretty sure to do before you know what has happened.

If the worst comes to the worst, a coat, or, better still, a seal-skin with the blubber on it, must be trampled into the hole for the time being; there is not a minute for anything else.

Sometimes it happens that, without a moment's warning, a pair of enormous tusks are silently thrust over the gunwale. In such a case, you must never fire or attempt to beat off the animal, but must just seize it by the tusks and lift it back into the water, or the boat will be capsized at once. Even if you are lucky enough to shoot the walrus dead on the spot, its weight alone is sufficient to capsize the boat, and they are not pleasant hosts to be received by.

It once happened to the sloop 'Rivalen,' in the eighties, when she was up whaling off the coast of Spitzbergen, that a quite small bull walrus swam stealthily after one of her boats, which had not molested it in any way, and capsized it before the men were able to do anything to prevent it. When a second boat, which was out with the first, reached the spot, the walrus had so mutilated two of the men that they had already sunk, while a third was rescued in an almost expiring condition. The fourth alone was unhurt; it was the harpooner himself, Peder Andresen, one of the well-known 'Stakvold boys' from a farm in Norway of that name.

Even when the herd does not turn and swim to the attack, the situation may be critical enough. If, for instance, you have more than one bull in hand at a time, you are in danger of being drawn under; and it is necessary to be especially cautious when handling the so-called 'bank-oxen'—old males which frequent the shoals far out at sea. A team of this kind is a dangerous one; especially if you happen to come across ice. They are very fond of following the edge of a floe and suddenly making an abrupt turn, in which case the line runs out across the ice and the boat follows

after it. Happy the one which does not capsize when it again splashes into the water.

Matters are worst of all when the walrus dive straight down under the ice; there is then only one thing to be done—jump on to the floe before you strike it, fend the boat off, and hold on to it all you know, for they must soon come up again to breathe. As a last resource, the line may be cut, that is to say, if you have time to do it; but as a rule there is little enough time when you are moving at such terrific speed. If the floe be small and the line long, so that the animals can come up again on the other side of it, the only thing to be done is to despatch them in the quickest possible manner that the circumstances will allow.

The natural conditions in Rice Strait and north of it prevented us from capturing the walrus in this manner, which, after all, is the best and most rational, for no sooner had we got hold of one than it made for the ice as fast as it could, with the boat after it. Our harpooners, Peder and Fosheim, therefore, generally preferred to shoot the animals.

CHAPTER V.

OUR FIRST MEETING WITH THE POLAR OX.*

A COUPLE of days after we had entered on our winter quarters, the mate, Hassel, Stolz, and I started on a rowing excursion, with Hayes Sound as our object.

At Cape Rutherford, we fell in with the pack-ice, and in our efforts to push the boat along between the floes towards land, the mate fell in and wetted himself up to his middle. As soon as the boat was beached, he turned his attention to changing his clothes; but his reserve wardrobe consisted of only an Icelandic jersey and a pair of stockings, and it was his nether parts which had got wet. The case seemed to be a hopeless one, but Raanes is a man of invention, and, nothing daunted, he proceeded to pull off certain of his under garments, held the jersey upside down, and planted a leg in each of the sleeves. With dry stockings and a pair of 'water-skin' trousers on his legs, outside the jersey, he was, considering all things, well clad.

These 'water-skin' trousers are a fine article of clothing. They are made of seal-skin, prepared in Eskimo fashion, and are absolutely waterproof. They have one fault, however, which is that when they become dry, they become at the same time so stiff that they will stand upright. But for this there is a remedy. When they are required for use it is only necessary to damp them, roll them up, and let them lie for half an hour, when they will be as moist and comfortable as ever.

While Hassel and Stolz remained at Rutherford Bay, to shoot

* Having shot many of these animals, and drunk the milk of the cows, without ever detecting the flavour of musk from which they are supposed to derive their name, I have decided to call them in this book 'polar oxen,' instead of 'musk-oxen.'

Sketch-map

of

HAYES SOUND

by

Gunn Isachsen

SKETCH-MAP OF HAYES SOUND.

By G. I. ISACHSEN.

ptarmigan on the plateau there, the mate and I went on farther. We wanted to get a glimpse of the surroundings of Hayes Sound, and thought that, in any case, it would be easy to peep into Alexandra Fjord. The scenery was prettier there than we had expected to find it. The country was entirely free of snow, with shining young ice on the pools and the parts of the fjord where there was no current. Some broods of eider-duck were waddling about between the blocks of ice or sitting on the beach sunning themselves, and we also saw some loons.

We set off in search of Alexandra Fjord, crossing one big valley after another, and every ridge we climbed we thought that when we got to the top of it we should be sure to see the fjord before us. But no, there was always another valley, and always another ridge! And thus we continued for many hours during the night. At length we began almost to give up belief in an Alexandra Fjord, and decided to turn back as soon as we should have reached the top of the next ridge; but there at last lay Alexandra Fjord before us in the twilight! But what was that yonder between two of the islands? Was it a ship or an iceberg? It looked very remarkable.

We thought that this was matter for investigation, and so we marched on along the grassy land by the side of the fjord until we were right under Twin Glacier. From a point of land just at this place, we discovered the object to be nothing but a hummock of ice lying between the islands; but some quite ordinary cracks, or grooves, in the face of the mountain behind it, assisted by the mystery of twilight, gave precisely the effect of the rigging of a ship.

On our way back, we sat down to rest on a little patch of fine moss and heather. We lighted a fire and got out our pipes, the only refreshment we had with us.

It was a very beautiful night, so deep and large and still. There were high mountains around us, but we could only just discern them in the twilight. On the black fjord floated ice-blocks, lighting it up, and looking as if they had come from fairyland. When we turned our gaze heavenwards, the air was inky-blue and warm, and the stars were deep-set in it.

Now and then we heard the chirp of a snow-bunting, or an eider-duck, twittering in its sleep; and once the lowing of a walrus in Alexandra Fjord, wild and sad; then several more took up the sound, and it rose to a many-voiced, unearthly bellowing, which by degrees sank to discontented grunts and snorts. It must have been a stranger to the herd which had ascended the floe, and been given his due chastisement before he was permitted a night's lodging with the others. Then everything became again as still as death.

Before we left our resting-place, it had grown so far light that we could see into Hayes Sound. There was no drift-ice on Alexandra Fjord, nor for some distance into the sound; but outside the fjord, and across to Bache Peninsula,* it was closely packed, and, for a ship, absolutely impassable. Had we been able to get the 'Fram' as far as Alexandra Fjord, we might, without hindrance, have passed right into Hayes Sound.

During the course of the forenoon, we got back to our doughty sportsmen, who had not shot or seen a single bird.

Immediately on our return to the ship, we made ready for another rowing trip, which was to be through Hayes Sound, but in the end we did not get much beyond Cape Rutherford. The cold increased so suddenly that we were obliged to return; and as we feared that we should not be able to get the boat back alongside the land, we dragged it across the Rutherford isthmus. We arrived on board again, after an absence of five days.

The thermometer now fell daily, and the ice rapidly increased in thickness. Our hopes were now that it would not be long before we could get into Hayes Sound with sledges. In the outer part of the sound, however, the ice was some little time in forming, on account of the current which there is there; and, as I did not wish to wait longer, I decided to drive overland, across the glaciers, to the inner part of Hayes Sound, and make an attempt to get down thence into one of the inner fjords. Fosheim and Isachsen were to go with me. We were particularly anxious to discover whether Hayes Sound was really a sound, or only a large fjord, while,

* Formerly called Bache Island, as it was regarded as an island.

at the same time, we hoped to make personal acquaintance with the polar ox.

On Wednesday, September 14, at half-past four in the morning, we turned out to prepare for our first trip across the 'inland ice' of Ellesmere Land. We took with us provisions for a week, and two teams, each of six dogs.

The first part of the journey we found extremely heavy; the way was steep and the snow loose, and it was very hard work for the dogs; but, in the end, we reached the top of a mountain-ridge which was some 3000 feet in height. To our great astonishment, we then saw that the mountain sloped straight down from the neighbouring edge to something flat and shining below, which at first, as we only saw a part of it, we took to be a lake; we had no idea then that we should come down on to Leffert Glacier. The descent was exceedingly difficult. The dogs pulled as if they were mad, and set off down the steep slope at such a pace that we quite expected them to do for themselves and for us too.

The glacier ran almost due west, and, like most glaciers, its surface was very uneven, but it was free from crevasses. We proceeded along it, and at first our advance was not so very difficult; but, later on, our work became harder, as the snow was loose, and the going consequently heavy.

We camped the first evening under a steep crag on the north side of the glacier. Tent-life was something quite new to Isachsen and Fosheim, and they were very keen to experience it. We set to work at once to light our 'Primus' and cook ourselves some food. We decided on pemmican lobsouse for supper, but there were many cooks and the mess got burnt, and burnt pemmican is about the most terrible thing it is possible to consume. However, we had done a good day's march, and had excellent appetites, and somehow or other the food slipped down. The others were loud in their praises of the burnt pemmican, so it was impossible for me to be the first to complain.

We had a thoroughly cosy evening, though there is always something strange about the first one. Eventually we crept into our sleeping-bag, but on no account would Fosheim keep his head inside; he said he felt as if he was being suffocated, and thrust it

out again, but not for long—there were twenty-two degrees below zero.

The next morning, at our usual hour, that is to say, eight o'clock, we started to drive on up the glacier, but the snow was heavier than on the previous day, and we found it necessary to camp half-way up it.

When, on the following day, we reached the watershed, the lie of the land obliged us to set our course north-east, through a valley which, after many difficulties, brought us to a glacier at the end of Alexandra Fjord; but, in spite of the most eager search, we could find no way down to bare land from the face of the glacier, which was almost perpendicular. We were afraid that we should have to turn back thus early in the expedition, but the next day we accidentally found a place where, with the utmost difficulty, it was possible to make a descent.

Our way led us along a channel, part of which was through a tunnel worn by the action of water, which, at this time of the year, however, was all frozen. A long half mile it was, and it took us from six in the morning till dinner-time to accomplish it. When dinner at last was served, I fell to on a biscuit with such ardour that I managed to break off a front tooth. Fosheim thought that we ought not to waste our teeth so far away from people, and implored me not to go on in that way. I followed his advice, but was about to throw away the tooth, when he again observed that there was no knowing how useful it might be; so I put it in my pocket, to serve as a remembrance and a warning. I have since had it put in again.

We then drove on towards the fjord, down a long, grassy slope, with one man always ahead of the team to show the way. None of us knew much about dog-driving, only just enough to be quite aware that we were doing it all wrong. When we got down to the fjord, we made an attempt at *haut école* style, and succeeded beyond our expectations, but I am afraid we had chiefly the dogs and the favourable condition of the ice to thank for it. In a couple of hours' time we were out of Alexandra Fjord; though after that we made but slow progress, as the ice was old polar ice which had been pressed right up to land.

We camped in the evening on a tongue of land where we found a capital place to pitch our tent, and subsequently we made use of this spot every time we came to Hayes Sound.

The next morning we continued on our way up the sound, or fjord, alongside the shore, travelling over young ice, in which we saw several holes made by walrus merely by thrusting up their heads. They have strong skulls, these fellows, with a strong covering over them. They are quite capable of driving their heads through six or eight inches of ice; a .38 Remington bullet will not penetrate the folds of skin on their necks; and I am very sure that a harpoon thrown by an inexperienced hand would fail to penetrate their hide.

We encamped in the evening in the inner part of Hayes Sound, beside a small river.

The next day we went out shooting, each of us taking his own line of country. I made my way up the fjord, while the other two went down it, and each chose his own valley. We all three met again in the evening, and discussed the events of the day in the tent as soon as we had had some food. The entire bag was a brace of hares, one ptarmigan—and a lemming. Fosheim, however, related that he had seen in the snow the fresh tracks of a herd of large cloven-footed animals, and our spirits rose in proportion. He did not know whether the tracks were those of reindeer or polar oxen, but we came to the conclusion that they must have been those of the latter. He had followed the trail the whole day, but without getting a glimpse of the animals.

Isachsen had been high up on the mountains, and had seen a fjord which penetrated into the north side of the land. We ought, of course, to have investigated this, but the dogs' food had given out, and we were compelled to return to the ship, a distance of over forty miles, and reached it the evening of the same day.

We set to work at once to equip for a longer stay in Hayes Sound, so that we might be able to survey and map the various unknown fjord-branches which we believed to exist there. It was our intention to make a chief station there with a store of provisions for ourselves and the dogs, and to make sledge-excursions

from it in various directions. With this end in view, we manufactured a double tent of sailcloth, which was sixteen feet long, eight feet wide, and six feet high.

When the tent was ready, the caravan set off, in all eleven men and eight dogs. We were equipped with 'finsko,' or the winter boot of the Lapp, thick rough over-socks to wear inside them, and 'mudds' or Lappish tunics of reindeer-skin. In addition to these, we carried all the extra paraphernalia which goes to make up the equipment of a sledge-journey. Hayes Sound was reached on the afternoon of the second day after our start, and about five miles outside our former camping-ground there we erected the chief station which I have already mentioned. We all remained there for a day, to get things in order; the tent was pitched in a hollow, which we dug out of a loose, sandy slope, and all our provisions were conveyed up to it.

The next day six of the men went back to the ship, each of them driving his team; while Isachsen, Schei, Bay, Fosheim, and I remained behind with four teams of dogs. The work first on our hands was to find a base for the mapping operations. Whilst this was going on, I took my rifle and went out to try my luck; those polar oxen were still on my mind.

I followed a sinking of the country in a north-westerly direction, and had not gone very far before I saw on the other side of a narrow isthmus a long fjord running parallel with Hayes Sound. I ascended some higher ground in the vicinity, to get a better view, and took out my glasses. Through them I discovered that the connecting land between the two fjords was probably some six or seven miles broad, and that from the obliquely-situated, elevated ground where I was standing, an even valley sank down towards the fjord, bounded on the west by high, blunt mountains with steep precipices, and hillocks of small stones at their feet. To the east the valley was bounded by knolls and heights of even gradient.

As I was standing there, scanning the country through my glasses, I suddenly perceived two black animals far away on some level ground. They looked like a couple of funeral horses, with trappings which reached nearly to the ground, and though I had

never seen any animal of the kind before, I felt sure that they must be polar oxen. I immediately got under way for an attack. It seemed so curious to be stalking these mysterious animals, about which I knew absolutely nothing, not even whether they were shy or not.

I made my way cautiously along, but unfortunately the wind was unsteady, and, before I knew what had happened, they had winded me, and were gone. When I caught sight of them again, they were up on the sand-hills, in full gallop southward. Need-

SOUTHERN PART OF RICE STRAIT.

less to say, I started after them at the quickest pace I knew, but the animals were considerably quicker, and the distance between us became greater and greater. I would not throw up the game, however, particularly as I had all the day before me, and so I continued to follow them along the bottom of the valley. To my astonishment, they soon turned off into a large valley filled with boulders, which cut into the mountain, and was almost impassable for human beings. Nor would any other cloven-footed animal that I know of have done such a thing—a goat,

THE 'FRAM' IN WINTER QUARTERS, 1898-1899.

perhaps, excepted—and I stood still, decidedly taken aback. All the same, I began to climb up after them, though with little hope of setting eyes on the animals again.

A short distance up the valley the tracks left it, and led straight up the mountain-side among rocks and boulders. Were they really trying to reach the plateau in that way? No, it was impossible, for a black wall of rock, perpendicular and unscaleable, both for folk and cattle, hung threateningly over.

As I was working my way past a sudden bend in the valley, I suddenly saw both the animals standing high up on a steep crag, and within range. It was merely by chance that I caught sight of them, for the crag was exactly the same colour as the animals, and this was the only place in the valley of that particular tint. So the polar ox, I thought, seeks cover from the prevailing tone of his environment, just as does the ptarmigan from the stones and juniper in summer, and in the autumn, after it has changed its colour, from the large patches of snow.

But there was no time for further reflection. I was now within range, and away I blazed, first at one animal, and then, directly afterwards, at the other. Both of them continued to stand, and yet I was sure of having hit them. I then tried giving them another round, whereupon the first animal took a couple of steps forward and rolled over the crag on to the boulders beneath. The other did exactly the same thing. I was not long in making my way up to them, curious as I was to find out what I had really shot. Both of them were stone dead, and on just tipping them up a little they rolled all the way down the stony slope and came to a standstill in the valley below, where they remained lying between some rocks. I was quite right, they were polar oxen—large animals about the size of our Norwegian cattle, and so heavy that it would take several men to move them.

The next thing to be done was to set to work to skin them as they lay there among the stones, and I had my work cut out to get the skin off and remove the entrails, but it was done in time.

At eight in the evening I got back to the camp, laden with beef, and worn out with the day's exploits. As I was approaching it I caught sight of one of the expedition going down to fetch

water from a little stream in the valley. Now, I thought, I will pretend to be a bear and frighten him; but when I saw that the wretched fellow had a gun with him, I seemed to lose all zest in the matter, and went back to camp merely as a man.

Our fellows saw at once, from the beef, that I had shot big game, and eagerly asked what it was. I muttered something about a mammoth, but did not give any very clear answer, for we had agreed, once for all, that meals, being the most important, should come before shooting yarns and the discussion of the events of the day. The mammoth beef was fried, in almost as short a space of time as it takes to tell, and then our tongues were loosened, for better steaks our fellows said they had never eaten, and the traditional flavour of musk, of which the flesh of the polar ox is said to taste, was entirely absent.

When we had had our coffee, and had lighted our pipes, I told my story, and as circumstantially as possible, so that another time my comrades might know how the polar ox acts when it is stalked.

It was late before we turned into our bags, and I am not sure that big-game fever was not in the blood of all of us that night, for by dawn every one was ready to talk about polar oxen again. The flesh was duly fetched the long distance back to camp, and when we returned to it, tired and hungry, I gave the steward orders to make at once some Julienne soup—'Juliana soup,' he persistently called it, and thus our camp received the name, from Schei, of 'Fort Juliana.'

On the morning of Saturday, October 1, there was more than the usual activity going on at Fort Juliana. Bay was getting ready to go out shooting, Schei and Isachsen preparing in earnest to survey the fjord on which we were camping, while Fosheim and I had our hands full preparing for a week's trip inland to solve the question—fjord or sound?

In spite of all this movement, we found time to name several conspicuous points in the landscape. Among others, and after a very lively debate, the high mountain to the west of our station, which fell so boldly and steeply into the sea, was named 'Mount * Köla Paalsen.'

* So given by the author.

By mid-day, Fosheim and I at last were ready with our preparations. It was a thick, hazy forenoon, with a slight fall of snow, which made the going at first somewhat heavy. Added to this, the dogs were lazy; they had got loose in the night, and had demolished the whole of our store of stock-fish. How they can have found room for it all I cannot imagine.

From Fort Juliana, the fjord trended in a south-westerly direction into the land; but when we had driven nearly fourteen miles we came to a point, in rounding which we discovered that Hayes Sound here divided into two branches, of which one continued in a southerly direction, while the other, which was somewhat narrower, made a little bend towards the north, and thereupon took a direction due west. We decided to follow this arm, which appeared to penetrate the deeper into the land. The ice was splendid in here, almost entirely free of snow, and the dogs, too, began to recover from the fish, and worked very well. At eight o'clock in the evening, we camped to the west of a little glacier which came down on the west side of the fjord.

On Sunday morning, we started on again. The ice on the fjord was almost everywhere black and shining, and our pace was better than even on the previous day. The country, however, did not look promising for sport. The mountains were perpendicular on both sides of the fjord, and the ground at the foot of them was thickly strewn with boulders. On the south side projected quite a series of small glaciers, which appeared to be very productive, as there were many icebergs in the fjord, several of which were of fair size. It astonished me to see that such small glaciers could produce such comparatively large icebergs. There was, however, the possibility that they might have drifted in, though it did not appear to be probable. After driving for six hours, we came to a point whence the fjord trended away in a more southerly direction, and we then discovered that we had almost reached the end of this branch of it. The arm terminated in a long reach of sands, which in their turn gave place to a large glacier, one to two miles from the fjord.

As we could not discover any promising shooting- or camping-ground in the vicinity of the point, while the country on the

other side appeared to be very much more inviting, we agreed that Fosheim should drive across the fjord and encamp there. I would, meanwhile, go up on to higher ground, and examine the country on the other side of the big glacier. I took my gun with me. Fosheim laughed, and said I was giving myself needless trouble, 'for there was nothing to shoot there.' To tell the truth, I was of the same opinion, but, on principle, I never land without my gun, and I had no reason to repent of having taken it on this occasion.

I had not gone far when I came across the recent tracks of a polar ox, and I followed them up, with my gun ready to fire. I soon saw the animal itself, which was a large ox. My two first shots seemed to have no particular effect on it; it set off full gallop across the boulders, and disappeared into a small side valley. I then threw down my glasses, gun-cover, and 'ski'-staff, and started off after it as hard as I could go. As I was running across a small bog, between some moraines, or coast-lines, or whatever they were, I suddenly caught sight of the ox, up on a mound of sand, where it stood glaring at me, not more than fifty paces away. I fired again. The ox took it very quietly, merely going away a few steps, and disappeared behind the sand-hill. I followed the animal, and when I reached the spot where it had been standing, saw it some seven or eight yards farther down the hillside. I aimed at the head, but remembered just in time that the skull would be wanted for a museum, and must not be injured, so I gave it a bullet in the shoulder instead, which brought it to the ground on the spot.

As I was skinning the animal, and taking out the entrails, I saw four more oxen coming straight towards me. Was I in for a battle? I knew nothing of the polar ox's temperament, and did not much like the look of their horns, so I put another cartridge into my gun; but when the animals had advanced to within range, they suddenly turned round, and disappeared among the sand-hills above.

I then went down towards the fjord to get hold of Fosheim, who, I knew, much wished to shoot a polar ox; but when I had shouted to him several times without receiving an answer,

I returned to try and get another shot at the animals, although I had only five cartridges left.

It was not long before I had managed to steal unawares on the herd, and was within eighty yards of them as they were grazing on a little patch of grass; but I had good cover behind a big stone on a moraine-ridge close by. The herd consisted of a large bull, a large cow, with her calf, and a heifer. As the cow was in the most convenient position for a shot, I fired at her, and she fell to the ground on the spot.

RICE STRAIT, NORTH OF FRAMS HAVN.

The other animals, when they saw her fall, began to bellow and behave just as the cattle do at home when they smell blood. They walked round and round in a ring with lowered heads, pawed up the earth so that the moss flew in all directions, lowed and snorted, and altogether behaved in a most alarming manner. I then carefully aimed at the bull, and it fell. Then I shot the heifer; but just as I was aiming at the calf, the bull came to life again, so I gave it the charge instead. I again aimed at the calf, and that with my last cartridge, and then the heifer got up! I

knew it had had enough, but gave it a finishing shot to save it from pain.

I then left the calf, which remained standing by the other animals, and went down towards the camping-ground to try to get hold of Fosheim. I met him a little way out on the ice; he had heard the shots, and thought it was hares again, but when I told him what had happened he cheered up. We hurried off to camp to fetch the flaying-knives, the 'Primus,' and the

MOUNT KÖLA PAALSEN. FORT JULIANA.

coffee-kettle, for when one is doing the work of a slaughterer one wants something to keep one going.

On our way to the camp, we saw a large polar ox among the boulders close by the tent. I told Fosheim to fire, and I would keep an eye on the animal's movements whilst he aimed at it. The ox behaved so considerately that, in a few minutes, it was shot.

It was late in the evening before we had finished skinning and cutting up the animals, but we kept ourselves going on strong

coffee, with milk from the cow I had shot. This milk was very rich, it resembled the milk of the reindeer, and tasted like thin cream, without the least flavour of musk.

We did not finish our task until ten o'clock, and we then went back to the tent, where we set to work at once to make 'Juliana soup,' as hungry as the hunters we were. The cooking-pot was an eight-man one, but, all the same, we crammed it full of meat, with plenty of fat in addition.

It was the most comfortable evening in the tent we had yet had, a regular hunter's evening. Without was the moonlight shining over a fairy landscape, full of big game, which never yet had heard the sound of a shot: within were we, well satisfied after our good supper, puffing at our pipes, a cup of coffee by our side, and in eager conversation until far into the night. What more could the heart of a hunter desire?

Next morning Fosheim went up to skin his ox, as we had not had time to see to it the previous evening. I went, too; to find my glasses, gun-cover, and 'ski'-staff, which I had shed when I gave chase to the ox. I looked for them till far on in the day without success, but they were found by Fosheim during the course of the afternoon.

The following day we made a trip round the fjord, under the glacier, and we then realized what a splendid game-country we had unexpectedly hit on. The vegetation was incredibly luxuriant, and the whole place swarmed with big fat hares, of which we shot a leash.

After we had crossed the sands between the fjord and the glacier, and were ascending the slopes on the other side, we came across the tracks of two oxen. It was already growing dusk, and as it would be impossible to see the animals at more than a couple of hundred yards' distance, even if we came across them, we agreed that Fosheim should follow the tracks, and I go down again to the level ground by the sands, in order to keep a look-out, and signal to him if necessary. We had separated, and gone a little way with this intention, when suddenly I caught sight of both the animals, which were making away across a small crag not far off. I immediately signalled to Fosheim, and

we started up towards them. Fosheim opened fire, but it was so dark that we were both obliged to fire several times before the animals fell, and when at last they did so, we both ran up to them. As we were standing, turning them over and looking at them from every point of view, one of them suddenly came to life again. I called to Fosheim, who had loaded again, that he must shoot; but before he was ready the animal was on its legs. When he did fire he missed his mark, and the ox set off full speed down the slope, and disappeared on the other side of the sands, with the bullets whizzing after it. To follow our quarry was an impossibility, on account of the darkness, and we had therefore to content ourselves with removing the entrails from the animals we had killed, after which we returned to camp.

The next day Fosheim went off after his wounded animal, whilst I walked up the big valley, where our tent was pitched, to look for more game. On the stream which ran through the valley there was high 'shell ice,' of the bubbly, freshwater kind often to be found on streams, and as I was crossing it, through I went, with much cracking and noise. At the same moment that the ice broke, an extraordinary apparition sprang up from the opposite bank. It was drift-white, ran on two legs, and looked absolutely like a little boy in his shirt. I was within range, and could well have fired, but was so taken aback that I could only stand still and wonder what in the world it could be. It was not until the figure was some three or four hundred yards off that it occurred to me that it was a hare. It seems to be a fact that the hares up here run long distances on their hind-legs, a thing I never knew before.

I had had great expectations of this valley, but I was doomed to disappointment. It consisted of broken ground covered with boulders and grit, and was almost without a trace of vegetation. On the other hand, it was without doubt a common passage of the polar oxen, probably to a valley farther west; for there was in it a broad path, very much like our cattle-paths at home in Norway, and every moment I expected to see the smoke from a 'sæter' chimney ascending from amid the rocks. At our usual supper-hour I was back at camp, the whole of my bag being a solitary hare.

Fosheim had not come back, so I cooked the supper, expecting his return every moment, but he did not come. I began to grow anxious about him, and to wonder what could possibly have kept him out so late. At last, about ten o'clock, he turned up, and as soon as we had had our supper, we began on the narration of the day's experiences. Fosheim looked very incredulous, and at first quite refused to swallow my story of the hare on two legs. He said he had seen plenty of two-legged hares at home—'scare-hare' being our Norwegian name for a coward—but he quite refused to believe in the existence of one in this country. I stuck to my point, however, and at last he gave in so far as to say he would investigate the matter on the first opportunity, and therewith changed the subject to his polar ox.

He had found traces of it on the sands, and had followed up the trail to the other side of them. Here the animal had taken to some rocky ground, which was so steep that he had found great difficulty in following it. Many times he had thought of giving up the pursuit, but when it came to the point could not bring himself to do so, and had therefore climbed on farther and farther upwards. At the top of the slope he had at last caught sight of the ox glaring down on him. It was standing under a perpendicular wall of rock, on a boulder not much broader than itself, and looked very much like a bronze animal on a pedestal. He raised his gun to his cheek, but then changed his mind, thinking it better to get out of the way first, in case of an accident, when the animal came tumbling down from its pedestal. So he cautiously crawled up a little distance to one side, and then let blaze at the ox, which was killed on the spot. It fell at once over the edge of the precipice, carrying with it a mass of rock and earth, but Fosheim, who had behaved with so much caution, escaped unhurt.

He had subsequently spent the whole evening cutting up the animal, and carrying the flesh down to the ice. The ground was so rough that he thought his task would never be finished. With regard to the shot, it appeared that on the first day the animal had received a 'mane-shot' only—a shot which brushes the mane and stuns the animal, but does not kill it outright.

On Tuesday, October 4, we decided to return to Fort

Juliana; the weather had changed, and, whereas before we had had beautiful autumn weather, it now began to snow.

We kept under the southern shore on our journey down the fjord. When we had been driving for about three hours, we suddenly saw a polar ox high up in a steep rocky place. It stood quite motionless, and looked exactly like one of the rocks beside it, so much so that it was almost impossible to distinguish it from its surroundings. I looked at it through my glasses, and should have doubted it to be really an ox if I had not seen it move when we first caught sight of it.

Fosheim went off to try his luck with a shot, while I remained on the ice to signal to him. There was a gap at the top of the hill, and it seemed as if the animal were thinking of making for this, so Fosheim decided to ascend by the valley, and head it off. If it made up its mind to come down, it would have to settle its account with me.

But no! Up it went, and Fosheim was just in time to give it a bullet in the middle of the chest at fifty paces' distance, just as it was about to go through the gap. It turned round at once, and set off full tilt down the slope, the stones and earth flying from under its hoofs. A hundred yards lower down it lost its balance, rolled over, and did not stop before it had reached the ice-foot, where it remained lying quite still.

When the dogs heard the shot, and caught sight of the animal, they became perfectly wild. I had barely time to throw myself on to the sledge before they were away across the ice, and hardly had I raised myself again before the whole team was fighting and tearing amid the hair of the ox, so that it was anything but easy to drive them off.

We did not stay there longer than was absolutely necessary, for on the north side of the fjord there was a large valley in which we hoped to find good ground for game. We reached it as twilight was coming on, and pitched our tent for the night, but we were destined to disappointment; there was no game, and but little vegetation.

My business now was to get back to Fort Juliana as quickly as possible, in order to give directions to the men who were coming

from the ship to fetch the meat, so we agreed that Fosheim should go up into the mountains, to see if the country were better there, whilst I went on direct to Fort Juliana. On the way there I was lucky enough to shoot another very fine ox, and had the satisfaction of arriving back with the certainty of having a considerable quantity of fresh meat for the winter; for on a due supply of this commodity the health of the crew, and therefore the fate of the expedition, was in a great measure dependent.

At Fort Juliana, I found Bay all alone; Isachsen and Schei having driven up the fjord on a surveying excursion. Bay was to have gone with them, but had hurt his knee, which made it difficult for him to walk. I found that he had been living on only biscuit and butter for several days, with nothing to drink but a little melted ice. Isachsen and Schei had taken the 'Primus' with them, so that he could not cook any food. They had had the forethought to melt some ice for him before their departure, and this he had kept in a tin box rolled up in his reindeer-skin tunic, so that it should not freeze; but it was nearly exhausted on my arrival, and some of it was frozen. The others had also taken with them the big sleeping-bag belonging to the tent, while Fosheim had mine.

I set to work at once and made a fire with paraffin, moss, and small bits of wood, and hunger and thirst were soon satisfied. Then we drew the fur coat over us, and were as warm and comfortable as possible. Isachsen and Schei, we thought, were having a much worse time, for no travelling-tent had been brought for them from the ship, and the nights are cold up north at this time of year, even in a sleeping-bag.

The following day, Friday, October 6, the weather was unusually clear. In the afternoon, just as Bay was grinding the coffee and I was playing cook with paraffin and bits of wood in a tin pan, Bay caught sight of a sledge, with two men on it, driving up the fjord. Out came the glasses at once, and we soon made out two skin-clad men seated on an Eskimo sledge, drawn by eight dogs. It appeared at first as if they meant to drive farther up the fjord, but suddenly they made a turn; they had probably caught sight of us. Who could it be?

My thoughts fixed involuntarily on Peary; he and no other could we expect to meet in these latitudes. He came driving along by our track, straight towards us, and I went down to the fjord to meet him. When we met, he asked if I was Captain Sverdrup, which I answered in the affirmative, and we then shook hands and walked together up to the tent, where I introduced Bay to him. I asked him to have some coffee with us, but he refused,

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saying that his tent was not more than two hours' drive from here, and that he was going home to dinner. He had passed Cape Sabine on August 13, and two days later had been beset off Cape Hawks, where his ship now was, about a mile from land and entirely surrounded by the pack. He had seen that Robeson Channel was full of old polar ice. After staying for a few minutes, he said good-bye to Bay, who had been grinding coffee

GLACIER IN RUTHERFORD BAY.

all the time, and turning and twisting with every movement of our honoured guest in his manœuvres to hide the ragged condition of a certain portion of his trousers, and the large 'new-seating' to which they had been subjected. I took Peary down to the sledge, and watched him disappearing at an even pace, driven by his Eskimo driver. As I was turning round to go back to the tent, I caught sight of Fosheim driving like mad along the ice. My heart felt quite warm with patriotism.

Peary's visit was the event of the day in our tent. We talked of nothing else, and rejoiced at having shaken hands with the bold explorer, even though his visit had been so short that we had hardly had time to pull off our mittens.

The next day Fosheim and I went up the fjord to fetch the last ox I had shot. On the way back, we met Schei and Isachsen returning from their sojourn on Jökelfjord, and 'Knibetangen,' or 'the Pincers,' as we called the neck of land between the two fjords. At the station we found Olsen and the mate, who had come to fetch the rest of the meat from the mountains. In order to ensure this against attack from the dogs, we piled it up in a heap inside the tent-door. When we had completed our work outside, we all crept into the tent, and then at last were able to listen to news of our friends on the 'Fram.'

The steward had sent us an enormous cake, and it is hardly necessary to say that we pronounced it excellent, to say nothing of all the other good things. There was a festive feeling in the air; we puffed contentedly at our pipes, and continuous chaff was bandied backwards and forwards across the 'Primus.' I had with me a whole bag of tobacco, which, however, had become so damp that I could not get it to light. I brought it out now, and began to dry it in a frying-pan, which I hung over the oil-stove; but the smoke was so strong that the whole party turned incontinently out of the tent, and I was left sitting there alone. When eventually they came in again, they were very pale, and demanded another supper! This I sternly refused, but referred them to Isachsen, whose turn it was to be cook next day, and he promised to make it up to them as soon as he came into power.

He turned out early the next morning, and started on his

preparations for making good the misfortunes of his brother-explorers on the previous evening. He got out a huge piece of frozen meat, which he laid on the end of a board, seized the hatchet, and began to beat it with all his might. He did not observe that he had lodged the end of his board on the mate's head, which was covered by the hood of the sleeping-bag. His victim began to protest from inside, but Isachsen only answered, 'Lie still, lie still; I shall soon have done,' and so the mate did.

On the whole, we much enjoyed our sledge-excursions, and the good-fellowship which reigned inside the tent made it a very pleasant life. Needless to say, there was no lack of good-natured chaff. Every man was willing to put his shoulder to the wheel, and no one ever tried to put a spoke in it. Bay, who on account of his good condition was, especially at first, the victim of most of the casualties which happened ashore and afloat, was in the habit, when he hit his knee or plumped into the water, of rapping out a little Danish oath. He was always told on such occasions that as he had undertaken to do the swearing of the party, it would be a pity for the rest of us to take it out of such good hands; a reproof which did not prevent him from often exclaiming, as we lay in the tent, 'Gad, it's comfortable in this little Denmark!' or, 'It's as nice and warm as a little hell!' I do not know the temperature of the aforesaid place, but certainly our tent was beautifully warm when, after the toils of the day and a good supper of fresh meat, salt pork and broth, we stretched ourselves out in comfortable wellbeing, with the 'Primus' glowing between us.

CHAPTER VI.

A DESERTED COUNTRY.

ON Monday, October 10, Olsen and the mate went back to the 'Fram,' heavily laden with meat and skins; while we, who remained behind, got ready for new expeditions: Bay and Isachsen to map 'Beitstadfjord;' Schei, Fosheim and I for a trip into 'Nordfjord,'* as we called it. It had been decided that a large expedition from the 'Fram,' with all the dogs, should come on October 15 to fetch the meat which had been left in Beitstadfjord. We had, therefore, to make haste about our trip to Nordfjord. Meanwhile, however, bad weather set in, and our departure was delayed for two whole days.

It was not till Wednesday, October 12, that we were able to get off. We followed land out to 'Noresund,' but, to our great astonishment when we arrived there, saw that the sound was open, the sea free of ice, and in many places the ice-foot along the shore absent. Our way was, therefore, very difficult, and it was as much as we could do to get the sledges along at all. Sometimes we drove on land, sometimes on the ice-foot, and sometimes on the small floes aground on the shore. After having smashed up a sledge, we at length got through the sound, and started on our journey up the fjord.

In the evening, we reached a point of land where we camped for the night, and there, as we were pitching our tent, we saw a curious-looking pile of stones. On examining the place more carefully, we discovered several of these piles, all exactly alike. That human beings had been here immediately crossed our minds, for we knew that this was no work of nature. When we investigated the matter, the heaps of stones proved to be Eskimo fox-traps.

* See Flagler Fjord in maps.

So, then, trappers had been here; but when? The old, ruined traps, with their narrow entrance and stone slabs to shut in the fox, gave no answer, but it must have been long since.

The following morning we continued our journey in better weather and circumstances than on the previous day. During our drive we came to a long, narrow peninsula, covered with gritty soil and patches of grass, and with a large open lane outside it. In the lane were a number of eider-ducks, chattering and quacking, and it all looked so inviting that we made a halt to examine the place more carefully. We had not gone far before we stood amazed. What was that? A low, ring-shaped stone wall! And still another, and so on all over the point! Here and there also were ruined heaps of stones, like a bee-hive in shape, supported by weather-stained, greyish-white bones; the jaws or ribs of the whale. We had, without doubt, come on a dead Eskimo settlement. The ring-shaped walls of stone were the remains of their dwellings, and the grey stone bee-hives their larders. We examined the whole of this dead settlement with great interest. How long could it be since it was deserted? This unexpected finding of ourselves amid the marks of human habitation gave us a sudden chilling realization of the loneliness and barrenness of the country. We peeped into the larders—the grass was growing green in them between the stones; we walked from one tent-ring to another; in the centre of the rings was a big tuft of grass: they were the marks left where the lamps had stood. Out on the beach, by the lane, was a broad bear-track. Fosheim grew keen at once; it might be a fresh one. But no—the dogs would not follow it up. Maybe it had been there for ten or twenty years, for everything keeps up here in the north.

The place was evidently the site of an ancient Eskimo summer settlement. The pretty tongue of land, with its sheltered creek on the right, and its fishing-ground out on the fjord on the left, was as if especially created for trapping and fishing. The eider-duck, which resolutely keep to the lanes as long as there is open water, knew well enough what they were doing when they came here. These birds are obliged to keep in open water as long as they can, for their broods only begin to fly very late in the

season. The parent birds try to feed them in small pools and channels until at last, one fine day, the frost drives them southward. Even then the young ones cannot always keep up with the older birds, and frozen eider-ducks, especially young birds, are often to be seen lying on the ice of the Arctic Ocean.

In what purposes to be a description of the Arctic regions, the eider-duck is entitled to particular mention, for it is without doubt the most interesting bird of the northern coasts. By nature exceedingly shy, it is, when preserved and kindly treated, the tamest of all the sea-birds. In Iceland, where its value is recognized, it has become a domesticated bird, and naturally seeks human society. If it is wished to start an eider colony up there, the proceeding is as follows: a place must be chosen on one of the islands where a stream has its outlet to the fjord, and small houses or coops made of flat stones, or similar material, in which the birds can build their nests. At the entrance to the house are planted some sticks or small birch-branches, from which are hung bits of coloured rag, glittering shells, or anything else of the kind that comes to hand; for the daughters of Eve, even when they are eider-ducks, will have their finery, and are fond of home comforts. Outside on the fjord, at the mouth of the stream, are moored a couple of decoy-ducks. Farther up the stream is placed a mill-wheel, and this usually has a little bell on it, to make the birds believe that there are human beings in the neighbourhood. Then the duck appears on the scene, and building is soon in operation. It is not long before she is joined by the drake, who guards the nest faithfully, until the eggs are hatched, when he goes off to sea. The duck sits on the nest the whole while, and she it is who plucks her breast time after time for its sake; but the drake defends it, and that sometimes with prowess, especially against that arch-stealer of eggs, the raven. He disposes of him by towing him out to sea, and diving with him till he is dead, and often till long afterwards.

It has been said that the eider-duck eats spawn, and that, consequently, they do harm to the fishing, but this is hardly the case; they live chiefly on marine plants at the bottom of the sea.

If the eider colony is to bring in money, the eggs and down should only be taken once a year, and the down never before the duck has left the nest with her young ones. Fourteen birds are reckoned to provide a pound of down, and one owner can well have five to six thousand ducks on his bird-island, or, in other words, collect about 300 lbs. of down annually. As the down sells at the rate of twelve to fifteen kroner—fourteen to seventeen shillings—a pound, it brings him in an income of 3000 to 4000 kroner, or £170 to £220 a year. Added to this are the eggs which, from a corresponding number of ducks, represent £40 to £45 a year. As will be seen, this is no inconsiderable income in a country where the conditions of life are simple.

The ice and snow on the fjord were good, after we left the Eskimo settlement, and in the evening we reached a large stretch of sands about five minutes' drive from the head of the fjord, where we encamped.

Next day, Schei went ashore on a geological excursion up a ravine with precipitous sides and a river at the bottom of it; or more properly a cañon. Fosheim and I went to the end of the fjord; he on the south side and I on the north. We discovered and followed up the trail of a large bear, and met on the sands at the end of the fjord where the tracks cut straight across the sand. Fosheim was very keen; he had never seen a polar bear, and, as the tracks were so fresh, he felt sure we should come up with the animal itself. I had not much hope of it, for a bear covers the ground with rapidity and is not easy to overtake, but we were going in that direction in any case, and therefore went on as quickly as possible. We climbed some high ground on the north side of the river, in order to get a view over the flat, grassy country higher up, and from it we were able to see several miles up the valley. I scanned the country through my glasses, and really did see the bear under a steep stony place on the other side. There seemed to be no chance of shooting any polar oxen, and so, as we had plenty of time, we followed up the bear; Fosheim through the valley, to cut off its retreat, and I on the other side, so that we could get the animal between us. We scrambled about among the rocks for a couple of hours, but saw no more of our quarry.

Truly a bad bear-hunt! It seemed as if the animal had literally been spirited away to the mountains.

Probably that is what really had happened, or, at least, that it had gone there on its own account, for they are not an unusual bourne for the polar bear, especially in bad weather. One thing, at any rate, is certain, and that is that it seldom hunts or fishes, or goes abroad, in snowy or windy weather. I have gone bear shooting very many times on my expeditions to the Arctic Ocean, but

FROM STENKJÆR. FOSHEIM'S FIRST POLAR OX.

have never found in bad weather. Like the dog, it probably dislikes wind and driving snow: with wind, in the polar regions, falls a fine snow like dust, which fills the dogs' eyes, and must be scraped out if they are not to risk becoming totally blind.

We saw not a few tracks of polar oxen, but the animals themselves we could not discover. It was growing so late, however, that it was necessary to get back to the tent as quickly as possible. The weather, too, grew very bad, with snowstorms and gusts of wind, so that there was every prospect that we should have difficulty

in finding the camp. At last, however, we reached the stretch of sand, though the tent was nowhere to be seen. We tramped round and round for some time, until at last we saw a faint light, which we knew must be from the oil-stove shining through the canvas of the tent. A few minutes more and we heard the well-known singing of the 'Primus,' and saw Schei lifting the cooking-pot off it, and wrapping it up in his reindeer-skin coat.

The next day we had to get back to meet the men from the 'Fram.' Instead of driving by way of Noresund, we set our course straight across the peninsula, and, after a very tiring journey in the deep and heavy snow, encamped in the evening in a valley just opposite Fort Juliana.

On Sunday morning our way lay across stony ground, with deep loose snow on it, which made it almost impassable for the dogs. We toiled through it, however, and got up at last; and afterwards things went really very well, and we reached the fort late in the afternoon, which was earlier than we expected; but the caravan from the 'Fram' had not turned up.

On Monday we stayed quiet and waited. Tuesday the same, but nobody arrived. Then the dogs' food began to give out, and we knew that this would likewise be the case, after the 16th, with Bay and Isachsen, who were at Stenkjær, in Beitstadfjord, also waiting for the 'Fram' folk. So we sent Fosheim up to Stenkjær with what food we had, while Schei and I went down to the 'Fram' with Schei's dogs. It was under thirty-seven miles, so we hoped to reach the ship that evening, but in this we were disappointed. The dogs, which had been fed for some time on Danish dog-biscuit, had no strength in them; in fact, were as good as useless; while the going was so heavy that we could hardly move the sledges, although we both put ourselves to them, and hauled together with the dogs. We were, therefore, obliged to halt on the west side of Alexandra Fjord and prepare for a night under the open sky, without a tent, and without anything to drink. But as we were groping about in the dusk among the hummocks, we suddenly heard something which sounded like the howling of dogs. We shouted back with all the strength of

our lungs, time after time, and at last received an answer: it was the mate with all the caravan.

As we had thought, they had been delayed by the bad weather. The snowstorm had prevented them from leaving the 'Fram' at the appointed time, and when, at last, they had been able to start, the weight of the heavy fall of snow had so sunk the young ice that water was standing a foot deep on it. They had been splashing and wading in slush all the way, and in many places had been obliged to make long détours round open leads, which had formed in places where the ice was too weak to resist the weight of the snow. They had suffered no little hardship, but their spirits were good, and both they and we were glad to have met with one another.

We pitched our tent at our old camping-ground, near Alexandra Fjord, and had a very comfortable evening. It is true that the tent was of the very smallest proportions, but, as we say in Norway, 'where there is heart-room there is house-room,' and we had enough of both.

We went back to Fort Juliana on the following day, and the 'Fram' folk were received with great hospitality. They were all wet through up to their knees when they got there—one could wring the water out of their stockings—and now it was turning fine again, with some twenty-four degrees below zero! Not one of them had proper clothing, and I had great doubts about the advisability of letting them go on to Beitstadfjord to fetch the meat. But they declared that they should be all right, and as they were very anxious to go, I at last gave my consent, but kept Nödttvedt to accompany Schei and me up a valley where there were fossils, of which Schei was anxious to get specimens to send on board. The fall of snow, however, had been so great that we could not find the stones, and we had to return without accomplishing our task.

On Monday, October 24, the 'Fram' folk came back with the meat from Beitstadfjord; they had not been able to bring all of it, but Isachsen, Bay, and Fosheim, who still remained behind, had promised to bring the rest.

The following day we all left Fort Juliana, and started on

our way home. The men from the 'Fram' were rather done up, and suffered especially from the rubbing of their stiff homespun clothing. One of them was so bad that he could not even drive his load. Clothes of coarse stiff homespun, such as this (it was Norwegian 'vadmél'), are not advisable on an expedition of this kind. If homespun be used, it must be soft, and the seams covered with linen, as otherwise it is possible that one may be entirely incapacitated on a journey which requires great exertion.

By evening we were again in Alexandra Fjord, at our old camping-ground, where we pitched the tent for the night. The mate and four of the others volunteered to sleep in the big bag down by the loads, to guard them from dogs and bears. Unfortunately, the bag was frozen, and they had much difficulty in getting into it, and they too were wet themselves. They laughed and talked, however, in high good humour after they had got into their ice-cover, and jokes poured forth like smoke from the ventilator after we had shut the hood down for them. The last thing we heard was somebody saying that there was no doubt that they would 'keep'—they were actually lying on ice.

We thought at that time that our loads were unusually heavy, and admired the dogs for being able to draw them; each load was about 550 lbs. in weight, and each team consisted of six dogs. Later on, we drove much heavier loads, as much as 813 lbs. a team, even on long daily journeys and in difficult country. The ordinary load drawn by our ponies at home across the mountains in winter is, I believe, about seven hundredweight. A team of six dogs, therefore, draws as much as one pony, and very much they are to be admired for being able to do it, I think.

On Thursday, October 27, we reached the 'Fram' again. It did one's heart good to see the old vessel once more, after lying out for weeks in the cold and polar ice. There she was, as cosy and homelike as possible, with her large new deck-building containing a big saloon, six new cabins (three on each side of the saloon), two large cabins for working in, and a new galley for the cook. Plenty of room is required when so many men come and go on long sledge-journeys, for sleeping-bags, tents, fur clothing, and the like, have all to be thoroughly dried. On this occasion

everything was wet through, for we had not yet learned to prevent moisture, that most unpleasant concomitant of polar exploration by means of sledge-journeys. We did not brush off the snow from our clothes carefully enough when we entered the tent, or sleeping-bag; we did not keep the tent free from rime caused by exhalation; nor did we endeavour to avoid undue moisture by taking off some of our clothing when perspiration became too active. In a word, we had still much to learn of

OPPOSITE STENKJÆR. SPLENDID GROUND FOR GAME.

the things which should constitute the A B C of the polar explorer.

On Saturday, October 29, the last party came on board. Bay's knee was still troublesome, and so the doctor took him in hand. The dogs, too, had suffered much on the trip. When Fosheim reached Bay and Isachsen with provisions, their dogs had had no food for four days, and as previously, too, they had been badly fed, they were very much exhausted when help came. Dogs that have been well fed can easily go without food for a week,

especially if they are lying idle, and there is not too much wind—if there is much wind, the loss of heat is greater and the power of resistance consequently less. Of course it is a great advantage if they can be in kennels, but this is not always practicable.

On November 1, we began the preparations for the winter. Tarpaulin covers were placed over the skylights, and a wall of snow was carefully built round them, about a couple of feet in thickness. In addition to this, we paved with snow that part of the deck which was above the cabins. We made kennels for the dogs, chiefly of blocks of ice, and each team had a kennel to themselves, and a wooden partition to separate each dog so that they could not fight. When all this had been done, we considered everything very warm and comfortable, and that we might anticipate the darkness of winter with equanimity; at any rate, we thought, we should not be cold.

On the Thursday of the same week, the mate and Braskerud went into Alexandra Fjord polar-ox shooting, and at the same time they were to bring back with them some meat which had been left behind. After two days, they returned empty-handed, having seen no game, and the bears had eaten up all the meat.

This meat seemed to be destined to an unfortunate fate. Once before it had been fetched—when Olsen and the mate brought down the meat from Fort Juliana—but the load being very heavy, they had been obliged to leave part of it on a projecting point in Alexandra Fjord. They had counted on reaching the ship on the same day, and so had taken neither tent nor ‘Primus’ with them. Meanwhile, the going became so bad that the dogs were not able to haul any longer, and they soon saw that there was no getting home with the loads for them that night. The mate took it very coolly, got out the sleeping-bag and crept into it; he would not leave the loads. But Olsen thought he would try to get back, loosed his dogs, and when they refused to follow him, but kept with the loads, started off alone. Being short-sighted, he soon lost his way, and walked about all night. Next morning, about nine o’clock, we on board the ‘Fram’ saw him come staggering down a neighbouring glacier in a state of great

'KRINGSJAA,' ON THE NORTH SIDE OF FRAMS HAVN.

exhaustion. When he had come on board, and had had a good rest, he told us that at one time, early in the morning, he had been unable to move another step. He had then sat down to rest on a stone, but had not been long there before he felt that sleep was coming on. He knew well enough, however, that he who sleeps in the snow in these latitudes never wakes again, and so he had got up and struggled on, hour after hour, until at last he reached the 'Fram,' and was saved. He never suggested any more night expeditions by himself.

When we heard that the mate was behind, and in difficulties, some men were at once sent off to his assistance, but they met him on the way, driving quietly along with his load.

I had long had an idea, if the condition of the ice the following summer should allow of it, of going up through Kane Basin and Robeson Channel, along the west coast of Greenland, as far as the vessel could penetrate. I thought of putting up a hut in which I and three of the others might winter, while the ship returned the same autumn to winter quarters off the coast of Baffin Land. I now made known my plans to the members of the expedition, and set Fosheim and Braskerud to build a hut with materials which we had brought from home. This occupied Fosheim, and Braskerud, too, in great measure, for the whole of the winter.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR LIFE ON BOARD.

ON Sunday, October 16, Schei, Fosheim, and I toiled slowly up across 'Nordfjordeidet' ('Nordfjord Isthmus') with our loads, the dogs tugging and hauling till their tongues hung far out of their mouths. When we reached the crest of the hill, and suddenly came on the view over the mountains on the south side of the fjord, we all three stopped involuntarily to gaze at it.

We were looking at the sun for the last time that year. Its pale light lay dying over the 'inland-ice;' its disc, light red, was veiled on the horizon; it was like a day in the land of the dead. All light was so hopelessly cold: all life so far away. We stood and watched it until it sank; then everything became so still that it made one shudder—as if the Almighty had deserted us, and shut the gates of Heaven. The light died away across the mountains, and slowly vanished, while over us crept the great shades of the polar night, the night that kills all life.

I think that each of us, as we stood there, felt his heart swell within him. Never before had we experienced home-sickness like this, and little was said when we continued on our way.

For yet a few days we were able to see a faint light on the highest mountains at noon—a suspicion of dawn in the south, which told us that there was life still to be found somewhere in the world. Then, even that was gone; we had entered on the great night.

What might not these four months' darkness bring us? Things so terrible had occurred up here in the polar night that they might well make any one pause and think. Here came Franklin, with a hundred and thirty-eight men. The polar night stopped him;

not one returned. Here came Greeley, with five and twenty men ; six returned. The same year that Nordenskiöld wintered in White Bay seventeen Arctic Ocean seamen died of scurvy, in the midst of a superfluity of food. The last of them was found dead, in a sitting posture, dressed in his fur clothes, with mittens on his hands, holding a piece of salt pork. Tins of preserved food were lying, unopened, round about ; but the contents of the salt-meat barrel were half eaten up.

And yet, in spite of all that had happened, in spite of all the horrors that had been experienced, we felt, on the whole, secure ; for science has triumphed—cold and scurvy and hunger need no longer tyrannize over us. I will go even as far as to say that such things *ought* not often to happen. When they do occur, it is through the fault of the leader of the expedition, and to his account they must be put down.

Well, there lay the 'Fram,' stout and defiant, like a little fairy-house, in the midst of the polar night. It was warm and bright in her cabins, and we worked with a will from morning to night. Up to the middle of November, we made small sledge-expeditions, shorter and shorter each time ; but at last we were compelled to hibernate, and began winter-life in earnest, both aboard and round about the ship.

Abroad, it was chiefly the building of the kennels, which I have already mentioned, and the transport of walrus-flesh from the Meat-heap, which occupied us. The spot where we had left a quantity of this meat, in the autumn, was situated about a mile from the vessel. When we arrived there, we found that the bears and dogs had played havoc with it, but there was still a fair quantity left, and we set to work at once to bring it away. The worst of it was that it was all frozen together into one large lump, so that we had to turn into stone-masons for the nonce, and ply wedges, crowbars, and sledge-hammers, in order to break the mass asunder. The transport we undertook, at first, in person, but it proved to be a slow and tiring business, and so we pressed the dogs into the cause, when it was done in a very short space of time.

The dogs, yes ! It is they which give a polar expedition such

as this its character: without them, we should get nowhere; without them, the time would be dull indeed. They are quite capable of keeping one very much alive, and of providing plenty of music, into the bargain. By day they were chained to a long cable down the ice, and at night went, six and six, into their ice-kennels under the ship's side; but, both night and day, they kept up an infernal commotion with their barking and howling, marauding and stealing, fighting and killing, all according as opportunity offered. If by hook or by crook they could manage to get loose from their chain, or their kennel, off they would go like a flash of lightning, either to the Meat-heap, to gnaw at whatever remains were there, or to an old walrus-carcase, which they had scented out in the neighbourhood of the ship, and which, by degrees, they quite hollowed out, so that it sounded like an empty barrel when we hit the skin with our 'ski'-sticks. Better scavengers one could not desire. They threw themselves on to, and devoured, everything that was thrown over the ship's side, whether it was food or refuse. Their food consisted of biscuit, stock-fish, and walrus-meat alternately; their drink was snow. They were very warm and comfortable in their kennels of ice, and the only thing to be careful about was to see that they had a ventilating-hole and pipe through the roof, to prevent them from becoming too warm, and, consequently, moist from sweat, which would have killed them at once. They stand the cold in the most astonishing manner, and, for that matter, might well have been out-of-doors both night and day; but, in such a case, their provisions would have been more drawn on, as we should have had to feed them better.

Each man has his own team, which he feeds, thrashes, and defends from the others. He looks after them when they are ill, and receives, in return, their entire and absolute devotion. But to eradicate the wild animal in them is altogether beyond human power. Onslaught and murder were frequent occurrences, and followed on each other so rapidly that it was generally impossible to prevent a catastrophe. One of the Norwegian elk-dogs, 'Fin,' a stubborn and pugnacious animal, was one day thus attacked by a team of the Eskimo dogs, and, in the course of two or three minutes, torn to pieces and eaten. When we arrived on the scene,

there was nothing left of him but the tip of his tail! This is nothing but the simple truth; it is impossible to imagine any animal, on the whole, more aggressive and enduring than the Eskimo dog. It is my belief that a team of these dogs—that is to say, eight or ten animals—could do for a polar bear. Their qualities as draught animals, I have already spoken of, while their staying power is something marvellous. When to this is added their great intelligence and affection for their master, it will easily be understood how important a factor they are in modern polar exploration.

Towards the middle of November we completed all the necessary outside work, and then turned our attention to the vessel and the forge which Nödtvedt had built of blocks of snow a short distance away on the ice. Here he occupied himself with blacksmith's work all the winter; made knives, hatchets, bores, and crowbars, and did all the repairs of the ship which came within his scope.

In addition to our usual daily avocations, such as cleaning, looking after the dogs, taking meteorological and tidal observations, and the like, we now set to work on preparations for the sledge-journey which I had planned round the northern point of Greenland. There were tents to be made, and sledges to be mended, strengthened, or provided with over-runners; * the winter hut, with its 'furniture,' and shed for provisions, had to be built and put up, single *kayaks* altered into double ones, food prepared for the dogs, a forge with its appurtenances made, all the provisions required for the journey weighed and packed—in short, there were innumerable things to be done, and no time to be lost. The 'Fram' was simply transformed into a large workshop, where every kind of handicraft and industry was carried on. Baumann was the tentmaker, the mate the seamster of the *kayaks*, Olsen the wheelwright, tinsmith and instrument-maker, Nödtvedt the blacksmith, Braskerud general handy-man in the timber-carpenter-watchmaker line, while Isachsen and Bay

* Wooden over-runners, which can be fixed at will over the metal runners, as often the snow is in such a condition that wood glides over it more easily than metal.

had a profession of their own in the old galley, where they pressed dog-food into moulds. Fosheim, as I mentioned before, was engaged in building the hut, to which was added the repairing of the old sledges, and the making of new ones.

Peder Hendriksen was the doctor's scientific assistant; once a fortnight they went off to the sound, to take the temperature of the water. They had great difficulty at first in making a hole in the ice, which was a couple of feet thick, but one fine day a seal took possession of it, and ever afterwards it was kept open for them. As a reward for its work as an ice-breaker, the seal was given a stock-fish every day. I do not know if it appreciated its payment, but, at any rate, every time they returned the fish was gone.

A pleasant change in the long working days of the polar night were birthdays and festivals. Orders were then issued to assemble in 'full dress,' a command which was obeyed with great alacrity, but which was necessarily more or less limited by circumstances. The first step, and the one which cost us most, was to wash ourselves clean, a condition which the polar explorer looks upon as the greatest luxury. Then came the next stage of transformation, the attire. It may, perhaps, be conceded that full dress on board the 'Fram' was not always complete, not always quite uniform; but this only added to the richness and impressiveness of the *ensemble*. Some of us did indeed appear in a white collar and a neck-tie, as well as other civilized appurtenances; while Bay and Fosheim, in whom was personified any coxcombry that may have been latent in the members of the expedition, were in a position to wear even clean cuffs. But, as a rule, we had to make use of anything that came to hand by way of decorating our persons, such as variegated bows, coloured pocket-handkerchiefs, artificial flowers, and the like, and one of us even arrayed himself in a Norwegian flag. Our spirits were in accordance; the doctor was indefatigable in keeping things going, and Bay the same; his good-humoured Danish jokes and his comparatively elegant attire gave him a peculiar position as a man of society and exponent of civilization. Later on, certainly, he did fall off; he lost his clean cuffs, his clothes became somewhat threadbare; and in his most retrograde period he was obliged even to borrow a coat of his 'colleague' the

steward, who dabbled in his trade as a bird-catcher and collector of insects. But it was the same with all of us; by degrees we lost all means of beautifying ourselves, and were obliged to be content with what Nature had given us, and no more.

After we were dressed, came the serious part of the business; to wit, eating and drinking, speeches and songs. We tried our best to think that we were living in the midst of civilization, but,

INTERIOR. DRAWING A 'BOTTLE-NOSE' IN THE FORE-CABIN.

despite all the merriment, our thoughts would often fly homewards, and we had a strange feeling in our throats when we drank the health of our dear ones at home.

The central point in our holiday-making was naturally Christmas, and then the 'Fram' shone like a bride. She was scrubbed from floor to ceiling, her lamps were polished, flags and pennons floated from unexpected places, and Japanese lanterns shed upon us their softened light. Every man appeared in holiday attire and spirits, and what good cheer the vessel could produce was on the board and in the cups.

At twelve, noon, we had a simple breakfast of 'mölje,'* with a dram each, and at five o'clock the repast of the day was served, after which came coffee and liqueur, with our national cakes, 'terter' and 'fattigmandsbakkelse.' Later in the evening we had champagne or hot grog, according to taste.

When the Christmas-tree was brought in, everybody was quite silent for a moment—and then the merriment broke loose in earnest. As it stood there, with its glittering gold and silver tinsel, and its red and white candles, in the midst of our darkness here, it seemed to be a greeting from home and from above. It seemed as if we were being told that there was still life, and that the light was not really gone. We thought that we were sitting amid our dear ones, could take them by the hand, could feel that they really lived; it was as if happy thoughts had been sent to us—and then we had to shout for joy and make a horrible noise, much worse than our four-footed friends outside in the snow. And what was a sob within us found expression in a terrible hub-bub, especially when all the Christmas presents were undone. They were chiefly children's toys—for men who felt like children! Drums, trumpets, fireworks, dolls, Noah's arks, sneezing-powder, scratching-powder, marzipan pigs, and things of the kind. There was merriment beyond compare, and practical jokes without end.

Then came the mental part of the festivity. Assisted by the wittiest of the expedition as contributors, the doctor had started a paper, the *Friendly One*, named after the leader in Baumann's team, of which the first number was read aloud that evening. Some portions of it are reproduced on the following pages, though much of it must necessarily be unintelligible to the great majority of my readers. The wit and sarcasm of the *Friendly One* resulted in the publication of a rival paper, the *Arctic Fox*, which appeared on New Year's Day, but was withdrawn the same evening for want of subscribers; and therewith ended our journalistic efforts on board the 'Fram' for that winter.

When our Christmas gaiety had reached its height, we concluded the festivity with a dance, which was quite the proper

* A dish composed of broken *fladbrød* (to which the Scotch bannock most nearly assimilates), over which hot soup fat is poured.

thing for young people like ourselves. So, to the entrancing melodies of a musical-box, the otherwise so serious 'Fram' folk danced with vigour, while the steward from the sofa made an eloquent speech on his favourite topics, love and food, which nobody had time to listen to.

We kept Christmas until January 3, when we settled down again to our work in the two cabins and the 'tween decks, where the thermometer was sometimes at zero (the last winter it read as low as 16.6° Fahr., or 27° Cent.). To stand and work with bare hands in such a temperature is anything but agreeable, but, like everything else, one grows used to it in time.

Ne 1.

Den Venligsindede.

4^{de} Dec. Bladet udkommer hver 1^{ste} af 1^{ste} og 2^{de} til Tageren eller Moenne. For kun elvne skædderen. — 1898

Ansv. Redakt: Færr.

Skrink, Lillemer og Tigger
 Den store og den smaa,
 De trende aadster, Ryder
 Og Ago ligesaa,
 Som Deputert for flokken
 Af samojed og Hund.
 Lykhænker hele stokken
 Om bord en festlig stund.
 Finn

Anmeldelser:

Uydskommen

Julelitteratur.

Victor Beaumont: **Digte.** 2. Bb.
Pris Kr. 2,00.

Dette i bedste Forstand ungdommelige Arbejde er ingen Debut. Den formelle Rutine røber den øvede Pen, f. Eks. som i følgende Vers:

„Peder han heber, han alle glæder,
Naar paa Jagt han gaar, og Stud han faar
Paa Ulve, som paa et Haar
Eigner den gulbrune Tispen vor.“

Forf. fornægter ikke sin Stand. Det herlige Digt „Et Togt til Mauritius“, hvor maler det ikke fint og kraftig de Tanker, som rører sig paa Dybet af en Sjemandssjæl. Og dog, hvor menneskelig lynger han ikke f. Eks. Kjerlighedens Høisang i Digtet „Pigen paa Jamaica“? Bogen egner sig ikke til at lægges paa Børnens Julebord, men anbefales enhver moden Mand og Kvinde. Gjest B. H. sen: **Svorfor jeg blev hængt eller gennem det svarteste Hjelvede.** En Thys Levnetsløb. Selvbiografi.

Vor Tid er rig paa Kriminalhistorier, men om de fleste gjælder det, at de ikke støtter sig paa Virkeligheden; de er opkonstruerede og usandsynlige. Her foreligger en Skildring af en virkelig Rjæltrings Liv. Alle de skildrede Skurkestreger er vissefelig udførte. Man tviler ikke paa, at Forf. — efterat han af Angeren over sit af utallige Forbrydelser besublede Liv er drevet ud i den religiøse Fanatismes mørke Dyb — giver en sand Skildring af sit Liv og Levnet.

Et kritisk Dieblif. (Fortælling.)

Polarnattens frygtelige Mørke rugebe over Egnen. Dødsstilhed herskede ombord. Pludselig høres en fjern Brusen. Kalver Bræen? Struer Isen? Som rullende Tordenslag nærmer Larmen sig. Rasser og Foustager veltes, Planter ramler ned, Lamperne klirrer, det knager og brager i

Studen, Barometret staar paa Jordstjælv. Forover gaar Larmen; som et Lyn farer en Skikkelse gennem Salonen, strækslagne skrætter alle op og ser spørgende paa hinanden. Hvad var det? — — —

Styrmanden slubbe i Kabelgattet for at kutte en Sirem. Gud ske Lov! det var det hele. Ah!!

Epigrammer.

Herr Hassel i Byssa og Lindstrøm sjøl
Jo flere Koffer, des mere Søl.

Mens Olsen tumler vilbt med Mechanikmagi,
Staar Rødtvedt lunt ved Esen og tar med Slægga i.

Avertissementer.

Skindbesætninger

til Anorakker faaes færdigsyede billigt hos Bundtmager

Simmonsens, Rice Stræde 1.

En ubrugt Fotografiplade er udstillet til Efterhyn en kort Tid, da den senere skal benyttes. Anvises af

Jormor Riferud.

Poesi?

En vældig Jæger for Herren er Svendsen Lancetten, Geværet, ja selvste Ransen
Han serer med Kraft. — Jeg kort vil berette,
Merk jer dette!

Det var midt paa Dagen,

Gjor lidet til Sagen,

Men alligevel,

Ham skal ske Fyldest, ske Ret og Skjel. —

Han anfaldt en Hund,

Som tog sig en Blund

En Middagsstund

Mellem 12 og 1,

Med sælbet Bajonet.

Hunden hyleb,

Mens Svendsen den pryleb.

Og netop, Diebliffet som

Dens Dødsstund kom,

Der skede en Vending for Hunden helbig,

Thi Slaget vældigt,

Det gik i Dæffet,

Og Geværet i to var knættet.

Venligst.

Konfirmationssøndag i Hayes Sound

Dg Vargen stob oppaa Bjergets Top
Bort ved Bræen,

Dg vesle Fin sneg sig hurtig op
Over Sneen.

Det er vel noget til Jagt idag,
Det smelber for og det smelber bag
For han Heika.

Dg Fin han nærmed sig Bjergets Top
Bort ved Bræen!

Dg Heika fulgte i samme Trop
Over Sneen.

De var nu spændt paa den herre Jagt,
Hvordan saa Vargen i deres Magt
Fin og Heika?

Dg Vargen venteb paa Bjergets Top
Bort ved Bræen.

De vilbe Jægere krabbed op
Over Sneen.

Men Gud forbarme sig, ser du der!
Det er jo Biffja, vor Pearly kjær,
Til han Heika. S. . .

Telegrammer.

New York ²¹/₁₂.

Capt. Otto Sverdrup! My bottlenose
is dead, will you sell me Lindstrøm?

Barnum.

Washington ^{23/12}

1st lieutenant, second Frim, G. Isaac. Please bring my luggage from Fort Conger. My best wishes follow you on your trip to the North Pole. It must be done and a cavalierist shall do it. Greetings for private Stoltz.

Greely.

Stockholm ^{22/12}.

Udnævnelse til Ridder af Vasaorden: Herm. Simmons for Mangel paa Virksomhed.

Kjøbenhavn ^{26/12}.

Guldbmedaljen tilskabt Cand. Bay for Fabrikation af Hundemad.

Kania.

J. G. Isaac udnæmt til Docent i Polarforskning. Enefte Ansøger.

Efterlyst.

To Moskusochser und en Rensdyr er forloren et Sted paa Grønlands Østkyst. Den ehrliche Finder schall faa sytten Gittelen och bedes indsende de Thyr til deres erbødige

G. Bucht,

Thiergarten, Copenhagen.

Dagens Nyheder.

Fra det militære Samfund.

Ved sidste Møde holdt Chefen for Kavaleriets Marineafdeling, Oberst Isaacs, et interessant og sagligt Foredrag om **Havhestens** Anvendelse i Marinekavaleriet. Det paa originale gale Idée særdeles nye Foredrag paahørtes med megen Interesse af et talrigt Fagpublikum.

Opfigtsbækkende Skandale fra Ellesmereølandets høiere Societet.

Fra sifter Kilde meddeles os, at et Medlem af en fashionabel Klub derstedes, som har gjort sig berøgtet ved sit høie Spil og sit usebvanlige Held, er bleven overbevist om at have benyttet falske Kort. Angjældende — Baron Fin S . . . — er etc.

blikkelig excluderet af Klubben, og man har gjort alt for at nedbryde Sagen. Men vi har dog Anledning til at formode, at nogle af hans Ofre vil forsøge at faa ham tiltalt og straffet.

Brydefamp.

Vi havde forleden den Fornoielse at overvære en Brydefamp mellem den berømte norste Bryder Lindstrøm og den inden Sportskredse vel renommerede, gamle Veteran Konjakk. Kampen var meget haard; L. kastedes to Gange, men fortsatte med Udraabene: Do you speak English, Sir? Staal, Captajn! o. l., ufortrødent Striden, indtil det endelig lykkedes ham at sælde sin Modstander under Tilskuernes Jubelraab. Det skal have været et af de haardeste Dage, L. nogeninde har taget; han var overordentlig anstrengt og vaklede stærkt, da han var Seirens Pokal hjem. Til Gæde for Seiren istandsattes L.'s øverste Etage, der var noget skrobelig, Dagen efter paa offentlig Bekostning af 40 Sommermænd.

Takt. To Fodfæster mistedes Torsdag den 15de ds. paa Veien fra Raskelovnen i Forsalonen til Byggen. Ved samme Leilighed tabtes ogsaa to Sukkerkopper og et Dglas. — Den rebelige Finder bedes aflevere Sagerne i Byggen, hvor Gierne er at træffe mellem 7 og 9

Dnsør udbødes!

Dødsfald.

Det bekjendtgjøres for Elegt og Venner, at min Begjæstring for Polarfærd afgik ved en voldsom Død Onsdag d. ^{12/10} 98 efter 3 Maanedes Sygeleie.

Bedes modtaget kun paa denne Maade. Rice Str. ^{21/10} 98.

Solst.

Til samtlige Medarbeidere sendes min bedste Tak, specielt til den ufrivillige Bay.

Sinn.

CHAPTER VIII.

GREELY'S CAMPING-GROUND.

DURING the whole of January and the first few days of February, life on board the 'Fram' went on the even tenor of its way, the only difference between the days being that now each one that passed made us more sensible of the increasing light, and brought an inclination to attempt short excursions in the vicinity of our winter quarters.

We had already made several trips eastward to the north side of Pim Island, to look for Camp Clay, Greely's camping-place, but we had never succeeded in finding any trace of it.

Greely's expedition was a link in the series of international stations which, according to the decision of the International Meteorological Congress held at Rome, in 1879, were erected as far north as possible, for the purpose of magnetic and meteorological observation. In our country, we had a station at Bosekop. The United States, as their share, undertook the working of two stations, one of which was Discovery Harbour, near Robeson Channel, in lat. $81^{\circ} 45'$ N., about 64° west of Greenwich. The leadership of this expedition was entrusted to General Greely, then a lieutenant in the United States cavalry, and in 1881 he took up his residence at the observatory at Fort Conger, in Lady Franklin Bay, where he remained until August, 1883.

It was part of the plan that the station should be visited every year by a relief expedition, and that the new-comers should remain behind in place of those already there; but in 1882 and 1883 the relief expeditions failed to reach their destination. In the latter year, one of the vessels, the 'Proteus,' was nipped in the ice, and sank half-way between Cape Albert and Cape Sabine.

A CAMP IN THE DRIFT-ICE.

After the ship had sunk, the crew did not consider themselves to be under command, and instead of helping to save the provisions and bring them ashore, most of them began to plunder the vessel. Might, if not right, was on their side, and, altogether, only a fraction of the plentiful supplies which had been brought up were cached on Cape Sabine and in other places.

The net result of these relief expeditions, therefore, was that from July, 1882, to August, 1883, fifty thousand rations were taken up through Smith Sound. Of these, a thousand rations were deposited in various places, while the remainder were brought back again, or went to the bottom in the 'Proteus.'

In August, 1883, Greely, with his four boats, of which one was a steam-launch, came down through Kane Basin, picking up the caches on his way; but all along the coast of Ellesmere Land he looked in vain for the crews and provisions of the relief expeditions, until his attempts at landing were prevented by storms and drift-ice. After losing two of his boats, however, he reached land at last, at Cape Isabella. From thence, unfortunately, he chose to follow Ellesmere Land northwards again, because it had been agreed that on Brevoort Island he should find news of the depots. If, instead of doing this, he had gone across to the coast of Greenland, he would have found a certain quantity of provisions on Littleton Island, and have had a comparatively short distance to inhabited parts, and a still shorter way to Foulke Fjord, which is one of the best places for game in these tracts.

The news of the foundering of the 'Proteus,' which Greely found at Brevoort Island, was a hard blow for the bold explorer; but in reality it was only the beginning of the tragedy which was played during the next nine months upon the barren island in the Arctic Ocean, a tragedy which vies in horror with the most terrible of the accounts of the martyrdom of Arctic travellers.

In a house of stones, with their last boat for a roof, they dragged out a hopeless winter of starvation. A few seals, a few foxes, in the month of April a small bear, and a kind of sand-flea, which they themselves called 'shrimps,' were the only additions

which augmented their scanty supply of food. They eked it out as long as they could by boiling a thin jelly from strips of skin which they cut from their clothes and boots.

The official death-list tells a terrible tale. Fourteen of the men died of starvation; two of these suffered, in addition, from scurvy and inflammation of the bowels. One died of scurvy; another, Sergeant Elison, of frost-bite, after seven months of indescribable suffering from frost-bitten hands, feet, and nose; and in order to be able to carry his spoon to his mouth, he was obliged at last to have it tied to the stump of his arm. One died of frost-bite and exhaustion on a sledge-journey; one was drowned when out trying to capture food; and one, Private Henry, was shot by Greely's command, because he stole his comrades' rations, and was therefore considered a source of danger to the existence of the others. As Henry was the giant among them, and as also, on account of his better food, he was as strong as at least two of the others, the three sergeants who received orders to shoot him were told to be careful that nobody else should be harmed.

But in the midst of this black night of hunger and sickness shine stars of self-sacrifice, of kindness, of duty. The tears must come into one's eyes when one reads about it. Lieutenant Lockwood, for instance, died of starvation on April 9, but up to April 7 he kept his shorthand diary, noting with great accuracy the readings of the barometer and thermometer for every single day, almost without an exception. In order to fetch a small provision of meat left by Nares at Cape Isabella, in 1875, four of the starving men started off on a voluntary excursion. They are successful in finding the precious treasure, but the November storms sweep mercilessly across the plains, whirling up great masses of snow, and frost strikes down the unfortunate Elison. The precious meat must be sacrificed in order to save their friend's life. The strongest of them, the brave Sergeant Rice, goes to fetch help, while the two others get into the sleeping-bag with their almost dying comrade between them, to try to keep him warm. The bag froze stiff, and when help came they had all lain motionless in the same position for eighteen hours.

In the spring of 1884, two of these four, Sergeants Rice and Frederick, made another attempt to fetch the meat, but again they were unsuccessful. They were overtaken by a violent snowstorm, and Rice this time is the one to fail. In order to warm and protect his dying friend, Frederick takes off his *timiak*, and covers him with it. It is in vain; he begins to wander, and talks about his friends at home, and all the good food he will have when he gets back. In a lucid moment he makes his friend promise that he will take back his few possessions to his home, and his manuscripts to a certain newspaper. Half divested of his clothing, and in a driving snowstorm, Frederick remains sitting on the sledge for several hours with his friend in his arms, until at last the latter expires. Then he can do no more, but his promise to the dead and duty to his country steel his will. He gropes his way back to the place where he had left the sleeping-bag, in order to be able to return with greater rapidity with the meat, rests in it till the next day, and then goes back to the sledge to secure what Rice had asked him to take home, and with an axe and his bare fingers hacked and dug him a grave in the ice.

In 1884 a relief fleet of three ships, under the command of Captain W. S. Schley, proceeded up between Greenland and Ellesmere Land. They made depots in various places, and on June 22 two of the ships reached Cape Sabine. Parties had been sent ashore to make a depot, when, through the howling of the storm, those on board heard the sound of shouting and hurrahs, and soon afterwards saw a signal which told them that news of Greely had been found. The intelligence spread like fire, and caused the greatest joy, when it was heard that he was not in distress, although he had only forty rations left. But, alas! disappointment immediately followed, for when they came to the last page of the record, they found to their dismay that it was dated October 21, 1883—eight months previously! A sloop was sent northwards in the greatest haste. Those on board scanned and scanned the country, and at last, through the hazy atmosphere, they saw the outline of a human being standing on a little hill. He was signalled; the figure answered and came down the hill, but his gait was tottering, and twice he fell. He looked like a ghost, with

sunken cheeks, wild eyes, and matted hair and beard. Lieutenant Colwell, the commander of the sloop, filled his pockets with bread and pemmican, and with several others rushed up to Greely's tent.

There they met a gruesome sight. Nearest to the door lay a man who appeared to be dead, with sunken cheeks and open staring eyes. On the opposite side lay another without hands or feet, and with a spoon bound to the stump of his right arm. Two of them had just taken down a rubber bottle from the tent-pole, and were pouring the contents into a tin mug. Straight in front of them, on his hands and knees, was a dark man with a long matted beard, and eyes which shone with peculiar brilliancy. He wore a dirty, ragged dressing-gown, and had a red skull-cap on his head. When he saw Colwell, he raised himself a little, and put on his eye-glasses. The former seized his hand, and asked him if he was Greely. 'Yes,' he answered in a faint voice, broken and hesitating, 'yes—seven of us left—here we are—dying—like men. Done what I came to do—beat the best record——' and then fell back exhausted.

It was a painful scene when Colwell gave them each a little bread, and some pemmican in turn from the end of a knife. The men could no longer stand, but had sunk on to their knees; they stretched out their hands and begged for more; their rescuers, however, were wise, and refused it. When Greely saw that they were firm, he brought out a tin box containing a decoction of seal-skin; *that* he had a right to eat of, he said, for it was his own. It was taken from him; but while Colwell was raising the tent-pole, which had fallen down, the men got hold of the half-finished pemmican-box, and scraped it empty.

They had been obliged to leave their house in May, when the snow began to melt, as the water ran in through the roof; they then took refuge in the tent. Fifty paces from the tent ten of the dead men were buried. One, who had died only a few days previously, lay unburied at the foot of the hill. The remains of four had been laid near the shore, and the waves had washed them away; while the body of the soldier who had been shot lay on a patch of snow near the tent.

When the bodies were about to be prepared with alcohol, to

preserve them during the journey home, it was found that the flesh of six of them had been partially cut away. The horrors and sufferings of the last three weeks, says Schley, need not be mentioned ; should the story ever be told, it must be done by the survivors themselves.

On February 12, the doctor and Olsen went off to try to find the scene of these horrors. In clear, cold weather, with the thermometer at -40° Fahr. (-40° Cent.), without food or other means of locomotion than their own legs, they started forth early in the morning, so that they might have the day before them, for it was not yet light for very long at a time. The snow in Rice Strait was hard, and the walking consequently good, but on the north side of Pim Island it became very loose and heavy. They ploughed along, however, and about noon reached a spot where among other things they found some bits of rope and sailcloth, and where they imagined the camp must have been.

When they had looked round the place, the doctor said it was time to think about returning home, as it was already growing late, but Olsen declared he could not go another step. The doctor then told him that he must make an effort, for it was impossible for them to remain where they were, without either food or a sleeping-bag. He took Olsen by the arm, supporting him as well as he could, and they both staggered off together. The doctor did everything in his power to keep his man going ; he tried to arouse his patriotism by singing, 'Ja, vi elsker dette Landet ;' he tried to make him laugh, and sang 'Den evigglade Kobbersmed ;' he tried to play on his erotic feelings, and sang 'Den gang jeg drog afsted, min pige vilde med,' but Olsen refused to be roused. As a matter of fact, he had been much indoors all the winter, at his tinkering and instrument-making and the like, and had had little exercise.²

In spite of the doctor's songs and support, they made very little progress, and slower and slower grew the pace. They passed Cocked Hat Island, but a little north of the Meat-heap Olsen could not move another step ; in fact, he was not able to stand. There was nothing for it then but for the doctor to use his long legs as fast as they could carry him, and use them he did, for he

was not many minutes covering that mile, and fetching assistance from the ship.

As soon as I heard what had happened, off I ran; while Isachsen and Baumann harnessed a team, got out a bag, and drove after me. The mate and Fosheim also came running after me. I got on to the doctor's tracks and followed them, to be quite certain of finding my way, and soon came across Olsen, sitting on a hummock, and so done up that he did not recognize any of us. He was stuffed into the bag at once, laid on the sledge, and driven aboard at a gallop. There we put him into his berth, poured some hot chocolate into him, and gave him a little to eat. He began to recover in an incredibly short space of time, and it was not very long before he had lighted his pipe. We knew then that he was in a fair way, and the next day he was almost himself again. Curiously enough, he was not frost-bitten.

By degrees the twilight became stronger, and in the middle of February we saw the first flush of the sun above the mountains round us. It was like drinking in life with our eyes; and it was like growing twenty years younger, when the first clear sunbeams gilded the slopes, and the sun stood above the crest of the mountains for the first time. Every man came upon deck beaming with delight. Our task was easy now; now it would take much to thwart the will or break the spirit, for we were in touch with life again. The same sunbeams that played upon us played upon our dear ones at home: it was as if a wave-signal had flashed between us and them.

CHAPTER IX.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL SHOOTING-TRIP.

THE darkness of the polar night was at an end: the profound stillness gone. There, where distant stars had been the only light in the depths of the darkness and the monotonous cracking of the ice in the cold the only sound, were now the sunshine on the snow, and the barking of dogs and shouting of men in various directions.

On February 22, 1899, Baumann, Bay, Isachsen, Hendriksen, and I left for Fort Juliana, on our way shooting in Beitstadfjord, and up on the sunken line of country leading across to Nordfjord where we had shot the first polar oxen. It was still unusually cold, but we were all anxious to be off and did not care much about the weather; and, besides, we were all well clothed.

By degrees, however, as we entered on the long fjords, the temperature sank to a disagreeable extent, but we could not determine how low, as we had stupidly forgotten to take with us any other than the quicksilver thermometer. We knew only that the mercury was frozen the whole time, but that is not saying very much. We all spent the night together at Fort Juliana, and parted company the next day; Baumann, Bay, and Isachsen going to Stenkjær; Peder and I to the isthmus above referred to. Notwithstanding that we all had on wolf-skin clothing, we could not sit long at a time on the sledges, and had to run by the side to keep ourselves warm. After pitching the tent on some level ground up on the isthmus, Peder and I set off, and wandered about all day in search of game, but without discovering a single animal, or trace of an animal.

It was not till the evening, when we lighted our 'Primus,' that we became aware how cold it really was.

In very severe cold—say, about -58° Fahr.—I often noticed that when the 'Primus' was lighted a thick layer of rime formed on the canvas of the tent. When this layer grew still thicker, long woolly tassels would hang down from the roof, and with the slightest puff of wind or touch of the tent, came down like snow. It sometimes happened that this snowstorm took place even when the tent was quite still. This phenomenon may be described as a kind of hoar-frost, and, in spite of its violence, has a certain likeness to the rime which, in still, foggy, winter

KOLOTENGVA'S ARRIVAL.

atmosphere, forms on the branches of the trees; and probably it arises from the same cause. Such snowy weather as we had inside the tent at this time I had never seen before, and I have a suspicion that it was the coldest twenty-four hours I have ever experienced. Peary, who was ten or fifteen miles farther north at the same time, says that on the same day they had -67° Fahr. It was then that seven of his toes were frost-bitten, and had to be amputated. We took as little time as possible getting out and creeping into the bag, but directly I was in it I felt that I should not be warm that night, although I had on a full

suit of wolf-skin clothing. About one o'clock I was constrained to get up and light the 'Primus.' Peder turned out too, complaining that his back felt cold. He had on his 'Icelander,'* but, when I looked to see what was the matter, I found that it was covered with white frost, both inside and out! Something had to be done. I pulled out the 'Icelander' as far as I could from his back, and put the 'Primus' up between it and his jersey. 'Now I'm nice and tepid,' observed Peder, complacently—he

KOLOTENGVA MENDS HIS SLEDGE.

was steaming all over. We let the 'Primus' burn all the rest of that night.

Early the next morning we turned out and made haste to Fort Juliana, where we set to work as soon as possible to dry our fur clothes and the sleeping-bags, which had become wet through and through in the space of only twenty-four hours.

* These garments, though called 'Icelandic jerseys,' are made in the Faroe Islands.

During the afternoon the other party returned from Beitstad-fjord. They seemed to have had weather still colder than ourselves. Inside *their* tent it had snowed the whole time, in spite of everything they did to prevent it; and when they stood on the snow outside, it seemed to be burning the soles of their feet. They, too, had had no sport.

The next day we drove back to the ship. In Alexandra Fjord we caught a glimpse of the sun for the first time that year, and we all burst out, as if at command, into a ringing cheer. We got on board the 'Fram' again that evening.

The first week in March Schei began to equip for another trip northward, for the purpose of discovering if there were any large glaciers along the coast of Ellesmere Land, on the way up to Cape Hawks. His first object was Bache Peninsula, but he hoped to get as far as Dobbin Bay. As I would not expend much patent food on the dogs that first winter, but fed them chiefly on biscuit and stock-fish, we thought it best to make a depot of dog-food on or near Bache Peninsula.

On March 7, Schei, Stolz, and Hassel started off, each driving his team. They had been given out 'finsko,' 'over-socks, and 'mudds.' The temperature was still very low, and near the ship it averaged from -40° to -44° Fahr. (-40° — 42° Cent.).

After four days' absence they returned, having made a depot of fish on Bache Peninsula. Schei unfortunately came back with several of his toes so badly frozen that three on one foot and two on the other had to be taken off; the amputation was successful, and he was laid up for only about a month. The reason for this misfortune was that, instead of 'finsko,' he had worn 'komager,' * which, though thoroughly adapted for use with 'ski' at an ordinary temperature, must be condemned out of hand in severe cold.

* The summer boot of the Lapp. These, unlike the reindeer skin 'finsko,' are made of soft leather, in such a manner that the sole is turned up at the sides and at the toe, and sewn to the upper leather on the upper surface of the foot. Their counterpart, with the addition of an extra sole, known as *lauparsko*, are in use among Norwegian *skiløbere*.

CHAPTER X.

ESKIMO VISITS ON BOARD THE 'FRAM.'

ABOUT a month after the sun had come back to us we also had our first sight of human beings, since our visit from Peary.

One forenoon, as Dr. Svendsen was walking in the neighbourhood of the ship, he saw a strange team of dogs approaching through Rice Strait. It was a Greenlander, driving from the south, with eight dogs to his sledge. He jumped off it when he reached the 'Fram,' and greeted us in European fashion. I invited him to come on board, for which he thanked me with great politeness, but said he must first make his toilet. He then very calmly dragged off his *anorak* (fox-skin coat), which he wore outermost, and his *timiak* (bird-skin vest), which he wore next the skin, and arrayed himself in a fresh *timiak* and *netsak* (a vest of thin seal-skin); all in forty degrees below zero—a temperature which did not seem to incommode him in the least.

At dinner-time we were very curious to see what he would make of a knife and fork, as well as of European food, and civilization in general. He was perfectly equal to the situation, however; handled his knife and fork with dexterity, and was never at any juncture betrayed into astonishment. He probably thought that we Europeans were capable of any enormity.

He was on his way up to Peary's ship, the 'Windward,' to tell some of his Eskimo of the drowning of several of their relations when out walrus-catching. As Fosheim is going to describe his visit on board, I will not trouble the reader with further particulars, but will confine myself to mentioning that he was a representative of the heathen Eskimo or Greenlanders who

still keep to the old customs I have already described, such as the game of 'exchanging wives,' the 'drum dance,' and other pastimes of the kind, which of course have long since disappeared from Danish Greenland.

Herewith I turn the matter over to Fosheim, making an extract from his account of the visit :—

'As I was standing at the turning-bench in the 'tween decks, on March 18, the doctor came running in through the door, radiant with delight, and exclaimed, "We have got a visitor! There is an Eskimo outside by the smithy." I ran out to look, and, sure enough, there he was, with his dogs and sledge and the usual gear, surrounded by a ring of curious spectators. They soon came on board, Sverdrup first, and the Eskimo after him, with short elastic steps.

'At dinner our unusual visitor sat at the end of the table, handling his knife and fork in a more civilized fashion than might have been expected. He was short in stature, but well-knit and unusually well proportioned, and looked very intelligent considering that he was a "savage." His little dark eyes shone with understanding and good humour. His nose was slightly aquiline, and on his upper lip was a thin, black moustache. His skin was of the dark red-skin type, with a slight tinge of sallowness, and his face was surrounded by a thick mane of coarse, glossy black hair, which fell far down on his shoulders, and quite hid his eyes and the adjoining parts of his face. When he bent his head, it fell over his eyes in a thick veil.

'That the man was from the east side of Smith Sound we found out at once; but from what particular part he came, or whither he was bound, we did not so readily discover. We showed him some pictures in Astrup's book, among others the one depicting the author and Kolotengva bear-shooting in Melville Bay. Our friend at once pointed to Astrup's companion, and then to himself, exclaiming proudly, "*Eh, Kolotengva! Eh, Kolotengva!*" So he was the well-known Hurragut himself; the first Eskimo to cross Inglefield Gulf in a *kayak*, and the daring hero of so many exciting adventures bear-shooting and walrus-catching!

'By the help of a map, with which he seemed as much at

home as a professor of geography, a few Eskimo words which we had acquired, and, last but not least, by pantomime, we got out of him that he was from the island of Karna, in Inglefield Gulf, that he had been four days on the journey, and that he was on his way north to Peary's ship, the "Windward." It came out by degrees that two Eskimo from the "Windward" had already been home that spring to fetch more dogs for Peary, who had lost from sickness during the course of the winter thirty-seven out of sixty dogs. In

OUR GUESTS IN NIGHT ATTIRE.

this manner the Smith Sound Eskimo had got information as to the whereabouts of the "Windward" and the "Fram;" and, needless to say, Kolotengva would not lose such a favourable opportunity of visiting the rich *Kablunaks*, who, according to an *innuit's** views, are in possession of so many wonderful things, from sewing-needles and pocket-knives to powder, shot, and guns.

* An Eskimo's designation of himself; *innuit* meaning, literally, 'human being.'

‘Kolotengva was a blithe and merry soul, who soon felt himself at home on board. In the evening he gave us a grand performance in the fore-cabin. He pounded away with much strength and skill on a little drum sent to Bay as a toy and Christmas present, singing the while a monotonous tune, accompanied by extraordinary twistings of the body and head. At first the performance was only “Lieder ohne Worte;” but as he became more excited and fired by the melody and its accompaniment, a whole flood of extraordinary words streamed forth from his broad lips, always in exact time with the singing. Possibly it was an old and well-known song, or—who knows?—the gifted Eskimo may have been a bard among his own people, and on the spur of the moment have sung about his journey hither; about “*umiarsua Pram*” and “*Nalagak Smerdrup*” and his hospitable reception amongst us. The song, which began *piano*, became by degrees wilder and wilder, more and more *fortissimo*, the melody, with the writhing and jerking of the body, quicker and quicker, until finally he raised himself half up in a sort of ecstasy, tossing his black hair backwards and forwards till it completely hid his face. The whole thing made an uncanny and sombre impression, and whereas at first we had laughed at his curious gestures and singing, we were at last made absolutely uncomfortable by the *innuit’s* wild music.

‘When the representation was at an end, there came a sudden change in Kolotengva’s appearance. The almost demoniac look went over to his old good-natured expression, with the broad smile on his lips and the merry twinkle in his eye. He was soon the favourite of everybody, and we had a very lively and cheerful evening in consequence. Our Eskimo friend was quite to the fore where practical joking was concerned. When on one occasion he was offered a dram from a child’s “take-in” glass, and, in spite of all his efforts, could not get a drop out of it, he saw through the joke very quickly. He put down the glass, and with a roar of laughter gave the cupbearer a sound spanking.

‘The food on board did not agree with him—a fact which he tried to explain to us in an extremely graphic manner—and so he returned to his usual mode of living, with meat for breakfast,

THE BREAK-UP OF THE ICE.

dinner, and supper. He kept a boiled saddle-of-bear on a shelf in the after-cabin, and this he repaired to every now and then, and gnawed at it. He seemed to like his fare very much, in spite of its extremely unappetizing and anything but cleanly appearance. Kolotengva procured himself these delicacies through the agency of a very poor weapon, according to our notions, namely, an old American muzzle-loader, of large calibre. But, in his eyes, it was the finest gun in the world—if only he had enough caps, balls,

PEDER HENDRIKSEN.

and powder for it; and of things of the kind he was given plenty when he returned with Baumann and Hassel from a visit to Peary, who was invited to spend Easter on the "Fram."

'Everybody grew fond of the light-hearted and good-humoured Eskimo, and absolutely vied with one another in giving him all sorts of things which might be of use in his hard struggle for existence, when he left us on March 25 with a lowing "Trur it dæ! Trur it dæ!" as a farewell. He had learned the words on board, and probably thought that they were our expression for the

Americans' "good-bye," which on a similar occasion he had proudly shouted to us.

'Kolotengva's return home, rich as Cræsus, through the gifts of the *Kablunaks*, in the shape of ammunition, knives, bear-spears, bits of iron, a file, a plane, tin boxes, matches, and—as a present to his good lady—coffee and soap, naturally gave the impetus to several more Eskimo visits on board the "Fram." First of all came three men, of whom one was badly clothed, very much frost-bitten, and miserable in appearance. Two of them went on to the "Windward," while the third, Erri, who gave himself out to be an *angekok*, or sorcerer, remained with us. Afterwards a whole caravan of seven people turned up, among whom was a kind-looking old man, who, with expressive pantomime and lively gestures, tried to describe a bear-hunt, in which *nanok*—the bear—fell head foremost into a lane, whilst he and *miki*—the dogs—stood crestfallen on the edge of the ice. His wife was an ugly old witch, a perfect termagant, whose jaws were never still.

'We had yet another, a fourth, visit of Eskimo on board—a handsome, well-dressed man, in a new fox-skin coat and bear-skin trousers, accompanied by his wife, a rosy-cheeked, thriving woman, in her best years, with a bundle on her back. We wondered what she had in it, and our curiosity was soon gratified. It contained a little baby, whose dark eyes gazed wonderingly at all the strange men, and who lay as cosily in her nest on her mother's warm back as any white man's child in its cradle.

'Happily this was the last Eskimo visit on board, for, truth to tell, we began to be heartily sick of them all. They spread all over the vessel a peculiar, rank odour of blubber and train-oil, with indefinable additions. We tumbled over them wherever we went, both in the cabins and in the 'tween decks; while their shock heads of hair looked as if they might accommodate a legion of animals, of which we stood in far greater fear than of either the polar ox or the bear.

'In addition to this, it was not impossible that their dogs might bring with them contagious disease, and pass it on to ours, a contingency which would cost us dear, and might be of fateful importance to the expedition; so it was with a feeling of relief

that we saw the last Eskimo sledge disappear southward down the sound.'

Baumann had often of late talked of going a trip north to visit Peary. As his fortunes greatly interested us on board, and we wished much to know where he was, and what he was thinking of doing, it was hastily determined that Baumann and Hassel should make use of the opportunity to travel with Kolotengva. The latter, however, declared that his dogs were so footsore that he could not use them, so we lent him a team of ours, and the next day they started off.

I will let Baumann himself describe the trip by quoting from the report he wrote immediately on his return from the sledge-journey:—

'We were a party of three, and went to see where the "Windward" and Peary were. It was about half-past eight on the morning of Sunday, March 19, when we started. The Eskimo, Kolotengva, drove first, and, by dint of much shouting and frequent use of the whip, urged his dogs to a gallop. I drove after Kolotengva, and had nothing to do but to hold on to the sledge to keep it on an even keel, for it would be a wonder if there were any distance worth mentioning between my dogs and the sledge in front of them. Last of all came Hassel, who at the start was unlucky enough to get a dog on the wrong side of a hummock, with the result that the dog's trace broke, and it always takes some little time to catch a dog and splice a lanyard. Kolotengva and I were obliged to stop to wait for him when we got off the point, near the Meat-heap, as he was not in sight out in the strait.

'This was a fortunate circumstance for me, as Kolotengva then discovered that my nose and cheeks were frost-bitten; a condition, however, that I am well accustomed to, so I was not surprised. The cure is old and well known, so I will not repeat it here. Meanwhile, it was not long before Hassel came in sight, and very soon afterwards was behind us. Then on we went again at a brisk trot, up towards the cleft in Bache Peninsula, following the flat ice, frozen in the autumn; but about a couple of miles north of Cape Rutherford Kolotengva began gradually to bear to the north-

east, following the flat grooves between the pressure-ridges, which ran in a northerly direction. He also took every favourable opportunity of crossing the ridges towards the east.

‘This was not quite in accordance with the route which I had planned, as I knew that the ice was good up towards Bache Peninsula, a little farther west. I explained this to Kolotengva as well as I could, and apparently he understood very well what I meant, for he pointed east and west, continually saying, “*Piuk, piuk.*” At the same time, however, he made us understand that outside (*i.e.* eastward) there was an Eskimo track leading north, straight to Peary’s ship. I gave in to him, therefore, and, judging from the view from an iceberg which I climbed, the ice was not at all bad in a direction a little east of north, well outside Cape Albert. At four in the afternoon, meanwhile, the ice became so bad eastward and northward that we were obliged to keep a little west of north until we were well north of Cape Albert. I think we were about a couple of miles from land. The sun was now shining on the highest tops only, so I decided to camp for the night.

‘We learnt from Kolotengva an easy and practical manner of making the dogs fast to the ice: he hacked small loops or rings in it with his knife, and to these the traces were attached. This method is also very practical for fastening the guy-ropes of tents; the loops are quickly hacked, and it is not at all difficult, for the first time I tried it I was completely successful.

‘Our supper consisted of pea-sausage soup, and bread and butter, the latter frozen hard; and after supper we had coffee and a bit of currant cake, which the steward had stowed away in our provision box. It was truly remarkable to see what our friend Kolotengva could put away, especially of drinkables—four large cups of soup (one of these cups, according to careful measurement, contains a pint), two large cups of coffee, and after that he set to work on his own account, melted ice in his cup, and drank the water. How much he managed to imbibe I cannot say, but when it is known that he had been eating ice all day—I can safely say as much as any dog—I think others besides myself would have been astonished. Nor was Hassel out of the

running, but he was only able to consume a relatively large quantity.

'Then we crept into the bags, that is to say, Hassel and I did ; Kolotengvá, who had none, looked rather wistful ; but when he was given Hassel's reindeer-skin tunic to sleep in, he was as happy as ever. The "Primus" was extinguished, and therewith the light ; everything was clothed in darkness, and in five

Nödtvedt. *Hassel.*
THE FIRST DAY IN THE SPRING FORGE.

minutes' time we had about the same temperature inside the tent as outside it.

'With the first flush in the east I was awake ; I could see the light through the canvas of the tent. A couple of well-directed kicks with both legs followed—I say both legs, because in a sleeping-bag one's limbs soon grow accustomed to concerted action. The object of my kicks was a hump, which denoted the approximate position of Hassel's head, for we were lying head to feet, so to speak. My object was attained, for not long afterwards I heard several grunts from inside Hassel's bag, and an arm

appeared from underneath the hood; then the buckles were undone, and his face, anything but smiling, showed itself to view.

‘I crept down into my bag again, and soon was sleeping sweetly—the last morning snooze is something indescribably delightful, when one can drowsily lie and half-listen to the singing and bubbling of the “Primus” and know that the next time one is called back to reality it will be through the medium of a steaming hot cup of coffee. It was not long before this was ready and I was called; and soon we had finished our breakfast, which consisted of biscuit, frozen butter, and the indispensable coffee.

‘The only thing now to be done was to strike the tent and start forth again. After breakfast, while the others were lashing the loads on to the sledges, I made use of the time by climbing up on to a neighbouring iceberg to look for a practicable route. It certainly seemed as if there were passable ice in towards land and also close under it, but it did not seem as if we could navigate for so very long in that direction. On the other hand, I saw flat ice due east, and this stretched northward and eastward as far as one could see; we should have only some pressure-ridges and broken young-ice to negotiate before we reached it. My decision was soon made, for I knew that out there was an Eskimo track which led direct to our destination.

‘We worked our way through very bad—not to say infernally bad—ice for an hour or two before we reached the flat ice outside, but then we were out of the wood, for as far as the eye could see northwards there was not the smallest hummock in view. We now set our course northward, and it was not long before we got on to the Eskimo track.

‘I now felt certain that we should not be more than two days reaching the “Windward,” and so I discarded here a quantity of the dogs’ provender, which I thought we could pick up again on the return journey. Our sledges, which were considerably lightened thereby, now shot over the splendid ice northwards with great rapidity.

‘My comprehension of the Eskimo language being now considerably enlarged, I began on a thorough pumping of my friend

Kolotengva, and learned as much as I could about Peary and the "Windward." Much that had been obscure before was now clear. Kolotengva drew for me with his whip-handle the outline of the country—newly fallen snow makes capital drawing-paper—and then he went on to explain how Peary in the autumn had gone southward and obliquely to Bache Peninsula, where he had shot sixteen polar oxen, and how he had also been walrus-catching farther up the sound.

'This spring, also, Peary had been on an expedition in the same direction, but had shot no game; and had been so unfortunate as to get his feet so badly frozen that he had lost, I think, seven of his toes. He had also been unlucky with his dogs, for many had died during the course of the winter.

'I now asked Kolotengva how he had become possessed of all this information, and he told me that already this spring some of Peary's Eskimo had returned to Karva, where they had their homes. First of all, four had come back—two men with their wives—and later, not so very long ago, one Eskimo alone.

'He described the route they had all taken, and how they had had good ice all the way to Cape Sabine, whence they had crossed Smith Sound, where the ice had been very variable, and where open water had compelled them to make a turn to the north. At Littleton Island they had again made land, and followed it right down to Cape Alexander, where open water once more obliged them to travel overland for a while. On my asking him where the "Windward" lay, he answered very cautiously, and merely pointed northward.

'A little before noon we were perhaps somewhat north-east of Victoria Head, at what distance I cannot quite say. Here there were two formidable grounded icebergs; at the outermost of which Kolotengva stopped, and made me understand that there was an *igdlou* (house) in the vicinity. We climbed up the iceberg, and, quite right, a little way inside of our route we saw one of the Eskimo semi-circular snow huts. In towards land, just under Cape Victoria, Kolotengva said there was another hut, but we could not see it. Of greater interest to us, however, was that far to the north, right under land, we discovered something

which, judging from all the signs, was the rigging of a ship. These waters are not swarming with craft, so we felt pretty certain that what we saw was the "Windward."

'So on we started again, still over good ice. We passed another *igdloo*, but had not time to stop. On we went continuously, but about two o'clock Kolotengva's dogs slackened speed; they were certainly very tired. The snow was now deeper, and our flat-runnered sledges ran very much more easily than the Eskimo sledge, so I made an attempt at driving first; but still we went slower than we liked, for we wished to reach our destination that evening. I therefore changed sledges with Kolotengva, and let him drive first. This answered capitally for a while, but then the ice became more uneven, and the snow deeper. We had now left the flat ice and got on to some old floes. The "Windward" we saw only now and then, but always nearer. The snow was anything but bad on these old floes, for the track which we followed had been pretty well trodden down, from the comparatively large amount of traffic which had gone over it.

'We passed a third *igdloo*, and here Kolotengva stopped—whether it was from motives of politeness, or a misunderstanding of my wish to keep our dogs away from the "Windward" dogs, I know not, but certain it is that I now drove first, very successfully, and that the dogs rapidly neared the ship. We saw two men coming to meet us—to judge by his clothes, one of them was a stoker, while the other was an Eskimo. I therefore stopped the caravan and tied up the dogs, about a thousand yards from the "Windward." I shook hands with the "stoker," and asked if I might see Peary. It was about four, or later, in the afternoon.

'I was shown through a sailcloth passage to a little snow-covered house on deck, and, knocking at a door, was answered by a loud "Come in." I entered the cabin, and at once recognized Lieutenant Peary, who was lying in his berth; and thus I had immediate proof that my surmises of what Kolotengva had been talking about were correct in at least one particular.

'Lieutenant Peary asked me to sit down, and I proceeded to state the reason for my visit. He thanked me for the others'

visiting-cards which I had brought him, and expressed his gratitude for Captain Sverdrup's offer of assistance, in case it should be required. At this juncture his dinner was brought in, and so our conversation was broken off. Peary asked me if I would dine with the ship's officers, as he, himself, being an invalid, was bad company. I accepted the invitation with alacrity, for I was as hungry as a wolf. Lieutenant Peary expressed his desire of talking with me after dinner, and I was then shown aft. Here I made the acquaintance of Captain Bartlett, Mr. Bartlett the "mate," and Dr. Dedrick. Formal greetings being exchanged, we all fell to at once on the dinner, which was excellent.

'After dinner our tongues were loosened, and I heard that the "Windward" had been beset as early as August 18. Judging from Captain Bartlett's expressions, her chances of getting away were anything but favourable. He was of opinion that the old ice which surrounded the ship, and which was firmly fixed on the inner side of several rather big grounded icebergs, would lie for a long time after the winter ice had broken up in the strait and Kane Basin. He did not think that the "Windward" was in any way exposed to danger, although she was not in harbour, for the vessel lay well off land, and was efficiently protected by the icebergs outside.

'Captain Bartlett thought our chances were much better, and was of opinion that we should get away fairly early, and be able to proceed northward.

'The "Windward," on her departure from home, had been provisioned for fifteen months, so that there was no question of attempting to spend another winter up there; although she still had seventy tons of coal left, while the steamship "Hope" had made an equally large coal-depot in Foulke Fjord, together with some stores. If the situation should develop in such a manner that the "Windward" saw her chance of getting north, and back, with certainty the same year, *i.e.* this summer, they would certainly push northward. It was, of course, also possible that the condition of the ice might be such that, one fine day, we might see the "Windward's" entire crew on the march southward. The worst of it all, as regards the crew, was that they were badly equipped with

clothes, and quite unfitted for a long journey on the ice. In any case, it was Peary's own intention to push northward, in spite of everything.

'Dr. Dedrick, Lieutenant Peary's companion on his land journey, looked about thirty-five years old. He was well built, and of medium height. He was dressed *à la* Eskimo, in bear-skin trousers, and a reindeer-skin *anorak*; and, though he did not say much, he was very obliging. He had travelled with Peary and his Eskimo in the autumn, and, according to Captain Bartlett, had been the perpetrator of a perfect masterpiece in the hunting line. In a valley on Bache Peninsula, they had come across a herd of polar oxen. After having fired on the herd for some time, there were still some animals left standing, whereupon the doctor seized his knife, and attacked them—truly a hazardous and imprudent action.

'The greater part of what Kolotengva had told me was confirmed in the cabin. Lieutenant Peary omitted to send for me after dinner, and I would not refer to the matter, as I knew that he was confined to his berth, and I did not wish to intrude upon him.

'I asked to be called the next morning at five o'clock, as I intended, weather permitting, to return the next day. I was given the cabin sofa to sleep on, and had my reindeer-skin tunic to take to, if it should grow cold in the night. I refused the doctor's liberal offer of his sleeping-bag, as I was under a roof, and had my "mudd;" and was not in the least alarmed by all the talk of the terrible cold in the cabin at night. My Lapp boots, over-socks and stockings were taken below, to be dried and prepared by the Eskimo—a splendid invention, these Eskimo, for keeping foot-gear in order—and everything came back in the morning in first-rate condition, dried, and warm, the "finsko" pliant and patched. My travelling companions were being entertained forward, where they were extremely comfortable, and so I determined to turn in; and therewith ended the evening of the second day.

'At five in the morning, I was awakened by the mate, Mr. Bartlett, who asked me to get up and look at the weather. It was snowing a good deal, he said, and it had also snowed slightly

during the night. When I reached the deck, I found it was as he described, but, in addition, I saw the gleaming of the sun, away in the east, and therefore made up my mind to get off as quickly as possible. I had a hot breakfast—fried ham—at half-past five, and at six was on deck, ready to say good-bye to everybody. Dr. Dedrick then told me that Lieutenant Peary would like to see me before I left, so I went to his cabin, and remained with him a quarter of an hour. He repeated his assurances of the previous day—of his sensibility of Captain Sverdrup's kind invitation, and his liberal offer of eventual assistance, if required. He asked me to thank him, and convey his remembrances to him and the others on board, and sent by me a box of cigars for Captain Sverdrup and the rest of the party.

'I took the liberty of inquiring the range of his maps in order to avoid unnecessary repetition, and collision. He told me that from "the heights" he had taken the bearings of the greater part of Bache Peninsula, also northwards in Princess Marie Bay, and to the west of it, but not south of the peninsula, nor inland, where he had met Captain Sverdrup. He had not yet worked out his maps. He further told me that it was on a trip at the end of February last that his toes had been frost-bitten, and that he had been obliged to have them amputated. Upon my expressing my regret at his accident, he answered laconically: "You must take your chances up here, you know." He hoped, however, to be up again in a few days. He could not make any promise to visit the "Fram," either for himself or for his companions, but thought that some of them would be sure to come down when the weather grew milder.

'I then said good-bye, wishing him a speedy recovery. The captain, doctor, and mate, as well as some of the crew and a few Eskimo, came with us to the place where we had left our dogs and sledges. They all expressed admiration of our dogs, saying in what good condition they seemed to be, and how well trained they were. The loads were soon lashed to the sledges, our last adieus made, and we on our way south again. It was still snowing, but not enough to hinder us, and the air had become much clearer.

‘When we reached the margin of the old ice, which I have already mentioned, Kolotengva pulled up to polish his sledge-runners. He broke off an icicle from the iceberg, put a bit of it into his mouth to melt, and with his bare hands washed the water over the ivory runners of his sledge. When this had been duly accomplished, he walked back a little way, to behind Hassel, who was driving last, made some cabalistic signs, and drew a line

OUR CAMP AT THE HEAD OF FLAGLER FJORD. (See p. 120.)

across the way with his whip-handle. On my asking him what was the reason of it all, he answered very seriously, “*Uangva angekok*,” which probably meant, “I am a sorcerer,” or “priest,” and that he was invoking a prosperous journey for us.

‘We now went on again, following our old tracks, which were almost obliterated by the falling snow. We came to the place where we had left the dog-food, took it aboard, and drove on south, but instead of following our old route, we took to the Eskimo track at the place where it joined ours, and followed it southward. When the sun went down in the west, we pitched the

tent for the night, and were then probably abreast of Cape Camperdown, but at a fair distance from it. I have already described our arrangements under canvas, so will not repeat myself, but will merely give our bills of fare, which consisted of soup à la *Julienne*, and beef, followed by biscuit, coffee, and iced butter; and for breakfast, coffee, biscuit, and butter. The next morning the tent was soon struck and lashed to the sledges, and we set off southwards at a brisk pace.

'After driving for about two hours, we bore to the south-west, and finally due west. This took us over bad ice and a number of pressure-ridges, but we wished to get on to the flat ice inside of Cocked Hat Island. By two o'clock we were on good ice again, and not long afterwards found our old tracks leading northwards. This put new life into the dogs; they neared the "Fram" at a better and better pace; and at four o'clock we were on board again, after four days' absence. Our average distance on these four days was about fifteen and a half miles a day. The dogs were in good condition on our return, though they were rather footsore.'

After his return from the 'Windward' on March 25, Kolotengva started home at once. He was simply loaded with presents, for, being the first stranger we had seen for a long time, all the reserve good-will which we had been laying by for so many months was expended on him. Kolotengva's joy on his departure knew no bounds, and probably never in his life had he been the possessor of so many invaluable objects. He had particularly coveted our empty tins, and he now took his departure with a multitude of them disposed about his sledge.

Our generosity, however, as has been mentioned before, brought its own consequences. It was not long after Kolotengva's return home before whole caravans of Eskimo, from their snow huts on Brevoort Island and Cape Sabine, came to visit the 'Fram,' and we did not get rid of them till the ice on Smith Sound began to be unsafe, so that they were obliged to retreat to Greenland.

CHAPTER XI.

ACROSS ELLESMERE LAND.—THE STRATEGIC DEFENCES OF THE POLAR OX.

THE whole of the winter I had been thinking of making an attempt to cross Ellesmere Land to the west coast, and I now determined to make a start from the head of Nordfjord, for it was there that I had received the impression in the autumn that a crossing might be made. I had noticed that a valley trended at an even gradient in a westerly direction, and I concluded that, given enough snow, it would be possible thence to reach the other side. I limited the expedition to four men: Isachsen, Stolz, Bay, and myself. The mate and Hassel were to accompany us as far as Fort Juliana, as the condition of the ice made progress rather difficult in the outer part of Hayes Sound.

We left the ship on April 17, but the going was so heavy that we took two days to reach Fort Juliana. Stolz, who had been careless enough not to use spectacles on the way, became snow-blind, and had to be left behind at the station. Hassel took his place, and his dogs came with us as a loose team.* The mate also was still with us.

On Thursday, April 20, at five o'clock in the morning, we left Fort Juliana. The ice was favourable, and we made such good progress that we were able to camp in the evening on the sands at the head of Nordfjord, after having covered a distance of thirty-eight miles in one day, and with fairly heavy loads.

Next morning we turned out early. Hassel and Isachsen remained behind to take the meridian altitude, and forenoon and

* A sledge without a driver.

afternoon observations, while Bay, the mate, and I went farther afield to reconnoitre.

During our reconnaissance I scanned the country eagerly for polar oxen; it would be very convenient if we could shoot one so that the mate could take back the meat with him. A little way up the valley, we saw the tracks of an animal, but could not discover its whereabouts, so we wended our way up the stony northern side of the valley to shoot hares, and as there

*Hexeffjeld.**Slaughter-ground.*

ON THE ISTHMUS BETWEEN FLAGLER FJORD AND BAY FJORD.

were plenty of them about, the shots followed on one another pretty thickly.

The mate and I went together, but he was so taken up looking for polar oxen, that he quite forgot the hares, so consequently I did most of the execution. As I was going quietly on my way, the mate, who was behind, came running after me to say that he had seen some big animals on the other side of the river, which he felt sure must be polar oxen. He was quite right. As soon as we could, we got hold of Bay, who was hare-shooting on his own account, and we all three started off after the

oxen. The animals, meanwhile, moved in such a manner that it was impossible to get down the slope to within range unseen, but we thought that the distance was so great that they would not distinguish us up among the stones, particularly as our clothes were of the same grey colour. We therefore went boldly down, but we counted without our host—they saw us directly, and began to show signs of uneasiness. And now began a regular stalk; from bouldered slope to plain, from sand-hill to sand-hill, with the result that when dusk came on, we had not once got within range, so cunning were the animals, and so well did they understand how to keep at a suitable distance without actually taking flight. It was a mixture of defiance and caution which was absolutely exasperating. Worn out and sick of the whole thing, there was nothing for it but to give up the chase, and think about returning home.

On our way back, we were obliged to climb the mountain-side again, to fetch the hares which we had left lying all together in one spot, and in so doing expended a good deal of bad language inwardly, if not out loud, on the innocent animals whose only fault lay in their being so big and fat and heavy to carry. 'The Arctic hare is a giant animal,' says Professor Collett, and he is right—a thousand times right!

When we reached camp we set to work to skin the hares before they were frozen hard, and afterwards had hare soup for supper. Fatter hares I never saw; there was half an inch of fat on the soup.

Our chances of progress overland looked very unpromising, for there was no snow. The snowfall, apparently, is inconsiderable so far up the fjords, and as evaporation is great, and this is a country where there is always blowing what we call a 'cow-storm' (a gale so strong that it blows the horns off the cows), all the snow had disappeared. However, I still meant to reach the west coast, and thought it might be done with two teams of dogs. It was decided that Isachsen and Hassel should triangulate from the end of the fjord seawards as far as the 'Fram,' the mate fetch Stolz from Fort Juliana, and Bay and I make the attempt to reach the west coast.

Our trip was not destined to be, by any means, as easy as we hoped. We did indeed find smooth ice on the river up the valley, but the water had been low when the ice formed, and numbers of

I.—VIEW OF THE BIG CAÑON.

stones projected from it in all directions. At every turn the sledges caught in them, and the dogs could get no foothold on the polished ice. In the afternoon, we came to some rapids, and were thus compelled to make a halt, in order to reconnoitre for a

practicable route. We examined first a large cañon running in a north-westerly direction, but, after four or five hours' walking, were obliged to give it up as impracticable, and return to camp. While Bay was cooking some food, I further examined the country near the rapids.

When we eventually turned into the bag that night, we had had a working day of twenty-four hours, but we recouped ourselves with interest, and slept the clock round. The fact that

II.—THE BIG CAÑON, FARTHER WEST.

it was night or day made little difference to us, we slept when it was convenient; for what did it matter—the sun shone all round the twenty-four hours.

After we had made a detour round the rapids by crossing some sand-hills, our advance became quite easy. The gradient was inconsiderable, and we covered the ground quickly up to the watershed. About midway between the watershed and the fjord the valley was narrowed by another rapid which divided it into two parts, of which the upper one trended a point more to the west than the

other. The nature of these two parts differed very greatly: the lower one being barren, while the higher was comparatively fertile. In the latter were large expanses of herbage, where, no doubt, the polar oxen enjoyed life, and where, at any rate, they had trodden regular cattle-paths.

It was two or three in the morning when we reached the upper valley. I expected every minute to see a herd of oxen, and expressed surprise to Bay that only their tracks were to be discovered. As we were standing, talking about it, we suddenly caught sight of a big herd lying up on a precipice some distance from the bottom of the valley. To stalk them was absolutely impossible; so we walked straight on. The animals lay still until we were within three or four hundred yards of them, and then they made off up among the stones to a knoll some distance above us, where they formed into square. We might then have shot the whole herd without difficulty, but thought it too much of a deviation from our route, and so continued our way.

Later on we constantly saw small herds up on the slopes, but, as on the previous occasion, decided that it would take too much time to go after them. It was true that we were in want of food for the dogs, as we had left a good deal of ours down by the rapids, but we lived in hopes of a better opportunity of shooting some game, and it was not long in presenting itself. We soon saw four fine oxen right in front of us, near the watershed, but very far off. To avoid alarming the animals we stopped, and I remained with the dogs, while Bay went off in pursuit. I watched the oxen moving far up the valley, and in a few minutes they were quite out of sight. Very soon after Bay had left me, I thought I heard a shot, but was not certain, as it was blowing hard at the time. Not long afterwards, however, I heard a similar sound, and supposed that the game was in full swing. My team became absolutely unmanageable when they heard the shots, and set off at such a pace that I only just managed to throw myself on to the sledge in time. They tore like wildfire across the level ground, the loads jumped from drift to drift, and before I knew what had happened, the sledge had dashed against an icy drift and was overturned; while I found myself at some distance

from it sitting in the snow. I struggled on to my legs again as quickly as I could, and flung myself on to the next sledge as it flew past, and on we went again at mad speed until at last the dogs came to a standstill in a heap of sand on the north side of the valley. There I came across Bay, who somehow had got into the same line of country. I was very much surprised to find him there, for I had no idea that he had fired at the animals which I had seen; they must have been at least a couple of thousand yards from him when I heard the shot. He afterwards mumbled something about having 'miscalculated the distance,' and of 'its being a bit further than he thought.' How far it really was he only discovered the next day, when he went to fetch cooking-ice (freshwater ice) from the glacier on the other side of the valley.

Meanwhile the dogs had winded the oxen, and when they came to a standstill I undid the connecting lanyard, and let them head up the slope, followed by Bay, who scrambled after them, literally steaming with perspiration, the result of his efforts in the chase.

I took my gun, and sauntered after them—I liked looking on at that sort of sport. When I reached the first slope, I observed that the four oxen had formed a square, and were standing in wait for the dogs which were making towards them. It was evidently their intention to give battle, and when the dogs came up, a curious scene ensued.

The oxen, as I said before, had formed a square. They stood at regular intervals one from another, with their hind-quarters together, and their heads outwards. Then in turn, and with lightning speed, each one made an advance in the shape of a circular movement from left to right. At the same moment that an ox regained his place, his neighbour on the right sped out on a similar attack, and thus they went on uninterruptedly with almost military precision. As long as the manœuvre continued, one of the oxen was always out on a movement of attack, endeavouring to spit or rip up one or more of his adversaries.

The size of the attacking circle seems always to be determined by the distance of the enemy and the nature of the ground. As a rule, the animals advance ten or twelve yards from the square,

and once I saw them make attacks to a distance of a hundred yards. The remaining oxen always cover the gap in the square, but immediately make room for their comrade when he returns from his round. Now and then, when the fight is a long one, they stop to breathe, and then begin again with renewed vigour. The greatest degree of precision is attained by oxen of the same age. Like old combatants, they seem thoroughly to enjoy defending themselves, and appreciate the sporting element in it. I have seen herds of as many as thirty animals form a square, with the calves and heifers in the middle, and the bulls and cows standing in line of defence at distances as equal as the points on the face of a compass. When the defence forces of the line were no longer available, the reserve was mobilized; right down to two-year-old heifers. In such circumstances, of course, the movements were not carried out so regularly, and the discipline was less absolute. I noticed that sometimes the regular old fighters of the herd formed themselves into a kind of outpost, at twenty or twenty-five yards' distance from the square. This was partly with a view to defence, to take the first brush with the enemy, but also, no doubt, to have a good fight on their own account. It sometimes happened that the whole herd first formed in a square, and that then one or two fighting giants would walk out to the outposts' line; but, as a rule, their order of attack was evidently planned from the first. When once the animals had formed into square, they remained at their posts until the attack was repulsed, or the entire square fallen. I have myself seen the last-standing ox make his sortie and then return to his fallen comrades. In cases where the oxen had to defend themselves against a single enemy they would sometimes form up in a long fighting-line, without cover on the flanks, and then stood forehead to forehead, and horns to horns.

Their mode of defence is, on the whole, absolutely equal to the attack of any brute assailant existing in these regions, whether it be bears or wolves. One asks one's self involuntarily what animal can have developed their strategic reasoning powers in such an admirable manner. The polar bear it cannot be, for it does not appear in numbers together; its habitat is the drift-ice rather than

the land ; and besides, it is my opinion that a polar ox would make short work of a polar bear. The ox is so quick in its movements, has such enormous strength of neck, and is provided with such formidable, pointed horns, that, as far as a bear is concerned, it has no cause for alarm.

What other enemy, then, has it to fear in these tracts ? The wolf ? Yes—that is indeed the only one ; but in these parts the wolf does not appear in large packs. As a rule, they go about singly or in couples (the greatest number I ever saw together was twelve), and they live chiefly on the innocent Arctic hares in which the country abounds. Other enemy in the brute kingdom the polar ox has not, in the Arctic tracts where it is now to be found. Either it must have migrated hither from regions where it had more dangerous enemies, or else the wolf in earlier times must have appeared in such large packs that collective defence was a necessity. I incline to the latter view. Their tactics and entire system of defence point to the assumption that they have been obliged to defend themselves against a mass-attack from an enemy which could overcome them by its numbers, but which they could easily conquer singly. The successive attacks with always fresh forces manifestly take place with a view of drawing on one or more assailants in order to destroy them singly, and thus by degrees diminish their number. Were not this the intention, the square in itself would be enough to hinder any attack ; but then the oxen, which are ruminants, and whose system of nourishment requires continual food, could easily be starved out by the assailants, which, like most other beasts of prey, are able to sustain hunger and thirst for weeks together.

On the occasion I have described, our dogs were several times hard pressed. At one moment an ox got hold of one of them by the harness, and I thought the dog was done for ; it was only by a hair's-breadth that it escaped. Bay then went within range and fired at them, but the animals stood as if nothing had happened. I advised him to aim at the head, which he did, and then an animal fell for every shot.

In my diary I read : ' There were four fine oxen. Two of them were veterans with broken horns, testifying to past victories ;

but they had never yet had to do with the worst among beasts of prey—man. I am glad I was not the shooter on this occasion, and that Bay so willingly undertook the deed of slaughter, as I should not like to shoot down peaceable animals which defend themselves in such a marvellous manner. It is not sport: it is simply butchery; it requires little skill, and causes one no excitement. Anybody can set a team of dogs on the trail and then quietly follow them with his gun, walk up to the animals, and shoot down the whole herd. . . .’ But what was to be done? Meat we must have, and necessity knows no laws.

Meanwhile there was no time for reflections. The animals had to be skinned, and before we could begin on the work we were obliged to go down to the loads to fetch our flaying-knives; and this took time. We pitched the tent as quickly as we could, swallowed some coffee and biscuit and butter, and started up again. I had helped to spoil Bay’s knife, and now had to pay for it by skinning all four animals alone in the biting wind up on the hill-side. It was anything but a warm job, and, before I had done, several of my fingers were frost-bitten.

When all was finished we laid part of the meat up on a big rock where the dogs could not reach it; this was to be our depot till we returned from the west. We let the dogs remain up there to eat their fill of the meat, and when they had had as much as they wanted, we cut it up into small strips and stuffed it down their throats until they could swallow no more. We came to the conclusion that a dog’s stomach must be a very elastic thing; but also that it must be an eminently comfortable arrangement to have something in reserve, since it is impossible to know when the next opportunity for a meal may occur.

Laden with good meat, hearts, and marrow-bones, and each with a skin, which we looked forward to laying on the tent-floor, we made our way down to the camp, hungry and tired, after a working-day of twenty-eight hours.

After dinner I fell into a doze, while the coffee was clearing, and then, just after Bay had wakened me, saw through a little opening in the canvas a herd of polar oxen, which were coming grazing down towards the door. There may have been twenty or so of

them. We watched them for some time, partly through the spy-hole in the wall of the tent, and partly with the glasses outside the tent-door. They advanced very slowly. Now came Bay's turn to go to sleep, and while he was sitting looking at the herd through the crack in the canvas, off he went. This, naturally, made me think that I was very wide awake, and I managed to keep an eye on the oxen for an hour, until I suddenly discovered a herd of four or five animals up on some projecting rocks a little way from the camp. They stopped to gaze for a moment at the canvas of the tent, which was flapping in the stiff breeze, but as they could not make out what sort of an evil beast it was, they suddenly took flight up towards the others, and immediately the whole herd formed up into square against the tent. Thus they stood for some time, snorting and sniffing the air, but without moving from the spot. As the monster, meanwhile, showed no signs of attacking them, the square was eventually dissolved, the animals scattered, and began to graze as before—and more I do not remember. . . .

The next day we went up to the slaughter-ground, fetched the dogs, which were lying about looking very lazy and as round as balloons, and got under way to drive westward.

Four or five miles farther west, by some tarns, we reached the watershed. There we saw, far away on the horizon, a chain of mountains which we had already faintly seen from the place of slaughter. It was a true Alpine landscape, with sharp crags and snow-covered peaks. We received a decided impression that along this chain of mountains a deep fjord cut into the land.

The snow was now irreproachable, except, perhaps, that there was too little of it; but the vegetation was abundant, and the sledges ran as well over the moss- and grass-grown plains as on the snow. Our hopes of soon reaching the before-mentioned range of mountains were, therefore, well founded, but suddenly we were stopped by an impassable cañon running due west, which hindered all farther progress. Although our tent was not very strong, and there was no lee up there from the stiff breeze which was blowing, we decided to camp, and after that inspect the country.

The river fell in a steep waterfall into the cañon. We made an

attempt to get down here, and crossed a large drift of snow into a fissure with perpendicular walls on both sides. The fissure became deeper and deeper the farther we went, and at last we saw nothing but a small strip of daylight above our heads. Suddenly it became narrower than the breadth of a sledge, and all farther progress west by that way was cut off. We were obliged to turn and laboriously work our way back up to camp, where we had dinner, and after that went off again reconnoitring, as it was far

THE WESTERNMOST SANDS, WITH TOMMEN TO THE LEFT.

better to find a practicable way before making a fresh start with the sledges.

We climbed up on to the plateau north of the valley. In a lateral valley we came across a spot which was well sheltered from the wind, and there we determined to move the camp. There was not a trace of snow anywhere about, nothing but sand and limestone ridges; and as far as we could see in towards the west there was the same snow-bare country. It looked as if we should want a pair of boots a day! As there was no question of our being able to drag both the sledges with us, we loaded one of them with

all the most necessary things, and harnessed both the teams to it. We then struck camp, and drove across bare land to the side valley we had discovered, and once more pitched our tent.

The next day we started off again reconnoitring. The land was bare in every direction, but our experience of the previous day showed us that with light baggage and our strong team we could well push our way across, provided we were not stopped by any new cañon. The country appeared to be level enough; but such cañons are very deceptive, and before one knows anything about it one may find one's self standing on the brink of an impassable gulf. Our fears proved to be well founded; after a short two-hours' march, we were stopped by a new cañon, with precipices on each side, four to five hundred feet in height.

What was to be done? To the west coast we meant to go, cost what it would—but the way? Suddenly a bit of advice given me by a Lapp, when I was a youngster, crossed my mind. We were out bear-shooting, and were stopped by a river that was too deep and swift to be waded. I said we *must* cross it, and asked the Lapp what we had better do. 'Why, go round it,' he answered. I was rather dismayed at first, I must confess; but I followed his advice, and the manœuvre was a success.

We did the same thing now, and marched a good way northward along the edge of the precipice. But the country became more and more impracticable, till at last there was nothing for it but to retrace our steps and follow the same cañon back, until we discovered that it issued into the cañon which had first stopped us, and which was the chief valley. The edge of this we now followed eastward until, wonderful to relate, we succeeded in finding a passage down to the bottom of the valley, west of the gorge which had stopped us before. There was no possibility of getting the sledge, with its load, down here, for it was as much as we could do to get down ourselves without it.

We descended on to a large expanse of sand, which was so level that we were actually unable to decide in what direction water would run. Beyond the sand was a lake or large tarn, and at the western extremity of the tarn a fine glacier, which closed the valley. We concluded that the river must have its outlet towards

the west, either under the glacier, or between the glacier and the walls of rock.

When we arrived at the tarn, we found that it was covered with ice as clear as crystal—the clearest I have ever seen. Many feet below we could discern quite small objects, such as rubble and the like. The ice was full of cracks, which, no doubt, were due both to the frost and to the pressure of the glacier. The latter was productive, and with its perpendicular walls exercised such violent pressure on the ice of the tarn, that this had been partially thrust up on land, where a high ridge had formed.

Now began a whole series of tiring and resultless manœuvres to find a way westward. We tried to climb from the mountain-side up on to the glacier, or to find a way between the mountain and the glacier, but both were equally unsuccessful. We went back to the sands, and made a long detour up through the northern cañon; trudged back again to the sands, and from their north side went up an imposing mountain, which we named ‘Hexefjeld’ or ‘Witch Mountain,’ in order to get sufficiently high to see to the end of the valley, west of the glacier. At length, after several hours’ tiring march, we succeeded in making sure that the river had its outlet under the glacier, and that west of the latter there was a sandy expanse similar to that east of it. The track of a bear, too, which had gone from the sands to the mountains, keeping north of the glacier, strengthened our belief that here lay the way, for where big game goes there the passage is always practicable.

We had now been wandering about the whole day, and were decidedly tired; though Bay was the chief sufferer, being an inhabitant of a flat country, and little used to scrambling for days among boulders and rocks. On the way out we had had the wind ‘on our backs,’ as Bay expressed it, and that was all very well; but on our return it was right in our faces, which was anything but pleasant, for our eyes were so filled with sand that we could hardly open them.

We were glad, indeed, when we approached the tent, and still gladder were the dogs, which we had taken with us for possible polar-ox shooting. When they winded it, they set off like mad, and, before we came up with them, had begun to fight furiously

in the midst of the camp, so that the tent was in danger of being torn to bits. I had started after them as fast as my legs could carry me, to try and prevent an accident, but before I reached the scene I saw the guy-ropes give way and the whole of one side of the tent fall in. Furthermore, I was just in time to see 'Gammelgulen' swallow the last lump of our supply of butter, and 'Svartflekken' gnawing for all he was worth at the pemmican. I can never again be angrier than I was at that moment, and I tore in after the dogs to administer summary chastisement. But when I got hold of them I was so out of breath that I could do nothing, and the whole band of thieves, which well understood what they had to expect, made themselves scarce in a moment.

After the dogs had been securely tied up, we set to work to repair the tent. A stiff breeze happened to be blowing straight down the valley, and the thermometer showed -4° Fahr. (-20 Cent.). A hard job it was! One whole hour did we sit sewing with fine needles and thread at the thin silk material of which our tent was made—and with what fingers! Frost-bitten over and over again, covered with blisters which were filled with watery matter, to say nothing of other casualties; and with a skin so thick and hard that it was like horn. But there was no reason to be put out about a small misfortune. We consoled ourselves by a goodly portion of beef for dinner, as much steaming hot broth as we wanted, a cup of coffee afterwards, and then a pipe, which thawed one completely, body and soul. One's pipe, ah——! And such good company as Bay always was; but he had one constitutional fault—he never could learn to smoke, so I had to do the smoking for us both.

We began to make our plans for the morrow. To take sledges with us was out of the question, so we decided to carry as well as we could provisions for three days, a gallon of oil, the tent, sleeping-bags, guns, an axe, a flaying-knife, the camera, a sextant, and the inevitable glasses. The dogs we decided to take with us loose, as we hoped to shoot some bears or polar oxen for them on the west coast. We would then make a sledge of the skins,

and in that way travel down the fjord, to lay under subjection as much new land as possible.

On Friday, April 28, we took our belongings on our backs, and started forth. Bay was simply a hero at carrying things, and had incomparably the larger burden. The first part of the way we did quickly, although our packs were pretty heavy; but the descent of the steep and slippery rock was quite another thing. We found the best way was to sit down and slide, breaking and scraping continually with our hands. Slide we did, and rubbed our clothes through into the bargain; but we put a brave face on it, and got to the bottom without other mishap than much destruction of a certain portion of our nether garments.

After the descent we rested a while under the face of the glacier, and amused ourselves by trying the marvellous echo which there was there. The dogs followed suit, and when they heard the answer to their barking, went nearly mad, until at last the wilds fairly rang with the echoes of our din.

We had now reached the level sandy expanse which we had earlier observed, and on we pressed as long as we had strength to go. At three o'clock on Saturday morning we at last reached the outer edge of the sands, where low mountain-ridges cut off all further view to the west. Here we encamped in a fairly sheltered valley, remained there until the afternoon, and then went on again, leaving behind us the dogs and all our things, except the rifles, glasses, and camera. We had now but little to carry, and it was not long before we were on the top of the westernmost ridge.

Before us lay another expanse of sand, but considerably smaller than the two we had already crossed. West of the sands was a small conical mountain, which we at once named 'Tommen' or the 'Thumb,' and we decided to climb it, in order to get a view over the fjord which we expected to find behind and west of it.

We set our course for its southern side, thinking that it appeared the easiest to climb, but a couple of miles from Tommen we came across fjord-ice. The chief fjord branched off here for a long distance into the land, east of our mountain, through a very narrow sound. We now gave up the idea of climbing Tommen in favour of the far easier way straight across the fjord and

aslant across a tongue of land north of Tommen. There was an even ascent across the spit of land, so that we saw nothing of the fjord around us before we suddenly found ourselves on a sharp ledge, with sides falling perpendicularly to the water. Such a surprise was it, and so grand the panorama which opened out to view, that we both burst out into a cheer.

Right beneath us lay the fjord, broad and shining, without so much as a flake of snow on it, only ice, nothing but ice, crystal-clear, like a huge fairy mirror. And the other side of the fjord was a great chain of mountains, several thousand feet in height, with snow-filled clefts and black abysses, jagged peaks, and wild precipices. Just so must the wild western fjords of Norway look on a winter's day!

A confounded blast was blowing up there, right through all poetry, and yet we stayed—spellbound. Had we been warm, and less hungry, there is no knowing what we might not have done—stood on our heads, or written verses, or some other madness, I am quite sure. The situation, at any rate, taught me one thing, and I had had experience of it before: if you are confronted with a great sensation, or a difficult choice, eat first, and eat well, or else nothing will come of it.

After we had recovered from our great surprise, and our enthusiasm began to sink with our temperature, we tried to find a more sheltered spot; and spent some time down by the fjord, on the west side of Tommen, looking for one; but everywhere the wind was equally violent. It was a question of being quick, if we wanted to do anything, so I got out the camera; and Bay, who had been deputed to act as botanist on this occasion, went collecting down the fjord. He returned, having found nothing but a little branch of creeping willow, *Salix arctica*, which he had discovered in a small cleft, and forthwith declared that he was in possession of the entire vegetation of the west coast of Ellesmere Land.

I, too, think we never came across country so poor and barren as this was. There was hardly a plant to be seen, although we scoured the country in all directions. Of animal life there was no more trace. No tracks of either hares or polar oxen, with the

exception of a single one out on the point, where, many years ago, presumably, an ox had been, and, of course, the bear-track which we had followed at the beginning of our ascent. I received the impression, however, that bears not infrequently do wander in from Jones Sound to the west coast of Ellesmere Land, and that then they follow the route we had come from Nordfjord to 'Bays Fjord,' for so we named the fjord on whose shore we halted.

Meanwhile, it was not only bears which had known and used our overland route. In several places we saw traces of Eskimo habitation, such as rings of stone marking the sites of their tents, both at the spot where we eventually got down into the big cañon, west of the gorge with the rapids, and also at the place where we deposited the dog-food.

As shooting was a complete failure, and we could get no food for the dogs, there was nothing for it but to return to the tent. We ran rather than walked on our return trip. We no longer had the wind 'on our backs,' but in our teeth, and a gale with some eight or ten degrees below zero is no joke. It was comfortable indeed to get inside the tent and the bags that evening.

The next day we tramped back to the sledges with our bundles on our backs. On our arrival the dogs were treated to three rations each, for they had not tasted food for three days and nights. They were very impatient, however, to get east again; they seemed to know by instinct that we were driving back to our big meat-depot, and went at quite a respectable pace. We had the wind behind us, and after we had passed the watershed, the pace downward became terrific. The snow flew up like smoke in our wake, and the dogs set a course straight on the rock where the meat was lying, without the slightest regard to the irregularities of the country. Exactly what I expected took place: we stuck fast in a steep sand-hill, a little way below the depot.

I walked on to find a place where we could pitch the tent. When I had gone a couple of hundred yards I saw Bay following me, and stopped for him to catch me up. As I was standing there I suddenly became aware of a cloud of snow rolling towards us at great speed, from the direction whence we had come. What in the world could it be? A cloud of snow *there*? There must be

something wrong about this, I thought, when all at once I discovered that it was a herd of polar oxen, which were charging our dogs at a furious gallop! The dogs, of course, were perfectly unconscious of what was going on, they were standing gazing quietly up at the meat.

Now began a race between the oxen and ourselves, to reach the dogs! We had, indeed, a good start, but would it be of any use? The oxen were gaining on us with such rapidity, that we should have to put our best legs foremost, if we wished to get there first, and we did put them foremost; we ran till the grit flew in all directions, and really won the race. Bay seized his gun from his load; I, the camera, from mine. Just then the whole herd came to a sudden standstill a hundred and fifty yards off, where they stood immovable, sniffing the air, and gazing inquisitively at us. They remained standing like this for a while, and then, after they had gazed their fill, slowly retreated.

We remained quietly at this place for two days, and let the dogs eat all they could. After the wind had gone down we went up on to some rising ground to get a view over the surrounding country, and took a number of photographs up there. It was a beautiful, quiet, sunny day; nature had been transformed, as it were, by a single stroke; there, where a few days before we had met nothing but ice and cold, were now quiet grazing herds of polar oxen. They had taken refuge in the more sheltered lateral valleys during the stormy weather, and had now been enticed back by the sunshine; altogether we must have seen as many as a hundred of them.

We stuffed the dogs with chopped meat, kept the skins and the best joints, and the next day drove down the valley in good weather along the ice on the river. A short distance down the valley, and a little way from the bank, we observed lying a polar heifer; it had been torn to pieces by wolves, and was still smoking. We saw from the tracks that it had been alone, and had been unexpectedly attacked by wolves, which had overcome the brave little animal, after a long and violent struggle. We took a quantity of its hair—of meat we had enough—and camped in the evening at our old place by the rapids.

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It was blowing great guns the next morning when we continued our way down the shining river-ice towards the fjord. The country on each side of us was entirely free of snow, and consisted of sand-plains and stony ground. The squalls were often so violent that they swept both dogs and sledges for long distances along the ice, and eventually, when they were stopped by a stone, overturned the loads, so that it was hard work to make any progress. After toiling for some hours we reached the lower part of the valley, where the wind dropped, while down on the fjord itself we had the most beautiful weather. About four miles down it and half-way across, we pitched the tent for the night.

The next morning, as we were about to start, a gale from the west sprang up. This was a godsend to us, as our sledges were piled high with dogs'-meat, which we had collected on the way from our various caches. With the wind at our backs we were able to get on a tremendous pace, and camped that evening in the eastern part of Noresund. Here we were obliged to take to a fairly narrow strip of ice along the southern shore, as on the north side the ice was broken up, and the hummocks were being driven to and fro by the tidal current which there is there. Here we met the first gulls we had yet seen; they are certain harbingers of spring here, in the north, for in winter they never fly across the ice.

The next day we drove on eastwards, through Hayes Sound, in the same stiff breeze as on the previous day. We had not used snow-spectacles on this journey, as we had been so much on land, and although the light certainly did affect us, we did not take to them on the fjord as we ought to have done, as we knew it was not far to the ship. But in the evening, in the tent, we began to regret our negligence, for we both felt symptoms of snow-blindness. It would be a delightful state of affairs if we were kept here, only nine miles from the ship, for a couple of days perhaps!

During the night, however, we felt better, and started again early in the morning so as to reach the ship in time for dinner. When we got on board, we discovered that Bay had lost two of our prime joints of beef. They had to be found, and he thought they could not be so very far off, as he believed he had lost them the same day.

He set off next day, with Baumann in tow, to find the beef. We did not expect them to be gone more than a day or two, but they were away nearly four, for it turned out the joints had been lost far up Noresund, while they were also delayed by a fall of snow so heavy that it reached almost to their waists. They had been obliged to call at Fort Juliana to fetch food for the dogs, and had lived themselves the whole time on water and raw frozen beef. But Bay was as jolly as ever when he got back, and was quite willing to be cross-questioned; in fact, he said he had been longing for the moment to come, when he could begin to hold forth, and he now gave free rein to his fancy, describing in picturesque language the high majestic mountains, the deep gloomy ravines, and the great herds of deer he had seen in the west. The spirit of a poet literally passed into him. Sad it is that that man cannot smoke a pipe!

On board the 'Fram,' summer had already made its advent. The snow and ice had been removed from the decks; the steward had spring-cleaned all the cabins; and the hut with its canvas covering was in readiness.

Another event was that for the first time since the 'Fram' went into winter harbour, a bear had paid her a visit. On April 30, while the doctor was taking his usual observations, he saw a bear near 'the crack' (*i.e.* the tidal crack between the ice-foot and the sea-ice) and the south side of the harbour. He finished what he was doing, quietly took his gun, and walked to within range. He dropped the bear at his first shot, and when the others came hurrying up to the spot, armed with their guns, there was nothing left for them to do.

During the absence of Bay and Baumann on their notable beef expedition, we had a short visit, on May 10, from Isachsen and Hassel, whose triangulation had brought them as near as Cocked Hat Island, or 'the Hat' as it was usually styled in everyday parlance. They now began on the measurement of angles from up on the glacier by Rice Strait, southwards along the strait. It was only a couple of days' work, but they were somewhat retarded by the bad weather, which I have already mentioned.

This bad weather began with a stiff breeze and heavy snowfall,

but it soon went over to a violent gale from the south, which continued for several days. On April 14, it began to clear, but the wind was as high as ever. I wrote in my diary: 'if only it would go on blowing a bit longer we might get up to North Greenland, and a happy day it will be for me when I succeed in getting the "Fram" there. It will be the greatest festival we have yet had; and for me, at any rate, a day of mark in my life.' If we were in luck, and fell in with the 'Fram' at Cape Sabine later in the summer, as we had planned, we should then have the choice of going home in the autumn of 1900, or of wintering on board and mapping some of the big fjords, the inner parts of which were as yet unknown.

It was one of our daily tasks at this time to go by turns to the top of a neighbouring hill, which we had named 'Krings-sjaa,'* to keep an eye on the condition of the ice. Things did not look very promising at first, and even as late as April 15 I had not discovered more than a single lead.

* *Kringsjaa*, or *rundskue*, a panoramic view.

CHAPTER XII.

CONSTITUTION DAY ON BOARD THE 'FRAM.'

INDEPENDENCE DAY rose clear and mild; there was festival in nature as well as in our hearts. The sunshine streamed over sea and land; a slight breeze across our ice-bound haven harbingered the spring, and, as it were, wafted greetings from home where now the trees were bursting into leaf, and the grass was spires

THE PROCESSION FORMS, SEVENTEENTH OF MAY, 1899.

of green. But here in the north, everything was still in winter garb. The snow glittered so that it dazzled one to look at it; it was just like a March day on the mountains at home. And yet there was something in the congealed scenery around us so truly grand, so homogeneous, and the spring air brought with it such a feeling of promise, that it made one's heart warm within one.

On our proud vessel flags waved from deck to masthead, looking like points of fire in the snowy landscape. Everything had been polished up and decorated for the occasion, and a little band of men in their Sunday best were eagerly engaged on preparations for celebrating the day in proper style. Maybe, that in the midst of the work and the merry-making they thought of their flag and country. The doctor had fixed up the programme for the day in the after-cabin; it was as follows:—

PROGRAMME.

MAY 17, 1899.

- 7 a.m. Choral music from the fore-cabin. (Solo by R. Stolz.)
- 8 „ Breakfast *à la* Lindström. (Toasts for the day to be proposed by Simmons.)
- 11 „ Procession to the Seal-hole in Rice Strait.
- 12 noon. Salute. Speech in honour of the occasion. (By a dilettante.)
Unveiling of Fosheimsæter.
- 1 p.m. *Dîner à la* '3 Kroner.'

Café, liqueurs.

- 6 „ Supper, with sups to follow.

In the evening dancing and music in the fore- and after-cabins, fireworks, and the midnight sun.

N.B.—No newspaper will be issued in honour of the day.—Ed.

Out in the sound was a heap of snow round the hole in the ice where the temperatures were taken. This heap was to do duty as a stand; thither we were to walk in procession, and from there the doctor was to make a speech in honour of the day.

At eleven o'clock the procession left the 'Fram,' with Baumann at the head of it, carrying the Norwegian flag; next came a picture of the 'Fram,' painted and borne aloft by the mate; then came the doctor with an opposition banner—for even in our little community there were discontented spirits who wished for modifications in our constitution. On the opposition banner were inscribed the words: 'Down with the Porridge: up with the Cheese.' This was a loyally presented protest against the oatmeal porridge which, together with tea and sandwiches, had at first been served some four or five times weekly.* Under this banner, in

* Partly in order to save the other provisions, we ate a great deal of porridge for supper the first winter. Nobody could know how long we might have to make

addition to the doctor, walked Simmons and Bay ; while Braskerud, who in his heart of hearts had longed to join the porridge-hater corporation, walked out of pure bashfulness under the Norwegian flag, in the non-committal ranks of patriotism. Then came the steward's banner, designed by Isachsen under great pressure ; it bore the mystic inscription : 'Up with the Whistplayers, and down with the "Primus."' When it is known that the steward hated

THE DOGS GO A SEVENTEENTH OF MAY PROCESSION.

both like poison, the inscription sounds somewhat self-contradictory, but as a matter of fact it was correct. During the daytime he was inflicted with 'the most disgusting invention in the world,' the 'Primus,' in his pantry, and in the evening, when he sought repose for his weary limbs in the after-cabin, where he lived, his life down there was embittered by the equally obnoxious whist-players.

our provisions last, and it was therefore better to economise the more valuable kinds of food, and gradually improve the diets, than live on the fat of the land at first, and afterwards be obliged to retrench.

I myself stood behind the camera, as the representative of history, for the purpose of immortalizing the northernmost Seventeenth of May procession for that year.

When the procession reached the gaily decorated stand, the doctor stepped up on it and made his speech; and, that ended, came dinner, which consisted of oxtail soup (real polar), our national fish-pudding, roast beef (also real polar), asparagus, stewed cloudberry, and rice, with jam. Our wines were ten-year-old 'akvavit' and malt extract.

Our spirits were soon of the best, and I think we all left the table in the good humour incidental to a good dinner. We then had coffee and curaçoa, and after this the greater number of the party had a nap in preparation for the exertions of the evening. Then the punch-bowl arrived on the table, and about midnight there was more coffee and curaçoa in Fosheimsæter, as we called the hut which Fosheim and Braskerud had built during the winter. Latterly they had been working at it night and day, as we wanted to inaugurate it on the Seventeenth of May, and it was now almost ready. Several speeches were made, everybody was in good spirits, and the evening did not come to an end before one o'clock.

It had been a tiring time for most of us, particularly for the steward, for in addition to taking a spirited part in all the distractions of the day, he had had to look after the cooking and serving of all the food, and, moreover, keep his own birthday.

The men's spirits seemed often to be in accordance with the weather; this time the weather took its cue from our spirits. On the 17th there was brilliant sunshine, with life and merriment on board; on the 18th heavy dark clouds hung over the mountains, and we all felt at a very low ebb. The speakers of the previous day went about in silence, and the steward looked as if he was filled with lead. I see I wrote in my diary: '*Verdens Gang* once proposed that "Bededag" * should be changed to the 18th of May. I quite agree with it in that proposal.'

Bay and I went for a turn in the evening to Rice Strait. For long distances together the ice was extremely weak, and we passed

* A day intended to be set apart for general humiliation and prayer.

many holes on the way. Not more than five miles from where we stopped we could see the margin of the ice, and as far as we could make out there was open water over the whole of Smith Sound and right away to the coast of Greenland. To the south, as far as the eye could see, were open water and a water-sky, the one

THE DOCTOR SPEAKS IN HONOUR OF THE DAY.

greyer than the other. It seemed quite strange to have so much water about us, for it was nine months since we had set eyes on it. On land the snow was in capital condition for 'ski,' but on the ice it was decidedly damp.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUMMER JOURNEYS.

I HAD many plans for sending out sledge-expeditions during the summer. One of them, a trip south on the 'inland ice,' I gave up, as there was so much to be done on board; but a journey to the west coast of Ellesmere Land, across the glaciated part of it, I hoped to have realized very shortly. I had originally thought of going myself, but gave it up in favour of Isachsen, who had now completed his surveying work. Braskerud was his companion.

I did not like to send them off just before Whitsuntide, so everything was made ready for a start on the Tuesday following it. On the previous Friday and Saturday provisions for a thirty days' trip were conveyed across the first part of the glacier and deposited on it in a heap. As the glacier was so steep that a full load could not be driven up it, the things had to be taken up in relays.

On Tuesday, May 23, Isachsen and Braskerud set off. Baumann, Hassel, and Stolz, with their teams, accompanied them across the mountains as far as Leffert Glacier, and returned the next evening. After the returning party had again passed the watershed, and were coming down-hill towards the 'Fram,' the dogs, metaphorically speaking, took the bit between their teeth, and ran away at such a pace that the only thing for it was to let them go, and get the sledges down to the ship as best they could without them. All the dogs eventually turned up on board except Baumann's; he went to look for them later in the evening, and at last found them up in a moraine where, not being able to get rid of their harness, they had become entangled in some stones.

Early on the morning of May 26, Schei and Peder arrived back from their expedition northward. They had not gone farther

than Copes Bay, for the bad condition of the ice had greatly hindered them. They had been obliged to drive long distances on the ice-foot, as outside it lay huge masses of packed, impracticable polar ice. Peder had several times suffered from snow-blindness, and twice had even been obliged to 'keep his bag' for a couple of days, though without thus impeding the work of the expedition to any extent. They had come across two shooting-parties from the 'Windward,' both of whom were returning with an empty bag. One consisted of Bartlett, the mate of the 'Windward,' and an Eskimo, and the other of three Eskimo.

Schei had geologically examined Bache Peninsula as well as he was able to do for the snow. It presented a most interesting field for research, and although, particularly in its northern part, the snow rendered difficult very accurate investigation, he was well satisfied with the results. There were no glaciers on the peninsula. He made a geological section-drawing, collected fossils, drew a sketch-map of the part he travelled over, took a number of photographs, and, on the whole, made the utmost of the excursion. In a long valley extending across to Nordfjord from Princess Marie Bay they had seen the traces of several camping-grounds and some sledge-tracks, both evidently left by Peary. It seemed as if his chief camp had been there, and they supposed it was there that his feet had been frost-bitten in February.

Their last field of work had been at Camperdown, on Bache Peninsula. Here the thaw was in full progress: the streams were rushing full and swift down the sides of the mountains, and large pools made the ice-foot almost impassable. Numbers of lanes crossed and recrossed the ice in Kane Basin, and also in the vicinity of nearly every little iceberg. Here, too, the seals were swimming peaceably and unsuspectingly about, and on quiet, sunshiny days were to be seen basking near the leads, looking like coffee-beans strewn about for long distances over the ice. Peder shot as many of them as were necessary to give the dogs a good feed, and I must say that on their return home they were in splendid condition.

On and near the 'Fram' the greatest activity had prevailed during the whole of the spring, for there was a great deal to be done.

Baumann had long been working so energetically at his magnetic observations, that he had had several attacks of partial blindness, and had been obliged to keep his cabin for a day or so at a time. As soon as the snow had melted on the slopes to the south, the botanist set to work to collect plants. The hut was completed and painted, the different parts marked, and the whole erection taken down and stowed in the hold. The mate, in view of the contemplated sledge-journey round Greenland, was very busy rubbing a compound of tar, stearine, and suet, into the wooden runners, in order to render them more resistant and slippery. For this work a good deal of patience is necessary, as each runner has to be warmed, and the grease afterwards rubbed in—in all, several hours' treatment. Peder and Hassel profited by the mild spring weather to scrape the blubber off and salt the skins of seals and walrus, and also to salt the skins of polar oxen, which they afterwards stowed away in the hold. The engineers got the engines clear for a start, and Nödtvedt, in his smithy, worked early and late making tools, partly for the sledge-journey, and partly for use during our future sojourn in the hut. Among the things he made were a forge and a complete set of blacksmith's tools.

Our hopes of an early summer were, I am sorry to say, doomed to disappointment. Cold and still weather set in again, and the thermometer often showed a night temperature of sixteen or seventeen below zero. When are added to this the thick fogs which we experienced during the daytime, it will be seen that the thaw was not likely to proceed with great rapidity. The trip planned, as a conclusion to the scientific work done up in the fjords, had to be put off on account of the bad weather, but everything was got clear for our departure as soon as a change should set in.

One of the expeditions was to consist of Schei and Stolz; but Stolz had to take to his berth, having become snow-blind during the transport of some walrus-skins from the Meat-heap, and the doctor was asked if he would like to take his place. He was delighted at the prospect of going, as it was his first sledge-journey, and the weather was very fine. He had to undertake to act as zoologist, as Bay could not bring himself to leave his dear insects.

He had discovered their favourite haunts, up on the steep stony ground under Kringsjaa, and now spent most of his time there collecting with intense fervour.

The object of the second expedition was, among other things, to visit the big valley leading across from Nordfjord to the west coast, and which, in some places, showed unusually rich vegetation. Here Simmons and I were to go.

Both the expeditions started at eight on the evening of Friday, June 2. The looseness of the snow, from the high temperature,

I.—BAY FJORD, FARTHEST WEST.

necessitated our driving during the night and resting by day, an arrangement which we found eminently satisfactory. The following morning we camped out on Alexandra Fjord. As the day went on, it grew so warm in the tent that we were glad to lie outside the sleeping-bags, almost without any clothing on. The following night the two parties said good-bye to one another at Ytteröen (Outer Island); our companions setting a course for Knipetangen, while we continued across the fjord to Fort Juliana, where we arrived about three o'clock in the morning.

Here we found everything as it should be; no evilly disposed

beasts had disturbed our possessions. There was some ice inside the tent, and so we lay on the hillside in the sun, but it soon grew too warm for us, and we were driven inside. In the evening we turned out and went up on to the neck of land leading to Nordfjord, Simmons to botanize, and I, if possible, to find some game. But the result was not very satisfactory, for the snow was still too deep for Simmons, and I did not discover a single trace of anything edible. Towards morning we returned, fed the dogs, and cooked ourselves some delicious pemmican lobsouse.

We were very curious to know whether our travelling tent would answer in the great heat, and so put it up, but again the warmth drove us inside the station tent with its double walls.

Not far off, a merry little stream was purling among the stones. It had been frost-bound when we were here in the winter, but now, innocent and crystal-clear, was singing its short summer ditty. It was so busy merely living, had such thousands of things to be joyful over; it laughed to itself, bubbled with good-humour, and chattered about every secret under the sun. Unfortunately for it, we prosaic people thought ourselves constrained to break in on its careless idyl. We brought the water along a tin spout, under which we were able to do a little in the way of cleanliness for ourselves and our cooking utensils; though, as a rule, washing was not a thing that we troubled ourselves much about on our sledge-journeys.

We soon saw that we should do well to go on to Nordfjord as quickly as possible; the vegetation there would probably be much farther advanced than here, and we could, moreover, take these tracts on our way back. On the evening of July 5, therefore, we drove to Noresund; but here we were met by absolutely ice-free water, and had to take to the ice-foot in order to reach the fast ice inside the fjord. But the farther we went up the fjord, the narrower and more rotten became the ice-foot, and at last it suddenly ceased, and left us cut off by steep walls of rock, falling away perpendicularly into the water. We saw that with much trouble we could carry our loads across the cliffs, and down again to the ice-foot on the other side; but we were afraid that with this warm weather the foot would be impracticable, or even

gone in a couple of days' time ; so we gave up the idea of going by that route, and decided to drive from Fort Juliana, across the neck, to the inner part of Nordfjord.

Before turning back, we scrambled up among the rocks, and collected a great number of plants, particularly various species of mosses, and we also saw traces of polar oxen. The whole of this large peninsula, with its abundant vegetation, must be a favourite summer resort of these animals, for in many places they had worn quite broad paths. In winter, on the other hand, it would appear that there are no animals out here ; they probably migrate farther inland.

The view from the slopes up there was enchanting. It was absolutely still, and in the glittering sunshine the sea and ice looked like a plain of gleaming silver. Thousands of birds were pitching and diving in the lanes ; eider-ducks, long-tailed ducks, black guillemots, little auks, and the ubiquitous gulls. They piped and twittered, quacked and mewed, till it all sounded like the hum of distant human voices. How homelike it suddenly became up there, just Nordland over again, only without its richness !

Early in the morning of June 6 we were again at Fort Juliana. Just as we were about to turn in, we suddenly heard a man's voice outside the tent, asking if he might come in. We were amazed, needless to say, and called out, 'Yes, of course, come in !' It was the doctor. He had felt ill while driving up the fjord, and had now come on to the station, accompanied by Schei.

We made him up a bed as well as circumstances would allow, and got him into his sleeping-bag. After he had had some pemmican lobsouse and coffee, his spirits improved, and he remarked that he had come to a first-rate hotel, and already felt better. He had become snow-blind while in the fjord, and as this complaint is often very painful, and he had forgotten to take any cocaine with him, he had no doubt suffered a good deal. He also complained of pains in the chest, but thought that they would soon pass over. After he had had something to eat, he crept into his bag again, and to our joy it was not long before we heard that he was asleep.

Polar travellers do not consider snow-blindness an affliction which need call for any particular commiseration, as it is nearly always the result of a man's own carelessness. It can, moreover, be stopped at any stage in its development, as long as one is in possession of the necessary means. It results from the effect of the intense light, caused by the refraction of the sun's rays from great fields of ice or snow. The first symptoms are a sensation of heat in the eyes; soon afterwards one begins to see indistinctly, as if in a fog, and there is a feeling of having some foreign matter

II.—BAY FJORD, FARTHER EAST.

in the eye. In spite of its short duration, the malady may be serious enough, for it may turn into absolute blindness. As a preventive measure, some travellers recommend spectacles of smoke-coloured glass, while others prefer blue, green, or red spectacles. Personally, I have felt benefited by all these colours irrespectively, and I have also used very faintly tinted glass. On the other hand, I have seen cases of snow-blindness, despite the use of all these colours, and some people have found even two pairs of glasses no good, but have had to 'take the veil,' in addition, to protect themselves. For any one with fairly strong

eyes, it is, as a rule, sufficient to rub in soot round the eyes and on the nose. Now and then one comes across people who can play what tricks they like without snow-blindness attacking them, as, for instance, the mate. As it will be seen, snow-blindness, like sea-sickness, is quite individual. The one principle of prevention is to shut out the surplus light which the person in question may be unable to endure, and as the more the eye is protected from the light the better, I should be inclined to think that smoke-

III.—FROM THE HEAD OF BAY FJORD, FARTEST EAST.

coloured spectacles are the best. The most dangerous time for the eyes is from April to midsummer; when once there is water on the ice the critical period is over.

In the evening we turned out again. The doctor was so much better by then that he said he thought he should be quite well again soon, if he kept quiet for a little while. I asked him if he would not like me to go back to the ship with him, but he said no, that he would rather remain where he was; he thought that as soon as his eyes were well, there would be nothing further the matter with him.

Simmons then started botanizing in the neighbourhood of the

tent, while Schei and I went up to the neck of land. The warm weather had had great effect up there, and we were now compelled to drive for long distances on blue clay, by the river-side. To get across to Nordfjord in such circumstances was an impossibility.

Schei proceeded with his geological investigations up on the boulder-strewn land. I hoped to find hares, in any case on the slopes toward the Nordfjord side; but not a trace of one did I see. I can't imagine what the hares up there do with themselves; there was hardly ever one to be seen.

On my return, I found Schei and Simmons back at the tent, and the cooking-pot boiling hard. The doctor said he felt much better; the pain in his side was gone, and his eyes had so far recovered that he could sit inside the tent without spectacles. After we had had our meal, he remarked that he regretted having come to the station—he had only alarmed himself, and prevented Schei from doing his work up the fjord—there was nothing serious the matter with him. We consoled him by telling him that there was no harm done, that we had plenty of time, and could drive up the fjord on another occasion. I then asked him for the second time if he would not let me take him on board, now that we had all rested, but he would not hear of it, and said that he should prefer to remain where he was. I then offered to stay behind with him—we could collect insects and shoot seals together. But he would not let me defer the journey to Beitstadfjord, and said that the time would pass quickly, even when he was there alone. He could go out shooting, collect insects, and look after his dogs; he would have plenty to do, too, in cutting ice round the tent, for it was our intention to take the latter back to the ship, as well as the whole of our depot out here.

We turned out in the evening, and began to remove some of the ice and sand round the tent, but did not finish our job, or anything like it, for we had originally sunk the tent two to three feet deep in a sand-hill. Then we got ready for our four days' trip to Beitstadfjord, and the doctor helped us to carry down our things, lash the loads to the sledges, and harness the dogs.

And then we said good-bye to one another, little thinking what was about to happen.

CHAPTER XIV.

BEARS AND POLAR OXEN.

THE condition of the ice left nothing to be desired, and after driving for three hours we made a halt at Knipetangen. Here there were seals innumerable basking on the ice, particularly in the direction of Haaøen (Dog-fish Island). We saw the tracks of several bears, and some of them were so fresh that we expected every moment to meet one of the animals themselves. We continued our journey in towards Beitstadjord at a steady pace all night.

Then the sun peeped forth above the tops, and sent its beams of purple and gold dancing over the mountains and fjord.

Suddenly Schei, who was driving last, caught sight of a she-bear and two year-old cubs, close by an iceberg. He shouted 'Bear!' and straightway set off across the ice, leaving his sledge and dogs to take care of themselves. I had not seen the animals, but I undid the lashing which secured my rifle to the sledge, turned the dogs in the direction in which Schei had gone, and drove after him. Simmons followed me. The dogs had not yet got scent of the bears; the wind was in the wrong quarter for it, and as yet we were not on their tracks. I caught up Schei, took him on to my sledge, and set on the dogs. Then, at last, they discovered what we were after, and off they went, across the polished ice, away to the north side of the fjord. The bears, which seemed to have an idea that they were being followed up by swift-footed folk, sprang across the crack on to the ice-foot, and set a course up the fjord. When we reached the crack, I told Schei and Simmons to run on while I brought my dogs up on to the ice-foot. Here I came across the tracks, and no sooner were the dogs on them than off

they went like rockets. I followed them as well as I was able, but I soon saw that I should make better progress on the fjord-ice, and so went down on to it again. A few minutes later the dogs brought the bear to bay; she had chased her cubs into a pool in the crack, where they were now swimming about. She thought, of course, that she was about to make very short work of the dogs, and attacked them over and over again. She had reckoned without her host, however; though 'Svartflekken,' who invariably came to

FROM SCHEI'S JOURNEY. A SHELTERED CAMPING-GROUND. (See p. 150.)

grief on such occasions, was no more fortunate this time than usual. The bear managed to get hold of his harness, and pawed him under her; but as soon as the other five saw what she was doing, they all set on her, tearing and dragging at her hair with such fury that she was glad to let the dog go. 'Svartflekken' was not at all ashamed of himself, as Simmons remarked, and was no sooner on his legs again than he was clinging to the bear like a horsefly.

Schei dropped the dam with two shots, and Simmons and Bay each shot a cub; they were swimming about in the pool, growling at us. Then the two men went off to fetch their dogs.

Schei had some little way to go before he reached his, for, instead of bear-hunting, they had turned their attention to the carcase of a seal, which the bears had left behind on the ice. The dogs were allowed to eat as much of the bear's-meat as they could get down, and we furthermore took with us a supply for three days; leaving the rest on the ice, after we had spread the skins over it to protect it from the sun. Simmons and Schei were greatly elated over their morning's work, for it was their first bear-shoot, but, as the proverb says, 'no one shall praise the day before the sun goes down on it.'

Later in the forenoon we encamped on the east side of the fjord, just opposite Stenkjær. After a few hours' refreshing sleep before beginning on our work, I went a reconnaissance up the slopes, while the others prepared breakfast. I followed the course of a small stream, and in the snow, near the foot of the valley, I discovered some fresh tracks. The snow, it is true, was as loose as scum, so that any track would be very much larger than the foot which made it; but these, I thought, could hardly be the footprints of a dog, and the only other animal likely to have made them was a wolf. They led up to a place where the snow had been scratched aside, then made a turn, and were soon lost to sight on bare land. As I was curious to see what the animal could have buried, I walked up to the spot. There lay some large half-digested pieces of blubber and meat, which the animal had ejected, and then cached, with a view to future delectation. I saw that this was not the work of a wolf, but of one of our dogs, which must have got loose and come this long distance to avoid being robbed by its fellows. When I got back to the tent, I noticed that one of the dogs had gnawed through its trace, but having accomplished its errand, had returned to its place again.

After breakfast we started forth to our work: Schei to examine the glacier and take photographs, Simmons and I to the moraine-ridges, with the old coast-lines, which had been one of our happy hunting-grounds of last autumn. This was a glorious time for the botanist; the vegetation here was luxuriant and far advanced, and he cherished great expectations of the coast-lines of which he had heard so much.

As we were wending our way up the slopes, we suddenly became aware of three polar oxen high up in a steep, rocky place. It was impossible to stalk them without being seen, so I thought it better to fetch the dogs, in case the animals should make off. On the way down to them we met Schei, who was more than willing to join us. When we returned, with two dogs each, we found that the oxen had moved further down the slope, and that we could now advance unseen to within a couple of hundred yards' distance. I overrated the distance at first, taking it for three hundred yards, and although I do not usually move the sights, I did so on this occasion. If one happens to be using a gun which has so flat a trajectory as a Krag-Jørgensen, it is better, I should say, not to move the sights at all, but rather to take a full sight and aim high.

My first bullet I heard singing among the rocks over the heads of the animals; my two next struck one each, and although the oxen remained on their feet, I could see that they had had enough. A large ox was still standing a little distance off, so I let go the dogs on to it, and left Simmons and Schei to do the rest. It was their first experience of polar-ox shooting. They followed the animal a little way along the flat-topped ridge of sand, and then Schei dropped down behind a stone, from which he meant to get a resting shot. Simmons was just standing wondering whether he should do likewise, but before he could make up his mind, the ox set off full gallop down the slope, the stones and earth flying from under its hoofs. It headed straight for the discomfited sportsmen, with all the pack after it, and so extraordinarily quick was the animal, that not one of the dogs could keep up with it.

It could not have been pleasant to be Simmons or Schei at that moment. It was difficult for either of them to shoot, for if they missed they might hit a dog; and in any case to shoot resting was an impossibility. This Schei also perceived, and he started up to aim; but the ox advanced on him so rapidly that he was not ready for it in time. The same was the case with Simmons—he had got a cartridge jammed—and now there was only one thing left for them to do—run to one side to avoid being tossed by the animal.

I had my own reflections on the subject as I stood looking on

at the performance, but they were of short duration. At the mad pace at which the ox was going it was impossible for it to remain up under the boulders, and so down it came, heading straight for me. Here was a dilemma! Behind the ox were both the shooters and the dogs, and if I missed, one or other of them might be killed. There was no time for hesitation, however, so I sent the ox a bullet at twenty yards' distance, but without it having the slightest effect. It rushed straight on me with the same furious speed as before, and there was absolutely no possibility of getting in a new cartridge. I had to do as my comrades had done before me. The animal flashed past, but my second shot being ready just as it was turning round, I gave it a charge which hit it on the nape, at the back of the head. It fell on the spot. It was a fine animal, with the biggest horns I had seen up to that time; and it was quite capable of using them too. The first shot it received had grazed the lower extremity of the heart, but it had no effect apparent at the time. The polar ox is, without doubt, the most invulnerable animal I know; the amount of lead it can take is almost incredible.

My comrades despatched the wounded ox, and we all three had enough to do for the rest of the day skinning and disjointing the animals, and bringing the flesh and skins down to the tent. We deserved a few hours' sleep, we thought, after such work as that.

Then we began on our business in earnest. Schei measured the glacier; Simmons examined the sands between the water and the glacier, and visited the west side of the fjord. He, however, spent most of his time botanizing with me; from our hunting-ground inwards, along the slopes, as far as the glacier.

In the fine weather we were now having, this fjord-arm, with the high mountains round it, looked most beautiful. It was full summer in here, and the grass was very abundant, growing in waving patches for long distances together, in which were multitudes of red and yellow sweet-scented flowers. Here we found our dear old friends, the lovely little *Linnæa*, the buttercup, saxifrages, and many other kinds. In fact, I feel almost tempted to recommend Beitstadfjord as a summer resort—but only in fine weather.

We returned to the tent tired and hungry, and feeling as if we should much enjoy regaling ourselves on our spoils of the previous day. There were, indeed, delicacies to meet the idiosyncrasies of every palate; one chose steaks, pure and simple, another had a preference for marrow-bones, while another examined the heart and kidneys, and fried them afterwards.

On Saturday evening we turned out at ten o'clock, lighted the 'Primus,' and put on the cooking-pot. Our way was now to Fort Juliana; we had told the doctor that we should be absent for

FROM SCHEI'S JOURNEY. CAMP AT BACHE PENINSULA.

four days, and nothing should tempt us to remain longer. The enchanting landscape of the morning was all gone, and the weather had turned raw and cold. Dark, rainy clouds hung threateningly over the precipices, while the valley seemed twice as narrow and the mountains twice as high as heretofore. Now and again a heavy rain-drop would fall on the tent, as if to warn us that it was time to break up; but we were not in any great hurry to start, for it was warm and comfortable inside. We had our breakfast and smoked our regulation pipes of plug tobacco.

With the addition of the flesh and skins of three oxen our loads had now become very heavy, and we found that getting

them along was no joke; while there was also more to come farther out, for we had all the bear-flesh to pick up. The skin of a bear with the blubber on it is a load in itself, and as much as a barrel of blubber is often removed from a single skin.

The going was so good, however, that we were actually able to sit on the sledges, until we were constrained to get off and run beside them to keep ourselves warm. The dogs were in worse case than ourselves; it poured with rain, and sharp jagged fragments began to project from the salt-water ice. It was like driving over needles, and we had not gone far before the ice was spotted with blood. Matters were no better when the rain went over to sleet, and we had to cross one large pool after another, many of them so deep that the sledges were under water. It was as much as the dogs could do to get across them without swimming, while we ran by the side as best we could to make it as easy for them as possible.

Outside Knipetangen, in Hayes Sound, we had bright sunshine again, whereas over Beitstadfjord still hung the same dull grey weather. The ice became worse and worse, often with deep, loose snow on the top of it, but under land was some bare ice, and thither we steered. The dogs, in spite of being so footsore, behaved splendidly, and a stiff breeze springing up behind us, we managed to get on a good pace.

Heavy as were our loads, they were not so heavy as that which awaited us in the tent.

CHAPTER XV.

DOCTOR SVENDSEN'S FATE.

To our great sorrow we found the doctor dead.

We gathered from his diary that he had overrated his strength. The great mistake had been that, whereas all the other members of the expedition had undergone strict medical examination, the doctor had never been examined.

After the experience which I have had, it is my very strong advice to future explorers to be particularly careful in their choice of a doctor. Almost before the other members of the expedition, he must have a sound and resisting constitution. The responsibility he has undertaken must not be overlooked; he it is who must watch over the health of each individual, and on him the welfare of the expedition may, in certain circumstances, be almost wholly dependent. If one or other member of the expedition should fail, there is always another who can take his place, but a doctor is not to be replaced, for, as a rule, he is the only medical man on board.

In my diary for Sunday, June 10, I wrote:—‘This, then, was to be the end here—here where we have spent so many happy hours, and where for so long we have had our second home. There is nothing to be done. We must be reasonable and submit to what has happened, be it never so heavy.’ And again on Monday I write:—‘The sun is shining as usual, everything looks bright and peaceful. The birds twitter as joyously as ever; they, at any rate, are happy; they do not feel anything of that which is affecting us human beings.

‘We cannot get away to-day; the dogs are so footsore that they can hardly move. Schei’s sledge, too, must be mended

before we can go on; nor have we any good news to bring our comrades on board; we shall be there time enough. Svendsen was a great favourite with us all, and I know this will be a heavy blow to the fellows on the "Fram."

Monday and Tuesday were spent in preparations for the journey. The doctor's body was sewn up in sailcloth for transport to the ship. The loads had grown so big that part of the depot had now to be left behind.

On Wednesday morning at two o'clock we broke up, and later in the forenoon pitched the tent at our old camping-ground on the west side of Alexandra Fjord. Here, too, the fine weather of the last few days had awakened nature out of her sleep, as it were, at a single stroke. The sun now shone warm and clear. Plains and slopes smiled their greeting to us under their many-hued covering of flowers. Ice-water streamed in the brooks, and rushed in torrents over the precipices. Near the tent a covey of ptarmigan were walking about, and from the hillside we heard the cry of the cock; while out on the ice the seals stretched themselves in enjoyment of the warmth, and the long-tailed ducks splashed about in the leads. Nowhere does one notice the magic power of the sun as in the polar regions; it creates summer in the space of a few days, as we had occasion to remark all the way we went.

The heat inside the tent was almost unendurable. We tried lying outside the bags, but it was too warm. Then we stripped, garment by garment, till we were almost naked, but even then we could hardly bear it. It was the hottest day I have ever spent under canvas.

At a little past midnight we drove on again. The temperature was now such that the water on the ice was as high by night as by day, and so for that matter we could have driven at what time we liked, but the nights were cooler, and the dogs consequently more willing to work. We took to the old drift-ice out on the fjord, and made our way as best we could with the doctor's body through deep and loose snow. At the worst places we lent a hand at the hauling, as great care was necessary in order not to upset the sledges.

We arrived on board on June 15, at ten in the forenoon. The

overwhelming impression made by the doctor's death is indescribable, and there were some among those strong healthy men who did not recover from it until many months were over.

The body was placed down in the cable-tier until the funeral could take place. On June 16 I wrote:—'The flag is flying at half-mast from the peak to-day. It is the first time it has been in this position on board the "Fram," let us hope it will indeed be the last.'

The funeral was a seaman's one. With the body and bier covered by flags, we walked out to Rice Strait, where a large hole was opened in the ice. It was an affecting moment. The doctor's lifeless body was lowered to the water-side, the prayers read, and a hymn sung. Then followed the moment when he slowly slipped into the deep. We shall never forget it. We sang a hymn, and said the Lord's Prayer.

CHAPTER XVI.

SUMMER WORK.—ACROSS THE GLACIERS.

SEVERAL small expeditions out to Brevoort Island after eggs and sea-fowl had been made during our absence, but, as regards the eggs, had not been very successful; the largest number taken at one time being seventeen eider eggs, and twenty-nine gulls' eggs. Many sea-birds, however, had been shot, particularly little auk. We captured seal continuously at this time, taking a great many in the vicinity of Bache Peninsula, where a violent storm in the autumn had broken up the old ice. On the young ice, too, which had formed in the big channel leading straight across Hayes Sound, and which we called 'Rutherford Klara,'* the seals were in the habit of congregating, and on clear sunny days would lie there in numbers basking in the sunshine.

Our summer work was now in full swing; the scientific men were occupied, sometimes singly in various directions, sometimes together for the purpose of dredging in Rice Strait. They were collecting as hard as they could, in view of our approaching departure.

A little way south of our harbour were some tarns, in which a quantity of alga was growing; we fished this up with rakes, spread it over the mountain-side to dry, and kept it to tighten the logs of our winter hut when it should be set up. I think we collected as much as thirty sackfuls.

The time had now come for a general stocktaking, and counting over of the year's consumption of our stores; a work undertaken by Baumann, and which occupied him and his assistants for several days. The result showed that on our departure we had been abundantly victualled for four years.

* A *klare* is still, open water; a polynia.

The remainder of the depot still at Fort Juliana I left alone for the present. It was possible that Isachsen and Braskerud might not return across the glacier, but that stress of weather, or some other cause, might bring them to the inner fjords, when the provisions would probably be of use to them. They were only provisioned for thirty days, and now one day after another was passing by without their reappearance. The thaw, meanwhile, was progressing so rapidly, that the ice in the inner fjords would hardly be practicable so late in the season.

On June 20 a spell of bad weather set in, and this lasted for four or five days. There was a regular gale from the south, with snow on the mountains, and snow and sleet down by the coast. This was bad for our two men up on the glacier; it would be impossible for them to make any way while the storm lasted, and it would also oblige them to wait a day or two afterwards for the snow to sink together.

On June 24 I wrote: 'It is a year to-day since we started on the expedition—since our friends and kin shouted their good wishes to us for our return. It was a bad day that, dreadful from first to last, as only such a day of sailing can be. It is dull to-day, too, and many sad thoughts crowd upon one. It seems as if this expedition were fated. First of all we were stopped here last autumn; then the doctor died. Isachsen and Braskerud have not yet returned from the "inland ice," and no one knows how they are faring. We must hope that at any rate they are not in danger; but it would be bad enough for the expedition if they found it necessary to shoot some of the dogs. Added to this, the condition of the ice in Kane Basin looks so unfavourable, that a miracle must happen if we are to get up there this year. Bay and I have been up to Pim Island to-day, where we had a good view north to Kane Basin, but the ice there is unchanged, there is not a lead to be seen. It is this steady south wind which keeps the ice packed up there.'

Meanwhile all were busy on board, both on deck and in the engine-room, getting the ship ready for sea.

On the evening of June 27 I determined to let Baumann and Hassel drive up the glacier, where the snow was now very good,

in the hope of their meeting Isachsen and Braskerud; not because I really thought their lives were in danger, but because they might be delayed by want of food for their dogs.

I was awakened on Sunday, July 2, at five o'clock in the morning, by the ship being spoken. Its immediate surroundings were a large lake of water on which we used a boat, although with care it was possible to get across dry-shod in very high sea-boots. To my great joy I saw that it was our four colleagues who were stationed on the other side of the lake waiting for the 'pram,' and that they and all their dogs seemed to be in good case.

Isachsen and Braskerud had crossed the glaciated part of Ellesmere Land, descending to bare land on the western side of it, where they observed several large fjords. Of this journey Isachsen gives an account in his report, which I quote in full. It is dated Rice Strait, July 25, 1899.

'The orders I received were agreeably brief; they were: with one man as a companion, two six-dog teams, and victuals for thirty days to traverse the "inland ice" of Ellesmere Land—I was to choose the direction myself, and I chose *westward*—and endeavour to reach the west coast, afterwards proceeding as far south as I could. I had Braskerud for a companion.

'The *provisions* were:—

66 lbs. biscuits	6 biscuits per man per day
3¼ lbs. ground coffee	½ oz. per man per day
39½ lbs. pemmican	10 " " "
10 lbs. pea-sausages	2½ " " "
2 lbs. sugar	½ " " "
9¼ lbs. butter	2½ " " "
2 lbs. lime-juice tablets . . .	½ " " "

In all 132 lbs.

4½ gallons petroleum.

'*Dog-food*: 400 lbs. rations at 1 lb. per dog per day of "patent food," equal parts suet and fish-flour.

'Added to this were the sledges, extra runners with German-silver plates, the sleeping-bags, one carbine with thirty cartridges, our private bags, a two-man tent, a tool-bag, and a cooker.

'The *instruments* were: a theodolite, a compass, two quick-silver thermometers, a pocket aneroid barometer, an alidade, a camera with seventy films, and an odometer.

'For *medicinal purposes* we had: opium, naphtha, iodoform-gauze bandages, plaster, cocaine, veils, and snow-spectacles.

'Everything together weighed 872 lbs., and Braskerud and I divided the weight equally on our two sledges.

'On Tuesday, May 23, at eleven in the forenoon, we left the "Fram," and were accompanied by Baumann, Hassel, and Stolz as far as Leffert Glacier. At two in the afternoon of the following day they returned on board, and we proceeded up the glacier. The conditions were extremely unfavourable, and it took us three days to reach the top of it.

'The general true course to Leffert Glacier is W. by S. about twelve miles; to the top of the glacier W.N.W. about twenty-four miles.

'Leffert Glacier falls out into Ross Bay, immediately south of Rice Strait. Its gradient is even. It is bounded on the north by partially snow-clad mountains, between which seven smaller glaciers shoot out to it on the south side of some higher snow-covered mountains.

'On the same evening that we reached the top I was away four hours reconnoitring up on a mountain to the north. To the north and north-west I saw the jagged, partially snow-covered mountains which lie south of Hayes Sound and Jökelfjord. To the west were high snow-clad mountains through which a very large glacier protruded. From the highest part of Leffert Glacier another glacier trended westward, converging with the one from the west, running towards Jökelfjord. In the south were high precipitous mountains only partially covered with snow.

'Before starting down from the top of Leffert Glacier, we thought it best first to go south, to see at closer quarters if there were not better country by which we could proceed westward. In the end, however, we were obliged to descend from our halting place, as the country to the south proved to be much too broken for us, and on May 28 we reached the face of the glacier, where we saw Jökelfjord with its icebergs lying right beneath us. It

proved unadvisable after reconnaissance to attempt crossing the aforesaid large chief glacier, as it presented numerous longitudinal crevasses, to say nothing of the land behind it being unusually high. The glacier receives small glaciers from the south and north, but particularly from the latter. Our glacier fell away almost perpendicularly towards a little glacier-lake. In front of this and between the two chief glaciers were moraines of fine material.

‘We therefore determined to turn from here in a southerly direction, as on the previous day I had thought to see more level country west of the broken country to the south. This necessitated our ascending again. The country between Beitstadjord and Jökelfjord appeared to be exceedingly broken, and there were sharp peaks and partially bare, almost perpendicular mountainsides in every direction.

‘On May 30 we at last got down to the south side of the chain of mountains south of Jökelfjord, and were now able to push on between high ranges on both sides. Our progress, too, was greatly accelerated by the lightening of the loads, and we could now on an average drive fourteen to seventeen miles in the working day, of which one hour was devoted to rest. It was not until this time that we began with the hour’s halt, as I had not considered it necessary before, the dogs having plenty of time for rest during our reconnaissances, which were frequent, and often of long duration.

‘On June 1 we reached the highest part of the depression in which we were travelling. The gradient had been tolerably equal all the way up, and from here sloped down again fairly gradually in the same direction south-westwards, the depression at the same time widening out till it became almost a plain. *Nunataks* projected from the ice on the south side, while on the north was the elevated and mostly snow-covered land west of Jökelfjord. When we had reached the lowest point of the depression, the gradient began to rise again, while we at the same time changed our course to the north-west.

‘About midnight, on June 2, we saw from the high ground to the north-west the first sight of what, later, proved to be the

SKETCH OF SVERDRUP'S AND ISACHSEN'S JOURNEYS TO THE WEST COAST, 1899.

* What Isachsen and Braskerud saw in the N.W., June 2, 1899.

west coast. It was a fjord-arm, which cut into the land in an easterly direction from a larger fjord lying almost due north and south. From the outer part of this fjord-arm a chain of mountains of equal heights ran in a south-easterly direction. Nearer, and in front of this chain, was a wide level mountain waste—"Braskerudflya." There was no snow, either on the waste or on the mountains. In one part only of the chain was a fragment of glacier to be seen hanging over the upper part of the mountain-side. In the south-east the waste abutted immediately on to the "inland-ice."

'Although we greatly wished to drive down the glacier to bare land, and, as we hoped, to the fjord, I thought it best, in view of the orders I had received, to proceed southwards and see if we could do anything in that direction. From a good point of vantage* we observed that the chain of mountains stretched as far as we could see to the south-east, and that they were free of snow; while at the same time they shut in the view to the west and south-west.

'In addition to the big glacier we were driving on, and which extended towards the fjord-valley in a north-westerly direction, a glacier from the north-east, and another from the north, converged towards the before-mentioned valley. We also observed a fjord running north-east, and another running north-west as far as we could see.

'Our work now was to get down from the glacier to bare land, and, if possible, to the fjord. If, as there seemed to be, there was vegetation, it was also to be supposed that there was game. On the forenoon of June 4 we therefore set our course north-westward, and, after driving seventeen miles, got comfortably down the glacier, and camped on the bare land in the evening. This was the first and last time on this journey that we drove during the day-time; it was an arrangement that did not answer; the dogs were less willing in the hot sunshine than they were in the cool of the night, while we ourselves, having had little sleep the last few days, slept for three hours instead of one when we halted for a rest.

'The three converging glaciers fell out into a glacier-lake, and

* Rundfjeld.

BRASKEUDEFLYA, FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

the following day we drove on this down the valley, but only for a couple of miles, which was the extent of its length. The ice on it was about to break up.

‘We encamped and rambled about the whole of that night on the north side of the fjord. The land hereabouts was more broken than on the south side, where the sides of the valley had a natural decline from the wastes. It only consisted, however, of comparatively low mountains and ridges. We walked for ten or eleven miles in a north-westerly direction, and, as far as we could see, there was no “inland-ice” west of the northernmost of the three glaciers which I have already mentioned.

‘The next night we walked about ten miles up on the wastes on the other side of the valley. These were situated, I should say, some 300 to 400 feet above sea-level, and were probably an old coast-terrace; a surmise which is strengthened by the fact that we found there a considerable quantity of drift-wood. Unfortunately accurate measurement of its height was in the circumstances impossible, nor could I determine the height of the sea-boundary, as on the bare land we were not higher than the level of the waste. Braskerudfly was about ten miles broad, and extended on the east side of the range of mountains as far as the eye could see. The material was sand and grit. Here and there was a little lake; in one of which we saw four gulls, probably glaucous gulls (*Larus glaucus*).

‘The bed-rock, which projected in places, consisted, according to Herr Schei’s determination of the specimens which we brought back with us, of “finely clodded limestone conglomerate, which, however, does not resemble any of the kinds of rock peculiar to Bache Peninsula and Princess Marie Bay. This circumstance would seem to point to the fact that other and younger formation divisions appear here than in the before-mentioned tracts.” This was, of course, the composition of the rock on the other side of the fjord valley.

‘In the middle of the waste, in the same direction as the chain of mountains, ran a series of crags, 300 to 600 feet above the level of the waste, while closer to the chain ran yet another series, larger in size and at smaller intervals than the others. The outlines of the fjord were somewhat broken, and several low points of land

jutted out on both sides of it. The ice on the fjord was even, and the landscape was reflected in it.* Only one iceberg of any size was seen.

‘In the middle of the fjord valley, the chief direction of which was north-west, ran a large stream, which received several tributaries in the shape of small streams from both sides of the valley. The glacier-lake was dammed by a narrow barrier of fine material, which rose to a height of from eighteen to twenty-four feet above the surface of the water. I saw no outlet from the lake.

‘When we got back from the wastes, there was so much water on the ice that we had to think about returning as quickly as we could, so we packed our baggage and drove back to our first camp on bare land. While we were here we made another trip to the waste, took observations for latitude and longitude and variation, and collected plants.

‘It was now June 9, so I decided to make use of the remaining time—about four days, as I reckoned we should require ten or eleven days for the return journey—in ascending the high snow-covered mountains to the north, whence, in all probability, we should have a good view.

‘On the afternoon of June 9, therefore, we drove from bare land, and a little past midnight were obliged to halt on account of snow and fog. The wind increased to a gale, and, until June 14, we were not able to advance more than about five miles. We made use of every slight improvement in the weather to get on, but were constantly obliged to camp. We would not, however, give up going farther north, and after driving a short distance, left the dogs and sledges behind, took with us what was necessary, and proceeded northward on “ski.”

‘After we had crossed the median of the three glaciers † the fog closed in on us, and, as there was every prospect of bad weather, we very reluctantly turned our faces homewards. My intention had been to describe, as it were, a figure eight, in order to see as much as possible of the country. The day after this the fog was so thick, that it was not worth while to drive on, but on June 16 we continued our way, partly in fog. The next day there

* Probably there was water on the ice.

† The Beitstadfjord glacier.

was a gale from the south-west, with fog, but in the course of the afternoon we were able to go on.

‘Our time was now so far advanced that I thought it best to get on to our old route again, as the country to the south-east was considerably broken. It was also necessary that we should be able to make a little progress, in case of fog, so we turned in a south-easterly direction, and about midnight, on June 17, arrived at our old depression. We still hoped to be on board for St. Hans’ Day, if only we had fine weather. On June 18, however, we only made a few miles, as the fog was very thick. Here we were detained six days by fog, and a snowstorm from the west-south-west. On June 22—that is to say, the thirtieth day since we left the “Fram”—we had remaining about fifty biscuits, ten and a half tablets of compressed lentils, about four pounds of pemmican, enough coffee for twice, half a gallon of petroleum, and six whole rounds, or seventy-two rations, of dog-food—we had been economical with the latter, and had not given the dogs much food, when they had no work to do. We were very sorry that our supply of tobacco had given out, though Braskerud’s waistcoat pocket, which had once had tobacco in it, did service in our pipes for three whole days.

‘On St. Hans’ Day, at two in the morning, we were at last able to make a start. The tent and sledges were almost buried in the drifted snow. Our progress, however, did not amount to much, and at half-past nine in the forenoon we camped again, after having advanced about one mile. It was our intention to wait till the snow had packed a little, as driving in snow as loose as this was simply wearing out the dogs to no purpose.

‘Already that evening the going improved, and by eight the next morning we had done another eight miles. On June 26, we only made a couple of miles, on account of the fog and snow. The following day we made so much progress, that, on June 29, we were able to camp at the end of Jökelfjord.

‘At midnight, on June 29, we were at the top of Leffert Glacier, and at two in the morning I saw a couple of men, with two teams of dogs, going in a direction away from us. We had often wondered if they would be anxious about us on board, as we were not back when the thirty days had elapsed. I thought they

would not, as I had the Captain's consent to prolong the journey over the prescribed time, if it were possible, *i.e.* if we found game. Braskerud said that if they came to look for us "we must put up with it—as long as they had some tobacco with them." As they did not see us we shouted to them, and they came to us, whereupon we encamped.

Braskerud.

BAD WEATHER REFLECTIONS IN THE TENT.

'When we met with the men from the "Fram," we had remaining two tablets of lentils, twenty biscuits, a piece of pemmican, coffee for twice, a quart of petroleum, and twenty-eight dog-rations; in spite of *our* having, at the last, eaten some of the dog-food.

'As a rule, we generally had two to four dogs running loose, on a minimum ration, and rewarded the others according to merit. Our leading thought had always been to return on board with all our

baggage in good preservation ; and especially with all the dogs, in view of the eventual object of the expedition—the sledge-journey round the north coast of Greenland.

‘ The following day we drove down Leffert Glacier on splendid snow, and reached the “ Fram ” on Sunday, July 2, at five in the morning.

‘ As might be expected, we had often considerable difficulty on this trip in extricating ourselves from the crevasses in the glaciers ; especially the glaciers south of Jökelfjord. The small fissures, in which we ourselves and a few of the dogs were continually falling for a short distance, we became so used to, that we did not take much notice of them.

‘ The *vegetation* on the west coast was everywhere luxuriant, where there was bare land. We brought back with us specimens of, altogether, about thirty-five species of plants, which, according to Herr Simmons, are as follows :—

‘ Phanerogams : *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, *Saxifraga tricuspidata*, *Saxifraga nivalis*, *Saxifraga cernua*, *Stellaria longipes*, *Stellaria humifusa*, *Cerastium alpinum*, *Papaver radiculatum*, *Draba* sp., *Oxyria digyna*, *Salix arctica*, *Lugula confusa*, *Alopecurus alpinus*, and *Carex foliginosa*, including a couple of specimens, which are not yet determined. *Cassiope tetragona* was observed, but no specimen taken. Of cryptogams, as far as Herr Simmons could determine, we brought back specimens of seven species of lichen ; among them *Cladonia rangiferina* (reindeer-moss) and a kind of *Cetraria* ; we also collected about ten different species of moss.

‘ The pieces of driftwood which we brought back belonged to a conifer, but of what species cannot be said for the present.

‘ The vegetation at the head of Jökelfjord was very sparse.

‘ We observed snow-buntings every day on the “ inland-ice ; ” and the tracks of foxes were equally numerous, and to be seen going in all directions. We saw the tracks of wolves several times, as well as those of the stoat and lemming.

‘ When we came to bare land, on the west side, we heard the twittering of birds wherever we went, especially that of the snow-bunting. We also saw here the wheat-ear (*Saxicola œnanthe*), and

several hares,* of which I shot three. I shot two Buffon skuas (*Lestris longicordata*), while ptarmigan and sandpipers (*Tringa* sp.) were also seen.

‘We could hardly step without treading in the tracks of polar oxen; but all the tracks were old, the freshest being probably from the spring. Their direction, as a rule, was west or south-west, so it is possible that these animals seek the coast in the spring, for we observed the same migration in many other places. We were, however, very much surprised that where there was such abundant pasture for them, we never met with any of the animals themselves. We brought back with us the antlers and under jaw-bone of a reindeer; and also a lemming. We saw several glaucous gulls in the glacier-lake. Judging by the acquaintance I now have with the topography of this country, I should consider the Beitstadfjord glacier as the boundary between Ellesmere Land and Grinnell Land. This also coincides with the names of the lands, for it was supposed that Hayes Sound divided them.† Geologically, too, this division seems to be justified, for the Silurian formation which is so typical of the country north of Hayes Sound and Bache Peninsula, is not so apparent south of Beitstadfjord. According to Herr Simmons, none of the specimens of plants which we brought back with us were of the kinds which are found only on Grinnell Land.

‘Finally, I wish to emphasize that Braskerud on the journey proved himself to be a capable and interested fellow.’

* That these bounded more on two legs than on four evoked from Braskerud, to whom this mode of progression was new, the most forcible expressions of surprise.

† A more natural division between these two lands, however, is the pass which Sverdrup and Bay went over. G. I. February, 1903.

CHAPTER XVII.

SLEDGE-JOURNEYS ASHORE AND AFLOAT.

ON Monday evening, July 3, four of us drove up the fjord; of whom Bay and I were to fetch the depot from Fort Juliana, and Simmons and Schei to visit Alexandra Fjord. The pools of water were so deep that the dogs might have swum them, and we drove through water almost the whole way up Hayes Sound. Towards morning we rested for a while on the east side of the fjord, and amused ourselves by shooting sea-birds in the lanes.

Here we parted company, and the other party started up Alexandra Fjord, while Bay and I went on to Fort Juliana, where we remained for two days. We accomplished our business there, and collected some plants and insects up on the slopes and on the neck of land leading to Nordfjord. We saw no traces of polar oxen, but shot a leash of hares, and saw the first ptarmigan chicks of the year.

The polar ptarmigan is a variety, or, more properly speaking, several different varieties, of our ordinary mountain ptarmigan. It is rather larger than the latter, while its summer plumage also slightly differs from it.

The sun now burnt just as it does on the Norwegian mountains on a really hot summer day, and we began to be anxious about the ice, for it had been bad enough on the trip hither. So, much as we should have liked to remain, we dared not do so any longer and started homewards on the evening of July 9, keeping farther inside the islands than we usually did, as I was afraid that the current outside might have weakened the ice. My anxiety was well founded; when we were in mid-fjord, we saw that there was open water almost all the way to the islands, though by going up the

fjord again, and a long way round, we just managed to get across. The ice was almost as thin as a leaf, and there was no longer any bottom to the pools. After making innumerable detours in every possible direction, we at last got under land on the south side, and hugged the shore as far as the Eskimo settlement, where we camped on a springy bank of moss, quite near to the ruins.

After resting for some hours, we set to work to excavate them, but in spite of a day's hard work found nothing of any great importance. The huts were built of stone and the vertebræ of the whale. There were great fragments of the latter lying about, and Bay thought them to be the bones of the Greenland whale.

But we had other things to do besides excavating; one of the sledges was in want of repairs; nor could we resist shooting a few sea-birds down in the crack. Heaven only knows what Bay did, but he managed to get wet through to his middle, and then disposed his various garments about the camp till it looked as if we had a drying day on. While his clothes were drying in the sun, Bay lay in his shirt digging and hacking up among the ruins. It was a sight for the gods! I took a snapshot of Adam in his shirt, and the original has hoped up to the last that the plate would be spoiled, but I have the pleasure of presenting him to the world, alive and well. He laughs best who laughs last.

The thaw was now proceeding with such rapidity that the whole of the stretch of ice which we had driven on along shore disappeared after the lapse of twenty-four hours, and there was nothing to be seen but blue water. We began to be rather anxious in case we might be cut off from the ship, and made all the haste we could to get under way.

At first we were obliged to follow the ice-foot, and this was bad enough, as it was simply furrowed through with rills of ice-water; but matters were still worse when out in a big bay, a little to the east, we were stopped by two deep swift streams, while for a long distance the ice-foot itself disappeared from view. To wade was impossible, so as a last resource we got hold of a cake of ice, put the dogs and baggage on to it, and used the tent-poles as oars. We also found the ridge-pole of our big tent, which was broad and long, very useful. Our craft was not an easy one to pull, but it

went in the right direction, and we gradually drifted across to the other side of the bay, where we managed to get a hold on the ice. Just as we were drawing alongside, a large fragment fell on to our cake, causing it to careen to such an extent that the sledges began to slide off, but we managed to stop them in time and hauled them up again.

In the morning we pitched the tent at our old camping-place on the west side of the fjord. We scanned the country and found that, as far as we could see, there was open water along shore, but about a mile from land was an unbroken ice-field. The question was how were we to reach it. But, what was that? A rock? We had not noticed it before, and out came our glasses at once. It proved to be only what we called a 'meatberg'—a large herd of walrus on a floe.

We toiled hard the next day carrying the baggage and sledges across the streams which cut through the ice-foot in deep channels. At last we reached the drift-ice, where we thought all our troubles would be at an end, but again we were doomed to disappointment. The old polar ice was grooved by deep channels of water which it was impossible to cross. We toiled and drove and carried our baggage, but our greatest achievement was to make almost a circuit, and finally we were obliged to find a way as best we might to the edge of the old ice. We did not advance more than a couple of miles that day, and eventually had to bite the sour apple, as we say, and camp on the drift-ice—a thing we very unwillingly did in the summer, for it meant having all our things wet through as the result of it.

We now began to travel again by day, for, as our method of advance was wading, we found the water quite cold enough anyhow, without choosing the coolest time of the twenty-four hours to do it in.

Eventually, after getting on to ice of the previous winter, we were able to make tolerable progress. We saw walrus and numbers of seals lying about, and every kind was represented, but each species kept to itself in select cliques. There were bladder-nose, harbour seals, the common seal, and saddle-backs (*Ph. Greenlandica*), but the greater number were bearded seals (*Erignathus*

barbatus). Unluckily, however, this miserable ice had put an end to any attempt at shooting.

Our chief occupation during these days was jumping, and by the end of them I had become so proficient that I would have undertaken to jump against anybody. We jumped almost uninterruptedly the whole day long, and when the channels were too broad to be jumped we waded them. If the bottom was not to be reached—and this often happened—we had to go round.

The loads were overturned several times. One day as we were driving along I heard a crash, and saw Bay disappearing through the ice to the bottom of a pool, but he is not the man to make a fuss about a trifle, and he remained quietly floating, with the water up to his armpits. I was more concerned about the load, which was just about to follow his example, and would certainly not stand a ducking so well. It must be saved first, so I shouted: 'Let go the load. I'll see to it!' 'Yes, but then I shall sink,' answered Bay. 'All right,' said I. 'You'll float up again soon enough.' 'Very well,' replied Bay; and let go. Fortune favours the brave; the ice held, and he was able to scramble up again without help.

There was something amphibious about Bay—something of the wader nature. When he was about to cross a pool, he had a habit of first sitting on the edge and dangling his legs, so as to thoroughly enjoy the cold water. Then, when he had sat like this for a little while, he would get down and wade cautiously through it with short steps; and he was never more in his element than when the water was running in and out of his waistcoat pockets. In fact, he was like a salt-bag on these summer journeys—always damp. True, he hung out his clothes to dry, just as we did, but it was chiefly for appearances, and the first thing he did when he emerged from the bag again was to wet them anew.

My dogs were footsore when we started on this trip, so I had been obliged to drive the mate's team. One of them was known as the 'Tiger,' and was the worst-tempered dog on board. He was invariably to the fore where any mischief was concerned, and a more decidedly criminal type it would be difficult to imagine. He stole from his companions; he stole from the loads; he made

inroads into the tents. If he was hungry, and had no muzzle on, he would eat his harness, and if he had eaten his fill he gnawed it from pure love of mischief. He would not work, but took every opportunity of slipping his harness, and the result of all his tricks was that he grew as fat as a sucking-pig.

Now, we had made up our minds that, as he would not work, he should not have any food; but when we had driven him a couple

BEITSTADFJORD GLACIER, FROM STENKJÆR.

of days he refused to go a step farther. However, go he should, we thought, so we tied him to the end of the ridge-pole belonging to the big canvas tent, which was stowed on Bay's sledge. The pole was sixteen feet long; the sledge only eleven. This arrangement answered pretty well for a time, in spite of active resistance on the 'Tiger's' part, but when we came to a pool the pole swept him under water; and as we were dragging the sledge up from it over rough ice, so that its fore-end was tipped downwards, he was then swung up several feet into the air. It was no pleasure being a sucking-pig then!

It might be thought that punishment of this kind would take down the fat of any normal animal, and bring even hardened criminals to serious reflection, but the 'Tiger' remained unconverted and unchangeable: equally fat, equally thievish, equally faithless, and equally evil in all his ways. In short, he was a brilliant exception to the rule that Eskimo dogs are splendid animals.

On the afternoon of Thursday, July 13, the sky clouded over;

ONE OF THE RUINS IN THE ESKIMO VILLAGE, BUILT CHIEFLY OF
WHALEBONES.

a thick mist came on, and it began to rain. Next day the weather was villainous, with snow, sleet, and a south wind. We had not taken snow-goggles with us on this journey, and such weather affects the eyes even more than sunshine, because there are no shadows where they can find rest. We both felt that we had a very decided touch of snow-blindness, and as the dogs were so foot-sore they could hardly move, we decided to stay quiet for the day.

I thought this rather weary work, and although the weather was anything but inviting, I took my rifle and wandered up the

valley, but the weather was too bad for small game, and the seals preferred their own element. The net result of my tramp, therefore, was that the next day my eyes were worse than Bay's, and as the weather was as bad as ever, we did not drive on before Sunday, July 16.

Then we had beautiful sunshine, but bad ice, and made little progress. After driving for three hours, we saw two men with dog-teams coming towards us through Hayes Sound, and we soon made out that they were Baumann and Hassel looking for us. They felt sure we had been hindered by the bad condition of the ice, and had therefore brought the 'pram' with them, so that they could row if necessary. They had shot a bearded seal in the morning, and had brought the best bits of its flesh with them. They now proceeded to feast us with delicate seal-steaks, with which we had a dram of brandy, and I cannot deny that the dram was good beyond description, for we had been wading in ice-water all day.

After lunch we continued eastward, and our advance gradually became so much easier that after a time we could sit up on the loads. A little east of Cape Rutherford Baumann and Hassel stopped for the night to capture seals, and so we stayed too, to take part in the sport.

But the weather suddenly changed again; dark, stormy clouds came up from the south, and the few seals we saw on the ice vanished before we came within range. We heard the bellowing and hubbub of some walrus far out in the lanes—noisy beggars, these—but saw none of them, for no sooner were we near the lane where we had just heard them than they were blowing and snorting away in another. We had to give it all up in despair, and go back to the camp.

When we reached Rice Strait next day, we found the 'Fram' afloat, and the greater part of the harbour free of ice; most of it having been driven out by the stiff breeze during the night.

Schei and Simmons had returned a week earlier, and Schei, with Isachsen and Peder, had at once gone out in the strait to take soundings and samples of sea-water. They came back the following day, and told us that the last gale had begun to break up

the ice in the outer part of Hayes Sound. They only got back to the ship by the skin of their teeth, and had nearly lost their sounding-line and sledge, as all their tackle had got adrift out in the sound. The trip had been a very comfortless one; they had been wading day after day up to their belts in icy cold water.

A couple of days later Baumann, Fosheim, and I, started for the southern part of Rice Strait, to dig out some ruins which Baumann had discovered some time before, and which he had already partially investigated.

It was a fine clear evening as we rowed out through the strait. After we had landed and beached the boat, we walked across the mountains down to Leffert Glacier. From the watershed we had a splendid view over Smith Sound and its surroundings. Twenty miles away we could see Greenland; first the rocks and precipices of the fore-land, black and bare; and behind them, mile after mile, the glaciers and snowfields of the 'inland ice,' looking like low white clouds. Smith Sound was practically free of ice; there were only a couple of icebergs to be seen drifting hither and thither. But just off Rice Strait was still a belt of fast ice, which would prevent the ship from getting out, though it was so narrow that it could not last for very many days.

We rested a little while up there, had our supper, made some coffee and took photographs. We then went down to the glacier, towards the outermost point of land, and so reached the ruins of some winter huts and tent-rings left by the Eskimo.

We found also three graves which were situated in the mountain-side, only some fifteen feet from the huts. The whole of the rock formation here looked as if Providence had intended it for a mortuary chapel. The water had at one time or another hollowed out the limestone in such a manner that an entire row of holes or vaults had been formed, with the broad side outwards, and the rock, as it were, hanging out over them. They were six to seven feet long, two to three feet high, and fully two feet in depth. The graves were quite dry, and in the worst weather no water could have penetrated to the bodies within them. In two places stones had been piled up to prevent the entrance of animals, but they had fallen down so that foxes, at any rate, could now enter. One body

had lain in each grave. The skulls were in a better state of preservation than the other parts of the skeletons, of which some important bones were missing. In what position the bodies had been placed could no longer be ascertained, but from the shape of the graves it is probable that they had lain stretched out. The graves faced about south-west, and it may safely be inferred that no ornaments, weapons, or other things had been buried with the bodies.

A little distance above one of the winter houses, in a sheltered spot with comparatively luxuriant vegetation round it, was another small hut. It measured one and a half to two feet in each direction, and was arranged inside in the same manner as the other huts we saw in Ellesmere Land. The sleeping benches usual in Eskimo houses were still there, the place where the lamp had stood could be traced, and on the floor were bits of charcoal and burnt bone. The whole arrangement was so like a doll's house, and everything was in such good preservation, that I involuntarily looked round for the little inhabitants themselves. We also found very small walled provision-rooms or larders, similar to those in which the Eskimo store their catches to protect them from the sun and the incursions of dogs. Even the four stone pillars were there on which the 'Konebaad' * is always raised to dry and be out of reach of the dogs. Everything was in miniature.

We walked along the shore, round the point, to the place where Baumann had found the first Eskimo houses; and this place we also examined as thoroughly as possible, but without finding anything of importance. Baumann had already brought back a few small things from it.

In a cleft of the rock close by was a grave covered with a heap of stones. It was only about three feet long, so that the body could not have lain extended in it. Baumann had already taken a well-preserved skull from this grave.

We also saw, near this place, a very remarkable construction of which I could not make out the use. It was more like a tunnel than anything else, and measured inside about fifteen feet in length,

* *Konebaad*, literally 'woman-boat,' is the Danish equivalent for the Eskimo *umiak*, the native skin-boat, which is always manned by women.

two and a half in height, and three in width. It was built of largish stones, and was much more solid in construction than Eskimo buildings usually are. The walls at both ends were in a very bad state of preservation; and of one of them there was left hardly any trace that stones had once covered the opening.

At all these places where we found ruins, we also found numbers of bones of different animals—bears, whales, walrus, and the various kinds of seal which frequent these waters. We saw, too, reindeer antlers and several objects made from them.

I have the impression, on the whole, that at the time when Ellesmere Land was inhabited by Eskimo, the reindeer appeared here in no inconsiderable numbers, for we came across their antlers wherever we went. I am quite certain, however, that there were no reindeer in that part of the country during our sojourn there, for we went about so much that we must have come across either the animals themselves or their tracks.

While our investigations were going on, the fine weather came to an end; a south wind began to blow, bringing with it rain and sleet. It sprang up so suddenly that before we knew what had happened, Rice Strait was full of ice, and we thought we had better wait a while before starting to row back to the ship. We waited from eleven at night to four in the morning in a mountain cleft, where there was some shelter from the wind, in spite of which, however, it was no easy matter to keep warm. We made coffee once and we made coffee twice; we smoked tobacco and we chewed tobacco—with such recklessness that we had to forego it all the rest of the month—but we were cold despite of all.

Once in the boat, we sped northwards through the strait, with a gale and heavy sea behind us. We had to keep a sharp look-out not to get the boat into trouble, so close was the ice around us; the hummocks came drifting up and along like steam-engines.

When we reached the 'Fram,' she was lying moored by the stern, with the southerly gale howling round her, and I was surprised to find no cases of sea-sickness on board. Things went on like this for several days.

The day after our return I tried to reach Cape Rutherford in a

sealing-boat, with the intention of collecting more moss for the hut, but the attempt was a failure, and we climbed up on the heights instead. The view was more hopeless than ever, and the ice more closely packed than we had seen it all the summer, but on the north side of Pim Island, there was a channel along shore. If only we could push through the narrow belt of ice between Cape Rutherford and Cocked Hat, the 'Fram' would be able to reach Smith Sound.

It was remarkable how few walrus we saw in Rice Strait that year. We had always several men out in hopes of a catch of some kind, and if for some reason they were not out, the dredging-boat was always about; but, as far as I know, not a single walrus was seen the whole of the summer. The previous year, when the young ice began to form, we saw them every day; sometimes in large herds. Perhaps, however, they were on their winter wandering from the inner part of the fjord; it is not unlikely that they would stay a couple of days in the sound on their way south to forage and rest after their long swim, and also to get air.

Day after day we scanned the ice from the highest hill-tops, but the prospect of getting on through Kane Basin seemed ever equally hopeless. Meantime we got ready for sea, in order to be able to start at a moment's notice, and among other things we prepared to take the dogs on board whenever it should be necessary; they had been tethered on shore all the summer.

In the night of Sunday, July 23, a fresh breeze sprang up from the north, and the belt of fast ice on the south side of the strait drifted away during the course of it. As soon as the breeze sprang up we lighted the furnaces and fetched the dogs on board.

On the 24th we weighed anchor and steered northward, in hopes of being able to go north of Pim and Cocked Hat, but the wind had pressed the ice southward, so that the land-channel north of Pim Island had disappeared. There was nothing to be done, therefore, but to turn back. We then steamed south to Brevoort Island, where we lay for some hours speculating as to the condition of the ice. Nearly the whole of Smith Sound was closely packed with heavy polar ice from Kane Basin. We could, certainly, have forced a way across the sound to Foulke Fjord, where it would

have been easy for us to capture walrus for the dogs, but we should not then have been able to keep such a good look-out on the ice. My idea was to round Brevoort Island and anchor in Payer Harbour. This we attempted, and found impracticable; the ice barred the way. So then I went back a little, and anchored under the lee of Pim Island, in a little bay about a mile from Payer Harbour. I climbed to the highest point of Pim, whence, the weather being clear, I had a splendid view both north and south—but there was the pack, and nothing but the pack as far as the eye could see.

A shooting party started off at the same time that I went to see the lie of the ice. They did not come across walrus, but did a good deal of damage among the sea-fowl—their bag consisting of more than a hundred little auks, a number of black guillemots, a few guillemots and eiders, and countless gulls.

The following morning we had to beat a precipitate retreat, for the pack set inwards so violently that we hardly had time to heave anchor, though we were lying with steam up and everything clear. There was nothing for it, then, but to go back and moor in our old winter harbour. The north wind, however, only lasted a couple of days, and directly afterwards was succeeded by the wretched southerly gales.

The only thing for us to do now was to get together all the food we could for the dogs, and so I took Isachsen, Peder, and Simmons with me to Hayes Sound, where, for once in a way, the south wind was of help to us. Abreast of Cape Rutherford we came across a couple of walrus, and we at once lowered sail and made ready to capture them. But the scoundrels always took care to swim against the wind. We rowed as hard as we could, but still we went the way the hen kicks, and that is not forward. We fell farther and farther astern, and soon saw that our wisest course was to hoist the sail and go ahead inwards, but then the wind went down, and in near 'Eskimopolis' all that was left of it was a light breeze; we then lowered the sail and rowed under land to be in readiness.

The only animal we came across was a bearded seal, which rose and gazed at us a little distance from the boat. We set to work at once to capture it, but it proved to be the very mischief, and led

us such a dance as I had hardly experienced before. At one moment it would be far ahead of us, and we would pull as if the Evil One himself were in our wake, but when we reached the spot, where, according to our reckoning, it ought to come up, we saw it far, far away in a quite different direction. We rowed in a circle, in a triangle, in a square—there is hardly a mathematical figure we did not describe out in Hayes Sound, but not a point did we gain, and the seal—well, we didn't get it!

At first on our boating trips we never took with us a tent, sleeping-bags, or blankets, but just hauled the sail ashore and did

ADAM IN HIS SHIRT.

the best we could with it. We followed the old rule of the real seal-catcher—lay down in our clothes on any ledge of rock, or on a seal-skin in the boat, and dragged our boots half off; but we grew tired of this on trips of any length, though we always continued to do it when we were out for only one night.

We landed in the evening on Skräellingöen,* in Alexandra Fjord, and lay down on the bare rock, without anything more on us than the clothes we stood in. It was not particularly warm work, and we turned out early, and were not long in lighting up the 'Primus.'

While Simmons was botanizing, we went up to the highest point

* *Skræling*, i.e. 'weakling,' the name of the old Norsemen for the Eskimo.

of the island. We found traces in the sand of a polar ox, but they may have been several years old. Despite our first-rate binoculars, we did not discover more than a single walrus; but how to get near it, when the frost during the night had formed a layer of horrible 'shell-ice,' which crackled as we rowed through it, we knew not. To get within proper range was impossible; but of course we tried our luck, and the walrus got a charge of the right sort, which sent it floating to the edge of the ice, where, to our disappointment, it sank.

THE SLAUGHTER-GROUND, LOOKING EASTWARD. (*See p. 138.*)

As I did not wish to be long absent from the vessel at this time of year, when it was a matter of watching for the first opportunity to get off, I decided not to go farther up the fjords, but to return on board. That there had been walrus not very far off we had exasperating proof of on our way home. We were ashore, cooking some food, when suddenly we saw a whole herd swimming along shore on their way north—under our very noses, and just as if they were doing it on purpose. They were going at such a pace that they sent the water up in spray around them, and there was consequently no question of catching them up.

Under Baumann's leadership all on board were in a state of restless activity, getting out the various provisions which we hoped, with the hut, in due course to set ashore. Each box was numbered and its contents entered in the books. We prepared stores for four men for two and a half years, and dog-food to last until far into the future—first of all the usual amount consumed by fifty dogs in one winter, and then patent dog-food for seventy days' use on sledge-journeys. The ammunition had to be seen to; some boats and the forge were to be landed, and not a thing must be forgotten. In a word, there were countless things to be thought out and arranged in such a manner that everything could be landed, if necessary, at a moment's notice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN SUMMER WATERS.—DISAPPOINTED HOPES.

ON Friday, August 4, I decided to make an attempt to proceed up through Kane Basin. I was quite aware that the conditions were about as hopeless as they could be, but I thought that the attempt ought to be made, and, at any rate, circumstances had never yet been more in our favour.

We, therefore, weighed anchor during the forenoon, and steamed northwards in nice quiet weather. Things went fairly well till we were abreast of Cape Camperdown, where I hoped to be able to get close under land and thus forge on northward. But there was hardly so much as a crack to be seen, and the ice compelled us to steer more and more to the east. Several times we stuck for an hour or two at a time, and then the ice would slacken and we crashed through it for a couple of ship's-lengths. At last our course became due east, and as that was not the direction in which I wanted to go, we moored to the ice. Even had we wished to go due east, it would soon have become impossible; and during the night the ice packed even closer.

Meanwhile, we made use of the time to rig up the winding tackle, so that the rudder could be raised at any moment, if the ice should begin to jam in earnest; but the ice here was almost motionless. During the night it so far slackened, that we were able to push through to a lane which ran due east, and which we hoped would bring us in the desired direction if we followed its northern edge.

While we were engaged in doing this, and expending great energy on it, we suddenly saw the smoke of a steamer issuing from Payer Harbour, and shortly afterwards the masts became visible.

The steamer was going north-east, and I took it to be a ship which was looking for Peary, and which probably had letters on board for us. As I could tell from the air that there was open water in a north-easterly direction, and thought, moreover, that our channel was in connection with the open water in Smith Sound, I steered eastward in order, if possible, to meet the ship; while we plainly saw that she also was manœuvring with a similar end in view.

A sudden thrill of joy ran through us all. In an hour or two, perhaps, we should be hearing from home. Our hearts seemed to swell—it is no trifle, this not knowing anything of those at home, and what may have happened to them. But some four or five miles from each other, we were stopped by a belt of ice. Only this narrow strip between us and the letters from home! They were longing looks which sped across the ice that day!

Thus we lay and looked at each other for a time. Then the American signalled that she had letters on board for us, and steered off southward—I thought she must be going to Foulke Fjord. We then steered west for a little way, but were soon obliged to moor again to the side of the channel.

A fresh southerly breeze had been blowing for some time, and when it took to increasing, we felt sure that we might expect another gale from the south. We accordingly put out some ice-anchors, and settled down to listen to the storm, which howled round us for three days in succession; while the ice in Kane Basin became closer and closer, for the whole pack was drifting northward and we with it. At our farthest point north we were about abreast of Cape Hawks; but we saw from the atmosphere that if we had been able to get under land the first day, at Cape Albert, we might by following it have been by this a good way further north.

We hoped that, after the storm, the ice would slacken, and we should be able to work our way up north. But so far was this from being the case, that when the gale had blown itself out, the whole pack drifted slowly and soberly southwards, every bit as close as ever, and we could do nothing but remain where we were. It was a grain of comfort, however, to know that the ice down towards Smith Sound was beginning to slacken; and as day by day the slackening made itself felt a little farther north, and the whole mass of

the ice was drifting southwards, we knew that at any rate we should get free in Smith Sound, so that there was no danger of our being beset in Kane Basin. The chances, however, of our being able to penetrate northwards were extremely small. Thus we lay for several days, and at last got free only a few miles north of Cape Sabine, but by then the channel leading northward was gone. We then decided to go across to Foulke Fjord, where we anchored in our old place.

We found one of Peary's ships lying a little distance up the fjord, and about an hour after we had dropped anchor, Captain Bartlett came to see us, together with Dr. Dedrick and one or two other members of the expedition. We spent several pleasant hours in their agreeable company. They gave us some newspapers, and told us that one of Peary's ships, which had come from America, had a mail on board for us, but that she had left it at Payer Harbour. We also learned that Peary was here in active preparation for wintering. His other ship was out walrus-catching, probably down near Northumberland.

Baumann called upon Lieutenant Peary, who was kind enough to invite us to send letters with his ship to our nearest friends; on condition that nothing should be made known with regard to the expedition itself.

The following day we had a visit from Peary's owner, Mr. Bridgman, and from Professor Libbey, also an American. Mr. Bridgman very kindly offered to let one of the ships bring our mail every year, promising to let the 'Fram's' owners know at what date the ships would be due to sail.

It was still blowing hard and the weather was very thick, so, as there seemed no chance of our getting off, we took it quietly, wrote letters, and went hare-shooting. Being in Peary's winter quarters, we left the walrus entirely to him, as we knew he wanted them as food for his dogs.

Fosheim and Isachsen went in the gig to Port Foulke on the south side of the mouth of the fjord, and there, among other game, saw a fair number of walrus. Of course, in such a little boat they did not think of trying to capture any, but all the same an infuriated animal gratuitously followed them, and

dived under their craft ready to attack. Needless to say they pulled as hard as they could, expecting every moment to see the great tusks appearing through the bottom of the boat, and the whole thing about to founder. But luck was with them; it was not many strokes to land, and they reached it in time. Once there they took their revenge by sending their enemy a bullet in the head, which made it sink like a plummet.

There were always shooting parties out at this time, and they

THE GLACIER WHERE BAY FETCHED COOKING-ICE. (*See p. 126.*)

returned on board with incredible numbers of hares. As our sojourn lasted as long as to August 12, we had plenty of time to make a considerable inroad on them.

On Saturday, August 12, we stood out of the fjord. The north wind, which had been blowing during the night, had gone over to a fresh breeze from the south. We steered first for Payer Harbour to fetch the mail, but had not gone far into Smith Sound, before we saw that there was no possibility of reaching it through such impenetrable masses of ice.

We then tried a course farther south—to Cape Herschel—

hoping to reach Rice Strait through byways and lanes, and so get hold of our mail, but this plan worked no better than the first, and we were nipped for several hours, drifting southwards meanwhile at a good pace. Towards morning we got free again, and captured a few walrus. Another method which we tried several times was to steam north along the Greenland side, and when we had reached a sufficient height for Payer Harbour strike across westward, but each time it was the same story over again—we stuck fast, drifted south, got free, and captured a few walrus.

This was beginning to be a poor look-out. In such circumstances it was impossible to push up through Kane Basin, and being so late in the season it was hardly to be expected that any great change in the ice would set in. I was very unwilling to risk being beset in Kane Basin, and consequently obliged to winter there, as there is very little game in the vicinity. This would mean that we should probably use up all our dog-food, and a favourable summer the following year—if we were lucky enough to have one—would then be of little avail. Without being sure, therefore, of a sufficiency of food for the dogs we could not embark on a winter so far north with all the dogs which would be necessary for driving round Greenland.

All this was really distressing. For, first, we must give up the journey round Greenland, which we had so much looked forward to. Almost all our time in Rice Strait it had been the great subject of conversation, and we used to make plans for the journey, and think how pleasant it would be when we should all meet again on the other side.

Then, secondly, we were in despair at not being able to get our letters from home. Our most desperate efforts had been fruitless. There, on the island, only a few miles from us, was news from home, and we could not reach the letters!

The night frosts, too, were beginning to set in; winter was coming on apace, and a decision must soon be come to. After a great deal of deliberation, we decided on Jones Sound.

PEDER 'GETS FAST' A WALRUS.

[From a drawing by Otto Sinding.]

CHAPTER XIX.

WALRUS-CATCHING.—NEW WATERS.

ON the morning of August 22, we cast off, and with heavy hearts steered southward. We had hoped it would be by another way that we should leave Smith Sound for ever.

In beautiful, quiet, rather cloudy weather, we set a course for the walrus shoals off Northumberland, and later in the day were making the most of our abundant opportunities. We often saw as many as twenty animals lying on the same floe; while from the crow's-nest herd upon herd could be seen not far off between the streams of ice. We found them unexpectedly shy, however, and this unwelcome fact we ascribed to Peary having had two ships walrus-catching here for some time. They had gained some experience of the world, these walrus, and were fully aware of the danger of a large boat; but it was the ship, in particular, which filled them with anxiety, and we were obliged to keep a long way off, for directly they saw it they took to the water at once.

Even with the greatest caution it was very difficult to get within proper range that day. As soon as the watchman caught sight of the boat he would begin to glare uneasily at us, raising himself higher and higher on his flippers, till he was the height of a man, and swaying the upper part of his body backwards and forwards meanwhile. No sooner has the watchman raised the alarm on such occasions, than all the others, the young animals in particular, begin to bellow and grow excited, ready to take to the water at any moment. The older animals, however, especially the bulls, take matters a little more quietly. As a rule, they are the last to leave the floe; and it often happens that they remain lying in their places after the younger ones have plunged into the sea. But

when once a real old bull takes to the water the whole herd is pretty certain to follow him forthwith, and not an animal will be left on the ice.

Considering that it was walrus-shooting, we got within very poor range that day, and it was not often that we were able to kill many animals on one floe—one or two slain, being the greatest number we usually left behind us. Fosheim, however, was lucky enough to shoot five on the same floe, and though the sixth had so much life left in it that it floundered into the water, he was able to kill it with the harpoon, so that we had all six on the floe at once.

At one time we attacked a herd of twenty animals on the same floe, but managed to send them all into the water except two, which remained lifeless on the field of battle. The uproar was indescribable; the wounded and uninjured animals, one and all, gathered round the boat roaring and bellowing, and we had to aim straight, and have our harpoons in order that time.

It was not many hours before we had killed twenty-two walrus, which, with the eleven we had captured in Smith Sound, made thirty-three animals, and quite a sufficient stock for the winter; though, if necessary, we could count on capturing a certain number of walrus and seals in Jones Sound.

To save time we took the last twelve on board and skinned them on the way south. We hoisted them up with the steam-winch, after having slit a loop in their throats, and hooked the derrick-hook into them. The skin of the necks of these animals, as I have mentioned before, is remarkably tough, and if a 'bank ox' weighs as much as a ton, which he often does, his hide is as much as an inch in thickness.

We now set our course for Glacier Strait, but in the early morning, off Clarence Head, we were stopped by great masses of drift-ice, which lay in towards land, and as far south as we could see. Due east of us was a long point or neck of ice—we had got into a bay in the ice, and had to steer east towards the Cary Islands. After rounding this point we set a course for Lady Ann Strait, and when there found ourselves free from the drift-ice both to the south and the east.

Suddenly, a heavy swell came on from the south-east, and we could see from the atmosphere that we should soon have a sea from that quarter. It was not long before it was so rough that we could hardly keep our legs. Unskinned walrus and lumps of flesh slid about in all directions, crushing everything that came in their way. The deck was as slippery as a 'ski'-hill at home, and horrible to view with blood, blubber, and other filth; but it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the dogs gorged themselves to their

RUINS OF A WINTER HOUSE IN THE ESKIMO VILLAGE.

hearts' content. More than once they were in danger of being crushed flat by the mountains of flesh, which had been hoisted up on deck one by one; while we had our work cut out for us in skinning the animals, and rigging up bins for the meat, so that it should not roll overboard.

In the midst of our work, Stolz came running up on deck, crying: 'Fire in the engine-room!' and as may be imagined our butcher's business came to an abrupt end, and the carcasses began once more to roll backwards and forwards with every movement of the ship.

The watch below were called, and the steam and water hoses at once set to play in the engine-room. A paraffin lamp had exploded, and the oil was floating about in all directions, but we soon managed to put out the fire, without any damage having been done.

After that we worked the whole night through, until everything that could be was lashed into place, and the decks were

*Fosheim.**Baumann.*

ON THE WAY TO THE RUINS. A REST AT THE WATERSHED. (*See p. 190.*)

fairly clear. We were all so busy that no one had time to expend a thought on sea-sickness. It was very rough, however, and a little later, as we were going below to breakfast, we got a tremendous roll on, and on entering the cabin, found the table on its back with its legs in the air. That the food should still be on it was too much to expect. It had settled as best it could in various corners of the cabin, but the cups and saucers and plates were still rolling from port to starboard and back again.

At breakfast time on August 24, we passed Princess Charlotte

Monument,* and steered west through Lady Ann Strait. Here we had a heavy sea from the south-west with thick weather; though once, when the curtain of fog was drawn aside, we caught a glimpse of Cobourg Island, and farther up the strait, North Devon. Cobourg did not look very inviting as a place of residence for human beings. Black perpendicular walls of rock fell abruptly into the sea; everything in the shape of a gap or valley was filled with snow and ice; and we were not able to discover a single green spot. If Cobourg looked little alluring, North Devon was less so, and it could not even boast the wild landscape of the former place with its riven mountains and peaks; we saw nothing but snow and ice between monotonous rounded hills.

There was no drift-ice in the strait, but there were numbers of icebergs, and it was not until we were farther west that we came on the pack in drift. Westward, along Ellesmere Land stretched a long narrow strip of ice, but outside North Devon the sea was almost free of ice.

All the way we went were large flocks of guillemots splashing in the leads. We were sorry we had not been here in the nesting season, for what a haul of eggs we should then have got! There was nothing to be done now, for the eggs had turned into young birds, and a swimming school was going on which seemed to interest both young and old. I had never before seen so many of the larger sea-birds congregated together; there were simply myriads of guillemots, black guillemots, gulls, and eider-duck. Cobourg did not seem to inspire them with any sense of fear, but had just the contrary effect.

We now set our course for Sir Robert Inglis Peak, the farthest point reached by Inglefield in 1852, and where, according to his own account, he saw land trending towards the north. We had a heavy sea and thick weather, and as we met close ice during the night we had to lie to for a time. We then steered south towards North Devon, where the waters were free enough of ice, but when we tried to shape the course north, towards Ellesmere Land, there was such a short sea that we could hardly turn the vessel; then, to our disgust, we met the drift-ice again half-way across.

* A natural rock, but which looks like human handiwork.

We now cruised fruitlessly about in the sound for several watches. As we wanted to keep in smooth water as much as possible, we sometimes put the ship in through the drift-ice; and by taking advantage of the places where it was slackest, came so close off Ellesmere Land that we could see there was open water in the fjords, but outside them the ice was as compact as ever all the way along the coast. We were obliged to have steam up the whole while, in order to be able to use the engines when we had to turn, but I soon grew tired of waiting about and burning coal to no purpose, so we tacked a short distance to the east, and sounded our way to a place of anchorage a little west of Cone Island, in a fjord which we called 'Fram Fjord.'

The fjord ran due north and south, and we anchored in a little bay on the west side of it, a couple of miles from the head of the fjord. A large, fissured glacier covered the bottom of the valley, and fell, blue and green, sheer into the sea, in the large bay outside the fjord. Straight from our place of anchorage stretched a large valley in a westerly direction; it was wide and smiling, and sloped gently upwards, with grass- and moss-grown sides, eventually uniting itself with the chief valley. On the east side of the fjord, on the other hand, the mountains rose precipitously, straight up from the sea.

This was a fairly sheltered spot for us; but farther outside it was still blowing hard, a fact of which we were left in no doubt by the storm clouds which, heavy and threatening, came hurrying past.

As soon as we had anchored, two parties went ashore; Isachsen, Schei, Bay, and Simmons up the valley to the west; Fosheim and I up along the side of the fjord.

The vegetation here was unusually vigorous, and it was one of the most verdant places I saw on the whole voyage. Wherever we went in this valley, we trod on grass or sank into a soft carpet of moss, and this made us feel sure that there must be plenty of animal life about.

Close by the place where we landed, we saw vestiges of former habitation, in the shape of tent-rings and fox-traps; while not many steps up from the shore we came across reindeer antlers, and the skulls of polar cattle. In the first two or three hundred yards alone,

we passed four or five skulls and various fragments of the skeletons belonging to them, and the farther we went the more we saw of such remains, but of living oxen or reindeer not a trace.

At some time or other, there must have been very large herds of these animals about, for I never saw such a quantity of remains anywhere else, and there must, therefore, be some particular reason for their extinction; but what? It is a riddle which can hardly be solved. Beasts of prey had dragged away the greater part of the skeletons, but the remains which we found showed no sign that violence had been the cause of death. How old the skulls may have been it was not easy to say; but excrements and tracks in the sand seemed to point to the conclusion, that it was not so many years since the animals had haunted these parts.

We had anchored at high water, and as the tide went down a long sandbank became visible, which at low tide was quite dry, for a very long distance up the fjord. In the shoal water here were myriads of sea-birds, splashing and swimming about, thoroughly enjoying themselves in the wash of the big river which came from the main valley. In the gap in the mountains, where the valley trended away to the west, was a glacier streaming down the perpendicular walls of rock, and this fell out into the river, which rushed, foaming and thundering, past it.

Of the big-game shooting, on which we had counted, there was nothing; all we did was to miss a couple of hares which were hopping about in the dusk. This was hardly the sort of thing to grow fat on.

Next morning we went down to the fjord, where the other shooting party soon joined us; they had killed three brace of hares, but had been no more fortunate than ourselves, as far as big game was concerned.

As a set-off to this bad luck, the botanist was simply revelling in the plants, of which he had collected quite a load; his case had been filled several times over, and he was in high good-humour. He wandered noiselessly and ecstatically about, as if he was the recipient of a special grace from heaven; and yet a still greater event was destined to happen to him.

It was on his watch, one fine night, and just as he was going

to turn out Isachsen to relieve him, that the great event happened. A shot was fired off in the twilight, and down ran Simmons to Isachsen, in the wildest excitement. 'Isachsen! Isachsen! I have shot a seal!' he shouted, in Swedish, in the sleeper's ear. 'What the devil do I care?' thought Isachsen, and turned round and went to sleep again. Simmons, who had hurried up on deck to contemplate his handiwork anew, had again to go below and turn Isachsen out before he was relieved, and had time to think over the latter's extraordinary obtuseness with regard to great events; for it must be admitted that a botanist who has shot a seal does find himself in one of the most supreme moments of his life.

It did seem, somehow, as if these sea animals were especially attracted by the 'Fram,' here in the fjord. The night that I was away from the vessel, Braskerud kept watch in the engine-room, and going up on deck to get a breath of air, he began to talk to the watch. As they were quietly chatting, they suddenly heard a blowing and breathing noise down in the water below, and were very much astonished when they discovered that the sounds came from a walrus. Their astonishment, however, rose to consternation when they saw it beginning to climb up the side of the ship. It made a very good try of it, accompanied by much blowing and snorting, but the ship was too high in the side, and it fell back each time. Walrus-meat was always welcome on board, it is true, but such an attention as this was beyond anything we could have conceived, and they stood staring at it, hardly able to believe their eyes. Whether the walrus was angry, or inquisitive, or weak in the head, the darkness of the night made it impossible to tell. Somebody at last thought of fetching a rifle, and in due course it was fired off, but where the bullets went nobody knows—the walrus could not be expected to tell us that; all I know is that it made no more attempts to board the 'Fram.'

At the place where we were lying at anchor, the bottom deepened rather rapidly, so the following day we moved on to a little bay, further up the fjord. We had plenty of time before us, for outside the storm was still raging, and we could do nothing there.

We always had a few men ashore at this time, either shooting

or on scientific excursions. Schei, who, as ever, had aspiring tendencies, was always at the top of some mountain or other, looking down on us and the world. From these mountains we discovered at low water that there were several sunken rocks in the outer part of the fjord, near the mouth, particularly on the west side; so we knew that we had not chanced on the very safest of waters.

CHAPTER XX.

THE 'FRAM'S' SECOND WINTER HARBOUR.

ON the night of August 28, we left the fjord. It was still blowing fairly hard from the east, but looked as if the bad weather was over for the time being. At Cone Island a thick fog came on, which prevented us from seeing a ship's length away from us, and there, too, we got into a pack of coarse polar ice, with pressure-ridges, hummocks, and other heartbreaking inventions, and were eventually obliged to moor to a large floe. There was a swift current here, and the ice was whirled round and round incessantly, making it necessary for us to shift our moorings several times.

When, later in the afternoon, the ice began to slacken a little, we went west, but did not get very far; still it was the right direction, and every little helped. The weather was very bad; rain and sleet succeeded one another, and it was so thick, we could hardly see where we were going. On the night of August 29, we should, according to the reckoning, have been due south of Sir Robert Inglis Peak, and, as I thought the chart must be more or less right, I decided to go in there, to avoid wasteful use of coal. We therefore attempted to bore the ice-belt, but, towards morning, the ice packed so much, that we lay nipped for the whole of that day, though every now and then it slackened for a moment. The bank of fog was so thick and greyish-black and deceptive, that we kept thinking we had quite long, broad lanes in front of us, but no sooner did we put the ship into one of them than it came to an unexpected end.

As we lay there, holding our own against the ice, a she-bear with two cubs came along towards us. Fosheim sent her a bullet,

but she had stopped at such a respectful distance that he only wounded her, and very soon she vanished from sight.

Although there was no wind, we now began to drift slowly west with the drift-ice, which still held us fast. A number of grounded bergs, which we saw here, seemed to be looking at us, and envying us for being still afloat, and not even sounding. We should never have thought of sounding in such distinguished company, for they are sounding-machines in themselves, and where they touch the bottom the 'Fram' can safely sail.

THE PEARY EXPEDITION SHIP, THE 'WINDWARD.' (See p. 200.)

On the night of August 31, the ice slackened in earnest, and we set our course north-eastwards, to where Sir Robert Inglis Peak ought to be. The mate, whose watch it was, worked up a long lead, which he thought would be a good move; but the fog came on again so thickly that he could not see more than ten or twenty yards ahead, the result being that he suddenly found himself with the jib-boom almost touching an iceberg. He just managed to get clear of it by putting the helm hard a-port. We were in no great danger, however, for the water was smooth, the weather still, and the speed small; the only thing we could have risked by a collision was the jib-boom itself.

Later in the afternoon, as we were boring ourselves a way through the ice, we saw a bear stealing on a seal which was lying on a large floe beside us. He probably thought we were a rival, and that he had better be quick; but in his haste he frightened the seal into the water. Disgusted at this turn of affairs, he jumped in too, and we steered after both of them with a band of shooters on the forecastle, ready to fire. When the bear saw this, he turned and swam towards the ship, doubtless meaning to do battle with this intruder on his preserves, but when he got nearer, he probably thought that we did look rather too gigantic, for he

THE PEARY RELIEF EXPEDITION SHIP 'DIANA,' 1899. (*See p. 200.*)

suddenly changed his tactics and swam away as hard as he could go, the water seething under his strokes. At last, when he thought he was really in a tight corner, he resorted to the bear's usual trick—he dived; but when his huge skull rose again above the surface, we were within range, and the bullets whistled round him. Many of them did not carry as straight as they might have done, although he was struck now and again—a sensation which was not at all to his taste apparently, for he scrambled on to a floe and took up his position there, determined to conquer or to die.

It was to be the latter. I stood amidships, whence I could get good aim, let drive, and dropped him. We then lay in to the floe,

put a rope-end round his carcase, and hoisted him aboard with the steam-winch.

In the course of the afternoon we at last broke through the belt of ice which had been keeping us fast for several days, and reached open water in the outer part of the fjord. We lowered the sealing-boat, and shot a couple of walrus and a bearded seal from it, and sounded our way inwards until the fog became so thick that we could only just discern land in the narrow sound which forms the entrance to 'Havnefjord,' or 'Harbour Fjord.'

The greatest caution was necessary here, and we steamed up mid-channel with the engines at slow speed. Suddenly we heard a great noise on the west side of the sound, and such a crashing and rumbling, that we thought the mountains were coming down on us, while at the same time the din was increased by the echoes which were thundered back from the steep crags on the other side. It was as if Nature herself meant to shut the way against us; we had hardly overcome the ice before the very mountains sent a shower of rock to dam up the waters; but, in spite of all, through we meant to go.

Later on, we saw that all this noise came from an island which we afterwards named 'Skreia' (Landslip), and honestly it earned its name, for we heard the rumbling and saw the dust of falling stones and rock all through the winter.

When we had got through the sound, a bay opened out to view on the east side of the fjord. Although we had sounded our way as near to land as possible, we were obliged, after all, to anchor in thirty fathoms of water. In order to make things doubly secure, we also moored the ship by the stern, to a rock a little way up on land.

Our new place of anchorage, however, was not very satisfactory; it was rather open, and there was a strongish current in the bay. I did not think it quite the place for a winter harbour, and, therefore, the next morning at four o'clock, I went up the fjord with Isachsen, Fosheim, and Peder to reconnoitre.

We could not find any better place of anchorage, but, on the other hand, we made the important discovery that there were a great many seals in the fjord. We shot three bearded seals, and saw

many more in the water. Of polar oxen we saw no trace, although we landed at three different places. We found on a neck of land some old reindeer antlers of great size, while several fox-traps told of the former habitation of these tracts. It was from this point that we discovered Skreia to be an island; but, on the whole, we saw little of the land, as most of the time it was hidden by fog.

We came on board again about five in the afternoon, and as we had not discovered any better harbourage, I decided to remain where we were. Nödtvedt drove a large iron bolt into the rock to prevent the cable from slipping, the fires in the engine-room were put out, and the 'Fram' went into her second winter harbour.

It was the first of September, and a day of mark in my family. My thoughts involuntarily travelled back to Norway; but homesickness is a sure follower in the wake of such thoughts, and must not be allowed at any cost. One must harden one's heart, and command full speed ahead.

We had shaped our course for Sir Robert Inglis Peak, but did not see it, and to this day I have never been able to make out what had become of it. Farther up the fjord we saw a little island, which we named Fosheim's Peak,* but it was so much too insignificant for its high-sounding name, that after several transitional stages, it came down to 'Fosheim's Baby.'*

On Sunday, September 3, Schei, Braskerud, and Stolz went hare-shooting on the talus just above our anchoring place; while Fosheim, Baumann, and I tried to get to the big valley† farther down the sound, but were stopped by the ice which now came drifting in.

In spite of the foggy weather, we had received the impression that Havnefjord ran some distance into the land, in a northerly direction, and from the shape of the fjord we thought it possible that there might also be a branch of it going west.

I made up my mind that the question should be settled as soon as possible.

* So given by the author.

† Later on we named it 'Stordalen.'

CHAPTER XXI.

BOATING EXPEDITIONS IN HAVNEFJORD.

ON Monday forenoon I rowed inwards in a sealing-boat with Isachsen, Schøi, and Stolz. It was quiet, foggy weather, but we were able to get a glimpse of the shore on both sides. On some stony ground, just inside of Fosheim's Baby, we saw fourteen hares sitting quite motionless as if they expected the sun to come out and shine on them after all this fog, and a little farther in were another lot in the same expectant position. We left them in peace, and continued on our way inwards with the intention of rowing through the sound, on the west side of a little island some distance up the fjord, but we were tempted beyond our powers of resistance by a bearded seal which was lying on a floe. It detained us longer than we had expected, but it had its revenge, for when we were ready to go on we found our way cut off by a 'val,'* which we had to row outside of before we were able at last to land on the island.

From its highest point we saw that the fjord did not cut nearly so deeply into the land as we had thought, but that, on the other hand, there were large valleys penetrating into it in different directions. Thus, due east of the island and right in front of us, ran a broad and fertile valley. In here there must surely be game!

We shaped our course for a valley which ran in a westerly direction, about a mile from the head of the fjord, and created quite a sensation on our row up. At one place a seal thrust its head up

* In several parts of Norway 'val' is the name given to a neck of land which, as a rule, is covered at high water, but which at low water forms an isthmus between the land and an island, or between two islands. If it is only covered at the spring-tides, it is called a 'törval.'

quite near to the boat, and gazed at us with eyes of astonishment before it disappeared again; a moment afterwards it came up in another place and stared at us with equal wonderment. Several of them followed us in this way for long distances up the fjord. Schei made an attempt on one, but without success.

We camped in the evening on a fine dry patch of shingle outside the valley. As soon as the tent was up, we went off shooting, for, whatever happened, we meant to have roast hare for supper. We saw no trace of polar cattle, but up on the slopes were hares in numbers. Shooting them, however, was easier said than done, for it was growing dusk; I for my part shot almost at haphazard, and my bag was accordingly—a leash of hares, after divers misses. An almost uninterrupted cannonade went on all the way up the valley, and if my companions had hit all their marks, there would have been hare enough for supper and no mistake. The others, however, had not much more to boast of than myself, although there was more than enough for our evening meal.

We then turned in, with snow-bare slopes and plains around us; but in the morning when we awoke, the snow lay several inches deep over the mountains and valleys.

In consequence of this, we did not prolong our stay up in the fjord. On the way home we had very bad weather, with snow and sleet, and it was so thick that we could barely see the land lying under its white covering only a few furlongs from us. The seals did not seem to mind the weather, for there were a great many of them lying on a strip of ice just inside of Fosheim's Baby, but the weather was so thick we could not see them until we were close on them, and by that time they took to the water before we were ready to fire.

We reached the ship in the evening, where I found everybody hard at work carrying the walrus-meat ashore, and spreading it out on the mountain-side to freeze, as soon as the cold weather should set in. The dogs were already tethered on the beach.

The health of the members of the expedition was not so good at this time as was usually the case. It was long before we forgot the days we spent ramming our way through the ice in Jones

Sound, and the cloudy weather, the east wind, and the dusting we then had. And such an east wind as can blow in Jones Sound! In through the sound day after day, without ceasing or changing, at the rate of thirty-five to forty-five feet a second. Sometimes, however, it would put on an angry spurt, and then we got it in the form of squalls, which froze the very marrow in our bones. When once it has given one a pain in the side, it is long before one loses it again.

Several of the members of the expedition were unwell, and Peder, usually so cheerful, was particularly so. He complained of pains in the chest and spat blood, and his legs began to swell. It was several months before he was at all himself again.

After snowing for several days, the snow suddenly turned to rain, an east wind sprang up, and the thermometer rose to 46° Fahr. (8° Cent.). It was our first clear day in here, and we made the most of it. Baumann, Isachsen, Fosheim and I, walked through Stordalen, where the others went shooting, while I climbed 'Östkap', or 'East Cape,' and found for certain that the land does not—as Inglefield says it does—trend away to the north at that point, but continues in a westerly direction.

The vegetation of Stordalen was particularly rich in places, and we saw many hares and ptarmigan; in fact, there were hares wherever we turned, often in companies of four or five. They and ptarmigan, however, were the only game in the valley. We shot five eider-ducks and eight glaucous gulls on the way back; all of them young birds, with one exception.

I now decided that we must row along inshore as soon as possible, and put down depots of dog-food as far west as we could reach, so that we might have something to depend on when we took to driving. I had thought of starting on September 7, but we had worn out all our boots, and as there was a great deal of cobbling to be done, we did not get off before the morning of September 8.

At the same time Schei and Bay started on a trip up the fjord, where they meant to spend most of their time on Fosheim's Baby; Bay was going to dredge, and Schei to geologize. They went in a small rowing boat, and took one of the silk tents with them.

The second party consisted of Isachsen, Fosheim, Stolz, and myself. We started with a stiff breeze from the east and hoped for a good sail westward, but already half-way up the fjord the wind dropped and it began to rain. Later in the afternoon, the rain went over to sleet and fog, so that we could not see a cable's-length from us. We rowed through the western sound between land and Skreia, but the weather was so thick that we dared not set out on the broad 'Sydkapfjord' (South Cape Fjord), as we knew that a mass of drift-ice was lying inside it. We, therefore, landed on the point, our clothes wet through from the miserable weather. There we crept under some rocks, where, with the sail spread over us, we were in tolerable shelter from the rain. We brought up the 'Primus' and cooked ourselves some food, and among other things a hare, which Fosheim had shot on a point of rock as we rowed past.

We sat under the rocks for a couple of hours and waited for the weather to clear, but instead of that it merely grew rather thicker. As we could do nothing on the fjord in such weather, we decided to row across to Skreia and see something of the land.

We hauled the boat up into the bed of a stream, which we thought was a good enough harbour in such quiet weather, and then encamped on the shingle close by, spreading the sail of the boat over the tent, to protect ourselves as well as we could against all the penetrating damp. About nine in the evening, just as we were sitting and lying about in melancholy rumination on the downpour outside, a violent gust of wind struck the walls of the tent, and a moment later a gale had sprung up from the south. We were out of the tent in a very short space of time, for it was on the point of falling on us. I ran down to the stream to look after the boat, and it seemed to me to be lying as safely as possible. We had in it a store of patent food for the dogs, and about 160 lbs. of bread, in two watertight tin boxes.

All night long we heard the sea moaning and breaking on the shore, but we felt quite at ease about the boat, and slept soundly till late in the morning, lulled by the monotonous song of the waves.

We awoke to find things very different from what we had

expected. Eight inches of snow were lying on the ground, and through this we had to stamp our way to the boat, finding it, when we got there, as full as a guillemot of slush and sea-water. The 'watertight' bread-boxes were filled with water to overflowing, and the dog-food—well, dog-food will stand water; but the bread!

The weather was clear the next day, and we saw that the drift-ice was not so bad but that we could get across the fjord, so we

SCHEI SURVEYING A GLACIER.

started to row to the other side. The ice was slack everywhere in the fjord, and it was not until we were close off the opposite shore that we met with any difficulty. This was in the shape of a rather tiresome strip of ice, which necessitated our punting the boat forward. Near 'Sydkap,' or 'South Cape,' we got into a land-channel, in which we saw a great many walrus, as well as on the ice on both sides of it, but we would not stop for them, as we wanted to get on while the weather was fine. The current was as swift as a river, but fortunately it was with us, and we made good progress westward along the shore. Then, too, a fresh breeze

sprang up from the east ; we hoisted sail, and on we went like this the whole of the day, between the ice and the land, with the spray flying from under the bows. It was one of the most enjoyable sails I ever had in my life, combining as it did the desirable conditions of smooth water with a stiff breeze behind us. Nor is the element of excitement wanting in this kind of sailing ; some dexterity is required to wind in and out among the floes, just slipping through into a new channel before they close up, and having to judge how many boat's-lengths it will take one, or whether it will turn out to be a blind lane. Then in the distance we see another lead and make for that ; but how are we to get to it ? *There*, outside the floe, must be the way, but we shall never get through ! Yes, after all—we just slip through in the nick of time !

We passed one perpendicular headland after another, and after each one we thought we should see the land trending northward ; but in this we were mistaken. Westward, always westward, went the coast-line as far as we could see, with high bluffs and precipices falling straight down to the narrow strip of shore. In the shoal water outside lay stranded hummocks the whole length of the coast, and apparently it was these we had to thank for the channel along shore, for they barred the way of the drift-ice. We had some difficulty in navigating across the large sandbanks at the mouth of the rivers, but in the bays there was still open water.

Many eider-ducks, with their broods, swam past us, and now and then we lowered sail and shot a few.

Meanwhile, the snow on the land grew less and less the further west we went, and we rejoiced at getting into drier regions. Where we were now sailing, we saw the bottom at one or two fathoms ; a quantity of seaweed was growing on it, but neither then nor afterwards did we attempt to dredge at this spot, for the navigation was too difficult.

At nine in the evening we pitched the tent on bare land not far from a small river.

While my companions were getting under way the next morning, I went and had a look round. There was hardly a plant to be seen ; and the only signs of game were the tracks of a few

ptarmigan. The favourable wind of the previous day had gone down, and we had to take to the oars again, with a course for the westernmost headland of the fjord, which we afterwards named 'Baadsfjordnuten' (Boat Fjord Peak). In mid-fjord a breeze from the west sprang up, so we set sail and stood, close-hauled, up the fjord, to get a closer view of the peak. It appeared to be situated on an island, and it was worth while to find this out for certain.

Along the west side of the fjord was a strip of ice, which prevented us from landing, and after a couple of vain attempts to do so by pushing and punting a way through with the boat-hooks, we landed on the east side. We saw from there that Baadsfjordnuten did not lie on an island, but on a peninsula, which was joined to the mainland by a low isthmus.

Our voyage was soon brought to a temporary standstill. The drift-ice which was moving up the fjord proved to be too much for us, and we were compelled to camp; to find next morning that the whole fjord was thickly packed with drifting ice.

The following day, September 11, there was a slack southerly breeze, with snow; and as the autumn was so far advanced that we might expect the sea to freeze any day, we decided not to continue farther west, but to turn back, and get home as quickly as possible—that is to say, when the ice should have slackened enough to allow of it.

We pitched our big canvas tent from Fort Juliana on the beach, and carried the dog-food up to it, as well as all the other things composing our depot, so that we should be ready to turn back the next day, if the ice meantime was accommodating enough to drift out of the fjord. We spent the whole day on this bit of work.

Next morning, at four o'clock, we turned out, ready to set our course eastwards. The fjord was free of drift-ice, but was covered by a layer of snow and slush, several inches thick, through which it was very difficult to row the boat. It was still worse when we got outside, and met the masses of drifting ice, which lay close together, with a thick layer of slush between them, all the way eastwards. As it was impossible to make any way, we chose the wiser course of turning back and waiting for an

off-shore wind, which, we hoped, would drive out both ice and slush to sea.

On the return journey to the tent, we caught sight of a bearded seal on a floe out in the fjord, and tried to get within range of it unseen. It is not easy to steal unawares on seals in such circumstances. To get the boat along at all was very difficult, and the ice in the slush always makes a certain amount of noise when the boat cuts through it. After incredible toil we at length succeeded in getting more or less within range; but, as ill-luck would have it, Fosheim, for once in his life, shot wide. Several hours' hard rowing are not very good training for a rifle-shot.

Not long after this, we saw a herd of saddle-back or harp seals (*Phoca greenlandica*) making up the fjord. These handsome seals, which have their name from the saddle-shaped mark on their backs, are in the habit of swimming round and round in a circle in large herds, and frequently get on such a pace that the whole body of the animal can be seen high above the waves. When they see a boat, they will often swim towards it, and then stop, gazing at it, raised right out of the water, with their flippers above the surface. In the autumn they are so fat that they float like cork fenders.

Fosheim shot one of them without difficulty, but that was the extent of the damage we did, for the whole herd went on at once. We hauled our booty up into the boat, and filled one of the cooking-pots with its blood, for we were all very fond of food prepared with this delicacy, especially of blood pancakes.

A short time afterwards, we shot a harbour seal, which went to the bottom; but not so Isachsen's ten eider-ducks and two glaucous gulls.

We got back to the depot about two o'clock, unloaded and beached the boat, and then Isachsen and I set to work to sew the lining to the tent, while Fosheim and Stolz went to see what sport was to be had with the hares. They returned at supper-time with five animals, and we had every reason to be satisfied with our bag for that day.

CHAPTER XXII.

CAPTIVITY IN BAADSFJORD.

IT was now clear to us that, without a land wind, which could drive the drift ice *ad undas*, we should not reach the 'Fram' before it was strong enough for us to walk back. We therefore made up our minds to two or three weeks' arrest in 'Baadsfjord' (Boat Fjord), and set to work to shoot as much game as possible, in order to save the provisions. We did not pitch the travelling tent, but took up our quarters in the big canvas tent.

The frost set in with a will, and we expected that the ice would soon bear, but we had not reckoned with the violent tidal current, which there is here, both along the coast and up the fjord. It left the ice no peace, but broke it up continually every time it began to form. Several times the off-shore wind swept the fjord free of ice; but it merely collected outside, where it drifted backwards and forwards, sometimes east and sometimes west, and after a couple of attempts to push through it, our hopes in that direction died a natural death.

All four of us then took to shooting, and we made great havoc among the hares; there are no game laws to be respected in these happy regions. There were not very many hares about; but we beat out every hole and corner, and at last got so many together that when we took our departure there was not more than a brace left in the whole place. Not far above the tent was a little tarn, with grass growing round it, and for a long time ptarmigan were a sure find there before dawn or in the dusk of the evening. It was generally Isachsen and Stolz who did execution among the birds, for they were the only ones who, besides rifles, had shot-guns with them.

The result of shooting hares day after day like this is that in the end one becomes so keen about it that one hardly cares for anything else. We beat them up high and low, early and late, from behind stones, in trackless wastes, and in every imaginable place. I certainly never shot anything up there which afforded me so much enjoyment; and it happened several times that I began to follow a hare in the twilight of dawn, and kept on the track of the same hare almost the whole day.

Meanwhile, it was not only shooting which occupied our time. We climbed to the top of all the mountains in the neighbourhood, from which we might expect to get a view over the surrounding country, for we were just as anxious to solve the question of what it was like west of us, and how far the fjord penetrated into the land. But, no matter where we went, we never succeeded in climbing to any place where we could get a clear idea of the lie of the land. We saw that about five miles inside of our camping-ground a glacier came down to the fjord, and that the latter here made a bend, but how far it might be to the head of it we were not able to decide.

When we saw for certain that the boat could not be taken back to the ship that autumn, we set to work to build a house with it. The site we chose was a mound of fairly dry grit, not so hard frozen but that we could hack and dig it with the implements we had at hand, namely, spades and seal-hooks. When we had dug deep enough, we turned the boat over the top to make a roof, and heaped shingle along the sides, and over the whole put a layer of snow a couple of feet deep. The house was about twenty feet long and six feet wide, measured inside, and we could stand upright under the keel. The floor sloped gently upwards, and at the upper end we made a bench in Eskimo fashion, raised about a foot from the ground. The entrance was at the stern of the boat, and a sack, which we split up, made a fine door of double sailcloth.

The house proved to be so warm that I do not think many houses at home in Norway are warmer. We had meant to put in a ventilating shaft, but we went into residence before we had time to see about it, and afterwards it was entirely forgotten. The 'Primus,' however, did not like our house as well as we did; as everybody knows, they are asthmatic, and require air, and

consequently we had to open the door whenever it was in use, but it was warm enough in any case, and by so doing we did not feel the want of the ventilator.

Our house was not only warm, but it soon became convenient and comfortable. The thwarts made capital shelves, and the lockers fore and aft in the boat might have been made on purpose for storing cups and food. Altogether we were very well satisfied with our architectural efforts, and spent many cosy evenings in the 'boat-house,' though I should explain that it was not until later that we took it into constant use, as it was not ready until the end of our captivity.

We took turns to be cook day and day about. We did not have coffee for breakfast at this time, and we were also very economical with the butter, as we wanted to have some in reserve for the return journey. Some of the bread which had been soaked in sea-water we ate up with a good conscience, for it would have been too heavy to drag with us on a sledge-journey, and we managed to get through one of the boxes. Our method of making it in any way eatable was by first warming it in the frying-pan—for it had become simply a cake of ice, and that not of the most palatable kind—and then spreading on it preserved cod-liver, which we had with us in tins; we all liked it so much that we almost forgot the butter. We had a good supply of groats, of which we ate as much as we wanted every day in the shape of porridge, and always in the soup.

One day, towards the end of our exile, we made up our minds to see the last of our supply of seal-flesh. It was already somewhat high, and we therefore decided to boil it down for soup, hoping that with a liberal addition of groats it would slip down fairly easily. We were ravenously hungry, and filled the cooking-pot to the brim. Unhappy man that I was—for it was my turn to be cook that day—I managed to burn the mess! High soup is bad enough, though I think burnt soup is worse, but when it is both high and burnt, the resulting taste is about as bad as it can be; and for the culinary abomination I turned out that day I make full acknowledgment and apology.

But this was not the end of the matter. The next time we

warmed it up it got burnt again, and what it then tasted like baffles description. I moved that this soup be thrown out, but Fosheim and Isachsen were so hungry that the motion was thrown out and not the soup. They would get it down somehow, they said. Before such heroism I could only be silent, and we set to work on it and on the meat unflinchingly. I think none of us will feel inclined to dispute the fact that it was more fearfully and wonderfully disgusting than anything we had ever swallowed

FOSHEIMSÆTER AND ITS BUILDER.

before, and, one way and another, we had eaten a good many unappetizing dishes up there. The cooking-pot, too, had to be emptied, as it was wanted for something else the next morning! It had never occurred to me before what a 'giant's kettle' we had brought up to Ellesmere Land with us. When the deed was done, and we had laid our spoons aside, we looked solemnly at one another, strengthened by our common misfortune and the knowledge that there were yet men in Norway. Ever afterwards, when in similar circumstances anybody demurred to finishing the contents of the cooking-pot, he was always asked, 'Do you think you

FJORD IN THE WEST! FROM BRASERUDFLYA, 1899.

have come up here merely for pleasure?' This always had the desired effect, and brought the delinquent to a sense of shame and duty.

I was very much annoyed at first at our unwarranted arrest in Baadsfjord, but there was nothing for it but to take the matter calmly; and as our tent-life was so pleasant, and the shooting afforded a good deal of excitement, I was soon reconciled to our captivity.

We had to think about rigging up some sort of sledge for the return journey. It is true that we were not much more than fifty miles from the 'Fram,' but we were obliged to have something on which to carry our provisions, the tent, and sleeping-bags. While the others were out shooting, therefore, Fosheim and I started to make a sledge on the model of the Eskimo ones. Two of the thwarts of our boat were sacrificed to make the runners, while the empty bread-tin provided metal plates for fixing on them. We then cut off short a couple of harpoon shafts, which we laid at right angles to the runners, and lashed the whole thing together.

But the day was so fine, and it was so tempting to follow the others' example and enjoy ourselves, that we determined to leave our work and see what it was like on the other side of the fjord. No sooner said than started on, although we saw well enough that the ice was about as weak as it well could be. We thought, however, that we might get across to the other side if we kept to the strongest parts, and so set off boldly in the beautiful weather. But truly there is a Nemesis in the world! Suddenly the ice broke under me, and in I went. It was I who had proposed leaving our work and going off to enjoy ourselves and make the most of this fine day. Happily, Fosheim was innocent, and also quick in seeing what to do. He held out my gun to me; I caught hold of it, and he pulled me out. And then we two sinners hurried home to our duty—that is to say, Fosheim went on with the sledge whilst I changed my clothes, and went out shooting.

October 3 was Isachsen's birthday, and we kept it with as much ceremony as our circumstances would allow. We had coffee for breakfast, and brought out all the best food we had at our disposal. We had no alcohol of any kind among our

provisions, but that made no difference to our spirits; we talked, and were very cosy and comfortable, and ended up the evening by spinning yarns. Isachsen declared—though he alone must be responsible for the statement—that it was the most enjoyable birthday he had ever spent.

We had another and still greater feast when the 'boat-house' was finished. It is true we were not in a position to put up a fir-tree and wreaths, as the custom is at home, when the builders get the roof on a house; but, on the other hand, owing to the compulsorily non-alcoholic nature of our beverages, I did not risk seeing a scarecrow set up on the roof one fine day in ridicule of the stingy master-builder who would not stand his workmen 'drinks.'

It was an easy matter for us to do without spirits, but we felt the want of tobacco very much, and already, after the first day or two, our supply gave out. A kind of moss, which I found, and tried for a time, proved to be worse than nothing at all, for the taste was anything but agreeable, and, once in my pipe, it seemed to last for ever.

We had done so much walking and climbing when out shooting that the result was the almost total destruction of our foot-gear. At this juncture some seal-skin, which I had stretched to dry on the roof of the tent, came in very opportunely for cobbling purposes. Stolz accomplished a masterpiece in this line, and proudly declared that never before had such a difficult bit of mending been brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

After October 1 the cold began to increase steadily, and the ice thickened so rapidly that we fixed on October 5 as the date for our departure. Isachsen and Stolz stowed away in the 'boat-house' everything that was to remain in Baadsfjord, and, in addition to a respectable quantity of tinned food, we stored three brace of hares, seventeen brace of ptarmigan, one black guillemot, eight eider-ducks, four gulls, and one fox. Besides all this, we left three packets of candles, fifteen gallons of paraffin, and all the tackle belonging to the boat.

Meanwhile, Fosheim and I walked across the fjord to a point of land north of Baadsfjordnuten, in hopes of getting a glimpse of the fjord on the other side of it. We climbed the hilly range south

of the point, hoping thus to obtain a view both of the fjord and of the land west of it, but getting there was not so easy as we had thought, for every ridge we climbed brought us in sight of a still higher one, which completely shut out the view. There must be an end to these ridges some time or other, we thought, and so we tramped on all day long, across country strewn with boulders and covered with newly-fallen snow, but eventually we had to turn our faces homewards, with our object unaccomplished.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SAD HOME-COMING.

AT last, on October 6, at half-past nine in the morning, we broke camp at Baadsfjord, and set off homewards. We took with us a tent and sleeping-bag, as well as provisions and paraffin for a week.

We made a very good beginning ; there were only a couple of inches of snow on the ice, and our sledge ran splendidly, but out on the fjord we got into old ice and loose snow, and the situation then assumed a very different aspect. The runners of our sledge were much too narrow for going of this kind, and sank into the snow. Happily, however, this state of affairs did not last very long, and we soon got on to young ice again, and made good progress almost the whole day. There were long, newly frozen lanes, running parallel with the land, which we took to, and thus were rarely obliged to travel over the old ice. We put two men to the sledge, and took turns in dragging it, while the other two rested for an hour. In this way we kept going all day, and when we camped in the evening, on an old large floe, we had done seventeen miles.

We hoped to reach South Cape on October 7, and started betimes in the morning, walking westward across ice that was as good as, if not better than, on the previous day, inasmuch as there was not so much old ice to be travelled over. As we were nearing South Cape, about half-past five in the afternoon, we saw two men on the ice running towards us from land. They were Baumann and Bay.

Before I left the ship, I had settled with Baumann that, if we should get frozen in so far from the ship that we could not return before the ice had formed, he was to send some men west to our

assistance as soon as the ice would bear. It was this relief party we now met. Baumann and Bay had been up on land to scan the country, while Schei and Hassel remained at the camp. All four had their teams, and they had also brought my dogs as a loose team. The meeting caused mutual pleasure, for they had begun to be anxious about us on board, on account of our long absence.

But it was on board that things had gone wrong. I saw at once from their faces that something serious had happened, and they were not long in telling us what it was. Braskerud was dead.

Like several of the others, he had caught a very bad cold in Jones Sound, and had been ill a fortnight with a cough and great difficulty in breathing, but had suffered no pain. It was impossible to do anything to relieve him; the doctor was dead, and nobody understood the real nature of his illness. He had kept his bed the last three or four days, but no one, still less himself, thought the end was so near.

Braskerud was a thoroughly good fellow, and we were all very fond of him. He had many interests outside his duties, and was particularly keen on forestry. Only a couple of days before his death, when he was lying in his berth suffering from great weakness, he heard two of his companions discussing his favourite subject. When he could stand it no longer, he called out: 'Wait a bit, wait a bit. I am coming too!' and, throwing on some clothing, he joined them on the sofa, where he took an eager part in the discussion. Two days later he died.

To a certain extent, Braskerud's death made a greater impression on many of the members of the expedition than even that of the doctor, and it caused still greater depression among us.

Winter was before us, the doctor dead, Braskerud dead, Peder still ill and in his berth, and Nödvedt ailing—we had fallen on evil days. And the oncoming polar night, with its cold and its crushing darkness, did not tend to make us see things in a brighter light; particularly as, since the doctor's death, we had felt powerless against every sickness. It was not long before there were very few of us who did not imagine that something or other was the matter with him.

Baumann and Bay took us to their camping-ground under the

perpendicular South Cape. It was a dangerous place for a tent, being exposed to any stones and débris which might fall, but, happily, none struck the tent itself while we were there. The detachment had been lying here for rather more than a day, detained by the lanes in the ice. It was only near South Cape itself, however, that the ice was poor; it was good enough both east and west.

As we were approaching the camp, Schei caught sight of us, and at once began to get the supper ready. After our tent was up, we were invited to the other tent, where we were regaled with pemmican lobscouse and strong coffee. It was delicious: no less of a treat was it for us to watch the tobacco-smoke curling its way up under the roof of the tent, while we puffed slowly at one pipe after another, and told each other our experiences. Coffee and tobacco had long been contraband articles with us.

We had taken only summer sleeping-bags with us to Baadsfjord, and, being almost hairless, they were not immoderately warm at this time of year. As long as we were in the fjord, we did not find them cold, as we had a good warm house to sleep in, and, besides, we could, if we wished, spread the travelling tent over the bags, but on the way home we had suffered a good deal from cold. Baumann, however, had been thoughtful enough to bring wolf-skin clothing for us all, and we now spread these garments over us when we went to rest at night, and were as warm as we could wish.

On Sunday morning, October 8, we got under way to drive on board, leaving behind us all provisions, both for men and dogs, as we should not require them on the short distance to the ship. A fair amount of fish for the dogs which we had remaining we cached, and put stones on it to protect it from the foxes.

We then set across Sydkapfjord at a smart pace, for there was just enough snow on the ice to enable the dogs to get a good foothold, steering, subsequently, into the western sound between Skreia and the land.

Suddenly we caught sight of something away under land, which soon turned out to be a bear. I turned my dogs towards it at once, and almost before they had become aware of the animal's presence, the whole caravan set off full tilt. Eight men and thirty dogs after

one bear are not long odds on the bear! But neither was our quarry slow to make off, and I had to let go my team before we could stop him. After doing this, Fosheim and I had only four dogs to our sledge, and consequently we began to fall behind the others, so I jumped off, and let Fosheim drive on alone. The bear, poor thing, knowing that it would soon be overtaken, hurried up from the ice to some stones under a crag of rock, where the dogs caught it up and began to bait it, and where Baumann soon shot it. I took the carcase on my sledge, and we drove on to the ship, which we reached at twelve o'clock—eighteen miles in four hours, with a bear-hunt thrown in, is not bad work.

During our absence from the ship, several bears had been killed. Simmons and Olsen, too, soon came back from shooting out in the sound; they had seen three bears, but could not do anything, as they had no dogs. The day afterwards Baumann and Schei saw a bear, followed it up, and shot it up on a hummock. That was the whole of their bag. Next day they went out again, but came home empty-handed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ARDUOUS JOURNEYS.

THE time for sledge-journeys had come round again, and we equipped ourselves for them with much ardour. It was my intention to drive west to make a depot at as great a distance as possible from the ship, and to move the tent from Baadsfjord out to the new depot, but before that Isachsen was going a trip eastward to survey the country from Havnefjord to Framsfjord.

Before we could set off, our boots required a thorough overhauling, and the provisions had also to be seen to. It was my intention to send six teams west, and two eastward.

Peder was now beginning to recover, and his spirits were decidedly better; as a rule, he was able to be up, and he helped to put the plates on the sledge-runners.

My camping experiences now made me decide to try a lined tent for travelling purposes. I could not help thinking that the difference in weight would be so trifling that it would well repay us, for it was my opinion that with double walls it might be possible to avert some of the moisture, which so greatly increased the weight of our loads on long journeys.

We worked at our preparations from early morning till late at night, for we were all anxious to be off. Fur clothing, 'finsko,' and all the extra things that are required on a sledge-journey at the cold time of the year, were given out in sufficient quantity.

Fosheim, Schei, Bay, and I were going to do the actual depot-driving westwards, while Baumann and Stolz were to come with us as far as Baadsfjord, with a load of things to be deposited there. They were then to return to South Cape, to fetch the provisions

which we had left behind, and drive them in to Baadsfjord again. Hassel was to go with Isachsen, surveying.

After breakfast on Friday, October 13, we all started off. The going was not first rate, and the weather very indifferent, with a northerly breeze and driving snow.

All the men who were remaining behind came out on the ice

VIEW OF SOUTH CAPE.

to say good-bye and see us off. In a community of fourteen it makes a great difference when eight go away, and this time everybody seemed to feel it more than they had ever done before. We could not help remembering what had happened during former absences, and here and there perhaps were signs of suppressed emotion.

The dogs had been well fed for a long time, and they now

hauled as if they meant to go to the world's end; and in a way that was just where they were going, only it was a pity the ice was so bad. Outside Sydkapfjord, however, it improved. There we pitched our tent, but a little east of the former camping-ground, as I did not care for the idea of being under the perpendicular bluff, where we were exposed to falling rock and stones at any minute. We saw no bear-tracks the whole day, and only one seal, which was lying on the ice.

The inner tent, which we now tried for the first time, was made of thinnish cotton lining material, for we had nothing else that we could use. The ridge of the roof was so low that there was a space of about a foot in height between the two tents, and we hoped that the intermediate air would prove to be a non-conductor. The space between the vertical walls was calculated to be from three to four inches, if nothing pressed them closer together.

We were greatly astonished at the effect of the double walls when we tried the tent the first evening. No sooner were we all inside, and the 'Primus' burning, than we had to drag off our outer clothing and sit in our shirt-sleeves. This was something quite new to us, for we had never had such warmth in the travelling tents before. Baumann and Stolz, who had their old single silk tent, were as cold as ever, and we felt obliged to ask them to supper, and gave them a standing invitation to our meals for as long as we camped together.

• A fairly heavy fall of snow during the night made the next day's march to the little sandbank about half-way between South Cape and Baadsfjord a rather tiring one. The ice, however, had lain undisturbed since our last visit; the lanes, which had then given us so much trouble, were now frozen over, and the ice was everywhere safe.

Next day we had the same thick weather, and going that was worse than ever. We reached the mouth of Baadsfjord at dusk, after having toiled our way along step by step, and turned our faces up the fjord. But bad as the going had been before, it was worse now; even when we hauled as hard as we could, together with the team, it was as much as we could do to move the sledges.

Every few yards we came to a standstill, and when at last, about six o'clock, we reached the house, the dogs were completely done up, and their drivers as well. The fact was we were out of training. We perspired copiously, and were so thirsty that our tongues seemed to cleave to the roof of our mouths.

How good it would have been when we got there to throw ourselves into a chair and call—if we could have called—‘Waiter, a bottle of beer all round!’ But such luxuries were not for us, and the first thing we did when we got into the tent, after tying up the dogs, was to make some sweet-soup. We consumed such quantities of the steaming fluid that we had no room left for solid food, but we managed to get through two or three cups of coffee each afterwards. This was the result of a Turkish bath in twenty-two degrees below zero!

The following day we ‘papered’ our boat-house ready for occupation. This we did because the warm air inside, acting on the wall of sand, would naturally thaw the frozen particles and bring the whole thing down on us. We therefore nailed sailcloth to the gunwales, thus covering the walls, and well packed the intervening space with moss, which we found by a tarn a little way above the camp. We then shovelled away the snow from the big canvas tent, and got it in readiness for striking. On the hillside we rigged up the mast of the boat, with the proper stays and shrouds, and hoisted all the small game to the top of it, to be out of the way of foxes and dogs. It had a truly remarkable appearance, but was very effectual.

We then moved in: no furniture vans were required here, for we counted no drawing room mirrors or grand pianos among our effects, but, on the other hand, the kitchen department was unusually well represented.

Later in the evening, after various culinary operations had taken place, the heat became absolutely tropical, and we lay outside the sleeping-bags all night.

The following day Baumann and Stolz went off on their errand to South Cape, whereas the rest of us, as I mentioned before, were to go west with the tent and depot. The former had to be struck before we could start, but it was so covered with ice that before

we had knocked this off sufficiently for transportation it was late in the day, and we did not think it worth while to set out. The weather, too, was bad, and the going worse, so that the two who had left might congratulate themselves on having sledges which were as good as empty.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN AWKWARD BEAR-HUNT.

ON Wednesday, October 18, we broke camp in Baadsfjord; the weather was so thick and snowy that we could hardly see in front of us as we went along, while the going was as heavy as the first time we came to the fjord.

Just outside Baadsfjord we suddenly came across two living beings standing gazing at us, but it was so dark that neither of us could make the other out. It was only when they came towards us to see what we were that I knew from the hang of their heads and the jogging gait that they were bears. What we were they did not seem able to decide; and it was not till the dogs had caught sight of them, and I had let go my team, that they made off—one due west, and the other south-east towards a large iceberg, with the whole team at its heels.

The bear soon realized that it would be caught up, and headed for the iceberg, which was square in shape, slanting on one side and vertical on the other, and fell away abruptly into a lane at the back of it. But just as it was jumping the crack and was about to scramble up the sloping side of the berg the dogs caught it up, and it took to 'pig-walzing,' as Peder used to call it. The dogs pressed it so close that before we knew what had happened 'Lasse' was under its claws, but his friends came to the rescue so valiantly, tearing and dragging at its hair, that it was glad to let him go and continue its way up the iceberg. No retreat was possible from here; forward the bear had to go if it wanted to save its life; and with the dogs full cry after it, it jumped from the top of the berg into the lane some thirty feet below. The water splashed high in the air, and the dogs, which had not

expected 'Bamsen' to escape in this manner, did not seem at all inclined to follow his example.

Fosheim and I came hurrying up, very angry with the dogs, which had not had the intelligence to run back the way they had come and follow the bear, which was now, of course, making off towards Jones Sound as hard as it could go. But when I had got round the iceberg I saw the situation at a glance, for there stood the bear, growling by the side of the lane, looking very large

Bay.

PHEW ! THAT COALING !

and ferocious, and ready to spar at the first dog that should be incautious enough to come down. Now it was his turn, thought he ; and he seemed to be quite in his element. No wonder the dogs had stayed where they were, with their heads on one side and their coats bristling, yelping with all their might. They were not so stupid after all.

As luck would have it, I had come bear-shooting that day without a gun, but the others had theirs, so it was all right. I therefore stepped back a couple of paces and gave place to Fosheim, who sent the bear a ball through the shoulder. He had aimed

high, however, and the animal retreated towards the lane ; he was, therefore, obliged to expend a couple more shots on it, but by that time it was fairly dead.

Fosheim then got out the flaying-knife, while the dogs sat all the time on the top of the iceberg looking on at the whole performance without moving a muscle. Apparently they were still under the effects of their amazement at the turn affairs had taken.

We others then drove three of the teams towards land with my load in tow. There we soon found a good camping-ground, and, while Bay went back with a team to help Fosheim bring the bear home, Schei and I pitched the tent.

When the bear arrived we cut some steaks off it for supper, and laid out the rest of the meat to freeze. The skin we folded up to fit the sledge, and let it freeze in that shape, and the following day we cached it and the meat by shovelling snow over the one and placing plenty of stones over the other.

CHAPTER XXVI.

STORMKAP.

THE next day, October 18, we continued our way westward, the going being still bad. Later in the day the weather cleared, and in front of us, towards the north, a fairly broad fjord opened out to view, which seemed to cut far into the land.

The burning question of the day was whether there were big game in it or not. Hitherto we had seen nothing which could point to the existence at the present time of polar oxen in this part of the country, but this fjord, with its beautiful large valleys, looked so inviting and promising that we had every hope of finding some there. We set our course towards a high point west of the fjord which had the appearance of an island, but which later proved to be connected with the mainland by some low ground. Later on we named the place 'Stormkap,' or 'Cape Storm.' Near Stormkap we passed several lanes, and saw a very decided water-sky in the west.

We had several times made quite remarkable observations with regard to the slipperiness of the snow, and the respective gliding qualities of tin and German-silver on it, but never so markedly as to-day. We all had German-silver over-runners to our sledges, except Schei, whose sledge was shod with plates of tin. The whole way along Baadsfjord Schei was always behind, and we had to wait for him several times. But when we were nearing Stormkap we found it necessary to drive on some newly frozen lanes for some time to avoid the old ice which so greatly impedes progress, and then the sledges with the German-silver plates became so heavy that the dogs had to drag the loads along step by step. Schei's sledge now ran so lightly that it seemed as if his dogs had

nothing to draw ; I had to ask him to drive first, and then we could not keep up with him ! When we had crossed the lanes, however, and had got on to ordinary ice, he slowed down again.

We camped in the evening under the steep bluffs of Stormkap, where we found a good camping-ground, with only one disadvantage, which was that it blew several percentages more there than anywhere else.

No sooner had we turned out the next morning than we were greeted by a driving blast from the north. The whole landscape was seething in the drifting snow, and of the high walls of rock above us we saw not a vestige, unless we kept close under them. We drove across a large bay to a steep headland on the west side of it. The going was splendid, for the wind had blown away all the loose snow, and we sat on the loads and drove westwards at full gallop. But arrived at the headland we were suddenly stopped by open water, which stretched as far south and west as we could see. There was nothing for it but to bear towards land in hopes of finding an ice-foot which could help us on.

We decided to camp and reconnoitre westward before attempting to go farther. Fosheim and I went ashore to choose the ground, and I told him to bring his gun, as we might possibly come across a bear among the rocks.

When we had crossed the crack and had reached land, we saw that the tent could be pitched almost anywhere ; it was only a question of getting the dogs up from the ice. We called them, and they responded to our invitation by tearing across the crack with the loads behind them. Just as I was tying them up, and was about to make the lanyards fast to a rock, they suddenly jerked them out of my hand, and set off westwards as hard as they could go. I looked up, and there, among the stones, was a great bear glaring at us. I shouted to Fosheim, but before he was ready to fire, the bear was down on the ice, making at full speed for the open water. The range was pretty long, and several bullets went astray before it was hit.

Schei also had let go his team, and when the whole dozen dogs reached and began to worry the bear, it collected its remaining forces, dragged itself the few yards which still separated it from

the edge of the ice, and plunged into the lane. It was lying there, floating, when we reached the spot. A dead bear which has exerted itself never sinks, unless it is extremely thin, and this was a fine, fat beast. We then hacked a slope in the edge of the ice, up which to haul it, and although there were four of us to the job, it was as much as we could do to drag it up. If I recollect right, it took three of us, when it was landed, to turn it over on its back. The work of cutting it up and skinning it out there on the ice in such wind was anything but amusing.

When we had finished our work, and were looking forward to the moment when we should be comfortably settled inside the tent, we found that the tide had risen so much that we could not get ashore like ordinary human beings. Schei declared that his wind overalls were so waterproof that he could wade to land without getting very wet, if he tied them tightly round his boots, and, after due preparation, he started off. These overalls of waterproofed cotton material are invaluable garments, and those Schei had on were not otherwise than thick; probably, too, they were fairly watertight; but it took him some time to get across, for the water was deep and there were pitfalls to be avoided, and certainly he got very wet.

Fosheim and I, having no wish for a swim, decided to wait till the tide went down. Meanwhile we dragged the meat down to the crack, so that we should have nothing to do but hand it across the ice-foot at low tide. It was miserably cold standing about, with a wind that seemed to blow right through one, so we took a turn eastwards, and, in so doing, unexpectedly found a crossing, which brought us ashore dry-shod.

The camp was then put in order, and later on the meat fetched and laid out on the snow to freeze.

We were very much interested to know in what direction the land trended: that it should extend so far to the west we had never imagined, and we hoped and expected that as soon as we had got round the nearest headland to the west we should find the coast trending northward. But at present we could see nothing of our surroundings; the fog lay thick out at sea, and as it was also growing late, we postponed our reconnaissance till the morrow.

Next day, a fresh breeze blowing from the north, we went westward to scan the country; a thick veil of fog still lay over the sea, but it was not so thick as on the previous day, and we could see a faint outline of land on the other side of the open water. It appeared to be a mountain landscape on a large scale, majestic and imposing, with precipitous black walls of rock and white snow-fields in the gaps.

Our progress further west, with the ice in the condition it now was, was here cut off by a steep bluff, which fell perpendicularly into the sea. We therefore retraced our steps, and while the others were pitching the big canvas tent and stowing the depot in it, I walked westward to a point, whence I saw that the land extended still farther to the west. How far it did so I could not well make out, but I felt sure that, at any rate, it was a good day's march to the farthest headland in sight.

Nearly the whole of the bear-meat was put in the depot, as well as its skin, with the blubber on it. The list of provisions was as follows:—

- 4 packing cases of patent dog-food, about 400 rations.
- 2 tins of pemmican.
- 1 tin of chocolate.
- 1 tin of sugar.
- 2 tins of potatoes.
- 2 tins of milk.
- 1 packet of candles.
- 5 bundles of fish.
- 2 packing-cases of blubber.
- 1 2½-gallon keg of petroleum.

When everything had been stowed inside the tent, we built a big wall of stones round it, door and all—an undertaking which, together with our other arrangements, took us the whole day.

Next morning, October 22, we drove off again, our plan being to investigate the big fjord, which cut into the land between Baadsfjordnuten and Stormkap.

The atmosphere was very thick, and we could see nothing. Across the bay to Stormkap, the north wind was so violent that

sledges, dogs, and men were swept long distances across the ice. It is true we had the wind abeam, and there was nothing on the sledges except ourselves; but it was a kind of locomotion we had never experienced before.

After passing Stormkap we took a line for the big fjord; but the light was so dim that we got a little out of our reckoning, and found ourselves instead in a large bay to the west of it. There we got into ugly pressure-ice, and had a great deal of trouble in making our way back to the fjord again. However, when we did

HAVNEFJORD. I.—WINTER QUARTERS.

reach it we found good even ice, on which the dogs worked well, and we hoped accordingly to reach the head of the fjord that evening. But, in the dusk, we somehow managed to get into bad pressure-ice again, and this we found all but impassable. It was a refined mixture of young and old ice, which almost closed the way for us, and at last we camped on an old floe, tired out with our struggles to get through.

After a while the wind went down, and the evening was not so bad outside the tent, while inside it was very comfortable indeed. We eagerly discussed the great question as to whether or not we should find big game: from outside the valley had seemed so

HAVNEFJORD. II.—INNER PART OF THE BAY.

promising, but at closer quarters it changed its character. My impression now was that the vegetation was extremely sparse, and that the valley chiefly consisted of grit and stones. This impression, however, might be the result of the bad weather, for through driving snow the black crags of rock are the only things that stand out in a landscape of the kind. The prospects might be better up at the head of the fjord.

So we turned in, and slept the sleep of the just; but in the middle of the night we were all aroused by the man nearest to the door starting up from his sleep, and whispering, 'Here's a bear!' He seized his neighbour by the arm, and began to feel for his gun; but, unfortunately for the tent, it was outside, and, in his sleepy zeal, he cut a hole in the floor and dragged it in. Then he very carefully undid the lowest hook of the tent-door—for the bear was sitting just outside it, ready to fell the first person who should put his head out—and cautiously but resolutely peered through the opening. There, close by the door, was the animal, quietly sitting. It was one of the dogs! Somehow or other it had got loose, and the sound of its footsteps on the snow near the tent-wall had assumed such proportions in the ears of the man by the door, that in his dreams he had seen a monster animal approaching the tent.

This occurrence brought down on his devoted head a good deal of chaff, both that night and often afterwards—in fact, whenever he was seen rummaging in the tent for anything he required or had lost, he was invariably asked: 'What, another bear?'

CHAPTER XXVII.

HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS.

NEXT morning the weather was clear; we found a passably good route under land, and about half-past ten in the forenoon encamped near the river at the head of the fjord. We swallowed some coffee and bread and butter as fast as we could, and set off shooting; Bay and Schei through the big valley running due south, Fosheim and I up the valley to the west.

We had not gone far from the tent before we discovered the fresh trail of polar oxen. In our joy at this we set off full speed, following the tracks up the valley as well as we were able to do so. About five miles from the fjord the valley divided into two arms, one of which ran in a south-westerly, and the other in a northerly direction. The tracks led south-west, and we followed them until a high wind from the north set in, with driving snow, so that we could not see a hand's-breadth in front of us. We then soon lost the trail, and as it was hopeless to think of shooting anything that day, we turned back to the tent. We returned along the other side of the valley, and saw numerous tracks of polar cattle in the clay and sand in places where the ground was free of snow.

We reached the tent before the others were back, and therefore concluded that they had had better sport than ourselves; but as it was impossible to know this for certain, I began for safety's sake to cook some food—we decided on bear steaks. No sooner were they frying hard than we heard steps outside, and though, of course, I very much wanted to call out and ask what sort of sport Bay and Schei had had, I refrained, as according to our canons it was not the correct thing to ask questions before the returning

party had had something to eat. Bay, however, came to my help, for he called in: 'Just look out here a minute!' Fosheim, who was sitting near the door, unhooked a couple of hooks and looked out, while at the same moment Bay threw in a string of hearts and bits of meat for boiling. This was indeed beyond our boldest hopes. It was so long since we had had beef, that I had not a moment's hesitation as to how it should be cooked: it should be boiled. Meat like this was too good for frying, and besides, if cooked as aforesaid, it would give us at the same time some delicious soup, to which 'Juliana,' or strips of vegetable, could be added.

A few minutes afterwards the pot was boiling. I know nothing so deliciously fragrant as the smell of a steaming flesh-pot in such circumstances as ours. Our pleasures were few enough up there, and when we had been toiling and struggling in the cold for hours at a time, this odour seemed so delicious, that the first whiff of it put us into good spirits at once.

When we had eaten to repletion, and had filled our pipes, Bay and Schei related the events of the day. Having, as they said, reached the big plain inside the fjord, which we had thought was sandy soil covered with snow, but which proved to be extensive and continuous grass-land, they found tracks at once; and after the lapse of half an hour caught sight of six polar oxen under some steep stony ground a little distance up from the river.

Their immediately made their plan of attack. Schei was to try and get within range from the cover of some heights on the north side of the river; while Bay was to keep on the other side, where he also could find cover almost till he reached the animals. This lengthy and cautious stalking, however, was not at all in accordance with Bay's temperament, and after a little while he determined to go straight ahead. The animals were so astonished at this novel mode of attack, that they stood quite still. As Schei now approached from the opposite side, the oxen formed a square by way of defending themselves, and the shooting began. The last two or three animals broke away and headed for the mountains, but were stopped by the deep snow, and shot. Afterwards began the flaying and cutting up. Our sportsmen had

been obliged to leave a couple of animals with the entrails still in them, and this I thought so dreadful that I was on the point of starting off the same evening to finish the work, but gave it up on account of the darkness and bad weather.

Next day we drove to the field of battle, taking with us all the dogs, but had to stop a short distance before we came to it, as there was no more snow on which to drive. We set to work on the animals, skinned and dismembered them, and carried the meat down to the sledges. The dogs, who knew by instinct that now was their turn, could not, or would not, wait any longer; just as we were going to let them loose on the garbage, three of the teams broke away and set off in a pack, and their harness having become entangled on the way up, they set on the entrails so encumbered.

It is not a pleasant sight to see dogs on such occasions; they then become beasts of prey only, and there is such rivalry among them to swallow the greatest possible amount of food, that they have not time even to fight. Nothing is to be heard but their snorting and smacking noises as they gulp down the contents of the paunch, and other delicacies; while their coats get into such a horrible mess, that they look as if they had been dragged through the gutter, or worse. They devoured almost every scrap of the entrails, and ate till they were as round as balloons. Entangled as their traces had been before, they were still worse after the dogs had waded in the garbage, and woven the lines in and out of each other. These gluttons were a sight to behold after they had done their meal! Confusion was worse confounded! Some lay on their backs, some on their sides, some had wound the line so fast round their feet, that they could only lie still and yelp, while others had got it round neck, head, and paws. If we had not gone to their rescue at once, and cut their harness and traces in many places, something serious would have happened. We then took some of the meat down to the camp, but as we could not bring it all down in one day we had to stay on till the next.

While Fosheim and Bay were driving down the last of it the following day, and Schei was mending the harness and splicing the traces, I went off to see if I could shoot anything, but the

fog came on so thickly that I could hardly have seen less had I been blindfold. I just made out, however, that I was among some sand-hills, and happily, the weather being quite still, I was able to follow my own tracks back again, and reached home after four hours' absence.

About three o'clock we all met in the tent for dinner. The skins and meat had been brought down, and all we had now to do was to get out of the fjord and on board the 'Fram' as quickly as possible. We accordingly loaded the sledges, and lashed the loads fast to them that evening.

The weather had gradually changed to almost a thaw, and there were not more than a couple of degrees of frost. This was very bad for the sleeping-bags, and they suffered especially during the last twenty-four hours. We had heated the tent more than usual, so that the snow had melted, and the floor of the tent was quite wet through. The bags were rather damp, as it was, and we feared they would be still worse the next night, but later in the evening the weather suddenly cleared, the temperature fell quickly, and there was every sign of severe cold setting in again.

SKREIA, FROM WINTER QUARTERS

We drove off early on October 26, and in spite of our heavy loads the sledges glided easily and rapidly onwards. About five miles down the fjord I caught sight of a herd of polar cattle on some level ground, a little way up from the sea. I stopped, got out my glasses, and began to count them, and after some counting backwards and forwards, there proved to be as many as fifteen animals in the herd.

We now held a council of war. I had some hesitation in attacking, as the distance to the 'Fram' was so great; moreover, being late in the year, it was possible that we might not be able to fetch all the animals before the winter set in. To shoot more animals than we could transport and make use of was simply barbarism. After some minutes' discussion we came to the conclusion, that if we all lent a hand at hauling the sledges, we should be able to bring the flesh on board during the course of the autumn, even if we shot as many as a score of animals.

In order to get within range we were obliged to drive a short way farther out, till we could get under cover of a small island near the east side of the fjord. Our sudden change of direction in shaping a course for this island made the dogs aware that we were after something or other, but I am sure they had not yet got wind of the cattle. At the northern point of the island we lost our cover, as we were obliged to cross the bay, a distance of some two to three hundred yards. I felt convinced that the oxen, if they were as observant as they usually are, would see us before we could get into cover again on the other side, so we left the sledges, and each man took his team, holding the connecting lanyard in such a manner that when the time came he would only have to let go the one rope-end.

A little way out on the bay the dogs got scent of the cattle, and set off as fast as they could go. They pulled so hard, that we could hardly keep our legs, and time after time one or other of us fell down, and was dragged, rolling like a log of wood, across the ice.

Remarkable to relate, we managed to cross the bay without being seen by the herd, and then headed up across a steep sand-hill on the other side. Fosheim and I now had only two or three

hundred yards to go, but we stopped to wait for Bay and Schei, who had not kept up with us. This, however, did not suit the dogs, who wanted to set on the cattle at once, and pulled impatiently at their traces. I tried to hold them in, but they began to howl, and made such a clamour that I was afraid they would put the oxen to flight, so, choosing the lesser evil, I let them go, when they flashed like rockets up the hillside, and across the level ground at the top. The oxen were rather scattered, but quick as lightning they formed a square, and stood side by side, so close together, that the whole herd looked like one black mass.

We should have liked to wait till the others came up before beginning to shoot, but as only one team was attacking the square, we were afraid the cattle might break the ranks and make off to the mountains, so Fosheim walked to within suitable range and began the slaughter; for by no other name can the shooting of a drawn-up square be called.

During the few minutes that it took to do this, the animals made their regular sallies after the dogs. How proud they looked, those sturdy animals with their formidable horns, as they galloped snorting across the plain, the breath from their nostrils looking like jets of steam a couple of yards long in the cold air.

Fosheim walked round the square and took such good aim that, as a rule, one shot was enough for each animal. He aimed at the forehead, under the horns, and fired as the ox was lifting its head to its highest pitch. Twice or thrice it happened that an ox with a bullet in its head did not fall, but burst out from the square in fury, and then, for a moment, things looked bad for Fosheim. But each time the dogs came to the rescue; though, as a matter of fact, the animals had had so much that their strength was broken. When Bay and Schei came up, Fosheim had shot all the cattle except two or three young animals and about five calves.

It was ten o'clock when we first caught sight of the herd, and by eleven the misdeed was finished. How distressed I felt, as I stood there, looking on, that we should be obliged to do such a thing! I would rather hang a criminal, if such a thing fell to my lot, than shoot down a herd of defenceless animals, which had

set themselves up as targets. I see that I wrote in my diary : 'So, then, all the giants and defenders of the herd were fallen, and lay bleeding, with bursting eyes, in a steaming pool of blood ; only a couple of young animals and five calves were left standing inside the square, which before had been so strong. They stood, trembling with fear, gazing at us out of their deep dark eyes.'

It was not so horrible at first, when the big bulls out in the square made their furious attacks on their assailants ; but as they

'ON THE LINE.'

were shot down one by one, and only the young animals and calves were left standing alone in the middle of it, it was a dreadful sight to look on at. Round about them lay in heaps their friends and kin, while the blood spurted steaming from their gaping wounds. The nearest of the fallen animals lay so close up to the survivors that the latter could hardly move. Terror was plainly written in their beautiful beseeching eyes, and every limb shook with fear, but to attempt to flee from their comrades—no ; rather would they fall.

There lay twenty animals in a heap—horrible riches that we

BIG-GAME' SHOOTING IN KING OSCAR LAND.

[From a drawing by Otto Sinding.]

had acquired all in a few minutes. Our next work was ready to hand, and had to be done as quickly as possible. We started to drag the animals one by one from the sanguinary mass in which they lay, and remove the entrails from them.

Bay took his team down to the sledges, and drove our baggage-sledge across the bay to an eventual camping-place. There he left the dogs, and came back, bringing the 'Primus' and a whetstone, with which respectively to warm and sharpen the knives while the skinning was going on. As a rule, when we were skinning newly killed animals, we used to warm the whetstone by placing it on the animal's body; but when the weather was so still that we could burn the 'Primus,' it saved time to do so; and to-day of all days we required efficient apparatus. Unluckily we had not many knives with us, so that we could not work nearly so quickly as usual.

We kept at it the whole day, and as we removed the entrails, we turned the animals over with their legs under them, and piled them up as close together as we could, so that they should not freeze before we had skinned and disjointed them.

It grew so dark by the time we had skinned six animals that we could not see to do any more, so we let loose the dogs to revel in the garbage. When they were unable to swallow another mouthful we collected our things and started downwards, taking with us a couple of prime bits of meat for boiling.

Just as we arrived at the place where we expected to find the sledge, I saw a herd of animals down by the crack. I wondered what they could be, and at first thought they were polar oxen, but their action was different. Were they bears? No; impossible. Wolves? No; these animals were black; at any rate, they looked black in the darkness. Then Schei came up, and was able to explain that they were Bay's dogs, which had been left behind, and were patiently waiting for their turn to come. While we were pitching the tent, Bay took them up to the slaughter-ground to feed.

It was late that night before we settled into the tent, and a hard day we had had of it. Standing out in — 22° Fahr. (— 30° Cent.), working hard at disembowelling all these large animals the

whole livelong day, without a sup or a bite, had not been pleasant work. We had breakfasted between five and six in the morning, and it was six o'clock again before we had anything to eat; but, in return, how delicious were the smoking soup and meat—the former had a layer of fat on it as thick as the broth itself. The amount which one can put away on such occasions is something astounding; and then, one's pipe alight, the coffee before one, and one's weary limbs stretched on the bag, a feeling of wellbeing comes over one which could hardly be possible except after such a day of toil. But, as a rule, it is not long before one is overcome by sleep; it grows more and more difficult to keep one's pipe alight, and one's last waking thought is a firm determination to creep into the bag. Often we used to fall asleep before we had fastened the last buckle of the hood; but then one is so fresh to begin again the next day—that is to say, if one's night's rest is undisturbed.

This was not the case on the present occasion, as later in the night the wind got up, and the tent was very nearly blown away. Schei, who was lying nearest the door, had to turn out and brace up the guy-ropes.

It was blowing just as hard when we woke up in the morning, and the whole fjord was in a smoke. It was little better at the slaughter-ground, where we had the pleasure of skinning fourteen half-frozen animals in some twenty-five degrees below zero; but where there is a will there is a way, and goodwill was not wanting in our case. Had we had plenty of flaying-knives with us the work would have gone quicker; but we only had one that was really fit to be used.

By four o'clock the animals were all skinned and cut up, and the meat carried to one place, where it was piled in a heap. This we covered with skins to prevent the foxes getting at it quite so readily.

I simply had to stand still for a while and contemplate this glorious stack. Never before or since have I seen such a heap of good meat; it was literally a 'meatberg.' Here was both the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye; it almost made one's mouth water to look at it.

We were able to turn in fairly early that evening, after having

supped off the same courses as the previous day. The dogs, too, had done likewise. I had begun to be almost afraid that the others would grow tired of this continual broth and meat, so that it was with a certain diffidence that I had proposed it again this evening; but my anxiety on that score quite disappeared when I saw how it was appreciated. After all, it is the kind of food which is most sustaining to men under canvas at the cold time of the year.

Before turning in I had a look at all the guy-ropes, and thought they would hold through the night; but it takes something to withstand the wind when a tent is abeam of it, and our camping-ground was aslant so that we had been obliged to pitch the tent in this position. Matters were no better this night than the previous one, and again one of us had to get up and make the guy-ropes taut to prevent the tent from falling.

We were now ready to return on board, and we turned out betimes, so as to get in a good day's march. The snow was driving down the fjord before the wind, just as on the previous day; and when we reached the sledges out by the island, they were entirely covered by the snow. We had hard work shovelling it away from the loads, and getting them and the sledges fairly free of it, and were thus not ready to start before nearly half-past nine.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOME TO THE 'FRAM.'

WE now made good progress homewards; all the gaps in the pressure-ice were filled with snow, and it was therefore easy for us to bring our heavy sledges across them. In addition to this we had the wind behind us, which increased our pace, and so enabled us to sit on the sledges. The farther we went, the easier was the going, until late in the afternoon, when the tin plate broke on one of Schei's runners. An attempt at repairing it was unsuccessful, and although Schei ran by the side, it was as much as he could do to keep up with us. We then took turns in running, and later on shifted the dogs turn and turn about, and in this way made good progress all the same.

While Fosheim was taking his turn at running, being as warm as possible, he forgot all about his nose, which took this opportunity of freezing. He knew nothing about it until it was frozen so stiff that it looked like a piece of white bone in the middle of his face, and he might easily have broken it off. Had it gone on freezing for a little longer, he would have been noseless. However, with general assistance and careful treatment, that member was saved at the last moment, but it wore mourning for a long time afterwards, and looked more like a dab of pitch which had got into the wrong place than anything else in the world.

When we were driving out of the fjord, and had almost reached Baadsfjordnuten, a she-bear with two cubs came up towards us, but turned off to the west as she was about to pass us, and then continued up the fjord, where she spent a long time examining our tracks, and trying to find out from them what sort of animals we were. We could easily have shot her; but we had little time, and

VIEW OF HAYNEFJORD, WITH FOSHEIM'S BABY.

meat in plenty, to say nothing of the carcase of a bear at Baadsfjordnuten, which we intended for the dogs. So we let her enjoy life with her cubs. The conditions up there are harsh and inclement enough anyhow, and the joys of a bear-mother few and far between. Her lying-in chamber is a cavern in one of the big drifts; her food as she lies in childbed is often scanty; but when her offspring grow bigger and become a solace and an amusement to her, the joys of motherhood are hers all the same.

HUNTING FOR COOKING-ICE.

It is not uncommon for the polar bear to play with her cubs in the most wanton manner, ducking them in the lanes, sliding down the icebergs, tumbling, rolling, growling, and pretending to fight with them; and the little ones throw themselves into the game with all their hearts; while the hoar-frost and glittering sunshine on the hummocks and snow-fields give the scene a marvellous purity and freshness. It is a breath of grand untouched nature, doubly grateful in the great stillness around, for when the Queen of the snowfields plays all is silence. There is not so much as the

black muzzle of a seal to be seen. Her Majesty might suddenly be pleased to be hungry.

When we arrived at the crack, we had some difficulty in crossing it, and so, postponing any further attempt, we pitched the tent at our former camping-ground out on the ice, on some hard drifted snow which I thought was deep enough to protect us from the layer of salt which often forms on young ice.

When salt water freezes at a low temperature, a layer of salt is lodged on the ice. On the under side this efflorescence is soon washed away, but on the upper side the icy cold brine remains, even should the temperature fall as low as -20° to -40° Fahr. (-30° to -40° Cent.). Unluckily it proved in the morning that the sheet of snow had not been thick enough to protect us, for both the floor of the tent, and the bags, were wet through.

We had expected a visit from the bears during the night, and were disappointed they did not pay us one—it would have been fine sport to have been called up to a bear-hunt in the middle of the night, with four-and-twenty dogs to raise the alarm!

We also had another disappointment out here at 'Nuten' (*i.e.* the Peak). We found that the foxes had eaten up nearly the whole of our store of meat. This was very annoying; but to our annoyance was added profound astonishment when we saw that they had dragged the huge bear-skin for quite a distance along the stony ground. Goodness only knows how many foxes it must have taken to do it! A regular highway was left where the skin had been dragged along, and all the foxes had pulled in the same direction with the greatest unanimity of action, as if they had been under command, or had settled it all beforehand. Their task accomplished, they had had an entertainment on it, and half the skin had been eaten; while round about the snow was so trampled up that it was just like a farmyard. Nature's house-keeping up here is a thrifty affair, and it would be difficult to find anything which is not made use of to the uttermost.

The next morning we drove into Baadsfjord, where we found the snow very much heavier than outside, for there is never any wind there. About midday, however, we reached the boat-house, and met there Isachsen and Hassel, who had just arrived, and were

tying up their dogs. Isachsen came running down across the crack to meet me, and my splendid load made him open his eyes. We thought ourselves very fine fellows as we drove up with our big loads of meat with the skins thrown over them.

We took up our abode in the boat-house and lived well on fresh meat, which we cooked in various ways. By way of pudding we had 'dænge,' which is so excellent a sweet that I can safely recommend it to any housewife. We prepared it by taking some of the water-logged biscuit, which we beat into small pieces, and soaked in water. We then fried it in fat, adding a pinch of salt, and a generous portion of treacle. These ingredients may be supplemented with advantage by some of the Norwegian 'mysost,' or whey-cheese, for want of which we used whey-powder.

Over our pipes after supper we related the adventures of the day; the fjord where they had taken place we named 'Moskusfjord,' or 'Musk Fjord.'

There being open water in the west, Isachsen was unable to do his surveying work here, so it was agreed that he should drive the meat still remaining in Moskusfjord down to a place on the shore where it could easily be reached, even if the sledge-runners were shod with only German-silver. A load was then to be driven on board as quickly as possible, but before starting a guide was necessary, and although Bay's feet were wet, and his sleeping-bag had been soaked through the previous night out at Baadsfjordnuten, he immediately volunteered to go, while Hassel joined my party.

In the afternoon there had been a great hanging up of the bags to dry inside the house, and their condition improved somewhat as the result of it, but on the whole there was not very much to be done with them.

Fosheim had driven the mate's team on this occasion, and in it was a criminal by name 'Gamlen.' When we turned out next morning, October 30, to help the two who were going west, we discovered that 'Gamlen' had got his muzzle off, and had bitten 'Underbete,' one of Peder's dogs, to death. 'Underbete' had received his name from a peculiarity of the jaw—his upper jaw, namely, projecting very much beyond the lower one, so that

the former was situated right under his head, as in a shark. 'Gamlen' had always been a murderer; equally too he had always eaten his friends and acquaintances, but to thrash him for his sins was of no use. The episode was a serious one for us, for 'Underbete' was a splendid draught animal. We gave expression to our sorrow at the murder by skinning the deceased, and taking his skin back with us.

After Isachsen and Bay had gone we brought Schei's sledge into the boat-house, and put new tin plates on the runners. After supper, Schei and Fosheim confessed, that before leaving the vessel, they had provided themselves with the wherewithal to keep my birthday, in the shape of some cigars, and a small bottle of spirits of wine! They proposed, that if the leader of the expedition had no objection, his birthday should be kept on the thirtieth, while we had a roof over our heads, instead of on the thirty-first, when we should probably be in the travelling tent. The proposal was of course accepted, and we set to work at once to make toddy with the spirits of wine. A poem too had been composed in my honour. Fosheim was the bard on this occasion, and possibly Schei may have had something to do with the authorship; I imagine they had written it in the tent during my absences. They made so much of the hero of the day, that he felt quite bashful. But a birthday of the kind may be very enjoyable once in a way. We had an extremely pleasant evening, and sat up till nearly eleven, at least a couple of hours longer than usual.

The weather had been brilliant the whole day; we had not had such fine weather since we came to Jones Sound; but it was very cold, more than twenty degrees below zero.

On October 31 we drove east, taking advantage of Isachsen's and Hassel's tracks, and the sledges ran so easily in them, that we reached almost half-way to the ship in the one day.

About midday we saw the sun for the last time that year, and thus we began our second winter night on this voyage. Later in the afternoon there was a change in the weather; it came over thick and began to snow, and snow continued to fall the whole of that night and the following morning. All this loose snow, of

course, made the travelling considerably heavier than it was before, but the sledges ran fairly easily on it all the same.

When we set off the next morning, at seven o'clock, it was quite dark, and we could hardly see one another. Suddenly we heard Fosheim shouting, 'Here's a bear!' I had seen the bear too; in fact, I had driven close by it, but then it was standing still. 'No,' said Fosheim, 'it was going west.' 'I think it is *we* who are going *east*,' I shouted back. Fosheim sat silent for a time, thinking it over, and at last came to my conclusion, which was, that it was a block of ice that he had seen.

The satisfaction on board was great when we arrived back safely about five o'clock in the evening. Their surprise was no less than their pleasure, when they saw our loads of good beef, for none of us had much expected that big game would be found in the southern part of Ellesmere Land.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CARRYING MEAT IN THE POLAR NIGHT.

It was now decided that Baumann, with Raanes, Stolz, and Hassel, should drive into Moskusfjord to fetch the meat that was lying there; when they had met Bay and Isachsen, they were to take one or other of them back as guide, and let one of their own party supply his place. November 2 was a busy day on board, for the four men were to start the next day. The usual fur clothing which we wore on sledge-journeys at the cold time of the year was given out, as well as provisions for nine days, for both men and dogs.

It was many a long day since a joint of beef had stood on the 'Fram' dinner-table, and the excellent roast beef which we had that day tasted doubly good in consequence; in fact, I believe it did its share in making our fellows keen to be off.

On Friday, November 3, we all met at a six o'clock breakfast. We had a hot breakfast that morning, so that the party who were going off should have something to travel on. They started at half-past seven.

We, the last-comers on board, began at once to equip for another meat expedition, which we hoped to start on as soon as possible. We worked like galley-slaves, for there were countless things to be seen to; first and foremost being the getting in hand of our new sledges. Like the party which had just gone off, we intended to have German-silver plates on them all. In addition to these, the sledges had to be provided with loops and 'long lashings,' and seal-skin over the seizings. Peder, who had had a relapse during our absence, but was now well again, helped Nödtvedt to put the plates on the over-runners of the sledges. Olsen had

made a number of new cooking-pots, and he now set to work to put new bottoms in those we were going to take with us. A good many muzzles had to be made as well. Simmons, who, like Fosheim, was going on the trip west, had all his time taken up mending the inner tent, which had suffered a good deal of damage on the journey; we had not yet quite learnt how to treat it.

Before our return, the mate had seen to the putting up of a winter awning. On the whole of this polar expedition we only used an awning from the main- to the mizzen-mast. In form it was like an ordinary tent with vertical sides fore and aft.

There had been several spirited bear-hunts during our absence, and the mate had shot his first bear. This he describes himself, as follows:—

‘About half-past six or so in the morning the steward came down and turned me out. “There’s a big bear up at the Meat-heap,” said he, “pawing the meat about so that he’s making the snow fly.” Out I turned, and, taking my rifle, ran off to the Meat-heap. There stood a thumping big bear in the middle of the meat, turning it over, and picking out the best bits. So I went to very close range, and fired off a shot just by way of a warning, as it were; but not a rap did he care; he just stood and pawed the meat about, throwing a bit at the puppies now and then, when he was so minded. So I took real good aim, shut both eyes, and blazed away, and I’ll be hanged if I didn’t shoot him straight through the heart, so that he sank to the ground on the spot!’

Our puppies used to run loose around the ship. They were only a few months old, and were no good for either hunting or hauling, so we let them run about on the ice, enjoying life, and barking at everything they saw. They were particularly interested in bears, and if one approached the ship they always ran after it. It was often very amusing to watch these little balls, for though they could not possibly imagine that they could bring the bear to bay, or harm it in any way, they invariably gave chase. If they met with one which was timid by nature they made themselves quite alarming enough to frighten it away. This happened several times. But if an old bear came along, determined to reach

the Meat-heap, he did so, regardless either of the puppies or the bigger dogs, which, of course, were chained up. Once we saw a she-bear, with two cubs, which was so bold that she walked right up to the heap through forty or fifty dogs which were tied up round it. There was an uproar among them, but neither the dam nor the cubs cared in the least about it, but went on quietly eating until the shooters arrived on the scene, when she had to pay the penalty of her boldness.

HOMEWARDS. A LOAD OF MEAT.

On Saturday, November 4, shortly before we went down to breakfast, I heard the puppies making a noise out on the ice, and from the deck I could just make out a bear hard at work on the Meat-heap. I went below again and told Schei that, if he wanted to go bear-shooting, now was his chance. Schei was very keen on shooting, especially bears, and did not need to be told a second time. He seized his rifle, and ran off as fast as his legs could carry him, while the rest of us went to breakfast, in which for the moment we were more interested.

Before we had finished our meal Schei came back again, took

his seat at the table, and told us what had happened. He is short-sighted, and therefore obliged to wear glasses. These are well enough in themselves, but in very cold weather they have the disadvantage of becoming dim from moisture, with the result that it is hardly possible to see through them at all. This is what happened in Schei's case. The glasses clouded over, and he did not see a sign of the bear until he was close upon it; added to this it was dark. He aimed as best he could, and fired. The bear gave a growl, and set off inwards along the crack, with Schei after him,

A SHELTERED CORNER.

on the outer side of it. Now the crack was rather high, for it was low water, and along the side of it were large floes of ice. Schei saw nothing more of the bear, but heard it making off inwards. Suddenly the animal came running out through the crack and straight at him. He had barely time to turn the barrel of his gun towards it and pull the trigger. Happily he hit the bear, which fell almost at his feet, but he had to give it two more shots to be quite sure. After breakfast he and Peder set to work on the skinning. It was a small bear, but a nice one.

Wednesday morning was fixed for our departure, and the two first days of the week were spent in active preparation for it. I

myself gave out almost everything that we required for the journey, and so felt at ease on the matter ; but when we were well off, and were about to cross Sydkapfjord, we discovered, to our great consternation, that the tent had been left behind, so we had to turn back to the 'Fram,' where we found it lying on one of the kennels. The sledge had been put up there for the night, and probably the tent had not been properly lashed to it, and had slipped off.

Baumann and Bay returned that evening. The party coming from the east had met Isachsen and Bay at Baadsfjordnuten, and Isachsen joined them, while Baumann returned to the ship with Bay. The going had been unusually heavy the whole time, so that the dogs had had very hard work. It had been so dark, too, that it was like driving at dead of night.

The next morning, Thursday, November 9, we set off again, equipped for a nine days' absence. Matters went pretty well. West of Store Sandör (Great Sandbank) we met the caravan, on their return journey, with large loads of meat. On the trip up Moskusfjord they had had a bad storm right in their teeth. The wind was so violent, the mate said, that they thought the Last Day had come. There are many curious impressions with regard to that day, but the general idea is, I think, that it will be rather warm. The mate, however, had Arctic views on the subject, and had expected the day when ushered in by a gale from the north, and some twenty-five degrees below zero.

According to their description the storm must have been a serious one. They had been obliged to camp, and during the night the wind had been so violent that every moment they expected the tent to be torn to ribbons ; but a tent of this kind, when new, will stand more than one would think. In the morning the weather was as rough as ever, and they began to discuss whether they should remain where they were, or make an attempt to drive on inward. The mate thought it could not possibly be worse than yesterday, and that as they were all in good training they had better try to get on. So accordingly, they set forth and eventually reached the 'meatberg.' To protect the tent and make it warmer they piled up the meat and skins in a heap outside the end wall,

and this made them a rampart almost as high as the tent itself. But all the same the storm raged against the tent so violently that nearly all the guy-ropes were dragged off. Curiously enough the canvas was not damaged, but they had plenty to do during the night keeping it in place and bracing up the guy-ropes. Down the fjord next day they had the wind behind them, and the sledges flew before it. At 'Nuten' the wind went down, and after that the weather was fine.

We continued westward and camped, about four o'clock, a good way west of Lille Sandör (Little Sandbank), having driven our thirty-five miles or so in the day.

The following day we encamped on the point of land at the outermost narrowing of Moskusfjord. The weather was beautiful, with moonlight and stars, but it was bitterly cold, and a draught of icy wind was blowing right down the fjord.

We had only wolf-skin clothing with us on this trip, and consequently were obliged to run by the side now and then to keep ourselves warm; but Fosheim had to reconcile himself to being cold, for he was out of sorts and could not run. But for the matter of that one may be dressed as one likes; one will feel cold before evening if one sits on the sledge all the time.

We decided to leave all our paraphernalia behind at this spot, and drive inwards early the next day with empty sledges.

We had good weather up the fjord, and the dogs hauled as if they were possessed—they had not forgotten the slaughter-ground and its attractions. Going at this pace over smooth polished ice was unalloyed delight, but when at last we came to the strip of drift-ice up the fjord we were made to feel that existence has its dark side. The ice was now worse to get through than it had ever been before, for the recent storms had blown the snow into huge drifts, with gaping pitfalls in them here and there. But the dogs cared nothing about what the country was like; on they went, at the same mad pace, and it was as much as we could do to keep our seats on the sledges. We arrived at the meat-heap at last, feeling as if we had been whipped all over.

We began at once to stow the remaining meat on the three

sledges. This made them very heavy, but the meat had to be got back somehow or other, and we had to make up our minds to spend more time on the work, if necessary.

Grown wise from misfortune, we now hugged the shore on the east side of the fjord, where we found a very passable way through old ice, and when that ceased, came out on to good, hard, shining ice.

It was a wonderful journey: the full moon in the south hung over the mirror-like night landscape, which glittered and shimmered under its cold beams; while on both sides of the fjord lay the land, furrowed by deep valleys and clefts, and with black mysterious shadows. It was like a journey through a Paradise of Frost. The dogs set off at frantic speed, and we, who sat behind, felt something like Johannes Blessum when he drove with the troll on Christmas night. Wild was the pace and well-fed the steeds: they had been crammed to their necks every evening with blubber and fish.

The next evening we camped on the east side of Baadsfjord. The weather began to look threatening, and the going had been heavy the last few hours, after a mist had come on. This causes a rime to form on which the sledges run about as easily as on clay.

The day afterwards we had a strong head wind from the south, and the going became so bad that the dogs could hardly draw the loads, although we hauled with them as hard as we could. Later in the day we came to a standstill altogether, and there was nothing for it but to camp, after having made only a couple of miles during the day. During the evening it began to blow hard, and we lay congratulating ourselves that the rime and snow would be carried away.

Next morning we found that the wind had gone down, and in calm weather and on polished ice we made such good progress that in due course we were able to camp a little east of South Cape. It clouded over again, however, and in the evening, when we turned in, was so dark that we could not see our hands before us.

The day afterwards things were as bad as ever. We set off a little before seven in the morning, but it was so dark that we found ourselves driving into icebergs and drifts, and other disagreeables of the kind. It was some small comfort to know that we had daylight

before us, though it did not seem inclined to come. The loads capsized again and again, and we had a terrible work to get them on an even keel once more; the dogs too grew tired of it all, and when we had toiled half-way across Sydkapfjord we determined to leave half of the meat behind. We accordingly piled it up in a pyramid and placed two or three skins round it, lashing them so far firm that they would keep in place if a breeze should spring up while we were away; and thus, with half loads, we managed to get on board that evening.

When we reached the ship we heard that Bay had been unwell since his return, and had even kept his berth for a couple of days. He had suffered a good many hardships on the trip—had walked on newly frozen ice with a layer of brine on it, had been wet from morning to night, and had suffered much from cold feet, so it was not to be wondered at that he felt some abdominal pain and oppression of the chest.

Baumann and Olsen had started trapping white foxes. There were more than enough of them about the place, and it made a change from the somewhat monotonous sport to be had late in the autumn; the more so as they are not easy to catch, although they cannot compare with their cousin, the red fox, for slyness. They had tried snares of wire; but this method, which answers well in the case of hares, was no use as far as the foxes were concerned, for they twisted the wire until it broke, and so got away. Then they made and tried wooden traps, and into these the foxes went without the smallest hesitation.

By degrees, as the different parties came back on board, they took up their share in the preparations for the winter. We kept at it steadily, and the light of the full moon made us feel inclined for work almost the whole of the twenty-four hours.

Our first and most important occupation was building—building in snow, ice, wood, and sailcloth. We put sailcloth covers over the skylights, and entirely covered them with a thick layer of snow. The largest of our undertakings was the building of a forge and dog-kennels. For our smithy this year we used the provision shed which had been made for the journey to North Greenland, and which we had intended as a sort of lean-to to the

hut. It was in reality a wooden frame covered with sailcloth, and was fourteen feet long and ten broad. It was Fosheim and Nödtvedt's task to put the forge into full working order.

The kennels we built under the ship's side, which thus formed one of the walls. They were furthermore built of blocks of ice bound together by slush, which we made by mixing snow and water, the latter procured by boring a hole in the ice. We pressed this binding material in between the blocks with a spade, and the whole formed a compact mass. Inside the kennels, along two of the walls, we fixed benches of wood a couple of feet from the ground.

In the midst of all this work we did not forget the beauty of the Arctic night, which unfolded itself in all its most enchanting splendour just at this time, when the moon was at its full, and shed its glittering brilliance on the scene both night and day. A moonlight night up there in the north is something infatuating. The effects of light and shade are so sharp; the transition from black to white so abrupt—while the snow and ice seem twice as white, the clefts and chasms twice as black. Skreia in particular was very imposing, with its black irregularities and perpendicular walls. I managed to get several good moonlight photographs of this beautiful scenery.

Before we finally began to hibernate, it was necessary to fetch the rest of the meat and skins which were still lying at Sydkapfjord. The mate was very anxious to try the double tent, of which he had heard so much, and accordingly, on November 17, about eight in the morning, he, Fosheim, and Simmons started off to fetch the meat. They were not to return till the following day, and as they had so much time at their disposal, they hoped to have a bear-hunt on their own account out on Sydkapfjord. There were always bears, however, prowling about the ship and the Meat-heap, and not a few of them had made intimate acquaintance with our rifles. Our fellows came back again all well on the 18th, but the bears had wisely kept out of their way.

Now that all the meat had been brought on board, we saw that the loads we had driven from Moskusfjord, and which comprised all the meat we had out there, were by no means small. Fosheim's load had weighed 760 lbs., Simmons 666 lbs., and mine

EAST CAPE ON THE LEFT, THE SOUTHERN POINT OF SKREIA ON THE RIGHT. (See p. 222.)

814 lbs., not bad weights for six dogs to draw! It was under nine miles to the ship when we had found it necessary to lighten our loads, while the entire distance in to our last slaughter-ground in Moskusfjord was a good eighty miles; that is to say, there and back, rather more than one hundred and sixty miles. We had taken a week on the work, and one day covered no more than two or three miles, being detained by stress of weather. This averages twenty-three miles a day. It must also be remembered that the journey took place at the dark period of the year, and during cloudy and gloomy weather. The time that one can drive during the day is therefore not very long—as a rule, from eight in the morning to four in the afternoon—and out of this we spent a long time every morning and evening trying to find our way on account of the darkness; nor had we any track to follow, which, of course, would have greatly accelerated our pace.

Of the last twenty animals we had shot, five were calves from the previous year. Most of the cattle were young, and were from one and a half to two and a half years old. There were two large cows and three which had had their first calf. Of full-grown oxen there were only two. The collective weight of the meat, without heads or hoofs, was fully 2640 lbs.; the skins and heads weighed 1100 lbs. The first animals we shot averaged heavier than the others, so that we had altogether about 3740 lbs., or considerably over a ton and a half of beef on board.

Besides all this beef, we had more than fifty brace of hares and a good many birds of different kinds; ptarmigan, eider-duck, gulls, and black guillemots—almost a disconcerting supply of fresh food, and quite enough for the whole winter. With such abundance we should hardly want bear- and seal-flesh for human food. All the beef was hung up inside the winter awning, and the bear-meat out on deck, where we had a score or so of carcasses dangling.

We then turned our attention to the walrus-meat. As we thought the dogs would most likely get at it if we left it where it was, we brought it all on board and piled it up to above a man's height on both sides of the ship, from forward on the forecastle down to amidships, so that only a small gangway was left along the deck to the meteorological screen.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE POLAR DOG AND ITS AILMENTS.

THE dogs were now put into winter quarters, or, in other words, were shut up in their kennels. They had 'playtime' out on the ice from nine to one, but the rest of the day were under house arrest. Watch had always to be kept over them while they were out, for they were so savage at this time that they were quite capable of tearing one another to pieces. We divided the watches between us, and also the duty of feeding them; each man, as I have said before, feeding his own team. I made an exception, however, in my own favour, and did not feed my dogs when we were on board. Fosheim looked after them for me; nor did I mount guard.

My experiences with regard to the feeding and keeping of the dogs on a journey of this kind differ not a little from those of other polar travellers, and I think therefore that my view of the subject will not be out of place if set forth here.

The dogs should be fed once every day. We chopped the frozen walrus-meat into allowances, and every other day gave them three to four pounds of it; on the intermediate days they had dog-biscuit. At times we added stock-fish to their diet, and they then had meat, biscuit, and fish alternately. If it is necessary to feed dogs entirely on the flesh and blubber of walrus, care should be taken that each dog has his due portion of meat, and not blubber only. For a single meal blubber is quite enough, but in the long run a diet of blubber alone is not sufficiently nourishing. The best arrangement is to divide the two stuffs equally, though at the coldest time of the year a larger proportion of blubber may naturally be used than in milder weather.

We did not, as a rule, remove the blubber from the walrus-skins, but chopped up skin and blubber together into lumps. We then scored through the skin in dice, as it was so thick and tough that the dogs could not easily bite it. In this manner it was the blubber alone which kept the strips intact.

I must confess that I do not greatly believe in the sickness of which so much has been said by many polar travellers; nor do I believe that the dogs cannot stand the winter darkness. In my opinion it is cold and insufficient nourishment which are the cause that they so often die during the winter. If they are always out of doors, without any protection against wind and weather, and especially if they are tied up all through the winter, I do not think it possible to keep them all alive, no matter how well they may be fed. I, for my part, have never experienced that the dogs suffered from the cold and darkness if only they had kennels, and wholesome and sufficient food: in other words, were well looked after. In fact, I have always found them in full vigour, even at the darkest period of the year.

On the other hand, I have often had reason to notice that if the man who was in charge of the dogs did not prevent the stronger ones from eating up all the food, one or two of the team would in all probability become so weak that they were likely to die. But if they were taken on board for a little time and well fed, they very soon recovered their strength.

The old theory is that the dogs ought to be fed two or three times a week. When one sees that expeditions have faithfully followed this theory, or have even improved upon it to the extent of feeding their dogs only once a week, and that nearly the whole pack has died in the course of the winter, I do not think one need go so far to seek the reason for it as to some kind of contagious disease. It lies very much nearer home.

My experiences are borne out by the fact that, as a rule, sickness among the Eskimo dogs only occurs when the catches are poor, and the usual symptoms of the malady—weakness, going over to a kind of madness—point to the same conclusion.

One must, of course, distinguish between the different kinds of dog-sickness which occur in these regions; but these kinds are

not very serious, nor very contagious. I think that most of them come from want of care; for instance, from a dirty condition of the animals themselves. It frequently happens that the dogs get their coats smeared with blubber, and the hair then becomes matted together, with the result that often large sores from frost-bite appear on the unprotected places. These sores are often confounded with skin-diseases.

I have wintered with the 'Fram' in the polar regions for seven years, and during all that time have had a great number of dogs under my supervision, and it would be remarkable indeed, if this sickness is 'unavoidable,' or if the dogs will not stand the darkness, that I should not have noticed something of it. Certainly, I have seen puppies attacked by sickness, but it was not contagious; and I am quite sure that it resulted from want of care. The cases in point were merely pups which had been born at an unfavourable time of the year, so that it was impossible to keep them clean and dry. They were always wet, were frost-bitten, and on the whole suffered a good deal of hardship, which no dog can endure for any length of time, and still less a young one.

The chief thing, therefore, is to look well after the dogs, and give them good and sufficient food. If this be done, I do not think any polar traveller need fear disease among his dogs, provided, of course, that they do not bring infection with them from home; but, if this were the case, it would show itself within the course of the first year, and if it did not, one might feel quite at ease on the matter.

The dogs play such an important part in a polar expedition, such as mine, that one ought above all things to have one's attention particularly directed to them, and to see that they are kept as well as is possible in every respect. If this be not done one will not get any work out of them, no matter how good the dogs may have been to start with. On the other hand, if the dogs are well cared for, and well broken-in, a good deal of work can always be got out of them, even if they are not all first-rate dogs.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN WINTER QUARTERS.

THERE was so much to be done this autumn that the time was not long enough for us; while for the winter we had planned such a countless number of things that it was necessary to get through the autumn work as quickly as possible.

After the apparatus for tidal measurement had been set up, as in Rice Strait the previous year, there was still some coaling to be done, and a restowing of the provisions. A quantity of coal was still in the hold, which it was necessary to get away and into the bunkers, so as to make the place a little more trim. So one day all hands set to work; the coal was hauled up in the 'tween decks in buckets, carried aft, and the bunkers filled with it.

When all this had been successfully accomplished, the mate, Hassel, and Peder set to work to put the provisions in order, and restow them. The mate, in doing this, accidentally trod on a rusty nail, which penetrated his foot. The wound became inflamed, and he was laid up for several days, but it soon yielded to carbolic bandages.

By November 30, we had very nearly completed all the outside work, and could begin to equip for the big sledge-journey in the spring. We had found by experience that a good many improvements were necessary in our equipment, both as regards sledges, tents, sleeping-bags, and cooking apparatus.

There was hardly a thing in connection with the equipment of the sledge-expeditions that I did not find could be made just a little better than it was before; and yet my sledge equipment, when we left home, was considered to be on a par with that of any previous expedition. One learns as long as one lives, it is said, and

certainly it is a saying which cannot be used with greater truth than with reference to sledging expeditions. No matter how many sledge-journeys one may make, there will always be some-

A PET.

thing, I think, which can be improved on. One thing must never be forgotten, and that is, that it is impossible to expend too much care on the equipment; for on that, in great measure, depends the entire success of the enterprise.

GLACIER WALL IN RICE STRAIT.

All the sledge-runners required new plates, for the German-silver had not been laid on closely enough. In regard to the construction itself, I was well satisfied with the sledges we had brought with us; but the maker of them had permitted himself the use of materials here and there which were not so good as they might have been, and these parts had accordingly to be taken out and replaced by new ones.

Judging by the results I had obtained with the double tent—we had been using it all the autumn—I thought it would be well worth our while to take an inner tent with us at the cold time of the year. In this way we might hope to avoid a great deal of moisture, both of the bags and of one's clothing, and there would be no increase in the weight of the baggage after we had been out a few days.

Baumann had, therefore, large orders for tent linings, in addition to a couple of complete two-man travelling tents. These small tents I used were six feet long by five wide, and five feet under the highest part of the roof, outside measurement. The lower part of the walls was vertical for a couple of feet in height. The inner tent was four feet high under the ridge of the roof. It will be seen that there was no unnecessary space in our tents; there was just room for two men and the cooking-pot, together with provisions for three or four days, and cooking ice for the day.

It will probably be thought that we could not possibly be comfortable in such a small tent, but this is quite a mistake, for we all agreed that they were the most convenient kind of tent to travel in. In the first place, they were much warmer than the four-man tents, and, secondly, they were easier to keep tidy, and this saves time when camping in the evening and getting off in the morning.

When we arrived at our camping-ground for the evening, we used to feed the dogs, and then one man only would enter the tent; to him were handed the bags which he spread out on the floor, and then the rest of the things were given him in one by one, and immediately put in their proper places. When everything was arranged the other man went in, and the 'Primus' was lighted.

They took up their places on the bags, and in two or three minutes it was almost as warm as in an ordinarily comfortable room at home. I do not think it possible for any one who has not tried this mode of life to imagine the feeling of wellbeing which percolates through one, so to speak, as one sits inside in the warmth of the tent after having worked hard from early morning, day after day, and week after week, in such severe cold.

Olsen had orders for five new sets of cooking vessels. A set of our cooking vessels consisted of a biggish cooking-pot, a smaller one that could be placed inside it, a coffee-kettle to go in the small pot, and outside the whole a ring which projected a couple of inches below the bottom of the big cooking-pot, and could be filled with ice. When the water in the pot boiled we had a separate supply of warm water for the coffee-kettle, or for the next course.

The cookers we had brought from home, and which we had used on a previous expedition, were complicated and difficult to manipulate; and, moreover, they took up too much room. It may be that those which we constructed up there were theoretically less economical in consumption of fuel, but they were more practical in reality, and easier to manage, and I think that they were quite economical enough. It proved, for instance, that when we were prepared to give up our favourite dish of fried steaks, which absorbed a great deal of heat, two men had quite enough with two and a quarter gallons of oil for fifty days, for the cooking of two courses of food twice daily, and for the melting of ice sufficient to provide an abundance of drinking water at the cold time of the year. Our 'Primus' was reckoned to burn about eight ounces of fuel in the hour, full pressure; but we never used it at full pressure, as it was extravagant, and also soon made the tent too warm.

Olsen also had an order for a new odometer. The wheel was to be something like an American bicycle wheel, with a steel outer ring surrounding a thin wooden one; the spokes were to be of wire, somewhat thicker than those of a bicycle wheel. The mechanism was very much that of a patent log; one hand gave the mile, and the other every tenth part of a mile.

These odometers we attached to the last sledge in the train. Olsen had made some the previous winter; and they had proved to be very useful, especially when surveying, as they gave the distance covered with wonderful accuracy. An apparatus of the kind is also a great advantage when driving, as one can see at any moment how far one has gone. On a long sledge-journey it is of course necessary above everything else to save the dogs, and yet do a passable day's march. If, therefore, one finds one's self in very bad ice, where one must work one's way step by step, and then at other times goes spinning over it, it will easily be understood that one cannot very well go by the clock, but must equalize the time as best one can. Here it is that the odometer comes in as an ingenious and accurate regulator of the work. If the going is easy, one puts on the pace to get in a few miles to the good, which one can fall back on when the weather or the going is bad; if, on the contrary, advance is difficult, one has a known record with which to square the distance.

Besides the odometer, there were several other instruments which Olsen had to repair, or make anew. He was a most excellent all-round man, and was a good tinsmith, coppersmith, and instrument maker; to say nothing of being a finished gunsmith.

As I have already mentioned, we brought with us from Norway fifteen elk dogs, but they did not give us much pleasure while in life; and it was only after their death that they came to honour and glory. Seven of them were eaten by the other dogs, and the survivors, being useless as draught animals, we ourselves despatched to the eternal hunting grounds. They were taken at the right time of year, and out of their beautiful skins we meant to make over-socks and mittens, but first they had to go through Nödtvedt's hands; not in his capacity as smith, but as tanner. In his skilful hands, too, were all our calf-skins, for, as I wanted to see whether the skin of the polar calf could be made use of in any way, I was having a couple of new bags made of them. For the considerable repairs needed by the old bags we used reindeer-skin.

All through the first part of the winter Nödtvedt divided his

time in such a way, that when the weather was very bad he was occupied on the skins, and when it was fine at the forge. There was plenty to be done there too, for he had some large orders to execute.

The ox-skins were taken in hand by Bay; of course with plenty of help. They were to be prepared for keeping; that is to say, the flesh was all scraped away and the leg-bones removed, leaving only the hoofs. Some of the skins were prepared with alum.

Had any one done us the pleasure of paying us a visit at this time he would probably have thought that the vessel was a work-house; but all hands worked with such a will, and there was so much singing and joking going on, that, after all, it is hardly fair to compare our occupations on the 'Fram' with the compulsory work of a casual ward.

Both the cabins were turned into workshops. In the after-cabin were installed the tinsmith's and filing workshops, and there hammering and soldering went on the whole livelong day. The needle was plied as energetically as the coarser instruments, and the handicrafts of tailoring and shoemaking were well represented. There, too, the sledges were mended, and the plates of the runners put on. In the fore-cabin the work was chiefly the sewing of skins, and making of clothes, tents, dog-harness, and sleeping-bags. In the 'tween decks was Fosheim's carpenter's bench; and on deck one heard the cheerful sound of hammering from the smithy, and saw the light from the forge through the canvas walls. In fact, one could hardly get about on board for work-people and their appliances, and there was life and bustle there in the bay, even in the midst of the dead season. Between the stitches and the blows of the hammer many a joke was made; chiefly aft, perhaps, where Nödtvedt in particular kept things going.

Our winter harbour this time was a very sheltered one, and even when a gale was blowing out on the coast there was hardly a breath of wind in where we were.

The ventilator which had originally been fixed in the after-cabin of the 'Fram' was unfortunately not self-adjusting. It was

efficient enough when we were in waters where there was a steady breeze, for then we could force the air down it with a fan; but in where we were it was of no use. If, by chance, there was wind now and again, it merely took the form of a squall from either shore, and in such a case the fan was useless.

When the fore-cabin was built, a ventilator was put in, which was as simple as it was practical. On the port side of the main-hatch was made a hole twelve inches in diameter, and from this was carried up a metal cylinder, which was screwed fast to the

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deck. Descending perpendicularly from this, and about six inches outside the wall of the cabin, was a wooden shaft, which communicated with the lower deck, part of which formed the floor of the cabin. About three inches above the lower deck a metal tube, eight inches in diameter, was joined to the shaft, and was brought in at a right angle through the wall of the cabin; eight inches or so inside this, the tube ended in a right-angled bend upwards. Where it passed through the cabin, the shaft was provided with a damper, by means of which the supply of air could be regulated at will.

On the starboard side we had an air-extractor constructed in the same manner. The metal tube in the cabin was an inch smaller than that of the ventilator, but the shaft was of the same dimensions, so that it was not necessary to sweep it so often to prevent it from becoming clogged with rime. To accelerate the ascending current of air, we fixed to the cylinder on deck a tin chimney some five or six feet in height. The whole appliance was a most efficient ventilating agent, and the colder it was the greater was the velocity of the entering air-current; in the winter we had always to regulate it, or it would have made things altogether too wintery in the cabin.

The outlet tube was usually swept once or twice a week, but this was not a long business. After it had been swept we always warmed the tube by holding the flame of a soldering-lamp up to it, and in a minute or two the air was again in even circulation.

It was something of this kind that I thought of having in the after-cabin, and set Olsen to work to make a hole in the aft wall, and slightly move the stove. We made the hole in the wall of plaster which ran from the floor to the highest part of the stove, and inserted the tube directly into it. By so doing, I thought the entering air-current would be increased, and the cold air rushing directly through the wall at the floor-level would become heated and rise towards the ceiling.

The theory perhaps was good, but when put in practice it certainly proved to be a failure. The tube, instead of bringing cold fresh air into the room, extracted all the warm air between the stove and the plaster wall, and with such violence that Olsen, who is a light weight, always looked very anxious when he approached the hole. We had to give up the new system as quickly as possible, and construct something on the lines of the ventilator in the fore-cabin, and this when complete was irreproachable. We could see the tobacco-smoke tearing down to the outlet, and even if there were twelve or fourteen men puffing at their pipes—and smoke we could—the fumes were never dense. When we had finished smoking, and regulated the outlet so as to make the air flow out quicker, the cabin was free of smoke almost in a moment.

THE TWIN GLACIER VALLEY.

Peder Hendriksen, who had been out of sorts several times during the autumn, now had a relapse, and his illness seemed more serious than it had done before. He complained of giddiness and lassitude, and suffered from pain in the head, while, moreover, his limbs began to swell.

Peder was one of those people who can never keep quiet. He stayed in his berth for a day or two, but as soon as he felt in the slightest degree better, nothing would prevent him from getting up. I was determined to put an end to this, and in order to be able to control him and put him on some sort of diet, I moved him over to the fore-cabin, where Baumann, Schei, Simmons, Bay, and I had our quarters. The doctor's empty cabin was scrubbed and put in order for him. He was then, in a measure, dieted; that is to say, he lived entirely on broth and fresh meat in different forms, but was absolutely forbidden coffee and tobacco.

When one has no doctor on board, and has no idea what a man is suffering from, it is nonsense to begin dosing him promiscuously, in fact, in my opinion, it is downright risky; so the only thing to be done is to resort to a common-sense treatment, which cannot but be beneficial in any circumstances.

At first Peder was not very well pleased with this arrangement, but it was not long before he became quite happy in the fore-cabin. The swelling of his limbs began to decrease, and his spirits, which had long been bad, improved again. Of course he immediately wanted to get up, but was not allowed to do so. Still worse was it for him to be refused an occasional pipe or a cup of coffee. Bay would sometimes ask him if he would like some coffee, and when he answered 'Yes,' would pour out a cup, and then drink it up before his eyes. Or he would say, 'Peder, will you have a pipe?' 'I should think so, Bay,' answered the unsuspecting invalid. So then Bay would borrow a pipe and fill it; but when it came to smoking it, had to find some one else to do that for him, and Peder was obliged to look on, swearing a gruesome revenge as soon as he should be on his legs again.

One way and another a good deal of amusement was got out of Peder during his stay in bed, where, truth to tell, he now lay without at all feeling ill. He was not neglecting any duty by

remaining where he was, and as I thought it would do him no harm, I kept him there ; but I had to promise him that he should get up for Christmas, and when he did so he was not long in going aft to his old cabin. After that we never noticed any further trace of his malady.

On December 1 the steward said farewell to his galley for nearly three months. He had a bad foot and was obliged to take to his berth, but what was the matter with it we were quite unable to find out. Afterwards we discovered that he had a fester in the calf of the leg, beginning at the very bone. Hassel took his place in the galley, and managed the steaks very well.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

WE had often wondered if we should have a 'Christmas pig' this year. Once, on the first 'Fram' expedition, we had one as opportunely as December 22, but this time we had not to wait so long, for it appeared at the beginning of December.

Baumann one day was walking on the ice near the ship with his rifle, when he suddenly heard the puppies barking. The older dogs were lying about round the ship, having eaten so much that they were unable to move. He felt sure it must be a bear, and called to the mate to ask him if he cared to come and look for it; and while the mate was fetching his rifle, Bay and Baumann started in advance.

When they had almost reached the point, they saw that the dogs were barking at something on the flat ice; but it was dark, and what it was they could not make out. On approaching nearer, that is to say, to within twenty or thirty paces, they saw that it was a bear lying quite unconcerned, and letting the puppies make as much noise as they liked. Once, when one of them ventured a little too far, it just turned over on its back and hit out at him with its paw, but without reaching him.

At ten or twelve paces Baumann fired, but, as far as I remember, only hit the animal in the foot. The bear then sprang up and slunk away inwards, towards the ice-foot, where it received another shot, this time in the shoulder, which was fatal. Close by the ice-foot it sank to the ground, and remained lying there.

At this juncture the mate arrived on the scene with a sledge; the booty was put on to it and conveyed on board, where it was skinned, and in the afternoon taken in hand by Baumann, Bay,

and myself. We cut the meat from the legs and shoulders, reserving some of it for steaks, and put some more through the sausage-machine, with some salt pork, for meat-cakes. We laid out the steaks to freeze, and then kept them in this condition, so that we had them in readiness for several meals. Meat-cakes were a very favourite dish on board ; but, on the whole, we did not care much for bear-meat, and as we had such abundance of beef we used the rest of it for the dogs.

Christmas was rapidly approaching, and there was much to be done. Busy as we had been before, we were now still more so, and every day that passed made things worse. There were those on board who nevertheless sacrificed some of their valuable time making Christmas presents to give their companions pleasure.

A general cleaning of all the cabins and galley had to take place ; there were clothes to be washed, and cakes made. The steward was still ill, suffering great pain, and there seemed no chance of his being up for some time to come. The responsible task of making Christmas cakes Hassel would on no account take upon himself, so Schei and I had to gather courage and do the best we could : nobody could ask more. We arranged matters so that Hassel had the galley to himself during the daytime, and we made havoc there at night.

The first night we made what promised to be the most delicious pastry. As all experts know, this is a lengthy business, and we were the whole night about it, if I except certain preparatory steps concerning the Christmas punch which we had to boil ourselves, likewise at dead of night.

Next evening, when all was silent, we began again on our baking exploits. But, to our horror, we found the pastry frozen ! There it lay, as hard and cold as a lump of polar ice. This was a pretty business. However, there was nothing for it but to try and thaw our handiwork, of which before we had been so proud. This operation proved to be a dangerous one, for if we were not very careful the butter trickled out again. Our hopes of a successful baking sank in a disquieting degree ; and they sank still lower when Schei, who had been intently studying the cookery-book, read out, in a trembling voice : ' Pastry must not be exposed to a

temperature so low that it will freeze.' There, then, was our fate, sealed in clear incontrovertible terms!

At this stage of the proceedings we began to rack our brains to know what in the world we were to do with all this beautiful pastry, if it was no use baking it in Christian fashion; but, try as we would, we could find no solution to the problem. At last in desperation we resolved to take our chance, and, at any rate, bake some small cakes.

Consumed with anxiety, we fell to work, and watched the course of events, prepared for the worst. It was a long time before we ventured to look into the oven; but at last we cautiously opened the door, and, putting our heads together, peeped in. Schei had on his glasses, and certainly this time they were not dim from moisture.

Things inside looked much better than we had dared to hope. The wretched little bits of pastry that we had put in had risen to miniature balloons. We drew a sigh of relief and went on with courage to greater undertakings; and before Hassel came in in the morning and drove us out we had the satisfaction of seeing the whole big lump of pastry transformed into the most beautiful cakes. In three nights we had made an incredible number of 'fattigmandsbakkelse,' 'terter,' 'sandbakkelse,' and 'hjortetakker;'* while, in addition, we made for each man a large open tart filled with prunes, and ornamented with the initials of the destined recipient.

There has been so much discussion as to what the polar bear does with itself in the middle of winter, that it may be of interest to give here some account of the last bear we saw in the autumn, and the first in the spring. Personally, I agree with those who think that, like the common bear, it takes a nap at the darkest time of the year. Were not this the case, it would be

* These peculiarly Norwegian Christmas delicacies require a word of mention. Of the half-dozen kinds of cakes usually made, *fattigmandsbakkelse* are perhaps the most general; they and *hjortetakker* are bits of cake-pastry thrown into boiling lard, while *terter* are plain pieces of puff-pastry, and *sandbakkelse* a kind of sponge-cake.

very remarkable that, practically speaking, it is never seen in the middle of the winter.

On Sunday, December 10, Schei and Nödtvedt went a walk out through the sound, taking with them the puppies and a few of the dogs from Schei's team. In a pressure-ridge, which ran straight across the sound, the dogs put up a bear, which sprang out and made off as fast as it could towards the east side, following the ice-foot. Out at Stordalen it was brought to bay.

THE MATE'S TEAM.

The snow was loose going, and Schei, who was on 'ski,' had a good start of Nödtvedt. When he neared the place where he heard the dogs worrying the bear, he stopped for Nödtvedt, who had never shot one, to catch him up, shouting to him to make haste. But when the stupid puppies heard Schei calling, they thought it was to them, left the bear, and ran back to Schei. The bear, meanwhile, took the opportunity of making its escape, and set off along the ice-foot. The dogs were sent off again, and several times the two men heard the bear at bay, but each time farther and farther away; the dogs were unable to keep it until its pursuers came

up. They could see from the tracks that the animal had been bitten till it was bleeding.

It was very cold, and a keen wind was blowing outside East Cape, so that Nödtvedt, who had thrown off his reindeer-skin tunic at the beginning of the chase, began to feel it; and, as the bear had already got so far away that the dogs could no longer be heard, and the whole enterprise looked rather hopeless, Schei and Nödtvedt made a virtue of necessity, and turned back. The dogs

EAST SIDE OF SYDKAPFJORD.

also came back to them, with the exception of a puppy and one of Schei's team.

We expected the truants to turn up in the course of the evening, but at eleven o'clock they had not returned, nor had they appeared by Monday morning. Schei began to be anxious, thinking that the bear had perhaps got hold of them, and started off in quest. Bay went with him, and they left the ship early in the forenoon, and were away all day. They saw nothing of the dogs, but found the tracks of Sunday's chase, and saw that

all the way an almost uninterrupted fight had taken place. In some places the bear had been up on a small hummock to rest, but it had always gone on again in the direction of Jones Sound. No dogs were to be found, and the two men were obliged to turn back.

Schei now began to be afraid that he was really going to lose his dog, and I was very much of the same opinion. It would be very annoying to lose the full-grown dog, which was an exceedingly good draught animal, and the puppy promised to be the same; in fact, it would be a quite considerable loss, and we forthwith started off to look for them again.

Monday went by and we saw nothing of them, nor by Tuesday morning had the situation changed; but later in the day they both turned up, safe and sound, though ravenously hungry and tired out.

We had hoped very sincerely that we should be spared any more cases of illness that winter; but we were doomed to disappointment. A couple of days before Christmas Simmons was obliged to take to his berth. There he stayed for several weeks with high fever, and became very weak in consequence. That *we* were quite unable to make out what was wrong with him was not matter for surprise, considering that on the first 'Fram' expedition we had had an exactly similar case which had baffled even the doctor himself.

Christmas Eve this year fell on a Sunday. At twelve o'clock we had 'mölje,' and a dram by way of accompaniment. Afterwards both the cabins were decorated with flags and pennons, and, dressed in our best, we all—that is to say, all who were on their legs— assembled at a five o'clock dinner.

Out of consideration for our new steward, the bill-of-fare was this time rather simpler than usual. It consisted of 'fiskegratin,' a baked compound of fish-flour, eggs, and butter; saddle-of-beef, green peas, asparagus, stewed cloudberries and rice, followed by coffee, curaçoa, and cakes, and finally by the punch-bowl.

This year also each man had presents, some of which had been brought with us from friends at home. Like last year, they

consisted chiefly of children's toys. The evening passed off as cheerfully as we could in any way expect. Our spirits were good, and the conversation was unflagging until late in the evening. Some songs were sung, and Isachsen played on his violin.

According to our good old Norwegian custom, we were called on Christmas morning with coffee and cakes, to which was also added a dram. The serving of it was seen to by the steward, with Fosheim as his assistant.

Hard as we had worked all through the autumn and winter, up to the present time, Christmas bid fair to be no less of an

25-32-99

Merr
 Anvenelles de poisson
 Perdrix blanches
 Fubus. canemomus
 Champagne. Dimmy
 Jean de vie. so arganmet
 Lufé
 Chartreuse. Benedictine. Curacao
 Cigars. Trilby

En Géograp.

exertion as far as most of us were concerned, though in quite another way. We set to work to over-eat ourselves in true Norwegian fashion. The one who suffered most, however, was our young steward, on account of the many courses he had to dish up for breakfast, dinner, and supper. Of course he could over-eat himself on Christmas Day, just as much as the rest of us, but while we were taking a well-earned after-dinner nap he had to stand out in the galley and wash up.

Simmons, poor fellow, was lying ill all this time with fever and headache; so, in order not to disturb him, we moved, when supper was over, to the after-cabin, there to enjoy songs and music, and the delicious but insidious bowl concocted by Baumann.

The recipe alone was sufficiently promising—champagne, brandy, sugar, water, and fruit-juice—and the result quite fulfilled the promise. Our thoughts at this time were chiefly fixed on keeping Christmas as well as possible; while Baumann's birthday, four days later, was a reason the more to keep the ball rolling.

Notwithstanding our Christmasing, we did not forget the observations. On December 29 the mate, Peder, and Isachsen began to make a hole in the ice, and got everything in readiness for taking the temperature of the water. During the whole of the winter Isachsen and the mate had taken a fortnightly series of temperatures; and Schei had taken samples of water at the same time. When Peder recovered, he resumed his place as Schei's assistant.

Then came New Year's Eve. Out of consideration for Simmons, we again trooped off to the after-cabin to finish the evening. When we were settled round the punch-bowl, Isachsen read aloud the first and last number of the *Friendly One* for 1899. Again this year Baumann had taken the initiative with regard to the paper. Last year the doctor had edited it; for 1899 Baumann was the responsible editor as well, and brought out, as aforesaid, the first copy on the last day of the year, and that, too, as an 'Extra Number.' The reading took some time, for the contents were important and varied; one volley of laughter succeeded another; nobody got off scot-free, and all the others hugely enjoyed the good-natured hits at their comrades.

At last, about twelve o'clock, we reached what the editor called the 'ice-foot of the paper,' and he was rewarded with such applause as has seldom or never fallen to the lot of a newspaper editor from his subscribers.

On the stroke of twelve Peder came tottering from his cabin into the saloon, dressed up as an old woman; the very incarnation of everything worn out. In this guise he was intended to represent the Old Year, and certainly he looked like anything but a juvenile. Methuselah's wife herself could not have looked older; the devil's great-grandmother might have been his grandchild. He bewailed and lamented his age and feebleness; he groaned over the young people of the day, who were growing more and more intolerant of the old, and anxious

to be rid of them; and therewith vanished through the door, to return a few minutes later the self-same Peder, in his best clothes, as smart and dapper as possible, with a little black hat perched on the side of his head. Shaven, shining, and smiling, he looked like a boy. He was the New Year which had come to wish us good luck. His eyes were bright with good-humour, and his face shone like a newly-scoured copper kettle. We all caught the infection from him, and the applause was greater than even on his first appearance. And thus it was that we old boys amused ourselves like children in the midst of the gloomy ice night, far, far away from everything and everybody.

On January 4 we gave up keeping Christmas, and went back to work again. Before we did anything else, the kennels had to be put in thorough repair.

The weather this winter had been remarkably variable. The thermometer had continually gone up and down, reading at one time from -51° to -53° Fahr. (-46° to -47° Cent.), and even, if I am not mistaken, as low as -54° Fahr. (-48° Cent.), and then suddenly up to 28° Fahr. On the mildest days the snow thawed on the deck; while the kennels melted inside in an inconvenient manner, although we made big holes in the roof. The dogs, always on the alert for something to do, profited by the occasion to scratch and burrow in the porous ice, and several of them made their way right through the wall.

In order not to weary the reader with all the work we had still on hand, I will merely mention that Nödtvedt had a very large order for swivels, which were to be spliced into the dogs' traces. The dogs often twisted their traces round and round in the night, and the worst of them were quite capable of spoiling a new trace in a single night.

It was my intention that the expeditions should start as early as Monday, March 5, as I was afraid that in many places, where the current was strong, the ice might break up. It was not easy to tell how long during the spring and summer the ice would bear, so it was best to make sure of it, and start as soon as possible. The question was, whether it would be possible to get off by this date, or not; I hardly thought it could be. We often

worked until late at night, and as the time of departure drew near, we were obliged to turn Sundays into working days.

On January 20, 1900, a bear visited us for the first time that year. He came galloping up towards the ship, but all the dogs were out on the ice, and the bear, which was probably as incorruptible as it was young and thin, realized at once that this was no company for him, and made off across the crack with the evident intention of fleeing from the source of danger. But, as so often happens, virtue was not fleet enough in her movements; the dogs soon stopped him, and the mate's rifle brought him to the ground. He had absolutely nothing in his stomach, so it was not to be wondered at that he was anxious for a meal.

In order to economize the dogs' patent-food, we were obliged to feed them at the beginning of our journeys on blubber and stock-fish, in such proportions that each day's rations consisted of about 10 ozs. of blubber and half a stock-fish, amounting together to rather more than $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. in weight. We chopped in readiness a large number of allowances of blubber, and the stock-fish we packed in bundles of twelve halves in each. The patent-food was stowed in sacks, and on each sack was written the number of allowances and their collective weight.

At the end of February, Lindström was again able to take up his duties in the galley, and Hassel then set to work to weigh out provisions for the different sledge-parties.

Both cabins were now so full of workmen and tools, that it was almost impossible to move about in them; in the after-cabin things had got to such a pitch that a gangway had been made across the sofa.

As I expected the sun on February 10, I walked out to the southern part of Skreia to see if anything was to be seen of it. A bank of fog was lying over the ice in the south, so that I could see nothing of the sun itself, but the whole of the southern horizon was a sea of fire, and if the atmosphere had been clear, the sun, sure enough, would have smiled on our meeting. It was not till two days later that we first bade it welcome back.

In the middle of the month we had again a mild period, and the temperature rose to just under 36° Fahr. We also had

some wind at this time, and the clouds scudded so rapidly across the sky westwards, that although we did not feel it in our harbour, we knew there must be a gale raging outside in Jones Sound. After this wind the snow became unusually hard and good, and it was like travelling over flat ice wherever we went.

BAY HARE-SHOOTING IN HAVNEFJORD.

On the 23rd a reconnoitring party was to start westward. A few days before they left, the weather changed for the worse; there was a fall of snow, and the going became loose and bad. The temperature sank very much the last day or two, and when they started, the thermometer read at least forty degrees below zero.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BJÖRNEBORG.

It had been my intention to take part in the first sledge-journey of the season, but as there was still much to be done on board, and I wished to put the last touches to the work myself, I gave up the idea of going.

The members of this expedition were Isachsen, Bay, Schei, and Stolz; each man with a full load. Their orders were to drive to the westernmost depot, and there leave their loads. If everything there was as it should be, they were then to go a day's journey farther west, to see how the country and the going looked in that direction. If the depot had been plundered by bears, which I considered more than probable, they were to return as soon as possible. In either case, they were to look in at Baadsfjord on the way back.

They brought back bad tidings. The violent storms in Jones Sound had pressed the ice towards land so that the country west was very difficult to negotiate; and they had taken five whole days from Havnefjord to the depot. There were pressure-ridges and pressure-ice the whole way, and, what was worse, they had seen a decided water-sky in the west, which pointed to much open water there. In comparison with this, I took the tidings of the depot with calmness.

As our men were going up the ice-foot to the depot, a large bear came running down to receive them. He did not say whether he had come to welcome them, or only to tell them that he could manage very well alone. Suffice it to say that Schei was not to be trifled with that time; he shot it on the spot. On arriving at the tent, they found it torn to pieces, the tent-poles and the other wood-

work broken into matchwood, and scattered about on the ground. Nearly all the dog-food had been eaten up, and a good deal of our provender had also disappeared. Of the bear-skin and carcase which we had left behind, not a vestige remained. A hole once made in the tent-wall, the foxes also had been able to get at our things, and they had not neglected their opportunity.

While our party were engaged in skinning their booty, another bear stole up towards them. It wanted, perhaps, to see how a bear should be skinned according to all the prescribed rules—Isachsen and Stolz undertook to teach it. They loosed their dogs on to it, but these were more interested in the bear which had already been shot, and would have nothing to say to the other. When at last they turned their attention to it, the bear grew frightened, and set off among the rocks, towards the mountains, where it disappeared from view.

The next day they started homewards, going round by Baadsfjord, where they found everything in the best order.

After this information I decided to keep a watchman at the plundered depot as long as any sledge-parties were travelling west of it. Bay at once applied for the post, and was appointed Commandant of 'Björneborg.'

The ravages committed by the bears detained us not a little, as among other things the tattered tent had to be replaced by a new one. It was made by the mate and myself, and was six feet long, six feet wide, and four feet high, with a flat roof and single walls. On the inner side of the framework, along the wall and under the roof, we intended to nail the sail of the boat, which we had at Baadsfjord, while for the floor were destined the tatters of the former tent. When our new bear-skin and what was left of the rags had been placed on the roof, we thought the house would be very warm.

On March 7 Fosheim and I started west in company with the newly appointed Commandant. We did not take quite the same route as the others, and found the going good and the ice irreproachable. There had been much pressure in Jones Sound, but it was not a difficult matter to avoid the ridges.

A little after twelve the following day we arrived at the

boat-house. As we had something to do there, and it was also Bay's birthday, we made a halt for the rest of the day, and camped out on the ice near the drive up to the house. After finishing our work we had a dinner, which was as sustaining as it was splendid, and consisted of boiled beef, sausages, soup, and green peas. After dinner we had drams and coffee, and after supper hot grog.

Early next morning, and on good ice, we drove on, running by the side of the loads nearly the whole day to increase the pace. We reached Björneborg in the evening, where we found our new depot in good order.

Next day we set to work on the erection of the Commandant's residence. We built a very respectable house, and introduced the bear-skin and a superfluity of rags, all according to taste. As soon as we were gone, Bay was going to make a snow wall round it, and put a layer of snow on the top of the bear-skin. Like other residences of the kind, Björneborg must have its flag, we thought, and as we were in possession of a flagstaff, which, considering our circumstances, was irreproachable, we secured it to the roof, and ran up a Seventeenth of May flag. But our Commandant was economical, and would only use it on occasions of especial ceremony.

Here Bay lived, absolutely alone, for three months; and during the first part of the time without so much as a living being for company; afterwards he had a garrison consisting of a whole watch-dog. During all this long period I never saw him out of spirits.

We had worked so hard at the house all day that we had not found time even to go and see what were our chances of progress westward. I could hardly think that matters were likely to be so bad that we could not push on somehow or other, but it was impossible to tell.

Next morning Fosheim and I made a start, and as the ice looked exceedingly bad, we took only one team with us and no load to speak of. We drove at first along the ice-foot, and got on a good pace on the polished ice, but this came to a sudden end under a perpendicular cliff. We were then obliged to go out on to the sea-ice, which consisted of pressed-up young ice, and this

nearly stopped all further progress. We were very glad when, not long afterwards, we were able to turn across the crack again; and this we followed all the way along under the cliffs until we suddenly discovered a long fjord which cut into the land in a northerly direction. A short distance up it was a little island, and inside of this it appeared as if the fjord sent out a branch in a north-easterly direction. Later on, however, it proved that this was a valley which extended across to Moskusfjord.

The pressure-ice lay high and rugged along the coast, and turned into the fjord in a large curve; but this time we cheated it by simply driving in a still larger curve, and thus avoided it in most satisfactory fashion.

At the western headland we had the same trouble over again. The pressure-ice lay close in to land, and there was nothing for it but to take to the ice-foot again. The upheaval here had been so violent that in many places the ridges lay close up under the cliffs, and we had very hard work to get past them.

A short time afterwards we came to a new fjord, which appeared to be of similar size. We made the same circuitous movement, and well avoided the worst of the ice, but on the opposite shore our troubles began afresh, and it was just as much as we could do to get through, and no more. Then we suddenly discovered that the whole mass of ice outside was drifting west with the current, and the sky in the west plainly denoted open water. My hopes of finding a means of advance by that way sank very considerably; but what were we to do? There was, indeed, nothing to be done, but to set our teeth and push on so that we might have a solution to the problem as quickly as possible.

We worked our way on across a big bay, and at last saw the land trending north! In the sound outside was open water, and great pressure hummocks were drifting along at terrific speed in the violent whirlpool caused by the strong tidal current.

We drove along the ice-foot, and camped in the evening at the next point. After tying up the dogs, we started to climb as far as possible up the talus in order to get a view of the country. We

saw from there that the ice-foot continued as far north as the eye could see ; in certain places it was very high, and from this we concluded that it went close up to the cliffs. A keen east wind was blowing, which swept along the side of the mountains, chasing the greyish-black masses of fog before it through the narrow strait.

Due west of us was one, or perhaps two islands—it was impossible to say which, for certain, through the fog ; we could hardly see the land at all on the opposite side. Our chances of advance in the future, it will be seen, were not very promising ; but I did not think we had any choice in the matter, and hoped that when the time came we might, by making a strenuous effort, be able to push on. The strait could not go on for ever, and some time or other we must come to the end of it.

I had now seen what I wanted, and decided to return home the next day. We climbed down again and set to work to feed the dogs and pitch the tent.

The result of the continuous jumping on and off the loads as we drove along was that Fosheim had been unlucky enough to break off the butt-end of his gun. We discovered this in the evening, and accordingly took the gun with us into the tent to try to mend it. We soon saw, however, that we had not the necessary tools with us to make a satisfactory repair, and came to the conclusion, at the same time, that, given the chance, it would be possible to shoot a bear with a rifle in this condition. We had only the one gun with us.

We tried at this time one of the new, spinnaker, two-man, tents made by Baumann. On first entering, certainly we did think it rather small, but we soon came to the conclusion that it was big enough, and indeed ought not to be bigger. After the ' Primus ' was lighted it soon became warm.

The two new sleeping-bags of polar-calf skin also did duty for the first time on this trip. They were warm ; but I do not think they would answer on long journeys, as they become considerably heavier than good reindeer-skin bags ; nor am I prepared to say that they are so very much warmer.

About two o'clock the following day we were again at Björneborg, where we found the Commandant in splendid spirits,

and delighted with his new house and dignities. He received us with much hospitality, and asked us to stay with him as long as we were there, an invitation that we accepted with pleasure, and spent a very pleasant evening. He was an open-handed host, and showered hospilities on us from his abundant store. We soon saw that it would not be an easy matter to starve out that fortress, good as was the appetite of the Commandant.

Fosheim and I, meanwhile, felt that our legs had suffered a good

‘SYLENE’ (THE AWLS), IN THE INNER PART OF HAVNEFJORD.

deal from our sudden violent exercise on the trip west. We had run nearly the whole day, which takes it out of one, and we both felt stiff and done up. I thought the feeling would soon wear off; but it was more serious than I had imagined, for it was months before we quite got rid of it. I had never experienced anything of the kind before.

Next day we went home. As we were standing down below the ice-foot, ready to be off, and were just going to take leave of Bay, the sun came out. It had been hidden behind Stormkap, and now suddenly shed its heavenly light over land and ice. The

quick transition from shade to sunlight worked like magic on us and on the surrounding scene. It was as if we had been suddenly set down in another country; we hardly knew ourselves again. Round about us the pressure-ice glistened and glittered under its rays, while the caverns and grottoes in the hummocks threw back the sunlight in all the colours of the rainbow. We could have sung and shouted for joy!

But we had no time for dreaming. Farewell to Bay, a cheery call to the dogs, and so away. And away we went in good earnest! The sledges hopped from drift to drift, and the whole of Björneborg, with its Commandant, was soon lost to view.

We kept up this pace the whole of the day; the going was good and our loads light, for we had only one day's ration of dog-food with us, and we camped in the evening between Lille and Store Sandör. We had intended to drive as far as Store Sandör, but the German-silver plates on Fosheim's runners went to pieces. They had been spoilt west, where for long distances the ice was strewn with sharp stones of all sizes. We had been as careful as we could; but, all the same, many stones had got under our runners, and Fosheim's had to be repaired before we could go farther.

This sledge was an historic one. It belonged really to Bay, and was called the 'pile-driver,' a name it had received after some repairs done to it in Hayes Sound, which resulted in strength rather than elegance; but the former quality was more necessary than the latter in a sledge that was to be used in every kind of country. Fosheim patched it up sufficiently to enable us to reach the ship, which we did about midday, and found everything as when we left it. It was so crowded up in all directions that it was as much as we could do to struggle through to our cabins.

Of breathing-time we had little: no sooner had we taken off our travelling clothes, and hung up what had to be dried after the trip, than we set to work again.

This failure of the German-silver plates was a great blow to us. We were obliged in consequence to repair a sledge to take the place of the 'pile-driver,' as it was impossible, in the

BRASKERUD'S GRAVE.

short space of time still remaining, to loosen the plates and solder them on again. We therefore put in order a sledge known as the 'water-sledge,' which Fosheim had made the first autumn on board.

It was now decided that Baumann, Raanes, Hassel, and Stolz should leave the ship on Saturday, March 17, with full loads, and with Björneborg as their destination; returning thence to the boat-house to fetch provisions and dog-food, which were to be used on the approaching journeys westward.

With regard to these, our plan was as follows: Isachsen and Hassel were to make one party, Fosheim and I the second, Schei and Peder the third. After we had all met at Björneborg, on the evening of March 21, a returning party was to be formed, with Baumann as the leader, and the mate and Stolz as the other members, while Schei and Peder were also at first to be members of the returning party.

These five were to go with the two aforesaid sledge-parties from Björneborg, and keep them in provisions and paraffin for ten days. They were thereupon to return to Björneborg, pick up Schei and Peder's equipment, and the three others accompany the two latter west and north as far as should prove desirable. When the returning party again reached Björneborg, they were to drive to the ship to fetch more provisions, and subsequently go in to Baadsfjord to fetch the boat which we had left behind us in the autumn.

Our time was now growing very short, and we had to work both at night and on Sundays.

Friday, March 16, was Olsen's birthday, which, of course, we wished to keep as well as we could. With regard to eatables and drinkables, everything was perfectly satisfactory; but the difficulty was to find time in which to consume them. For Olsen himself it was a particularly hard day, as he had several small things to finish for Baumann's party, which was to start the next morning, and this kept him at work all night.

After a somewhat cold period, with the temperature under -40° Fahr. (-40° Cent.), the thermometer began to rise quickly, and I grew anxious lest wet weather should spoil the going in

Jones Sound. Matters looked rather doubtful on Saturday when Baumann's party drove off; the weather was cloudy and dull, but happily it proved to be only a threatening.

While Isachsen was strolling along by the ship's side during morning-watch, a bear ran into the very midst of the dogs before any one realized what was happening. Schei's team and mine took it in hand, and made it go back to the crack, where it could not get away. Isachsen, who had not yet had a chance of shooting a bear, was not long in running on board to fetch his gun, and soon afterwards had despatched it. Fosheim helped him with the transport and skinning.

The necessary extra equipment I had already given out, such as fur clothing, 'finsko,' dog- and wolf-skin gloves and over-socks, stockings, spectacles, veils, etc., not to omit the ammunition.

On looking through the list of provisions, I calculated that, in taking with us the rest of the provisions required for the spring expeditions, each load from the ship to Björneborg would consist of about 550 lbs., besides what we reckoned as dead weight, *i.e.* everything which was not provisions. With the dead weight the loads would come to over 670 lbs. each.

The dietary per day, per man, was as follows:—

Bread	13	ozs.
Butter	2 $\frac{1}{3}$	"
Sugar	1 $\frac{1}{3}$	"
Coffee	$\frac{5}{6}$	"
Chocolate	1 $\frac{2}{3}$	"
Pea soup	1	"
Vegetables	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
Figs, French plums, raisins, nectarines	$\frac{2}{3}$	"
Egg powder	$\frac{1}{2}$	"
Groats	1 $\frac{1}{3}$	"
Potatoes	2 $\frac{1}{3}$	"
Meat fat	$\frac{2}{3}$	"
Pemmican	6	"
Golden syrup	$\frac{2}{3}$	"
Fish-flour	$\frac{1}{6}$	"
		<hr/>
		2 $\frac{2}{10}$ lbs.

Dr. Baumann required for his party 240 days' rations, about 530 lbs.

Isachsen and Hassel 100 days' rations „ 220 „

Sverdrup and Fosheim 100 days' rations „ 220 „

Schei and Peder 80 days' rations „ 175 „

Bay 90 days' rations „ 200 „

In all 1345 „

Of dog-food we required 3050 rations, or nominally 3350 lbs., as each allowance was calculated at $1\frac{1}{10}$ lb. In order, however, to economize the patent food, which consisted of equal parts beef-suet and fish-flour, we took with us a quantity of blubber and fish, of which the dogs required a ration of $1\frac{3}{4}$ lb. (13 ozs. blubber and 15 ozs. stock-fish), and thus the actual weight of the dog-food was considerably greater than the above figures.

We were taking with us nine teams, which properly should have consisted of fifty-four dogs; but in reality there were fifty-five, as Bay had seven dogs to his team. How this originally came about I no longer remember, but nearly all the time his had been a team of seven. This much I remember, that it was not owing to Bay's weighty frame, but to old love between the dogs.

These dogs are curious animals. At the making up of the teams of two friends, one only had been included in Bay's team. This the excluded one could not forget, and haunted the team, early and late. Now, a team will not stand any interference from outsiders, and the consequence was that the other five fought the unfortunate animal time after time; but to show them how amiable was his disposition, he merely turned over on his back, whined, and let them maul him as much as they liked without, as far as I saw, ever attempting to pay them back. It is one way of making one's self agreeable! Still, so much love deserved its reward, and eventually had it. He went on ingratiating himself with the others in this manner for such a long time, that at last he was acknowledged and taken as seventh man into the team.

Of instruments, each party took with them a pocket-chronometer, and a quicksilver- and a toluol-thermometer. Schei, in addition, had an ordinary pocket-sextant with a mercury horizon, Isachsen a theodolite, compass, and pocket-compass, and I a

theodolite and compass. All the instruments were tested before our departure, and, as far as possible, corrected.

By the evening before our departure, everything was ready except a sledge, but this Peder undertook to complete during the course of the evening. It still required a hauling strap at the fore end, and the 'long lashings.'

These long lashings, as we called them, proved to be extremely practical. They were small lines, which we made fast round the top of the uprights of the sledge; by so doing a

FROM THE HEAD OF HAVNEFJORD.

quantity of line was saved, while the loads at the same time were better kept in place, to say nothing of the rapidity with which the lashing and unlashings could be accomplished. It was a method which we owed to our Eskimo guests in Rice Strait, and will be readily understood from the illustrations. They, however, used straps of seal-skin, which we also tried at first, but soon gave up in favour of rope, as we found that in the cold weather the straps became very brittle.

At last, then, all our paraphernalia was ready, and I could draw a sigh of relief. It had cost a great deal of work to bring

all to completion, and the last few weeks on board the 'Fram' had not been easy ones. I was longing to get off, and make a trial of ourselves and of the equipment. It was my firm belief that we had good reason to be proud of the material at our disposal; we had, one and all, unwavering faith in it, and hoped to obtain good results if, tolerably scatheless and without smashing our sledges too much to pieces, we could only fight our way through the strait in the west. We had long surmised that *there* lay before us a struggle which might be harder than any of us could form an idea of.

HASSEL LASHES THE LOAD.

During our absence Simmons was going to take up his quarters aft, Isachsen having lent him his cabin while we were away. To the after-cabin, therefore, all the instruments were moved; first and foremost the chronometer, of which Simmons had promised to take charge. The reason for this was that I thought it unnecessary to warm two such large rooms as our fore- and after-cabins when there were not more than four men left on board; there was plenty of room for them aft.

There were now only three men left on the ship to look after the tide gauging and meteorological observations.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE GREAT EXPEDITION.

TUESDAY, March 20, was the great day of departure, and after breakfasting at six o'clock, we were ready to start about eight. The weather was beautiful, and we drove out through the sound, east of Skreia, at a smart pace, taking, when south of it, a line direct for South Cape. We never now drove our old way west of Skreia, for, although the distance was about the same, the ice and going generally were better east of it.

Out in Jónes Sound a strongish breeze from the south sprang up, and across Sydkapfjord the going, which had been very good before, became rather loose. Under the high cliffs of South Cape, however, the wind had less effect, as it blew directly on to the mountain side, and there, too, we came on to the same good slippery ice that Fosheim and I had had the last time we were there.

We got on a tremendous pace westwards. At South Cape and some of the other headlands were enormous masses of ice which had been pressed up during the winter; in some places many times the height of a man. It appeared as if the ice had been cracked and broken up at some time during the course of the winter, mostly into small pieces, and that all these blocks and bits and rubble had subsequently been pressed together between the ridges, and piled one above the other as far south in the sound as we could see from the highest hummock thereabouts. At the time that this violent pressure took place the ice must have been at least two feet thick. Just under the headlands, where we had to make our way through all this uneven ice, it was very hard work, but on the whole we had

nothing to complain of, as the snow had drifted a little, and smoothed over some of the inequalities.

In the bays and fjords the ice had not been subjected to this violent upheaval; in fact, had one placed a line from headland to headland, it would, as a rule, have formed the inner boundary of the pressure-ridges; for it was very seldom that they extended farther in than this imaginary line.

The dogs, which for the last few weeks had been fed up on blubber and raw meat, were in splendid condition, and hauled like heroes, every one of them. We made a good day's march in consequence, for in the evening we camped at Lille Sandör, about thirty-seven miles from the ship. As I did not wish to use my new spinnaker tent as long as I was travelling with the returning party, I quartered myself on Schei and Peder, in their three-man tent, while Fosheim lodged with Isachsen.

Next morning, at the usual time, that is to say, about half-past seven, we continued our march westward, on ice that was splendid going.

Baadsfjordnuten had become quite noted for the violent upheaval which had taken place there, and the last few times we had driven by it we had been obliged to take to the ice-foot. Driving up on this now was rather nasty work, and before we could cross the crack we were compelled to go a good way through the pressure-ice—great masses of ice in the immediate vicinity having been pressed right up to and over the ice-foot. Baumann's party, however, had done some road-clearing for us, as they had with them the necessary implements, with which they were provided chiefly with a view to negotiating the sound in the west.

On the ice-foot we discovered the track of a bear, and I expected every moment to see the animal itself among the hummocks, but did not do so. We made a short halt here, and ate some biscuits while the dogs were resting. The weather was simply beautiful, considering the time of year, and under the steep bluffs the sun was so powerful that one could almost describe it as warm. Some of the party even took the opportunity of splicing some old traces which the dogs had gnawed through during the night.

Fosheim and I still felt the effects of our over-exertion on the

former trip, when we had done so much running. I had hoped that as soon as we began with regular exercise again the feeling would pass off; but, instead of that, it only grew worse. Peder, too, was so 'remarkably stiff' that, as he expressed it, it was the 'very devil;' but he had it in rather a different way, and I thought he would be better long before we were, and had not very much sympathy for him.

After our rest, we followed the ice-foot for a while, until we drove down on to the ice again in Moskusfjord, where we made a big curve outside the pressure-ice, and were finally able to take a line for Stormkap.

Peder's team, which was being driven for the first time this year, was quite out of training, and during the afternoon he began to fall behind. I pulled up and waited for him every now and then, and on the whole the caravan kept very well together until we reached the ice-foot at Stormkap, where, after the immense upheaval that had taken place, it was almost impossible to drive with our heavy loads.

After I had been driving a little while up on the ice-foot, I saw that I was some hundred yards ahead of the others, and so stopped for them to catch me up. This time it was Fosheim who was behind. Peder came limping up to me, calling, 'Fosheim is so damned stiff he can hardly stand!' and burst out into roars of laughter, as was his wont on such occasions. When he had got his breath again, he added, 'But it's hard luck on old Erik all the same!'

At Stormkap we saw such an inviting camping-ground that we could not bring ourselves to pass it by. It was true that we had arranged to meet the others at Björneborg that evening, but with our thirty-nine miles behind us—that was a good day's march!—we found it easy to silence our consciences. Besides, it was only a short hour's drive to Björneborg, and if we started at seven the next morning we should be there before the Björneborgers had their boots on, and should still have the whole day in which to arrange the victualling and apportioning of what had to be apportioned between the different parties. Another reason for stopping was that I was reluctant to force the dogs so early on the journey, a proceeding

we might have cause to regret later on, as at this early season of the year they are very liable to become footsore, especially on going so hard as we then had. We therefore gratified our momentary hearts' desire and encamped where we were.

It was a pleasure almost divine to get something to eat that evening, and we devoured so much broth and fresh meat that our performance approached that of the most critical period at Christmas. Peder and I, however, ate the most, as boiled meat and broth were our favourite dishes. Schei, I think, would have preferred a simple stew of pemmican; but Peder declared it was preposterous to say that pemmican lobsouse was as good or better than fresh meat and broth. No, that was 'too bad.'

The following day was one of those sunny quiet days, of which, unhappily, we had only too few in Jones Sound; but, on the other hand, when we were favoured with one we appreciated it all the more. Just now it came very opportunely, for we had a long day before us, taking out all the provisions for the two sledge-parties which were going off.

At seven o'clock we started; the dogs knew very well we were bound for Björneborg, and went as hard as they could go, so that when we arrived there most of the inhabitants were still in their bags.

As I was tying up my dogs after our arrival, the mate came up and told me that they had returned from Baadsfjord the previous evening with all the things they had gone there to fetch. He then made some rather mysterious remarks about a valley which cut through the land from the bay between Björneborg and Stormkap, and which he thought so very beautiful. He talked on in this way for some time, until I began to wonder what was the matter with the man. I had never noticed anything particularly beautiful about the valley—in fact, I had always thought it was an ugly hole—nor had I known before that the mate was endowed with such lyrical gifts. I looked well at him, and felt sure there was something in the background, but what it was I could not make out, till Baumann came up and said straight out that, in the event of our not arriving that day they had decided to go over there and look for big game. As I had more men than were necessary for

the sorting of the provisions, I told them I was quite willing they should still go if they wished, and if they shot anything so much the better. I thought so much eloquence from the mate deserved some reward. So they took their guns and went off, while we eight who were left behind set to work on the weighing out of the provisions.

First, Isachsen and Hassel's provisions were taken out, then mine, and then what was necessary for the returning party. The biscuit was taken out of the big tin boxes,

WHEN THE LOAD IS LASHED.

weighed, and stowed in bags. After that the small 2½-gal. kegs, which we used on journeys, were filled with paraffin. Each of the chief parties was to have two kegs, or five gallons, of oil, while the returning party were to have three kegs, as they had to keep us too in paraffin as long as we were together.

When everything connected with the provisions had been arranged, and the loads equally distributed, we went through the rest of the equipment, such as tool-bags, private-bags, cooking-pots, etc., to assure ourselves that nothing had been forgotten.

The Commandant was in great form, and seemed to be one

single broad smile of content at his 'still-life' out there. But even on his bright sky was a dark speck, for he had not yet had a visit from a bear—still, there was time enough for one yet. The snow-wall round the house was finished, and he declared that the tent was very warm. A couple of the wayfarers were invited to be his guests during their stay at Björneborg.

The sportsmen came back in the evening with a ptarmigan apiece, which was all the game they had seen.

The next morning, after we had taken a hearty farewell of the thriving autocrat of Björneborg, we drove off, about half-past seven, in the same brilliant weather as the previous day.

At first we followed the ice-foot, which formed here a single unbroken smooth surface. The dogs were wild with delight at getting off, and gave us a great deal of trouble at first, for each team wanted to lead. We raced along till the snow flew like smoke behind us, and often, when the sledges became locked from the teams trying to pass one another, we were swept along in clusters.

Unfortunately this glorious state of affairs did not last very long, for when we reached some rocky crags, where the ice-foot had been carried away, we were forced down on to the sea-ice, where things were very different. To add to our misfortunes, it was low tide, so that from the ice-foot to the sea-ice there was a quite respectable coasting-hill, ending in a wall of ice.

It was our intention to take a diagonal course down this hill in order not to end up by rushing into the wall, and with the two first sledges all went well; but the following dogs found it unnecessary to pay the slightest heed to the sledges, and set off down the hill at a mad pace. They are fleet-footed animals, these Eskimo dogs; but, all the same, the loads went faster than they, and ran into the midst of the team. Several of the dogs were run over, and howled mercilessly as they lay sprawling under the runners, but no sooner were they free again than they set off at the same pace as before. The sledges suffered most, for a dog will always hold; I have never seen otherwise. They seem as if they have no bones at all, or, at any rate, unbreakable ones, such knocks as they many a time take without apparently feeling them.

This time we were not obliged to drive for long on the sea-ice, but were soon able to cross the crack again; still, it was quite long enough for us, with our heavy loads, and all the pressed-up young ice standing aslant in all directions. Nor was it easy to bring the heavily loaded sledges up on to the ice-foot again, but we had with us in our equipment all the implements necessary for cutting a way, such as ice-axes, spades, and a big axe, and with a gang of workmen as good as those I had at my disposal it was not long before we had made ourselves a way.

Progress along the ice-foot was not as bad as it might have been. We had, of course, to put in a good deal of work here and there; but on the whole we managed to push on without often resorting to the implements. We found the stones, however, with which the ice was often strewn, a great trouble to us, as, if we were not extremely careful in avoiding them, the brittle German-silver on the runners suffered very much; and, in spite of the greatest watchfulness, it is an easy matter to scrape against a stone when the dogs are as fresh and the pace as hot as on that day.

Across the mouth of the first fjord, which we afterwards named 'Gaasefjord,' or Goose Fjord, we drove in a long curve inwards, and at a tremendous pace; but we had another struggle with the ice when we were rounding the next foreland, and our exertions continued unremittingly until we reached the fjord west of it. We drove at great speed on the even fjord-ice, and were soon far enough up the fjord to set our course for the outermost headland on the western side.

As we were beginning to near land I became aware of a black speck away on the ice, just on the boundary between the fjord- and pressure-ice. This at first I took to be discoloured ice, supposing that if it were walrus we should, in weather as cold as this, see the steam rising from them, and therefore thought no more of the matter. But the dogs soon got wind of something, and began to increase their pace, and I then understood that this was really more than a lump of dirty ice, and was, in fact, a heap of walrus. To stop the dogs now was impossible, unless by overturning the load, which I accordingly did, telling Fosheim to go on and shoot a few walrus. The mate and Isachsen wished to go too, so all three

set off for the animals, which were not in the least shy, and I do not think they would have taken the trouble to dive if we had walked straight up to them.

At a suitable distance fire was opened, and though it might have done more damage than it did, we got enough of them, for three animals were left lying on the ice after the others had taken to the water. We then drove up to the spot in question, so that the dogs could feast on all this excellent fresh meat. Out of each tentful one man was told off for camping and cooking, and the others set to work to skin the animals.

Before the dogs were brought up, however, we noticed that there was still life in one of the three animals, which suddenly rose to its flippers, blowing off blood and steam from its mouth like smoke. The shooters then gave it another charge of lead to put an end to its sufferings, but it was an extraordinary animal, and did not seem to care in the least how much we shot at it. In fact, the more we fired bullets into its skull the more alive it became. They have the best heads I ever came across; but probably it died at last, for, at any rate, it lay quite still.

While we were standing lost in this walrus miracle, a wounded animal thrust its huge head up through one of the three large holes in the ice which the animals had probably kept open for some time. It was badly wounded, and made several attempts to scramble up, but had not the strength to do so. It had the biggest tusks I saw on any walrus during the whole of this expedition, and it dug them with such force into the ice that the splinters flew off it. We ran up to the walrus and seized it by the tusks, trying by means of a rope round them and its head to help it up, but the rope slipped each time, and our exertions led to nothing. The mate, in particular, was quite touchingly anxious to help it, and worked at it till it sank. I thought then that he meant to go after it, to see if he could not 'get it fast' at the bottom, but at the last moment he drew back.

After the skinning had been accomplished, we dragged across to the dogs as much meat as they could possibly eat; and the last thing we did at night was to drag them another portion, so that if they liked they could go on eating all night.

The skins we spread on the snow with the blubber downwards, so that it should not be quite so accessible to animals of prey. It was not a bad thing to have an extra depot here, as we should often drive past it during the course of the spring and summer; and it would also be a good bait for bears. To commemorate the day's sport, we called the fjord 'Hvalrosfjord' or 'Walrus Fjord', and Baumann and Hassel took several successful photographs of the skinning and camp.

Well satisfied with the exploits of the day, we crept into the tents, where the fragrant steaming soup and meat already awaited us. Then we changed our boots, and after supper, our pipes alight, stretched ourselves at ease on the bags. Had we not reason to be pleased? We had advanced seventeen miles that day, and had acquired both a depot and a bait for bears; we could now hope to shoot them here almost every time we drove by.

But pleasant and comfortable as we had found the evening, the dogs were no less content. They had eaten more than their fill, and still there were large lumps of meat round about them. Most of them were lying motionless, with a bit of meat under their jaws, unable to open them; but even then there were certain among them of such a restless disposition, that they had to find something to do. They therefore fell to fighting, and although they had had such a superabundance of meat that evening that they could not eat more than a fraction of it, they fought over the remains nearly all night. But a little howling and disturbance of the kind did not trouble us, for we were well used to it; and when the time came we went to sleep no less quickly on that account.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THROUGH HELL GATE.

A CHANGE of scene had taken place when we turned out the next morning. In falling snow and with a southerly wind, we drove off at our usual hour, following the edge of the pressure-ice all the way to the western headland. When we arrived there we found that the ice was pressed right up to the cliffs, so that we had to get out all our implements, picks, spades, and axes, before we could make our way up to the ice-foot. When once we had brought the sledges up on to it, we got on pretty well for a time, but things soon grew worse, and at last we were continually at a standstill. One or other of the loads was always capsizing, and, as a rule, it required two men to right it again. This sort of thing detains one very much, especially when the caravan is as large as was ours. The worst of it is that it increases the distance between the different sledges, and when one starts again and the dogs pull as if they were possessed—as they did that day—the pace becomes so fast that one risks smashing up everything on the sledge, while it may even be dangerous for the man with it.

How those dogs rushed through the driving snow! When the sledge overturned or stuck fast, and they were unable to move it from the spot, they stood up on their hind-legs, straining and howling with all their might; and when they felt that the sledge gave a little, they set off long before it was on an even keel again. Such zealous service it would be difficult to match.

Down in the sound, almost beneath us, were huge masses of ice, chiefly old hummocks and pressure-ridges mixed with lumps of calf-ice, which were all grinding round in the tearing current without ever stopping or ceasing. In some places far, far out in

the sound were polynias, but to use a boat here would have been an impossibility; it would have been broken to pieces in a moment among all the hummocks and icebergs, which were ceaselessly whirling round and round, crushing everything that came in their way. Nor was there a single floe to be seen out there on to which, at a pinch, a boat could be dragged, everything was high and steep and inaccessible; but this is a last resort, and one not to be taken advantage of until the danger is imminent and the boat threatened with destruction. Even then it must not be loaded, or it will be impossible to drag it up in a hurry.

None of us had ever seen waters so absolutely impossible to navigate as the sound here, and this, combined with the indescribable difficulties we had to overcome in order to get through it—difficulties which could not have been surmounted without splendid materials, and tough folk and dogs—was the cause that for a long time we never called it anything but ‘the Sound,’ to which was invariably added an expletive more or less forcibly illustrative. Later on we agreed to name it ‘Hell Gate,’* or ‘Helvedesporten,’ and, although it may be difficult to find a more deterring nomenclature, it is far too weak to express our impression of the place.

Up from Hell Gate a seal thrust its head more than once, and peeped cautiously after us with searching eyes. Far out among the hummocks dived and splashed myriads of sea-birds, mostly black guillemots, but also a certain number of larger birds; they were too far off for us to distinguish of what kind they were, but probably they were eiders. Along the ice-foot the bears had had their beaten track during the winter, but we saw none of them.

To find a passable camping-place was not an easy matter, as the ice about here consisted chiefly of blocks and ice-hills, the latter being so aslant that it was impossible to pitch a tent on any of them; but we eventually found a fairly suitable spot on the ice-foot.

I had reason to be satisfied with our work that day. An advance of thirteen miles in country like this was not badly done, but with sledges and dogs and picked men, such as mine, we could

* So given by the author.

get through almost anything. As regards the dogs, they had not yet been very much tried, for, owing to the roughness of the ground, they had had waiting periods every time the caravan was obliged to pull up for the purpose of making a way. For the sledges and men, however, it had been a trial by fire, and the demands made on them that day are not easily represented. It was simply incredible that such lightly built sledges could withstand what they did, but that they really had survived the shocks I made quite certain when we encamped, for, according to my usual custom,

PRESSURE-RIDGE AT BAADSEFJORDNUTEN.

I looked carefully over them all, and not one had suffered the least injury. The only accident that had happened during the course of the day was the breaking of a spoke in one of the odometers, but this was not very important, and it could easily be mended as soon as we had got through the strait.

At our usual hour the next day, Sunday, March 25, we began to literally carve our way northwards, accompanied by driving snow and a strong wind from the south. Bad as the ice had been the previous day, it was now many times worse, and at places was so impracticable as to baffle description. Towering pressure-ridges lay in many places forced far up against the cliffs, and we were compelled to cut a way foot by foot, through

blocks and hummocks of calf-ice. Then suddenly we were confronted by a fissure so large that the only way of crossing it was to fill it up by shovelling in cart-loads of snow.

In other places the avalanches had carried with them boulders, hummocks, and ridges into the sea. Where this had happened the snow was as hard as ice, and we had again to take to the picks and spades; the dogs were unharnessed, and we ourselves dragged the sledges across the critical spot. High above us

CAMP AT HVALROSEFJORD. SPRING 1900.

hung beetling precipices and cliffs supporting enormous cornices, which at any moment might fall and sweep with them in their course rocks, men, dogs, and sledges into the whirling stream below.

Here and there a landslip had taken place, carrying away the snow and leaving behind it only black *débris*, so that we had to clear a way, stone by stone, before we could bring our sledges across the place. This would have been bad enough in itself had not the weather made things ten times worse. The wind steadily increased, and between two and three o'clock it had risen to a

violent gale, while the snow drove and swept so that we could not see our hands before us.

About three o'clock we found a place where it was just possible to camp, but to pitch a tent in such weather is not easy work if one wishes to avoid having all one's things wet through. On these occasions one man always went into the tent first to receive the things as they were handed in, brush the snow from them and pile them against the opposite wall, but although one may brush and brush till it seems as if there could not be any snow left for a mile round, there is always as much as ever inside the tent, and on the things that have been handed in.

When one has gone on long enough sweeping the tent and the baggage, one begins to brush one another; but in spite of all the brushing and beating, given and received, so much fresh snow is blown on to one again that at last one is obliged to creep into the tent with any amount of it still on one's clothes. Then the door is hooked, the inner tent well drawn down, and the brushing begins anew. First, each man has a thorough overhauling, then all the things are moved over towards the tent-door, and the opposite side is swept clear of snow. Then comes the turn of all the packages by the door, and each one is brushed and put back in its proper place. When all this has been done, the floor of the tent is thoroughly swept.

All this brushing being brought to an end—even on such an evening as this—the bags are spread out, the 'Primus' begins its cheerful singing, the cooking-pot is put on, and one changes one's footgear. The demands of one's inner man satisfied and one's pipe alight, it is with a curious feeling of satisfaction that one lies listening to the storm outside, as it hammers and beats without ceasing on the walls of the tent. But if one is to be thoroughly at ease one must be sure that the wind is not such that it is likely to tear the tent to ribbons, and of this we could feel pretty sure that evening; the gale was not so violent but that I knew that our strong tent would hold. Very different is it when one lies expecting the tent to go at every gust of wind, or when one has to sit round the walls in

order to support them and the poles in every conceivable manner. The comfort then is certainly not very great.

During the night the storm went down, and when we drove off the next morning the weather was fine, if not exactly clear. The ice, on the other hand, was by no means better, and in some places was so bad that, to be honest, I began to doubt if there were any use in trying to go on. It looked so impracticable at times, that one was tempted to think that it could lead to nothing but the destroying of our sledges and of almost everything we had with us. It was, however, my opinion that we had no choice in the matter, and therefore we pushed on as best we could.

At certain places on our way we came across huge rocks, some of which were as big as a cottage, and round them the snow had drifted to such a height that we could only just see the top. When we came nearer we found that, as a rule, the wind had hollowed out a large empty space between the drift and the top of the rock, so that we were often met by a yawning pitfall twelve to eighteen feet in depth. In driving across the steep slope above a rock of this kind the sledges were often in danger of skidding into the hole, carrying with them both men and dogs. I should mention that we were obliged to drive above the rocks, as below was the open sea. I drove first, and always made as wide a sweep as I could, so as to give my companions who came after as much room as possible for leeway. With the three first sledges, as a rule, all was plain sailing, but the more sledges there are in a train the smaller becomes the sweep, and the nearer one approaches to the edge. If there is the smallest gap between two of the sledges the dogs of the hinder one are sure to make a short cut to catch the other up, and the whole thing will probably skid into the hole.

It once happened that, just as we were passing a rock of this kind, a gap occurred between my sledge and the one following it. As soon as I became aware of this I pulled up; but almost before I knew what was taking place the dogs had made their usual frantic rush to catch up, and the sledge, men, and team were precipitated into the hole twelve feet below. A moment afterwards, before anything could be done to prevent it, the next sledge came

tearing up and fell into the hole, and on the heels of number two came a third, which followed their example.

This was the worst thing which had yet happened to us on this perilous journey. Life and limb were at stake, and the fate of the expedition was at that moment, perhaps, decided. As quickly as could be I was on the spot to start the work of rescue, and it was not long before the others came up, expecting an abundant harvest of broken limbs and splintered sledges.

In the grave lay pell-mell three men, eighteen dogs, and three sledges with their loads, and the snow was flying up from it in clouds. Here and there a sledge-runner, or a seal-skin strap, was sticking out. Then I saw one of the men crawling out of the medley and pulling himself together, then another, and another. Thank God, they were all alive! And the dogs? They were lying in a black heap, one team on top of the other, kicking, howling, and fighting, till we could hardly hear the men's voices for their noise, so, apparently, they too were alive. As soon as we had hauled them all up, we set to work to shovel part of the drift away so that we could drag up the loads. The first sledge, which, after much toil, we succeeded in bringing up, strange to say, was whole, nor was there anything wrong with number two, while number three was as intact as the two former. The very astonishing result of this flight through the air was, therefore, that not a limb, nor a lashing, nor bit of wood was broken.

Hardly had we recovered from this misfortune before we came to a place where there had been a snowslip, and here, for a long distance, we were obliged to clear a way; but as this was pretty straight across, and the slope not quite as steep as we often had them, we decided to drive our loads in the usual manner. The idea was that, if the sledges followed quickly on one another, we should be able to get across all right, and this was the case with the first two or three. Unluckily, however, one of the last to follow overturned, and we who were in front had to let the other sledges continue to move forward until they had come so far that there was sufficient length for them all.

Whilst I was standing waiting for the others, I was told that

one of the loads had slid down the slope, and was floating in the sea. It was not a very inspiring story; the sledge had been stopped, and on starting again the dogs had put on such a spurt that it had slid down and over the wall of ice, which was here many feet in height. Happily the traces had broken at the moment when the sledge started off, and the dogs, immediately grasping the seriousness of the situation, had one and all clawed on to the snow, clinging to it for dear life. For once in their lives they were agreed.

We all collected round the scene of the disaster, and saw the sledge lying close in to the wall of ice, where it had lodged on some stones at the bottom, and consequently had not sunk. The sledge had to be recovered at any price, for although it was loaded with things which would stand water, namely, stock-fish and paraffin—and inasmuch as this was the case the misfortune was not a great one—we could not by any means afford to lose it.

One of the members of the party, with a rope round his waist, climbed down the wall of ice, clinging on to it as best he could. Things went well all the way down. Peder, who is a man of forethought, and well knew the contents of the hold, had brought with him some fathoms of very stout plumbline. After the gun, sleeping-bag, and private bag had been drawn up, the line was put round the sledge, and the eight men who were standing above hauled all they knew; while the man hanging in the rope below got the sledge clear of the ice-wall every time it stuck fast. In this manner it was slowly but surely drawn up. We then undid the lashing, knocked the slush out of the fish, lashed the load on again, and continued our journey.

We worked our way along to a spit of land whence the coast seemed to take a more easterly direction, and on arriving there, after much toil and tribulation, found, to our great joy, that the sound opened out to a considerable extent and trended eastward in a largish bay; that the entire sound was covered with young ice; and that by following the ice-foot for a short distance we could again get down on to even ice. This was a sight which was as pleasing as it was unexpected, for I had not dared to hope for any improvement for some days to come.

By about twelve o'clock we had crossed from the ice-foot on to the ice, which was now good, and continued our journey northward. When we came to the first bay, which we afterwards named 'Renbugten,' or 'Reindeer Bay,' we found that the pressure-ice had formed a formidable wall along the entire east shore, and we therefore kept in mid-channel up through the sound.

As we were approaching some pressure-ice on the north side of the bay, I saw a bearded seal lying on the ice. I pulled up

UNDAUNTED WORKERS.

for a moment to tell Fosheim to try and get a shot at it, but said that, if he could not find cover so that he could come within range quickly, without any lengthy stalking, he might let it go; we would not waste time on it. However, in making haste, according to my injunctions, he managed to alarm the seal, which at once took to the water.

We still found it necessary to keep well away from land, in order to avoid the drift-ice, and camped that evening rather more than two miles north of the point whence the land began to trend to the north-east, and which we afterwards called

'Land's End.'* Our quarters that night we subsequently named 'Fjerde Leirplads,' or 'Fourth Camp.'

While Schei and Peder were doing duty as cooks, I went a stroll up on land to look for traces of big game, and after following the bed of a river I climbed on to some high ground, where I really found the tracks of polar oxen. They were, however, several days old, so that the prospects of getting a shot at the animals did not seem very bright. From this spot I discovered in a north-westerly direction two islands, which, however, did not appear to be of any great size or height. Of the coast itself I could not see more than two or three miles, the rest being hidden from view by a point of land, but beyond this point it seemed to trend even more to the east.

Our spirits were high that evening, although we did not exchange many words—perhaps it was what is called 'quiet happiness.' We had at last fought our passage through this terrible sound, and a way was now open to us where we might reasonably expect to make progress. It was our hope that we should return from this expedition with good results.

The further travelling plan, which we evolved up there, was that Isachsen's party should follow the inner part of the coast of Kong Oscars Land† (King Oscar Land), while mine kept to a more westerly course. By so doing, we should have a better opportunity of coming across new islands and land; and on our departure from the ship we had equipped ourselves with this possibility in view.

That night the dogs were very noisy, and we found it necessary to tie up the bitches by themselves. At the time that the teams were made up, a bitch, and sometimes two, were included in each team. This arrangement, of course, has its disadvantages; but it is a measure which is absolutely necessary, as the presence of the bitches spurs on the dogs to effort, and makes them fiery and courageous. They all appear to be doing their utmost to please the object of their affections, for they know that the fair sex has

* So given by the author.

† The whole of the west coast of Ellesmere Land we subsequently called 'King Oscar Land.'

HEAVY GOING.

ever had a weakness for the strong and brave. It is always on the strongest of the team that the fair one bestows her caresses; it is to him she goes, him she licks, when a halt is called. The weaker dogs receive only snaps and snarls in return for their attentions, no matter how agreeable they may make themselves.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

STORE AND LILLE BJÖRNEKAP.

NEXT morning, when we drove off, the weather was misty, and the still damp air so laden with rime that fine needles of ice fell without ceasing. We followed the ice-foot for the first couple of miles, until we reached the northernmost point in view, but here the good going came to an end, for the ice lay pressed up for some distance on to the sands and drove us out on to the sea-ice again. Very great pressure had apparently taken place here during the course of the autumn, and as far ahead as we could see the ice had been subjected to upheaval, and was extremely rugged. Although the going was somewhat heavy on the dust-like, newly fallen snow, it was hard enough for us to make satisfactory progress; the dogs were able to get a good purchase on it, and given that there was no doubt of their willingness to haul. A couple of miles from land we changed our course and drove north-east, parallel with the land. The result of this manœuvre was that our progress became considerably more difficult, as we had to cross all the large drifts which had collected between the pressed-up blocks of ice.

As far as we could see to the north the country was of little elevation, with expanses of sand which often shot out four or five miles into the sea, and were so low that we did not remark them before we were close on to them. In the south-west, far away on the horizon, rose some land with rounded knolls and ridges, and the landscape generally reminded me very much of the long low-lying coast of Siberia.

Out on the ice that day we saw what we thought to be unequivocal traces of reindeer. With the exception of antlers of

great age, which we had found in numbers in some places in Ellesmere Land, we had not hitherto seen any signs which could point to the existence of reindeer in these parts at the present time. It is, however, an animal which roams very far afield, and we thought that possibly these might be traces of reindeer which had come from the islands in the west, and, after having crossed the ice and paid King Oscar Land a summer visit, had returned home again on the approach of autumn.

The polar ox is also a wanderer, but compared with the reindeer I think one may safely say that, as far as these regions are concerned, it is much more stationary than the latter. In a country where there are wolves the reindeer is continually on the move, and I do not think ever remains for long in one place.

During the afternoon we saw a high mountain crag appear above the horizon on the port side forward, and this we named 'Store Björnekap' (Great Bear Cape). It appeared to be situated on an island, and on what we presumed to be the strait between the island and King Oscar Land we set our course.

Our next camping-place was outside a fjord which extended into the land in a south-easterly direction. From this fjord onward the country seemed to change its character, taking north of it a more mountainous formation, with rounded tops, which rose to an apparent height of 1500 to 2000 feet.

During the course of the day we came across several bear-tracks, which were so fresh that the dogs became absolutely unmanageable in their eagerness to follow them up. It seemed as if it would be a matter of no difficulty to procure food for them up in this bay if we should be pressed for it.

We drove nearly twenty-nine miles that day, and camped out on the ice four or five miles from land. Unhappily for us, the going became heavier and heavier the farther north we went. If only we could have a gale of wind to blow away all this loose hoar-frost! Underneath it was the most beautiful hard snow, but driving on the fine dust-like snow on the top was something like sledging on ashes, or blue clay. The temperature, too, kept rather low, about -40° Fahr. (-40° Cent.).

Next morning we got under way at our usual time, keeping at first on the same course, that is to say, straight across the sound; but what the day before we had thought to be a sound now proved to be only a fjord, and the high mountain we had taken for an island was a top projecting from some low ground of large extent. We then took a line west of this mountain, and kept on the whole of the day as well as we could; but the going became heavier and heavier, and deeper and deeper the loose layer of snow. Several times I tried driving inshore, but each time the ice became so bad that we were obliged to give it up and turn outward again. These great plains attracted us and lured us on, and we were eager to find out what they had to offer. Far inland was mountainous country, but adjoining it lay broad plains extending certainly as many as ten or twelve miles to the sea. They were lowlands in good earnest, for it was almost impossible to see where they ended and the sea began.

After we had passed Store Björnekap a similar foreland appeared in view in the distance, and this we named 'Lille Björnekap' (Little Bear Cape), but whereas the former fell away almost perpendicularly into the sea, there stretched beyond the latter some low-lying land some five or six miles in extent.

We kept at it the whole day and did well, but all the same we were not able to reach Lille Björnekap that evening, and camped a little to the south of it. As for the distance we had covered during the day we could only guess at it, as we had broken the rods of both the odometers in the sound, but we put it down at nearly twenty-three miles.

Once during the course of the day the weather had cleared a little, and we then saw one or two islands to the south-west, which we assumed to be the same as those we had observed from Fourth Camp, though without being certain of it. In a direction approaching the true west was a very large mountain, but whether or not it was connected with King Oscar Land we could not make sure, but thought it improbable that this should be the case. Were it really connected with King Oscar Land this land must extend a very great distance to the west, and in that case it was possibly the same land which Belcher discovered in 1850, and which he named North

Cornwall. But, as I have said, we considered this to be improbable, and thought that in the vicinity of the place where we now were there must be a sound cutting northward through the land in the direction of Greely Fjord, and that this sound must be in connection with the fjords we had seen the previous spring. The weather,

MOUNTAIN NEAR BJÖRNEBORG.

however, was so thick that it was difficult to really know one's bearings.

The next day, March 30, we continued northward, with the same misty weather and bad going as before. A couple of hours or so after our departure we met a huge bear coming towards us. We kept on our course, and he was as unconcerned as we, for he came straight up to us. At a couple of hundred yards' distance my dogs saw him, and I overturned the sledge and let

go the connecting lanyard, but the bear was not to be daunted, and made straight for the dogs, which began to tear at his hair. He did not seem to care very much about this, and made an effort to turn tail, but it was too late, for they were now clinging on to him and biting him wherever they could get a hold.

Baumann then told me that Hassel had never had a chance of shooting a bear, so I said he should have one now. He accordingly seized his rifle and set off, prepared to do the bear to death. At suitable range he knelt down in front of it and let

‘KRESTIAN.’ ‘KA’L.’ ‘SNIPA.’
‘MOSAIKEN.’

blaze. The bear was not at all offended, and simply stayed where it was. He then scrambled up, and, cautiously advancing a few steps farther, knelt down and fired again. He went on courting the bear in this manner till he had fired away all the five cartridges in his magazine rifle without succeeding in more than wounding it. Meanwhile ‘Bamsen,’ as we call bears, and the dogs continued to ‘pig-waltz’ with such vivacity that the snow flew up in clouds around them.

At this juncture Hassel’s team rushed in to their master’s assistance, and set on the bear. He had not overturned his

sledge at the beginning of the fun, and, impatient at the want of result of so much shooting, they joined the fray with it behind them. At this moment I also came up. As usual I had not my gun with me, but I had plenty to do in disentangling Hassel's team. I marched into the middle of the pack, among all the frantic animals, to loosen their lanyard, and found myself in a hot corner. Happily Schei and Baumann arrived on the scene after a few minutes—there was a report, then a shot, then another, and 'Bamsen' sank down with sundry ounces of lead in his body.

Wild as were the dogs, I was no less so. I tried to point the moral of the situation, impressing on Hassel that the art of rifle-shooting consists solely in firing off your gun at the right moment. His bear was an enormous fellow, and as fat as could be. Peder and I set to work to skin it as quickly as we could, flinging the meat to the dogs bit by bit. They swallowed the pieces almost before they had got hold of them; it was like throwing meat into a bottomless sack.

Whilst the feeding process was going on, two of the teams fell to fighting, and when at last we had separated them, disentangled their harness and traces, and administered the necessary thrashing, both of Peder's hands were freezing hard. He became quite dazed, and it would no doubt have been a serious affair had it not been taken in time; but by dint of strenuous rubbing, we succeeded in reviving them and preventing further consequences.

All the members of the expedition complained of the damp. The bad weather we had experienced in the sound, combined with the violent exertion it had cost us to get through it, had kept them all, being out of condition, in a perpetual steam-bath. Added to this, their clothes had been almost permeated by all the driving snow we had had, so that they and their sleeping-bags were entirely coated with ice; in fact, they were going about encased in it. In these circumstances I thought it only right to let the assistant party return from our next camping-place, or two days earlier than we had arranged.

Next day, March 31, we were early astir. The four of us who were going on had our things handed over by the returning party,

and we distributed them equally on our sledges, making thereby a very considerable addition to the weight of the loads.

The plan which we decided on was as follows: Baumann and his party were to go to Björneborg, pick up Schei and Peder's equipment, and accompany them a while north of the sound. Schei was first to examine the islands which we had seen from Fourth Camp, and then, together with Peder, travel on up the coast, north of the islands and land on the east side of the bay. The object of Schei's expedition was a scientific investigation of the country to be made in his capacity as geologist of the expedition; while to his duties in his own line were added, on this journey, those of botanist.

After Baumann had done this he was to return with his party to the 'Fram,' and in May, make a journey to Fourth Camp or Land's End to take a series of observations. He was also, if possible, to try to discover whether there was any reasonable way by which we could cross the land from one or other of the fjords we had passed west of Björneborg, for we knew that it would be impossible to get through Hell Gate at the time of year when we should be on our return journey. In the hope of there being sufficient open water in the sound, in the month of May, for him to be able to dredge, he was to drive the boat thither from Baadsfjord, and about May 20 fetch the sledge-expeditions on the north side of the sound. If there were no chance of being able to make use of the boat, he was to drive it to the 'Fram.' In both cases he was to build a cairn at Land's End, and leave a record there to say whether the sledging expeditions had been fetched with the boat, or if a passable land way had been discovered.

About half-past nine in the forenoon we were at last ready to start in our respective directions. The four of us who were going on the long journey, continued westward, towards a black wall of rock on which we were now steering, while the others retraced their steps.

We had with us a bottle of brandy for the purpose of drinking to our departure. It was now brought out, and we all presented our cups for our due share of the liquid. The mate, who drew the cork, and was about to pour out the drams,

suddenly stopped, for nothing came out of the bottle. Could it be empty? Impossible; it was too heavy for that. He shook it and shook it, and tried again; but still nothing came. It was very curious. Then we peeped into the bottle, and found that the contents were frozen, frozen to the very bottom! There seemed to be no use for our cups, so we got a stick and poked our good 'Three Star' brandy out of the bottle. Besides the other object, our parting-cup was intended to warm us—there were forty-four degrees below zero—but it was a cold draught.

We ate up our dram, said a grave good-bye, and went our respective ways.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TOWARDS CAPE SOUTH-WEST.

THE returning party travelled quickly. For the first they had the track to keep to, and secondly, their baggage had been considerably lightened. With us, however, things were very different; our loads had grown very much bigger, the travelling was heavy, and the dogs had great difficulty in making their way through all the loose snow, and could hardly move the sledges from the spot. We spent the whole day hauling along with the dogs, but when we camped in the evening, it proved that we had only made a little over nine miles. It is true that the odometers were out of order, but by counting our steps and judging from our surroundings, we gained a pretty good idea of how far we had advanced.

If only a bear would turn up, so that we could afford to stay quiet for a few days, feed the dogs, and wait for better going, for this was only wearing them out to no purpose! With such cold weather, and hard work, they would not be able to stand very much more of it; but who can afford to lie idle on a sledge-journey when there is no extra dog-food to fall back on? Even if one can only push on for a mile or so, it is something done.

Each sledge-party had with them a bottle of brandy, which it was intended should help to enliven them on festal and commemorative occasions, and so as the thirty-first was my little daughter's birthday, we had a round of hot grog in the evening, while Fosheim, who is as eloquent as an Aaron, made a speech in honour of the day.

One's feelings on such occasions are a curious mixture; the days are intended to be festive, and one does indeed screw one's

spirits up to a higher pitch than on most ordinary days ; but for the person chiefly concerned there often lurks behind a good deal of longing and sadness, and just because one sees so much more clearly the faces that are dear to one, the feeling grows worse instead of better. If only one could be at home for a little while, take them by the hand, and hear a few words ! But no, such thoughts must be thrust aside ; we had much to do before we reached as far as that !

No bear came in the course of the night, so we had to start driving again in snow that was the same sluggish going as before. We went very slowly, but we all lent a hand at the hauling and made a certain amount of progress. We saw no bears—they seemed to have quite disappeared—and although we scanned and scanned in our anxiety, we did not see a single track, or the slightest trace of a bear. We camped in the evening, after having dragged ourselves eight miles or so through snow that only grew worse the farther west we went.

On April 2, at our usual hour, we continued on our weary way north-westward. There was something very remarkable about the black wall of rock on which we were steering ; a sort of looming made it appear sometimes only a couple of miles away, and yet after we had toiled and toiled for hours, we did not seem to have come a step nearer.

We had been so long talking and thinking about bears without seeing a sign of any, that when one really came walking towards us we could hardly believe our eyes. But this was a more wary fellow than our last, for he very soon changed his direction and made off northward. I then let go the dogs, which had just winded it, and I knew at once that the bear was ours. Fosheim was despatched to shoot it, while we unloaded his sledge so that it might be in readiness in case the animal should get so far away that he would be unable to stamp after it through all the loose snow. In our haste in throwing the things off the sledge, we were so unfortunate as to break one of the loose over-runners which was lashed to the top of it. The dogs, in their excitement, dragged the sledges close together, and then merged into a single pack, and of course fell to fighting and making a horrible

disturbance—it was their very life. On such occasions kind words and persuasions are of no avail, and only a sound thrashing is of any use. After almost hopeless confusion the pack was disentangled, and I drove Fosheim's team after him.

It proved, however, that such haste had been unnecessary, for the dogs had kept the bear well at bay, and I had hardly started when it fell for Fosheim's rifle. We now turned it over on to the sledge, so as to drive it to the other sledges, at the spot

FROM THE WEST SIDE OF AXEL HEIBERG LAND. SPRING, 1900.

where we thought of camping; but we had counted without my dogs. When they discovered that I was driving another team, their fury knew no bounds, and, mad with jealousy, they all fell at once on Fosheim's team. We separated them, but no sooner had I begun to drive again than we had a repetition of the scene. There was nothing for it but to change teams, and when my own had been put to the sledge, they started off quite happily, and as if nothing had happened. They would not allow the others to be driven by their driver!

Fosheim and Isachsen saw to the skinning of the bear, while Hassel and I looked after the dogs, pitched the tents, and did various other things. Fleecing is said to be a paying business,

but it is certainly a cold one in some thirty-eight degrees below zero. They were quick workers, however, who knew how to use their knives, and in the course of a few minutes they had skinned the bear and begun to cut it up. The meat was chopped into rations of suitable size and laid out to freeze.

We fed the dogs on the meat and offal till they could eat no more; and we also offered them the liver, but not one of them would touch it. Both before and since I have tried giving dogs bear's liver, but

ISACHSEN AS DISSECTOR.

they must be excessively hungry before they will eat it. It is a common belief that the liver of the bear is poisonous to both people and dogs; but I do not think it is anything of the kind. I have myself eaten it many times without feeling any disagreeable consequences, and I have seen dogs eat it when they have been very sharp-set; while I have also come across dogs which have no great dislike to it, especially when it is frozen. I have never found it in the least unpalatable when care has been taken to remove the gall-bag as quickly as possible; in fact, it tastes just like ordinary liver. We cut some steaks which we laid aside as a delicacy for supper, and the heart, of course, was not forgotten.

We now decided to remain where we were until the going improved or the bear-meat gave out, as this sort of thing was simply wearing out the dogs for nothing. The bear had come, and if only a storm would come too, the going would soon be all right, and if things went as they usually did up here, we should not have to wait long for it. The misty weather shut out almost all view, so that we could not form much idea of where we were going; but, as I have said before, it was our belief that we were advancing towards a new land.

The next day we remained where we were, in the same cold and foggy weather, and continued our work of cramming the dogs. We also put the tents in order, first taking out the inner tents and brushing them free from rime, and then we turned our attention to the bags. These had become very damp down in Hell Gate, and once they begin to collect moisture, they grow worse with every day that passes. After great trouble we managed in the end to turn them inside out, and gave them a good sweeping. We repeated these household duties every morning as long as we were lying to, emptying the tent, sweeping out all the rime, and turning and brushing the bags; it was astonishing how this care prevented the damp from collecting. After the sweeping performance we walked about for three or four hours outside the tents. We also mended the odometer rods, and examined our instruments to see if they had come to any harm in the sound. It proved that my theodolite had suffered a good deal, though not injuries of a worse nature but that I could mend it sufficiently for use. We compared our chronometers, and took a number of observations with both instruments, also for the sake of comparison.

But the weather continued stubbornly the same, while our store of bear-meat grew no larger—our four-and-twenty gluttons took good care of that—and on April 7 we saw the last remains of the extra food disappear down their bottomless gullets. Next day we should have to take to driving again—there was no longer any respite to be expected.

On starting the following morning, we took a somewhat westerly course, towards a large sandbank, which extended for a

great distance. We guessed the time that we should require to reach it, at two or three hours, but before we came to the crack it was late in the evening. This, however, was not entirely owing to the fact that it appeared nearer to us than it really was: we had made slow progress, and had not covered much more than nine miles; but it was something to have done this on such bad going as was our lot.

Up by the crack were a couple of bear-tracks, and we were in great hopes of soon having a new bear for the dogs; but in this we were disappointed. Towards the end of the day the sky grew very black in the south-east, and we saw that a storm was brewing. We accordingly pitched the tents with extra care, so as to be ready for an emergency, and had not long to wait before a breeze sprang up; we were hardly inside them before the storm burst. It raged with such violence that we lay all night expecting the canvas to be split to ribbons, and the gale playing havoc with our things inside.

We turned out of the bags next morning at four o'clock, and began to cook and get ready for a start, although the storm was howling as loud as ever; but it was 'on our backs,' and we thought we ought to go on. Before we got outside the tent, however, the wind suddenly went round to the north-west with the same strength as before. This was too much for anybody, and we forthwith gave up the attempt and settled down within doors.

Many were our speculations inside the tent that day. It was this new land, in particular, which haunted our imagination. To the steep mountain, which was still due west of us, it was certainly twenty-five miles or more, and perhaps behind it the land extended still farther to the west: that it could be Ellesmere Land we considered almost impossible. On our journey from Fourth Camp we had seen several large icebergs out in the bay, passing close by one of them. Whence came they? I could hardly think they had drifted northward from Jones Sound; but if they had not come that way they must of necessity be from the north, and, in that case, there must be glaciers existing in these parts; they must, in any case, have come a long distance, for as yet we had seen no glaciated land. Greely mentions the existence of glaciers in Greely

Fjord, and that being so, it was not impossible that there might also be glaciers further south which issued into one or other of the fjords.

During the course of the night the wind went down, and by the time we were ready to begin cooking in the morning it was almost still. We therefore prepared to get under way as quickly as possible, but after such a storm it takes longer than usual to strike camp, especially when there is as much loose snow for the storm to whirl about as was then the case. The result of this is that sledges and tents and everything else are snowed down, and must be laboriously dug out; the loads on the sledges must be taken off, and each article beaten and brushed free from snow, for one does not wish to drive any unnecessary weight. Sometimes one is even obliged to scrape the ice and snow off the dogs. Occupied in this manner, it was past nine before we could set off with a good conscience; and even then we had not everything with us, for the axe, which had been set up beside the tent-door the previous evening, was so entirely buried in the snow that I forgot all about it.

We had hoped for good hard snow, but in this we were doomed to disappointment; there had been such an inordinate amount of loose snow about, that a storm of short duration such as this was not enough to harden it. In some places the crust on the drifts was so strong that it would almost bear the dogs, but the next minute through they went, often to their bellies, and so would lie for quite a long time struggling and swimming in the loose snow under the crust without being able to find a foothold. Our progress was distressingly slow, and, even when we unharnessed and put two men to a sledge, it was as much as we could do to drag the loads along foot by foot, in short jerks.

Our way led along the crack, outside an extremely long sandbank, seemingly without end. During the afternoon a stiff breeze from the west sprang up, which made it absolutely impossible to see where we were going, or whether we were driving on sand or sea-ice—there was shoal water here, and the crack was not very apparent, a sheet of even snow covering the whole.

When we stopped in the evening a whole gale was blowing,

and we had great difficulty in camping and getting our things in order; then, no sooner were we settled inside the tent with the 'Primus' burning, than the storm suddenly lulled. I thought we should have it again the next minute, from the opposite quarter; but no wind came, and it was perfectly still the whole night through.

As soon as we turned out next morning, I went outside to look round. It was the most beautiful travelling weather one could wish—clear and still, and I could not feel a breath of wind. The high headland in the west rose before me, steep and black. Our tent was pitched a little way out on a large bay which cut in between the great headland and the sandbank we had followed the previous day, but which now at last seemed to have come to an end. So now we had only to drive across the bay and we should reach the imposing mountain which for so many days had been the object of our desires, but which had hitherto defied all approach on our side. At the head of the bay the land was extremely low, stretching in great plains towards the north, and, judging from its appearance, it would be strange if it were without vegetation or animal life.

We got under way with all speed, for there was no knowing how short a time this good weather might last; and, sure enough, no sooner were we on the move than it suddenly clouded over and became so thick and foggy that we could hardly see the last sledge. The snow, however, was very much better, and about one o'clock we reached the southern point of the foreland—we called it 'Cape Sydvest,' or 'Cape South-West'—where the land trended about north-west to north, and had then covered a distance of nearly thirteen miles.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A TOILSOME JOURNEY.

JUST here by the point the going changed its character in a quite remarkable way. Whereas on the east side of it we had all the time driven on drifted snow, on the other side the ice was quite bare, and was blue and bright as far as we could see. Here also violent pressure had taken place last autumn, and great masses of ice had been forced up towards land; the sea-ice, too, had been subjected to great pressure, and would be bad for driving on, it appeared.

Before starting round the point we made a short halt, ate some biscuits and pemmican, and I climbed up the talus to get a view over the ice. I saw no old ice, either in the north or the west—all was pressed-up young ice; but the pressure towards land seemed to have been extremely violent, and great masses of ice lay thrown up and extended in a continuous ridge, certainly fifty feet high, almost the whole way along inshore. The ice was bare, almost as far as I could see. This was dangerous country for driving in, and we put the odometers on the loads before we went farther, for any attempt at using them would only end in fractures.

The dogs were as pleased as we were at getting on to easier going; they set off at such a pace that the sledges flew, and it was as much as we could do to keep them from overturning. In many places it seemed as if they must come to grief among all the pressure-ice, and especially the aluminium plates under the cross-pieces.

Some way farther north we came to a place where the ice was even worse. Happily we saw a means of driving inside the wall

of ice, though this manner of eluding the difficulty did not last for long. We were obliged to go out again, and, after some trouble, succeeded in getting down on to the sea-ice. This was terrible country! Towards evening we reached a largish bay, where we found fairly even ice, and made good progress; camping later on under two mountain-tops which we had seen all day, and whose naming had occasioned some difference of opinion.

Early in the morning a name more descriptive than tasteful had been suggested for them. Fosheim, who on several occasions

PRESSURE-RIDGE NEAR SKJÆRTORS DAGSKAP.

had shown himself to be the most gifted advocate of modesty of the expedition, said nothing, but his face promised ill. He went on pondering all day, and when in the evening an allusion was made to the same name, he declared indignantly it would not do at all; it was too ugly. No, they should be called 'The Two Craters' ('De To Kratere'), and so they are to this day. Virtue has had its reward.

It was blowing hard from the north-west, and was thick and foggy, so that neither that evening nor the next morning did we see much of the country. Soon after we started next morning we passed three small icebergs. They were about fifteen to twenty

feet high and of no great extent, and may, perhaps, best be described as fragments of calf-ice.

In some places we had great difficulty in making our way, often for long distances together; and once or twice were even obliged to take to the ice-foot. But the ice-foot itself was, as a rule, impassable, and we pressed on as best we could out on the sea-ice. The work we got through that day was something calculated to try our mettle. What gave us most trouble were the innumerable drifts of enormous size, filled with pitfalls. The pressure-ridges on land were still very high, and, on the whole, considerably larger than those we had seen the previous day, some of them being, I should think, as much as seventy or eighty feet in height.

Later in the afternoon we got down on to ancient ice, which was blue and slippery, but terribly uneven, so that, in spite of its undeniable good qualities, we were not able to make great progress, as the dogs were unable to go quickly on it. This ice was probably very old. If polar ice lie till a second year it begins, in places, to resemble freshwater ice on the surface; while, if it be several years old, the upper parts, to all intents and purposes, become freshwater ice. Chemically free from salt, of course, it is not, but there is so little remaining in it as to be unappreciable to the taste, and we never hesitated to use it for cooking purposes.

We were stopped during the afternoon by a small accident—the nails in the bed of Isachsen's sledge came out, and in so doing loosened the plate on one of the runners. Later on we drove across a bay covered with young ice, which was slippery and even, and here we made good progress. It brought us under the highest walls of rock we had yet seen in these parts, a height of at least 3000 feet. Under this mountain an enormously high perpendicular wall of ice had been pressed up, close to which we encamped, in order to get a little shelter from the wind, which had now gone round to the north-east. Close under the wall we did not feel much of it, but when we craned back our heads, and looked up, we could see the wind on the mountains blowing up large clouds of snow, and whirling them in wanton, fleeting eddies among the crags and peaks. We had long talked of measuring this wall of ice, which lay pressed up all the way beside the land, but the

weather had been so against us the whole time, that we had rather fought shy of it, and hoped to have a better opportunity for this, and for taking some photographs,* on our way back. There was no question of our being able to do it now, for the weather was much too bad. However, we did not break our hearts over it, for we were well pleased with our day's work, the odometer recording the longest day's march we had made since we left the returning party, namely, sixteen miles.

After we got under way the following morning at our usual time, the weather became so thick that we could hardly see a hand's-breadth in front of us. The land very soon trended decidedly to the east, and after going five miles due north-east we decided to camp, as we were afraid that we were only driving up a fjord. Nor did we care to keep to our original course when we could see nothing in front of us, for if the land really trended to the north-east we should, in such case, only be toiling and struggling out in the pressure-ice on the coast to no purpose. In such circumstances it was best to keep to the newly frozen ice along the shore.

We were anxious to get a few observations, for, if the land really trended north-east, we might not come back this way, and, consequently, we wished to determine its westernmost point. We therefore pitched the tents away from land, so that we might have a free horizon in case the weather should clear. When the camp was ready, and the dogs fed, I took my gun and went landwards to try my luck, thinking that possibly I might, at the same time, be able to find out whether we were in a fjord or only a large bay. I took a diagonal line inwards. From the foot of the mountains a large lowland stretched towards the sea; and, after an hour's march, I came to some extensive plains of grit without the smallest sign of vegetation, although they were bare of snow. By the bed of a little stream some stalks of dried grass were sticking up among the stones, and these, with the exception of some lichen on the stones themselves, were all the vegetation I saw. Of hares and ptarmigan I saw not a trace; and the track of a fox, which

* Most of the photographs taken on this journey were unfortunately spoiled on the way.

had stolen along the ice-foot, was the only spoor of any animal that I was able to discover.

By degrees, as I went inwards, the weather cleared, and I was able to see that we were camping in a large bay, and that the land on the other side of it continued in the same direction as before. When I got back I found Isachsen observing for longitude, and as he had already been lucky enough to get a meridian altitude we had thus determined both the longitude and latitude of the spot.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

EASTER IN HEIBERG LAND.

To my amazement Isachsen and Fosheim informed me that this was Good Friday evening! We had all nearly forgotten it; and, seeing that this was Good Friday, the day before, probably, had been Maundy Thursday.* We were quite horrified that the latter should have escaped us, and hurried into the tents to prepare a festal meal and make up for lost time, determined to do something extra, for it is not often that Maundy Thursday falls on a Good Friday. Saturday, then, April 14, would be Easter Eve, according to our new reckoning.

The fresh breeze from the south-east increased during the day to a strong wind, with dark thick atmosphere, anything but inspiring weather. We drove across the bay in the west on hard, even ice, but with heavy going, and after reaching land on the other side followed it northward. The whole coast-line, as far as we could discern, was almost straight, and all the way cliffs fell perpendicularly into the sea. Pressure had forced the ice a great number of feet up the steep sides of the mountains, and it looked almost as if a giant bricklayer had been there with his trowel, plastering the lower parts with a layer of ice. In some places, indeed, he must have stood on tiptoe, for the wall varied greatly in height.

At four in the afternoon we stopped at a point of land, where we encamped. Here we began again to imagine that the land would trend east; but in this, as it proved later on, we were once

* Maundy Thursday and Easter Monday (the latter known as 'Second Easter Day'), in Norway, are both Church festivals and holidays. They are almost equal in importance with Good Friday and Easter Day.

more to be disappointed. I do not know what was the matter with us, but we always wanted to be going east; I suppose we had Greely Fjord, and the fjords we had seen last year, on the brain.

So this was Easter Eve, then, though there were few enough signs up here that it was the eve of a great festival. There were no bells to ring Easter in, no busy folk running over one another to get home in time, no children's laughter, no holyday feeling in the air. Only wind and bad weather, day and night; and

HASSEL'S TEAM.

within doors the ceaseless beating of the storm on the tent-walls. But sometimes when a sunbeam came out for a minute even the bad weather kept Easter, and sprinkled drifting snow-curtains down the mountain-sides. At such times the fairy castles glistened and sparkled till one thought the Ice King himself must come out and take one by the hand and turn one into a block of ice for evermore. But this was only for a moment, and then again the storm swept everything before it in a grey medley of indistinct whirling snow which bit one's nose like a cat—but why, thought Nature, perhaps, should we be here at all? Why could we not let her even freeze in peace?

But it was Easter Eve. We made ourselves as comfortable as we could inside the tent; served up the best we had; and burned the 'Primus' an unduly long time, for even in Heiberg Land we had to keep the feast.

On Easter Day we drove across the next bay, and all the time followed land north-westward. Here, too, we saw little else but precipitous cliffs which fell abruptly into the sea; but our progress was fairly good, for, as a rule, we could drive on the young ice which followed the shore, in and out, in a strip fifty to a hundred yards wide. At last, by way of a change, had come quiet holyday weather. It was the best we had had since our departure from Hvalrosfjord, even though it was hardly what would be called fine down in the south. Nor was it clear that day either, and we were again sprinkled over by the same dust-like snow which was so common that spring. Still, we thought it worth while to try and get a few photographs of the landscape, and though they were not good, they were at any rate fit for use.

During the day we passed pressure-ridges, which for height surpassed anything we had yet seen. We thought of measuring them, but the wind was so strong and keen that we decided to leave it till we drove south again, hoping then to have a better opportunity: we had little time to spare now. However, to have some idea of their height I asked Isachsen what he would put it at, and to be sure of his not overstepping the mark I guessed first, saying:—

'That pressure-ridge is about eighty feet high, I suppose?'

'No,' answered Isachsen, 'it's a hundred and twenty if it's one.'

How high it may have been is difficult to say, since we did not measure it, but it was of great height. I had never thought that ice could pile itself up in such a manner, far up on land; and to this day I cannot understand how it came to pass.

After the great pressure had taken place the entire mass of the drift-ice had gradually receded from the land so that a belt of new ice had been able to form in here, and this remained lying unaffected. The period of this enormous pressure must have been some time during the previous autumn, or the first part

of the winter, for the blocks still retained their sharp edges and jagged surfaces where they had been broken off; whereas if they had been subjected to the heat of the summer sun, their outlines would have been more rounded.

Towards evening the weather grew rather dark and thick, and so we camped in good time on a point whence the land seemed again to trend in an easterly direction. Still it was our opinion that this was nothing but a bay, and that with a return of clear weather we should see it going in the same direction as before. We had a very pleasant evening in the tent, not the less so because the weather was still, and we could sit in peace without the ceaseless disquiet of the wind.

On Easter Monday, when I went up to the crack to fetch the dogs, I climbed a huge pressure-ridge to see if I could get a view over the ice, the weather being now sufficiently clear for this to be possible. It proved, as we had thought, that the land ran on in the same direction, and that our way led across a large bay, the breadth of which we subsequently put down at fifty to sixty miles. While I was standing up there scanning the country, I suddenly became aware of something greyish-blue far away in the west. What could it be? It must be new land. Yes, yes it was! But the looming was so great that it was impossible to gain any idea of what it was like, or of its distance away; this might be much greater than it appeared to be, for the looming is frequent even of land which is actually beyond one's range of vision.

When I came down to the loads again, I told the others of my great discovery. After a short council, we agreed—exactly reversing our original plan—that Isachsen and Hassel should go west, to pay the new land a visit; while Fosheim and I continued the chief route northward. On their return from the journey west they were to see whether any sound penetrated east into the land from the big bay we were now lying on, and, if they failed to find one, were to drive back southward along the land, going into the large fjords on the south coast, east of Cape South-West.

FRAM GLACIER.

CHAPTER XL.

THROUGH DRIFT AND SCUD.

ISACHSEN decided to leave behind some of his dog-food and a keg of petroleum, and start on the journey west as soon as possible. When he returned to pick up his provisions, he would leave a letter to say what way he had taken, and at what date he had left the place. We then said good-bye to one another, and drove off in our different directions.

The weather was fine, and we were in excellent spirits. We had all the time wanted to drive two alone—it had been decided on all the winter—and now, at last, the moment had come. It might be thought that the greater the number on such journeys, the pleasanter they would be; but this is far from being the case, and the more men there are together, the greater is the likelihood of confusion, and the less one's independence. There is always more or less disturbance among the many dogs, always a team that gnaw themselves loose, always something the matter; and it is not till one is alone with another man, that one is quite one's self. I am sure the west party thought as we did, and were glad to be independent and have their own separate task to perform, which is a very different thing from driving on the heels of another sledge, third or fourth in the train.

Fosheim and I did not long enjoy the good weather; the sky clouded over later in the afternoon, and before evening it was as rough as one could wish. This much we ascertained, however, that deep valleys between lofty mountains cut far into the land from the head of the deep bay. After a day's march of eighteen miles we camped, and spent our first evening in pleasant anticipation

of all the new and interesting things this main journey of ours had in store for us.

In the lighter and clearer air next morning we saw a little island a couple of miles distant. Our way took us to a belt of pressure-ice, and as it appeared that the ice east of the island was better, and that by going that way we should come close under the crack, we at once went ashore to take some bearings. But the compass went entirely wrong, and I might have spared myself the trouble; there were probably ferriferous stones on the island.

This was a very interesting little islet. It was quite small in size, not more than two to three hundred yards long, and a hundred yards in width. Along it ran a ridge fifty to a hundred feet high, which was as sharp as a scythe. The whole island looked like a moraine-ridge protruding from the sea, though it chiefly consisted of solid rock, strewn over with rounded stones. As far as we could make out the mainland stretched in a north-westerly direction, but outside the imposing Alpine landscape, with its fantastic bluish tops in the distance, lay mile upon mile of low snow-covered land as far as the eye could see.

After a short stay on the islet we continued driving, now with a course on a challenging little stretch of sand. The going became gradually heavier as we neared the sandbank, but, nevertheless, when we camped in the evening we had, I thought, almost reached the crack, though the weather had thickened so much that it was difficult to distinguish the difference between sea and land.

Among all the things about which we wondered, there was one in particular which seemed strange to us, and that was that for a long time we had not seen a single bear-track, and only the one fox-track which I have already mentioned. It would not be very amusing if we came to a sudden end of our dog-food.

On Wednesday, April 18, we had weather to which we were not wholly unused this spring, namely, strong wind and drift. As was our custom, we started at eight in the morning, but it was so thick we could see nothing of our surroundings, though on the whole our progress was not bad, for the wind, which was

from the south-east, was with us. But, suddenly, to our amazement, we found ourselves quite out of our course—far inland, in the midst of some sand-hills and mounds of grit, and all the time I had thought we were driving on the sea-ice!

There was only one course for us, which was to go down again; but this was easier said than done. Wherever we turned, we came on ridges of grit, across which our German-silver runners absolutely forbade our driving. We drove round and round in the sand in this way for several hours, and grew so disgusted at last, that we decided to camp. We had another good reason for doing this, as Fosheim was very nearly snow-blind, and had to retire into the bag as quickly as possible.

At about half-past four it cleared a little, and as I wanted to know something about these sand-hills, I announced my intention of going out to look round. Fosheim declared he was better and would come too; it was impossible to keep him in the bag. We managed to stamp our way to a sand-hill, whence we saw the sea-ice on the other side of the sands. The country was by no means so bad that we could not easily make our way down to the ice in the right direction, if only there were less drift and we could see our way a little better. It was so late in the day, however, that we thought it hardly worth while to break camp that night. We took such good note of our surroundings that we thought we could find our way among the hills even if bad weather should set in, and we then went back and crept into our bags for the night.

Thursday, April 19, dawned with a strong breeze from the south-east, and drift and fog so thick that we could hardly see our hands before us. In spite of this, we started at our usual hour, and, strange to say, found our way among the sand-hills so successfully that we reached the sea-ice; keeping, thenceforward, well away from land so as to be sure of not finding ourselves in a similar predicament, for it was not even a pleasant way of wasting time.

We drove the whole of that day without seeing land, and supposed we must be outside a fjord. At mid-day, when it cleared at the zenith and the sun came out, I tried to take a meridian altitude with the theodolite, and got one altitude, though it was not

worth very much. We camped in the evening somewhere out on the ice, but whether it was sea-ice or ice above sand we did not know; we knew only that we had driven nearly sixteen miles from our last camping-place.

We started next day in the same kind of weather, and without the slightest idea where our camping-ground had been. We kept the same course as the day before, but as we were pressing on as best we could—we had driven about four miles—I suddenly discovered that we were standing on the top of a sand-hill with a steep drop in front of us. How we had come there is impossible to say, for in our innocence we thought we were on level sea-ice! One must be born in Axel Heiberg Land if one is to find one's way in such weather as this.

We let the sledges go, and when we reached the bottom found ourselves, by a way of a change, on a river, on which the ice was as clear as crystal, and we could count the stones six or seven feet beneath us. It was of considerable size, too, being both deep and broad. I went up on to a crag of rock to try to get some idea of the lie of the land, but the drift was so dense that the only thing I could discover for certain was that the river ran in a north-easterly direction, through apparently extensive level country. I also thought I saw fjord-ice outside the mouth of the river.

On the big plains, of which I could just see a glimpse inland, there must be abundant vegetation; and far away as I was from them, I walked all the time on grass and moss in practically snow-bare country. The moss was so dry and thick that it was like walking on a soft carpet; but of animal life there was not a trace, though certainly I had not much opportunity of looking for anything of the kind.

We then drove down the river, soon reached the mouth, and went out on to the sea-ice. We were not long in deciding to keep a course so far to the west, that we should be in no danger of again mistaking land for sea, and drove hard ahead; but the very same thing happened again, and it was not long before we were once more close inshore. This time, happily, we drove under a steep sand-hill, and as we found out in time where we were, we were not put to any trouble.

Simmons.

THE MATE TRIES HIS NEW 'MUDD' AND PATENT NOSE-MASK.

Lindström.

Later in the afternoon the wind went down a little, and we then saw a number of projecting mounds and knolls. We thought at the time that they were low islets which were scattered about in the sea, but how far this was really the case I do not know. I think, however, I may say with certainty, that many of what we took to be islands were nothing but elevations on the extensive level country; though in this never-ending snowy weather it was quite impossible to come to any decided conclusion.

In the evening we camped on the lee side of what we took to be a little island. The bad weather continued, and it was not till the morning when we were setting off and we saw the crack round it, that we discovered for certain that it really was an island. The air being somewhat clearer, we also discovered in the direction in which we were going a rather larger islet—as we then thought it to be—and shaped our course a little west of it. The wind went on steadily increasing during the day, and when evening came, and we approached the land we had seen in the morning, a whole gale was blowing.

We drove close inshore, as we knew that the nearer we could pitch the tent to the high walls of rock, the more sheltered it would be, even if the wind blew straight on to the cliffs; provided, of course, that the direction of the wind and the cliffs were at right angles to each other; otherwise it would be hopeless to seek shelter there.

We tied up the dogs at a spot where they were safe not to be snowed down, and then turned in.

CHAPTER XLI.

BAD - WEATHER CAMP.

THE next day there was nothing for it but to remain where we were and wait quietly, for it was blowing so hard that there was no possibility of pushing on. The dogs were remarkably quiet that day; I did not hear a sound from them, and began to be anxious as I lay in the bag. I listened and listened, but heard nothing except the howling and whistling of the storm. This was really rather curious, and it was just possible they might be snowed down—a pretty state of affairs it would be if they were lying out there being suffocated—so I went out after them, though rather earlier than I had expected to do so. There they lay, safe and sound, though for this they had partly themselves to thank. These dogs have an instinct which prompts them to move their position according as the drifts grow higher, and they always try to keep on the top of the drift. When I went out to them they were perched so high up that their traces were stretched to the utmost. It was a long and cold job digging away the snow sufficiently to loosen the traces, but we managed it in the end, tied them up in another place, and turned in again.

It was anything but pleasant outside that day. The snow had drifted to such a height round the tent, that from a short distance we could see nothing of it but a glimpse of the top. With a wall of snow like this the tent was, of course, somewhat protected, but a storm has a most remarkable way of finding out weak spots, and several times it attacked us with such fury that we thought the tent was gone.

Here we lay for one day, and then another. Then another—and two more—five whole days! In such circumstances one has

time to fret one's self almost distraught ; this we did, and spent the rest of the time feeding the dogs, scraping the ice off them, and looking after them as best we could. We furthermore cooked and ate—what more can be asked of good folk living under the snow ?

As we had nothing better to do, we began to wonder if it would be possible to do without sleeping-bags later on in the spring. We were obliged to find something to experiment on, and so we tried lying back to back outside the bags. It was a most satisfactory arrangement as long as one did not turn round in one's sleep, and find one's self lying with one's back to the tent-floor, instead of against one's neighbour—it was anything but satisfactory then. Happily it was not difficult to move together again—the less so as the willingness was mutual—and cordial relations were soon re-established.

One day, when I was out to feed and look after the dogs, I went a few hundred yards inland, and saw what greatly aroused my interest, namely, the tracks of reindeer. This was truly as welcome a discovery as it was unexpected. I told Fosheim about it at once, and we made up our minds to sacrifice the first fine day to them. If we were lucky enough to shoot a few animals it would be of the greatest importance to us, for the dogs had had no extra food for a long time, despite all the hard work and bad weather they had undergone. But—there was a serious 'but' between us and the longed-for reindeer ! I still felt the effects of our reconnoitring trip in the month of March ; particularly so when we had been weather-bound for a time, and my legs had had time to grow stiff. They were so bad at times that often when I was going to feed the dogs I had to sit down two or three times before I could drag myself the short distance between them and the tent. Nor had Fosheim got off scot-free, but *he* was worse when he walked ; if he could stay quiet for a while he gradually grew better. However, towards the end of our stay at 'Bad-Weather Camp' ('Uveirsleiren') I felt a little less stiff, and with the prospect of the reindeer my hopes of complete recovery rose day by day.

After the discovery of the tracks we talked of almost nothing but reindeer and reindeer shooting. If only we could have a fine sunny day, after all this horrible driving snow, so that we could

climb to some point of vantage, and get a view over part of the island—as we still supposed it to be—we should, no doubt, with my good glasses, see herd upon herd grazing on the big plains. Of course, they always went in herds, these reindeer! There might be hundreds of them! In fact, we might almost expect to come across them a couple of hundred yards from the camp; it was not many days since they had been up on the slopes close by.

The wind blew itself out on the night of Wednesday, April 26, and when we peeped out about five in the morning a beautiful sight met us. It was the most splendid weather we could wish for; clear and still, with brilliant sunshine. We were not long in getting breakfast ready, for the lust of the chase was on us, and after the reindeer we meant to go, cost what it might. It would be a glorious day!

As soon as we had swallowed our food we set off up the island, and, as we had expected, it was not long before we fell on to fresh tracks. They were of only two animals; still it was a beginning, and, as they were perfectly fresh, we might expect to see the reindeer at any moment.

At this stage began our tribulations. We went up hill and down dale without seeing the trace of a reindeer. This in itself was nothing remarkable, for the wind had hardened the snow, and there was, moreover, little of it; a state of affairs which made it extremely difficult to pick up the tracks again when we lost them, and we went very slowly in consequence. I stole a look at Fosheim every now and then, and, if I am not mistaken, he sometimes glanced at me.

After a long time we came to the conclusion that the animals must have gone up to the highest part of the island. We went after them, and, when we reached the top, found, to our great astonishment, that we were not on an island at all, but on a point of land which jutted out from some low ground, and on which was a comparatively high mountain. It was this mountain which had led us into supposing we were on an island.

Then came the great moment when the glasses were produced, and all the reindeer were to appear in sight. Quite right; there, inwards, lay the large plains, partly snow-covered and partly bare,

STORDALEN.

and from them projected a point of land with a mountain on it, and on the mountain were we. West of us we saw two islands, neither of great extent; one of them was a fair distance away, while the other was about three miles off. But the reindeer? They were nowhere to be seen. I looked furtively at Fosheim. My legs were not right yet, and perhaps I had better not go any farther that day; to say nothing of some important observations I ought to take. It would perhaps be better if I went back to camp and left Fosheim to follow them up alone. It was only a matter of looking well for them, especially in all the gullies and depressions, and he must, sooner or later, find them, for it was down where the herbage was most vigorous that they sought their pasture.

At this juncture Fosheim showed himself to be truly great. He swallowed my elaborate explanations without blinking, and at once declared himself willing to go on; but his face plainly showed that he had seen through me. He then continued the chase alone; while I went down to camp and did anything that came to hand, such as mending the theodolite, which had had a new accident on the way, digging out the sledges, and seeing to the dogs. I took a meridian altitude, which showed a longitude of $79^{\circ} 50'$, cooked some dinner and had a pipe—in a word tried to kill time as best I could while I was waiting for Fosheim. But no Fosheim returned; he appeared to be doing the thing thoroughly. He never could have come across deer after all?

Then I began to scrape the dogs: they were so iced over, poor things, that they looked like lumps of ice, and as they lay there, freezing and crouching together, were having a very bad time. The scraping process was usually performed with a piece of wood shaped like a knife. It was an operation that, as a rule, they endured with much serenity, appearing to like it and to understand that it was for their good. But when the ice had so percolated into their coats that one could not help pulling their hair in the process of getting it out, they rather resented it.

The back is the part of their bodies which is most exposed; especially the part of it which immediately precedes the tail. As I have mentioned before, the dogs move farther and farther up the drifts, according as the snow is blown together, and then it is that

their backs, which protrude a little, become exposed. In strong wind they lie huddled together for mutual comfort and warmth, and even when they lie a few inches apart, which they often do when the snow is drifting to any extent, so much warmth is generated that the other parts of their bodies do not suffer.

This time two of the dogs, in particular, had suffered much from the cold; the chief of these being 'Nergaard,' who had large sores on his back from frost-bite. He was only a year and a

THE 'FRIENDLY ONE,' LEADER IN BAUMANN'S TEAM.

half old, was born on board, and was now on his first long journey. Meanwhile it was not only on account of the weather that the dogs suffered during these days, although prolonged snowy weather with wind is almost the worst thing that can happen to them. In weather of this kind a ration of one pound is too little for such big and strong animals, and no matter how sustaining the food may be in itself, the quantity is insufficient. We could see this by the dogs, which were beginning to grow rather thin, especially the bigger of them. 'Gammelgulen' had tried to rectify matters

by getting his muzzle off and eating it; he had then appropriated those of his companions, first gnawing them off and then consuming them. The traces had gone the same way, including the iron swivels, and only a little was left of the harness. 'Gammelgulen' had not all this on his conscience, it is true, but he had eaten by far the larger share, so it was not to be wondered at that he did not feel very well; in fact, it was astounding that he lived at all. He was ill for many days, and it was a long time before he was quite himself again; but he survived the diet, and added to the reputation of the Eskimo dog's stomach.

The dogs picked up very much during the course of the day, lying in the sun and enjoying its warmth; and when I gave them a last turn with the scraper in the evening their coats were in pretty good order again. It was not easy work patching together all the remains of the harness, but I had some reserve gear with me, and as Fosheim later on lent me a couple of lanyards, I, in a measure, put things right again.

So passed the day. In the evening I took an observation for longitude—but Fosheim? What in the world could he have done with himself? I had heard no shots, so that if he was shooting he must be far away.

While I was putting things to rights outside the tent I caught sight of a black speck which I did not remember to have seen before, out on the ice by the nearer of the two islands we had discovered. I did not take much notice of it, thinking it was probably the shadow of a hillock, or something of the kind. A little while later I happened to look in the same direction, and then saw that the speck had grown a good deal larger, and that it was moving. I could soon distinguish the outlines of a man walking in the direction of the camp. There were not many people to guess at, and as it was not I who was walking out there it was probably Fosheim. But how could this be? We had parted company in the east, and now he was far, far away in the west. Had he begun to circulate like a heavenly body?

When he arrived at the camp he had to give a detailed account of his excursion, the gist of which was that he had first followed the tracks some way to the south, across a bay, to a point on

the south side of it. There the animals had wandered about for a time, and had afterwards gone over to the nearest island, where Fosheim had followed them. They had then crossed the island and gone down on to the ice on the other side of it, Fosheim still stalking them. There they had taken a line for the north-westernmost of the islands; but by this time Fosheim thought he had had enough, gave up the pursuit, and turned homewards.

A NOONDAY HALT.

Before we turned in that evening we made ready to start the next day. We also cooked some food, for we were obliged to have something to eat even that evening, although we both agreed that we had done nothing to deserve it. Our spirits were not very much above freezing-point: we should have made better use of the day if we had driven northward instead of spending our time stalking two or three wretched reindeer in such country as this.

CHAPTER XLII.

TOWARDS THE NORTH!

EARLY the following morning, April 27, we turned out and got ready to drive on ; but, of course, by then the fine weather had come to an end, and the wind was again howling and whistling from the north, accompanied by fog and driving snow.

There was nothing for it but to grind on northward on snow that was the same slow going as before. When we had rounded the point near which we had lain, a large bay opened out before us, stretching inwards towards the plains, but bounded on the south by a precipitous cliff, which fell abruptly into the sea. Here, at first, we had to make our way across high, steep drifts ; between them, indeed, was shining ice, but the dogs were unable to get a purchase on it. Often the sledges stuck fast, and before they could be moved from the spot we had both of us to lend a hand and drag them until the dogs could get a foothold on the snow again. About the middle of the bay the polished ice came to an end, and we then made more even progress, though rather slowly.

Once we thought we really saw seals lying on the ice, and as we felt we must make sure of it, drove a little way up the bay, but at closer quarters the seals proved to be two big stones. We had no particular use for them, so we turned back without taking them with us.

We toiled across the bay during the course of that day, and camped in the evening a little way north of the next point. When the camp was ready we discovered, to our great annoyance, that one of our private bags was missing. These bags contained articles of far too much value for us to leave them behind if we could avoid it. They contained changes of clothing, sewing

requisites, ammunition, and reserve material for harness and traces. We could by no means afford to lose things of the kind, so, after supper, Fosheim took a team and drove back, returning about eleven with the bag, in good condition.

Next day the wind had veered round to the south, and we now had it from that quarter for a change, with a heavy fall of snow. Had the snow been loose before, it now reached the culminating point of looseness. As a rule, the dogs sank into it to their bellies, but also often halfway up their flanks. One cannot expect to get along very fast when half a hundred legs sink, at every step, into snow as loose as flour. The sledges, too, rode exceedingly heavily and sluggishly. They trembled in all their woodwork as we bumped along, and the very plates of aluminium under the cross-pieces creaked and wailed in distress. But the most remarkable thing of all was that even our 'ski' would not glide; the snow caked under them almost as it does in a thaw, and we could not use them in good Christian fashion, but had to stump along on them as one does on 'truger,' or Norwegian snow-shoes.

We decided to lighten the loads by leaving behind some of the dog-food, as we thought it was beginning to seem as if we might come back the same way. We had hoped all the time that we should reach the northern end of this land, which we took to be a large island, and that it would lead us eastward and then south along the east coast, finally bringing us down to some place on 'Norskebugten' (Norwegian Bay), but we now gradually began to give up this idea; it was not likely we should be able to hold out for so long.

We drove across a bay, which was probably some three miles broad, and which, towards the north, was closed in by a high, straight wall of rock falling sheer into the sea. Here we deposited two tins of dog-food of 108 rations each. We carried them a few hundred yards up from the sea-ice, placed them on the top of a stone, covered them with sand, and raised a pyramid of over-runners a little way above the crack. To prevent the pyramid from being blown down by storms, we carried some stones to it and piled them up round it.

This pyramid we made, of course, to enable us to find the place

again the more readily, which might otherwise have been difficult had we passed by here in thick weather; but if there had been bears about we should have been more careful how we put up such an erection, for there is nothing they are so fond of pulling down and destroying as a standing mark and things of the kind. Even if such a thing is ever so far out of his way, a bear cannot resist going to poke and sniff about it, and is quite sure to pull it down; he has a perfect mania for ravaging things of the kind. We put our backs into the work, and it was not many minutes before the pyramid was finished and we on our way northward again.

We drove past two largish hummocks, which I took to be of glacier ice, but could not be certain; they may have been fragments of some ancient pressure-ridge. I examined them as well as I could, without gaining any clear idea as to their origin. They were about two hundred to two hundred and fifty yards long, and twelve feet or so in height, and both were of about the same shape. The surface had melted, and so was rounded and smoothed off, and they looked very much like the backs of two whales sticking up above the surface of the sea. Of what kind of ice they were must for ever remain in oblivion; but for us they served as good landmarks, and marks one must have if one is to find anything again in these great plains. I have, myself, repeatedly experienced how difficult it is to find again even as large a thing as a tent on a stretch of sand, and yet it would be thought that it must be quite easy.

Such weather as we had had of late is very trying to the eyes; much worse, in fact, than the brightest sunshine. One's spectacles become clouded from the driving snow, and one has to be continually wiping them, which is not exactly what one wears them for. The result of this is that one omits to wear them, and the usual consequences are not slow to follow. Late in the afternoon my eyes began to pain me somewhat; but I was so taken up with keeping our course and urging on the dogs, that I had no time to think about it. In the evening, when we camped on the ice, I felt decided signs of snow-blindness. I lay the whole night with a bandage on my eyes; but as I was not much better in the

morning and the weather as bad as ever, we decided to remain quiet for a day.

We had not been able to drive more than eleven or twelve miles in the day the last few days, although we had kept hard at it, almost without a break, from a quarter to eight in the morning to about five in the afternoon.

On April 29 and Monday the 30th, we were weatherbound, and if it was absolutely necessary we should have a storm, it was just as well that it should occur at the same time as other hindrances. I think we had a right to grumble a little just now; we had bad weather and bad going without ceasing, and for this reason it seemed as if we were unlikely to reap any great reward from our exertions. We had expected quite other conditions of progress, and had reckoned on making our twenty to twenty-five miles a day, but what we were doing was something very different from this. One's calculations can be put out by a single wasted day; but when one has them wholesale, as we had, all one's plans and prospects are brought to naught.

Worst of all was it for the dogs; they fell off day by day, and it was doubtful how long they would be able to hold out. Nor was there any extra food to be had for them: there was no game either on sea or land; so it will be understood that they were not very lively days that we spent inside the tent at this time.

Late in the afternoon of April 30, the wind began to go down, and our hopes speedily rose—perhaps we could begin to drive again the next day—and on May 1 we really did continue our journey. The weather at first was calm and misty; later in the forenoon it improved and became fairly clear.

Before us lay a large bay, on the other side of which the land was lower than we had seen it for some time; the highest parts of it consisting of rounded hills. The outermost land which we could see looked like a largish island, but we dared not say anything for certain; we had been mistaken too many times here on the west coast.

We set the course for the westernmost point in sight, and drove off, very curious to know what things would look like when we should have passed it. What should we see? Would it be

another point, such as had been the case every time here west? The excitement of driving in a strange country when the weather is fine, and one can see far and wide around one, is very different from our sensations on the present occasion. One's fancy then has wings, and creates new goals according as the nearer ones are reached. Behind each bit of blue distance rises another, luring one on to exert one's every faculty; it is the princess behind the seven blue mountain ranges far away in fairyland over again. But with bad weather one loses courage and vigour, and it requires all the iron will of a man to prevent one from throwing up the game.

On the dogs the weather has the same effect: it is like the difference between night and day. If the team have not a particular point to make for, but must drag the sledges at haphazard through fog and thick weather, the pace is quite certain to suffer. If, for instance, one is driving across a large bay where there is hardly anything to be seen but sky and frozen sea, the teams at once lose energy in a quite remarkable manner; but no sooner does a pressure-ridge come into view in the distance than they set off as hard as they can go. If, furthermore, they know that there will be a short halt each time such a goal is reached, their energy can be considerably increased. In the same way if one is following the line of a coast, a stop at each point will put new life into the team, and one will not have any difficulty in keeping the course, for, as a rule, a good team will always go in a straight line, mile after mile. In thick weather, on the other hand, they do nothing but swerve, first in one direction and then in another; while the same is the case in loose drifted snow, as they always try to find the hardest places.

The snow was very loose that day, and the dogs sank into it; but all the same, we made better progress than hitherto, as the sledges rode better. The weather, too, was fairly clear, and we were able to see several fjords at the end of the bay, extending into the land in different directions.

Late in the day we saw a beautiful sight in the shape of several mock-suns. A mock-sun in itself is not, of course, a very rare phenomenon; but it is not often that are seen, as on that day, besides the sun itself, seven suns at once, in two rings, one outside

the other. The lowest one in the ring was missing, as the sun was very low; had it been high enough we should doubtless have seen eight mock-suns in all. Several times before I had seen the same phenomenon, but it is of rare occurrence. When we camped that day we had driven nearly fourteen miles.

Wednesday, May 2, began with calm foggy weather, but in the afternoon it cleared a little, and on the whole was the best day we had had for a long time. Advance was comparatively easy, and this put new life and courage into the dogs.

Before we began to drive in the morning we split my bag up the middle, so that each had a half to lie on, and Fosheim's was left behind. For several days we had been lying outside the bags in only our wolf-skin clothing, and it answered so well that we thought it unnecessary to drag the second bag with us and that a single thickness of reindeer-skin would be quite enough for us to sleep on until our return. The temperature had been fairly equal of late, keeping at about -15° to -18° Fahr. (-26° to -28° Cent.), and although to-day the air was still, the temperature had not sunk as it usually did when the wind went down. If only we had not had all this dreadful loose snow we should have got on well enough.

The coast now appeared to trend due north. The meridian altitude that day gave us a latitude of $80^{\circ} 31\frac{1}{2}'$.

May 3 on the whole was calm, with now and then a slight breeze from the north. We drove across the bay on snow which was in the same bad condition as before, and followed for several hours a terrible way alongside the point; it seemed as if it would never end, and it was as much as we could do to get along at all. When, after incredible toil, we had managed to round the point we made the great discovery that the land continued in the same direction as before, though perhaps a little more to the east—about north by east.

Another very large bay now lay in front of us, and again we started to toil through loose snow, camping in the evening out on the bay. The hopes we had cherished of improvement when we had passed the point were as thoroughly crushed as they well could be. Certainly this was growing monotonous.

SOUTH CAPE.

The next morning we resolved to keep on driving till late, in order to reach the other side of the bay by evening. A thick layer of loose snow on the top of old drifted snow, which also at places was so loose that it would not bear the dogs, in addition to old ice the whole of the way, grooved and rugged as it almost always is, up hill and down hill the entire distance across the bay—these were the pleasing prospects of the day.

About noon, however, a fresh breeze from the north swept away all the loose snow from the ice-hills, though this only made the cracks and fissures the worse. On the whole, however, we went more quickly now than we had done for some time, for the dogs were able to rest on the tops of the hills where the loose snow had been blown away.

The wind had somewhat cleared the atmosphere, so that now we could again see a glimpse of the country and form some idea of what it looked like. From the inner part of the wide bay three fjord-arms extended inland. This latter was for the most part rather high; but between the depressions were pretty sheltered valleys, which seemed as if they might be the abode of a great deal of game. A couple of days previously we had seen the tracks of two reindeer, which had crossed the ice from the west, and had gone up on land. The animals themselves we saw nothing of, and the tracks were not so very fresh; they were possibly of animals which were on their way from the islands in the west to their summer pasturage, and would probably return in the autumn.

It was late in the evening before we had got so far that we could pitch our tent on the north side of the bay, close under the ice-foot, at a place which provided a little shelter from the wind. We drove that day nearly fourteen miles.

Here we came to a conclusion which had long lain dormant; which was to give up all further attempt to penetrate northward, and to turn back. An important reason for returning was the condition of the dogs, which now began to be serious; they became thinner day by day, and their strength failed noticeably. There was no extra food to be had, and in the state the weather and going now were, it was impossible to tell how long they might be able to endure these hardships.

It was a terrible disappointment to us, this being unable to proceed farther; but there was nothing else for it. I think we had done all that we and the dogs could do, and that being the case, one's self-respect is not shipwrecked, even if the result of the work is not so great as one had expected.

Early in the morning of May 5, we began to look about for a suitable spot for a cairn, and up on a little knoll, some few hundred yards from the tent, we found a place where there were the necessary materials. We began at once on the erection. At first it was rather comfortless work in the cold north wind; but in the afternoon the wind went down, and the mist gave place to brighter weather. By mid-day the sun was so warm, on the dark snow-bare mounds of grit around us, that we could see the flakes of snow melting between the stones. On the top of the cairn we placed a tall stone, in which Fosheim made a hole with a chisel for a flagstaff, which bore the Norwegian flag. We then took a meridian altitude, which, when worked out on the spot, gave a latitude of $80^{\circ} 55' N.$, and placed under the cairn a record of our journey on the west coast, to which we added the latitude we had observed; finally we took some photographs of the cairn with its surroundings.

When the cairn was finished, we went a walk northward, along the shore, to get a view of the place on which we were about to turn our backs, and to try to reach $81^{\circ} N.$

A little way to the north we came across tracks of hares, and as they led up towards a large expanse of stony ground, Fosheim followed them, to try and get a hare or two for supper. I continued northward along the shore, and came to a sheltered little creek, where I discovered the tracks of seven or eight reindeer, leading towards the northernmost fjord, which penetrated the land from the head of the big bay. I trudged on northward, however, and after a while came across Fosheim, who had shot a hare—the only game we had seen since we left 'Bjorneleiren' (Bear Camp).

Some miles from the cairn, we went out on to a rather long spit of land, and saw thence that the land continued in almost the same direction as before—that is to say, about north by east;

but it seemed to be considerably lower than where we now stood. The northernmost point we saw, and which appeared to be about fifteen miles off, looked like an island, but that it really was one I am not prepared to say; it may well have been connected with the low-lying mainland.

In other respects, also, the land northward seemed to change its character. Apparently it was not so cut up by fjords, valleys, and clefts as the country south of it; and the mountains appeared to be of a different shape, with flatter tops and of altogether different formation, reminding me very much of basalt mountain.

About a mile from land a large pressure-ridge stretched northward as far as we could see, parallel with the land. The ice inside this ridge seemed to be broken up, and partially to have young flat ice between the fragments, but, outside the ridge, the ice was apparently oldish coarse ice, with old rounded-off pressure-ridges. We received the impression that the whole mass of the ice had receded from land, and that the channel thus made had been frozen over; that, later on, pressure had taken place, and that, while this was going on, a large ridge had been forced up of young and old ice alternately.

We saw nothing approaching to palæocrystic ice the whole of our journey.

We then took some bearings, and turned our faces southwards.

We had now attained our northernmost point on this sledge-journey, and felt we must have a feast to commemorate it. We skinned the hare; kept a leg for each of us; and divided the rest between the twelve dogs; there were not many ounces for each! We were sorry that we had nothing more with which to treat our enduring faithful companions; they had worked so hard on the journey that they had a right to a veritable feast, and we felt almost ashamed of ourselves for keeping the two legs for our own delectation. We did keep them, however, fried them, and concocted some 'buttered eggs' to eat with them.

It was very pleasant inside the tent that evening, considering all things, but our spirits were not first rate; we thought we had not reached quite as far as we might have expected. But when we took into consideration the very unfavourable circumstances

we had had to contend against, both as regards weather and the condition of the snow, we came to the conclusion that we might congratulate each other on the results we had obtained. We thought we had done well to get as far as we had, and that there were others, perhaps, who would have turned back earlier.

It was impossible to get any observation for longitude, for, later in the afternoon, a southerly breeze sprang up, the sky became overcast, and the same weather continued until morning.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE RETURN JOURNEY.

NEXT day we prepared to return. A return journey has always less of interest about it, for the element of excitement is wanting; one knows somewhat the appearance of the land, and it no longer offers surprises. On the other hand, progress is quicker, as one has a certain knowledge of the lie of the land, which enables one to drive, no matter in what mood the weather may be.

Meanwhile we permitted ourselves to hope for an improvement in this respect—it must sometimes be fine, even up here. It was so late in the season, and we had had so much bad weather that we thought we might fairly expect some fine weather to be not far off. Again the wind went round, and blew hard from the north; but this was all the better for us, now that we had turned our backs on that direction. I think the dogs knew we were on our way home; they were more willing to haul than they had been for a long time, poor animals. In addition to this we were fortunate in our course southward, inasmuch as we did not find ourselves in so much old ice as on the way north, and so were able to camp in the evening at the cape on the other side of the bay.

Next morning a whole gale was blowing, and the drift was so thick that we could hardly see our hands before us; but we knew that we had to cross a big bay to reach 'Cape Nordvest' (Cape North-West), which ought then to be in about the true south, or a little west of it. We set our course for the cape, and with the wind behind us, drove quickly the whole day, and in the evening came in sight of the majestic mountain wall which falls abrupt and wild into the sea on the north side of Cape North-West.

Out on the ice, about a mile from land, was a collection of large stones, and for a long distance the ice was also covered with grit. At one time, probably, all this had lain close under the cliffs, before the receding of the ice from land. In any case, it made a curious impression to see these big collections of grit and stones spread over such a comparatively large space.

It was blowing so hard that we were afraid to pitch the tent out at the extremity of Cape North-West, and consequently we spent a long time searching for a spot where there was some shelter before we eventually found one up under the crack.

The next morning the same gale was blowing from the north, but happily there was not quite so much drift, as the snow had packed somewhat. The weather too was on the whole considerably clearer; we even saw the sun, and I made an attempt to take an observation for longitude and an azimuth to the cape north of us, which we had left the previous day. But it is not easy to take observations when the weather is as rough as it was then, and almost all my fingers were frost-bitten before I had finished my operations.

We started at our usual hour, but the ice went up and down like waves; in the depressions especially the going was dreadful, and our progress much less satisfactory than on the previous day.

Of this first part of the return journey there is little to relate. The weather was in the same key the whole time, and we did not escape a couple of days' halt from stress of weather; but we soon saw that if we were to reach Björneborg with all the dogs alive we must make haste and drive every day, no matter what the weather might be. Our knowledge of the country, such as it was, now stood us in good stead.

So now, when morning came, we no longer asked each other what the weather was like, but went solely by the clock; starting every morning at a quarter to eight, and driving without a break till five in the afternoon. Our baggage was now quite light; even when we had picked up the dog-food and over-runners, which we had left behind, we had no loads to speak of, so that, in the worst weather and going, we now managed to drive over eleven miles a day.

On our southward journey too we came across the tracks of reindeer; they came from the west and went inland, and were so fresh that I did not think more than a couple of hours had elapsed since the animals had passed by.

We had several times thought of making a digression up one of the large fjords, as the country looked as if there might be game about; but with such bad going as we now had an excursion of the kind would cost us several days, and if we were unlucky enough not to shoot any game, things would look serious

‘MOSES.’

indeed. We came to the conclusion, therefore, that we ought not to set off on what might be a fruitless expedition, and only make a digression of the kind should it prove an absolute necessity later on.

We had set ourselves to reach ‘Cape Levvel’ (Cape Live-Well) before May 17, and our calculations proved to be correct; on the evening of May 16 we pitched our tent at the aforesaid cape. We found there a short record of Isachsen and Hassel’s expedition westward, of which a more detailed account will be given later on. They had reached Cape Levvel on April 28, and had started south

again on the 29th, as they had ascertained that there was no sound through the land from any of the bays to the immediate north.

Our 'Seventeenth of May' programme had long occupied us in the evenings inside the tent, for, notwithstanding that we were on a sledge-journey, we meant to celebrate it as well as our circumstances would allow. I confess that our discussions were chiefly on the subject of food, and at times we racked our brains over it till our heads quite ached; but all our efforts led to no satisfactory conclusion. We had brought with us many delicacies, and had purposely saved the best of them, especially the butter, so as to be able to be really extravagant on May 17. What harassed us so much, therefore, was not want of delicacies, but the way to cook them in the most appetizing manner. It was not till late in the evening of the 16th that we were able to come to any decided conclusion. Our programme also comprised the decking of our sledges with flags; as well as our next camp, wind and weather permitting.

But unfortunately the weather made no difference between May 17 and any other day. Wind and drift had Independence Days all the year round, it seemed; but in our patriotic zeal we braved the elements to the best of our ability, and kept our flags to decorate the tent with in the evening. It was there that the festal meal was to take place, although our breakfast at Cape Levvel was by no means to be despised. It consisted of biscuit fried in butter and fat, to which we added 'buttered eggs.'

The festal dinner, on the other hand, consisted of a kind of 'dænge,' specially composed in honour of the day, and which, in addition to the invariable percentage of water, contained the following delicacies: pounded buns with sultanas, figs, nectarines, chocolate, egg-powder, and butter. The compound tasted almost divine, and no housewife will regret including it as a sweet in the most *recherché* menu.

When we had eaten 'dænge' till we could eat no more, we had coffee and the last remains of our brandy. Fosheim contributed two cigars as a surprise, having brought them with him for this express purpose; finally came the great commemorative event of

‘TO SHOOT HERE WAS NO EASY MATTER; THE DOGS WERE CLINGING ON TO THE BEAR LIKE FLIES.’ (See page 417.)
[From a drawing by Otto Sindig.]

the day, in the shape of a song, composed in honour of the Seventeenth of May in latitude 79° N., at Cape Levvel.

The song was sung by Fosheim solo, with the howling of the dogs by way of chorus, for no sooner had he reached the third verse, where 'Gulen' and his brave choir are called upon as auxiliaries, before the dogs, who probably thought it a curious proceeding, began to howl and whine in the most doleful manner. Or was it that, being for the most part born and bred on Danish soil, they wished to show their sympathy with the sentiments which obtain on this anniversary among the people north of the Skager-rack? It is not easy to explain the reason, but the fact remains that they went on howling to the bitter end.

It was so cosy in the tent that evening that it was a real pleasure to be there. Our thoughts naturally travelled many times across the sea, to all the festivities going on at home; but we consoled ourselves by thinking that in due time we too should keep the day at home, and so talked and chatted in good spirits—there were many perhaps who, after all, were not as comfortable as we were.

Then we went to rest on our half sleeping-bags, back to back, as we had been doing lately, and slept the sleep of the just until next morning.

On May 18, we drove on in the same hopelessly bad weather as before; but, nevertheless, found ourselves very fit, and more inclined for work, perhaps, than many at home in Norway on the day after the Seventeenth of May. There is not much opportunity for revelling on 'Axel Heiberg Land,' and inasmuch as this is the case it is a good enough country.

The weather continued the same until we had passed Cape South-West; that is to say, violently bad every day, while the ice was not far behind the weather in unfavourableness. It often happened that the more violent squalls from the mountains all but overturned the sledges, and the air was frequently so thick that I could hardly see the dogs before my own sledge; but on we drove, in spite of all—we were obliged to do so.

It had been our intention to measure, on the way back, the high pressure-ridges we had been so struck with on our journey

north, but we had to leave it, for simply we did not see them!

After we had passed Cape South-West, and were steering down on Norskebugten, the wind fell, and the fog became so thick that we could hardly see our hands before us; but, being familiar with the course, we were able to make comparatively good way. It

VIEW OF BEITSTADSFJORD GLACIER.

was only when we came further south that the weather became clearer, and progress easier; the last few days we made very creditable daily marches, on good flat ice.

It was a great pleasure to us to see how the dogs picked up as soon as the weather improved. They had been so encased in ice that we had been obliged to scrape it off them, not only in the morning before starting, but over and over again during the day.

We had to be especially careful to remove the snow and ice from their eyes, as sometimes they were quite blinded by it. The last few days of the journey I went in front of the sledges on 'ski' to encourage the dogs, for they were very much exhausted, and seeing me in front really did seem to give them new energy. Fosheim, who then had to manage both the sledges and teams, devised the plan of driving so close to my sledge that he had three of his dogs on each side of it. By this means, when he kept close behind his own team, he could also reach mine with the whip

'OH DEAR, HOW COLD IT IS!'

and touch them up, if they showed signs of leaving the course. In this manner we made quicker progress.

We had as yet seen nothing of all the bears we hoped to come across as soon as we were south of Cape South-West. On our last day on the bay, however, as I was leading the convoy on 'ski,' and was a couple of hundred yards in front of the dogs, I passed a quite new bear-track. The instant the dogs scented the fresh trail, which, unfortunately, led westward, they started off as hard as they could go.

Fosheim was quick to overturn my load ; he seized hold of one

of the ropes with which it was lashed, and was able to give this a couple of turns round his wrist, so that he had a hold on the sledge, but in overturning it his 'ski' had become crossed under one of the sledges, and away went man, sledges, and loads, with the snow flying high in the air around them.

I set off after them as fast as I could lay legs to the ice—I seemed to be flat on it, and wished my legs were twice as long. My idea was to get in front of the dogs and stop them, but they were going at such frantic speed that there was no heading them off. I was afraid every minute that Fosheim would let go the lanyard and the dogs run away. Once loose, it would be difficult to say when we might see them again.

Suddenly they came to a standstill without any apparent reason, but this was not at all to the liking of 'Gammelgulen,' who was always a self-willed dog, and before I came up he had begun to howl and pull so at the traces that they all started off again, with Fosheim in tow. It was worse than the Asgaardsrei itself! I did not bless them as they tore on ahead of me, but blessings or the reverse were equally ineffectual, and on they went at the same unholy pace. At last I managed to overtake them, but by that time they were so mad that they were almost unmanageable. We then took off our 'ski,' threw ourselves on the sledges, and set the course for Fourth Camp. We were now going in the right direction, and at great speed, for the going was good, and improved as we came nearer under land.

After a short time we came across a seal; but it was lying in a hollow in the ice, and we did not see it before we were close up to it. It wisely took to the water at once, but the sight of it was enough to excite the dogs, and off they started again at the wildest pace towards land.

Two or three miles north of Fourth Camp was a largish iceberg, and on this we set the course, for I thought there must certainly be a lane near by, and that there might be a seal to be seen this fine weather. We greatly required an addition to our store of dog-food, for we had now only a ration and a half left for each dog. Certainly not a bright look-out.

A little way from the berg we made a halt, and overturned the

sledges. I then told Fosheim to take his gun, and go off to the lane; but he returned almost directly, saying he had seen nothing.

But what was that? The black patch on the ice a few hundred yards away from us? It was indeed a seal, and had to be captured at once.

Happily we were provided with a 'stalking-sail,' of the kind used by the Eskimo. This simple appliance consists merely of a white sail fixed to a kind of sledge, and is of sufficient size to hide the man who is standing behind it; under cover of this the shooter stalks the seal.

Fosheim hastened to rig up our stalking-sail, but while he was occupied with it, I suddenly caught sight of a bear stealing up to the seal. Poor animal! There it lay, enjoying life, little knowing the double peril it was in. I at once told Fosheim that he must look out, for he had a rival. He looked up quickly, saw the bear, and exclaimed in amazement, 'Why, if there isn't a bear stalking my seal!'

Of course we at once agreed to give up the seal; a bear had many times its value for us. At the same moment the ever-vigilant dogs got wind of the bear; I made haste to loosen the traces, and away they went like rockets across the ice.

I told Fosheim to throw himself on to his sledge and drive after them, which he accordingly did, first dragging out his rifle from the sledge, and off they went as fast as the dogs could go. The distance was not very great, and Fosheim had hardly got the cover off his gun before he was close on the bear, and all the dogs hanging to it. There was short shrift for 'Bamsen;' the whole pack was on his back.

But to shoot here was no easy matter, the dogs were clinging on to the bear like flies; the chief thing, however, was to give it a bullet, no great matter where. Fosheim fired while he was still on the sledge, but did not do much damage, and the bear began to move off. The dogs were so hungry and so pressing that I am very certain the two teams unaided would not have been long in tearing it to pieces. Fosheim had to shift his gun-barrel backwards and forwards, up and down, many times before he dared fire, on account of the dogs; but in the end he got a chance of giving the bear

another bullet, which finished it off. He then drove off the dogs, let loose his team, and came back to meet me as I was dragging along my sledge.

When we returned to the dogs, a team was lying on each side of the bear keeping watch; but not one of them was absent or had touched or bitten it. In spite of being so ravenous, they waited patiently till it was skinned—they knew it was not their turn till then—but I never saw anything like the way they ate when the time came for them, and I have been witness to a good many scenes of the kind. However, even on this occasion they eventually ate their fill; but when we had spread the skin on the ice and pitched the tent on it, we cut some meat in thick slices, and fed them as long as they were able to swallow. We fried some delicious steaks for ourselves, and enjoyed existence during the evening.

It was one of the most beautiful evenings we had on the whole journey. The temperature had risen to an astonishing extent since we had come down here. Up in the bay the thermometer had varied from zero to -4° Fahr. (-18° to -20° Cent.), but now we had 28° Fahr. The evening was so calm and peaceful, and the sun so warm, that there was water on the ice under land.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A JOURNEY OF PERIL.

NEXT day we continued our journey, provided with a bag of bear's meat. At Land's End we found the cairn which Baumann and the mate had put up earlier in the month; and in addition to a keg of petroleum which they had left behind, found Baumann's record, with a description and sketch-map of a passage across the land to 'Gaasefjord,' or 'Goose Fjord,' as we afterwards called the nearest fjord east of Hvalrosfjord.

We continued driving southwards down the sound, keeping this time in the middle of it to avoid the pressure-ice, which we knew lay along the east shore. We saw the tracks of sledges going south, and supposed them to be those of Isachsen and Hassel; we thought the tracks were probably two or three days old. We also saw the trail of numerous bears, track upon track, almost all the way, but of the bears themselves not a glimpse.

The weather was beautiful, and the going very good; we sat on the sledges the whole way, and drove at a slow trot through the northern part of Hell Gate. I noticed several times that there were open holes round the small hummocks we passed on the way, but did not pay much attention to them; the sun, too, was shining straight in my face, so that it was not easy to keep a look-out on the country in front of one. It never occurred to me but the ice must be strong enough to bear, and I drove confidently on, without suspecting any danger. But all at once I noticed that the ice was a curious colour; it suddenly became quite a dark blue, and the thin layer of snow on the top of it was wet through—we were driving on quite a thin crust of snow, and might go through at any moment!

This was a cheerful prospect. If we were to fall through here, we should do the thing thoroughly, for it was idle to suppose that we should come up alive from this tearing current—the current which had eaten up the ice.

I turned the dogs instantly towards land, and tried to keep them to the places where the ice was whitest—we knew it was thicker there—but all the same it was so weak in many places that it bulged in under the runners, and sometimes the dogs trod through it. They, too, quite understood the danger, and I can never remember them obeying the whip as they did that day. In towards land they went as fast as they could go, and Fosheim followed at our heels. I do not think that any of us, at any time, was ever so near losing his life as we were then, and I need not say we were glad when, near the crack, we again felt firm ice under us.

We were now careful to follow the crack until we reached a little spit of land a short distance to the south; there we made a halt, walked a little way up from it, and sat down in the sun to eat some biscuits and pemmican. We could see from here that there was open water the whole way south through this terrible sound, and that we had turned off only the shortest possible distance from the edge of it. Out on the large polynia were numbers of sea-birds splashing and screaming, and filling the air with their clamour.

Towards the west the sound is bounded by the island of North Kent; the coast of which, facing the sound, is as steep and inaccessible as the south side of the island; while the side towards Norskebugten is low and flat. In one respect, however, both parts of the island are alike: more barren country I have seldom seen. It looked as if even snow would not thrive there; for, with the exception of the tops of the hills, which were covered with snow-fields, and the valleys, which were filled with snow and ice, the land was absolutely bare.

While we were sitting there munching our biscuits and surveying the scene, we suddenly caught sight of two animals on the ice, coming from the south. As the wind was from that quarter, we were afraid the dogs would get scent of them, so, without more ado,

THREE FRIENDS FROM INGLED GULF, 1899. (See p. 96.)

we both ran down to the ice and overturned the sledges. We then turned our attention to the animals themselves; they were very curious in shape. We looked and looked; no, we had never seen game of the kind before. They were so suspiciously like our own—no, impossible! We looked again, and guessed again, and at last came to the conclusion that they really were dogs! When they

AN ESKIMO VISIT, 1899.

came nearer we tried to catch them, but they were so wary that it was impossible.

I must confess that I grew hot and cold by turns at this discovery, and thought at once of the party whose tracks we had seen in the snow. I began to be afraid that they had driven into the water and might be drowned, and that perhaps a couple of the dogs had somehow gnawed through their traces and come ashore. Both Fosheim and I were very much concerned, and we did not feel easy until when in perigee we succeeded in identifying the two circulating dogs as 'Fischer' and 'Turisten' from the mate's team.

How could they have come here? For the present we must be content to let this remain in darkness, but as we went further south we saw by the tracks that the runaways had been bear-hunting on their own account. They were as fat as they could be, and their coats were positively shining.

We camped in the evening in 'Renbugten' (Reindeer Bay), whence we meant to go overland to Gaasefjord. The tent we pitched on a strip of fine shingle, seemingly a high-water mark which ran along the shore; it was not very high, only a foot above the ice-foot.

The sudden transition from full winter in the north to a temperature which to us seemed quite summer-like; from the congealed dead scenery we had left to the life and movement down here, made a great impression on us. It was pure joy, while we were pitching the tent, to hear the ceaseless mewing of the sea-birds, and even the uncanny bellowing and grunting of the walruses. And then to have our tent on bare land! It was so long since this had been the case. It was a pleasure simply to be able to leave our things outside without having to think about sweeping them; to feel the fine shingle under our feet instead of snow day after day. We pulled off our boots and amused ourselves by walking about in our socks, like children when they are allowed to go barefoot in summer.

Next morning, when we opened the tent door, we were met by a cold rush of raw foggy air. Another change of weather, then! And before we were ready to start it had begun to snow; but the birds and the walruses went on just the same as the previous evening. What life there was!

We then began to make our way up the steep slopes to the watershed. It was soon so thick that we could hardly see more than a hundred yards in front of us, and we therefore came to take a rather different way from the one Baumann had indicated. After passing the watershed we came down into a pretty valley, and this we followed, well pleased with ourselves; but by degrees, as we descended, the valley became narrower and narrower, and we began to wonder whether, after all, it was going to end in a cañon. Without any warning, we were suddenly stopped

by a high wall of ice, which entirely cut off the valley. We made a halt to see if we could find any means of advance, in order to avoid driving the long distance back again; but the ice was absolutely perpendicular and inaccessible to any being without wings.

Suddenly it occurred to me that somewhere or other the river must have an outlet; there might perhaps be a tunnel through which we could pass, and on looking behind a massive snow-drift I really saw a big hole, which, on investigation, proved to be the beginning of a very large tunnel which pierced the glacier. A journey through it, however, did not seem very alluring: from the roof were suspended big blocks of ice which might fall at any moment; and indeed a good many had already done so during the course of the winter, for on the polished river-ice lay masses of blocks, large and small, which pointed an unequivocal warning to the danger of passing that way.

I confess I did not feel very much tempted by the idea of the journey. I went back to Fosheim and told him what I had seen, adding that we need not decide before we had had something to eat. So we set to work to make some extra good soup, and while it was boiling Fosheim got out the camera and took some photographs of the ice-wall and the tunnel.* When he came back the soup was ready, and we sat down to eat it, one at each end of the sledge, with the cooking-pot between us.

Not a word was exchanged while we were at work—but for that matter we did not usually talk much at meals; we had enough to do without it. When we had finished, and had lighted our pipes, I concluded we were capable of making a decision, and so asked Fosheim what he thought we ought to do.

Fosheim waited a little while before he answered; then he took his pipe from the corner of his mouth and said: 'We must try; it would be the very deuce if we had to drive all that way back!' 'Very well,' I answered; 'then it must be each for himself. It would be curious if a block of ice fell on the heads of both of us; in any case *one* must get through.' So off we started.

* Unfortunately they were all spoiled.

I shall not forget the moment when we entered the tunnel. Brave I did not feel—I openly confess it; in fact, I was afraid, rather than otherwise. And yet it was not fear that had most hold on me, but rather an uneasy feeling of awe.

Here were lofty vaults and spaciousness between the walls. From the roof hung threateningly above our heads gigantic blocks of ice, seamed and cleft and glittering sinisterly; and all around were icicles like steel-bright spears, and lances piercing downwards on us. Along the walls were grotto after grotto, vault after vault, with pillars and capitals in rows like giants in rank; and over the whole shone a ghost-like bluish-white light which became deeper and gloomier as we went on. It was like fairyland, beautiful and fear-inspiring at the same time; it was like driving straight into Soria Moria Castle, the castle 'east of the sun, and west of the moon,' the most glorious of them all.

I dared not speak. It seemed to me that in doing so I should be committing a deed of desecration; I felt like one who has impiously broken into something sacred which Nature had wished to keep closed to every mortal eye. I felt mean and contemptible as I drove through all this purity. The sledges jolted from block to block, awakening thundering echoes in their passage; it seemed as if all the spirits of the ice had been aroused and called to arms against the intruders on their church-like peace.

I breathed more freely when I saw a glimpse of daylight in the distance, and so probably did Fosheim. We looked at one another. It is very wonderful, now and again, to come right under the mighty hand of Nature.

CHAPTER XLV.

BACK TO BJÖRNEBORG.

FROM the tunnel down the remaining part of the valley we drove without stopping, or hindrance of any kind. We went slowly, but surely, through the loose snow, which increased in depth the farther we went. The valley widened out at its lower extremity, and together with a similar valley from the north, formed a sort of frame round a large plain which extended right down to the fjord. We saw numbers of tarns, and discovered later that this place in summer is a regular goose district.

We then drove on and down to Hvalrosfjord, where we discovered that we had inadvertently laid our course a good way south of the isthmus between this fjord and Gaasefjord; we therefore took a line towards the south-east, to the outer isthmus between the two fjords. The entrance to the cove on the west side of the isthmus was free of ice, and was swarming with sea-birds, which were diving and plunging in the water, drifting backwards and forwards with the current along the side of the crack. Later on we drove down to the ice on the cove itself, and camped in the evening on the low isthmus at Gaasefjord.

Again that evening our tent stood on bare land; it had not snowed so heavily here as higher up in the tracts whence we came, and the flat stretches of sandy soil round about were quite bare. For the first time that year we saw the thermometer above freezing-point; it read as much that evening as 33° Fahr. (0·3° Cent.), but there was mist, and we could see nothing of the land on the other side.

We turned out very early next day, hoping to catch the Commandant of Björneborg in bed. It had snowed a good deal

during the night and was heavy going; on the whole it was the most remarkable kind of snow I had ever come across, and that is saying not a little. It balled under German silver; and if we stopped for even a moment, we found on starting again that it had caked to such an extent under the runners, that we had to haul the sledges for a long distance with the snow still sticking to the plates. Even when it fell away, the sledges travelled so heavily that I was hardly able to move mine from the spot, although the baggage on it was of no weight.

When we had crossed Gaasefjord and reached the eastern cape, we saw that the whole mass of the ice outside the crack was in drift. There were large lanes between the floes, and in them were such myriads of birds, particularly black guillemots and little auks, that the sea was quite black. Almost every opening all the way across the ice was bubbling from them like water boiling in a caldron.

We arrived at Björneborg about half-past ten in the forenoon, and really caught the Commandant before he was up. The watch-dog, 'Björneborgsvagta,' did his duty: our dogs down by the crack, of course, responded, and the usual uproar ensued.

The Commandant came running out of his tent, more or less quickly, half asleep and wholly bewildered, thinking it was a bear. When he saw us his face beamed with delight, though to call such a thing a face is somewhat of a misnomer. The whole of the bare patch exposed to our view was covered with a thick layer of dirt, of an uncertain greyish blue-black colour, with a few lighter oases where the grime was peeling off. In the midst of this desert of dirt shone Bay's merry kind-hearted eyes, looking like small suns. The colour of his hands was more that of a negro than of any other species of humanity. I do not wish to imply, by this criticism of another, that we ourselves had much to boast of; in all probability we looked much worse than he did, but in our case it was a hue honestly acquired by the sweat of our brows. We had gone through a spring season of such bad weather as I have never experienced before or since, and from being constantly frozen, the skin of our faces had become as thick and stiff as bark; it actually hurt us to laugh or even smile. Just now, the weather being

mild, this agreeable condition was enhanced by a peeling process, and large tatters of skin hung from our faces like little pennons, and floated in the wind.

When we had tied up our dogs, we stood a little while talking to Bay. Both Fosheim and I had counted on being immediately invited to lunch, and we now gave the Commandant an opportunity of doing so, but no invitation came; nor did he let fall a single word which a hungry and willing interpreter could construe in such a manner.

Deeply hurt, we did the only thing worthy of us in the circumstances, and heaped coals of fire on his head by resolutely inviting him to lunch in our tent, which we at once set to work to pitch. The Commandant accepted our invitation with delighted alacrity—his *morale* had evidently suffered from the solitary life he had led.

The weather was so mild that we did not think it necessary to put up the inner tent, and this gave us extra room, which was very necessary, as our expected guest was anything but narrow-gauged.

The lunch consisted of an omelet, bear-steaks, and strong coffee. Latterly, Fosheim and I had been obliged to exercise strict economy with our coffee, by which I do not mean that we had not drunk it the regulation number of times—far from it—but we had had to make it decidedly weak, so that our allowance might hold out. We now had the big depot to draw on, and well we took our revenge.

It was not strange that we were in want of coffee. It was now sixty-three days since the returning party had left us; we were then provisioned for fifty days at rather less than $2\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. a day, and on our return we still had provisions for six or eight days. Economize we did not, still less deprive ourselves; we ate our proper meals morning and evening, consisting of two courses each meal, and I can safely say we ate as much as ever we could. It must be remembered that we were driving eight or ten hours every day in almost all kinds of weather, which is the sort of thing to sharpen one's appetite—and the man who should have no appetite for all the good things we took with us must be difficult to please;

we had as many as ten or eleven kinds of food to choose from.

At first on our journey north, we had been very extravagant with petroleum, and had got through a whole keg in eighteen days; later on, when the weather grew milder, we made a keg last nearly forty-five days, and we still had enough left for a week.

Bay took advantage of the short space of time while we were preparing lunch to go to his tent and 'dress.' When he came

OLSEN INSPECTS THE NURSERY.

back, having accomplished this feat, and took the place of honour at the table, he really looked like a human being. With his appetite, however, there was certainly something wrong. We were used to seeing him eat like a hero, and respectfully called him 'master,' but to-day we consumed at least two or three times as much as he. He assured us that he had eaten more than he usually did, and that it was *our* appetites which had become abnormal; but I had a suspicion that this again was owing to his recluse's life.

With regard to his remarkable want of hospitality, it proved

later that this had to do with the local conditions. When we went to look at the Commandant's hut after lunch, we saw that he represented sea rather than land forces. The fact of the matter was that the snow on the roof had begun to melt, and had taken a short cut down. Whereas his former commando had consisted of only himself and a dog, 'Tiger,' 'Stubbs,' and 'Basiliken' in turns, he had now mobilized a whole fleet of tin boxes, which plainly witnessed to a stubborn struggle with the wet element, and the whole of Björneborg looked very much like the scene of a naval engagement. Though Bay by nature is amphibious, he is no naval hero, and I had a suspicion that now for once his submarine tendencies had been fully satisfied.

From Bay we heard that Schei and Peder had come to Björneborg from the north a day and a half ago, and had gone home to the 'Fram.' They had shot a great deal of game, both bears, reindeer, and polar oxen; and were full of their hunting adventures and other experiences. In a large fjord up there the bears had been particularly pressing, as were also a couple of wolves which they had come across. One of them had even seemed as if it meant to measure strength with Peder.

Wolves are decidedly cunning animals, and not without strategic instincts. My experience is that, as a rule, they attack from two different sides at once, in order to scatter and weaken their opponents. In this case two wolves had approached the men, one from the front and the other from the rear. Schei's team saw the foremost wolf, and set off as fast as they could go, followed by Peder's team, so that Peder himself, who was on 'ski' beside his sledge, was left far behind. His gun was with the baggage, and he thus found himself in an almost defenceless position. The hindermost wolf at once took advantage of this to come close beside him, and seemed to have the most sinister intentions. Peder made himself very fierce, waved his 'ski'-staff, and the wolf was wise enough to keep out of reach of it, although probably its mouth was watering to feast on our able-bodied Peder. In this way they progressed, side by side, glaring at each other, until Peder caught up the other sledge, when the wolf deemed it right to disappear. The two teams having their loads, had not, of course, been able to attack the foremost

wolf, and there was consequently no tangible result from the episode.

The tracks we had seen in the northern part of Hell Gate were those of Schei and Peder, but Isachsen and Hassel were still north. My party, therefore, was not the last, but the middle one to come to Björneborg from the north.

We now asked Bay to tell us *his* experiences; but he insisted on first hearing ours; since Schei and Peder had had so much to tell we must have still more. He certainly had us there. We then said, what was perfectly true, that, although we had experienced a great deal, only one bear and one hare had been killed, the latter being shot by Fosheim at the northernmost point we had reached. These two animals were the only living things we had seen the whole of our long journey.

As is often the case when people speak the truth, we were not believed. Bay, with superior knowledge of human nature, maintained that we were trying in vain to make a fool of a wise man. When at last he was constrained to believe us, he began, at our request, to relate his own experiences, an account of which is contained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE COMMANDANT'S HERMIT LIFE.

‘ON March 13, 1900, at eight in the morning, Captain Sverdrup and Fosheim started on their journey, and I reckon that my hermit's life began from that time, as until then I had not been a whole day alone, the trip west taken by my two companions being only from the morning of the one day to the afternoon of the next. Hitherto also I had had my own team for company, and they had honestly done their best to provide me with distractions in the shape of cheery little fights, eating their harness, howling in chorus, and the like innocent canine amusements. But now my solitude was about to begin in earnest, and it was not without mixed feelings that I saw Fosheim harness my dogs—I could not free myself of the idea that he was rather encroaching on my domain. A little while afterwards the two sledges, which drove off to the east, were lost to sight in the very strong drift there was at the time.

‘I was now left to my own forces and resources, and they were by no means to be despised. First and foremost was the “castle” itself, a square canvas hut six feet long and four high, warm and comfortable; both the roof, which was flat, and the floor being covered with the sad remains of “Fort Juliana.” My residence, however, was not quite complete, for it had been planned that it was to have a wall of snow round it. Happily for me, I had begun on this the previous day, as otherwise—the hut not being provided with guy-ropes—the strong wind which sprang up during the night would probably have turned the house inside out. Even now the wind was still very violent, and I therefore set to work at once to finish the wall. It was done by about two o'clock, and as the wind

and drift increased, rather than the reverse, I went indoors, cooked some food, ate it, and then read.

‘The following days passed very monotonously, though quickly. I tried to spend my time as much as possible out of doors, shovelled up loose snow round the wall, put the depot in order, and did various things of the kind. On March 15, 16, and 17 there was a gale, and I kept inside the tent more than on calmer days; not because the weather could by any means be called bad, but because it was pleasanter to lie in the bag and read. When I did this I was obliged to use the stove, which made the hut look very bright, while at the same time it was so warm that I only used about a pint of petroleum in the day, although I did not at all economize it. I often lay for several hours at a time, holding my book with bare fingers without their feeling cold. On the whole, however, it was extremely mild at this time, the temperature on the first day only being as low as -20° Fahr. (-29° Cent.); the rest of the time it varied from -9° to $+9^{\circ}$ Fahr. (-23° to -12.7° Cent.). Of the sun I saw little, partly on account of the constant drift, and partly because the weather was cloudy. The landmarks in my life, needless to say, were my meals, of which I partook of two during the day; occasionally I had a sort of surreptitious lunch, but I always had a bad conscience after it. My culinary accomplishments as yet were only in their infancy, so that I did not make so much out of the food at my disposal as I was afterwards able to do. I particularly well remember that once, being the birthday of one of my companions on the “Fram,” and I knew they were feasting on board, I thought I too ought to enjoy myself, and cooked a festal dinner, consisting of fried bear’s heart, and chocolate. In an incredibly short space of time the first course filled the house with smoke, which was almost intolerable, and when I began to eat it, proved to consist outwardly of cinders and inwardly of a raw sanguinary mass, which was attractive neither to behold nor to eat. The chocolate was so weak that only an unusually lively imagination could discover that it tasted of anything but a *pot pourri* of the various things which had been cooked in the pot since our departure from the ‘Fram.’ Despite all, however, I think I should have considered

the dinner excellent, if only I had myself shot the bear whose heart I had thus maltreated; but this was not the case, for it had been brought from the boat-house.

‘But the unthinkable really happened! When, on March 19, I again had the pleasure of seeing people, I had not yet shot a bear; had not even seen the fresh trail of one. The only living things in that desert besides myself were two ravens, which daily came to visit me. They looked hungrier and hungrier every day, and seemed to be impatiently awaiting the moment when they could swoop down on my lifeless body. I, however, treated them with great consideration, and never shot them—for they were never within certain range.

‘On March 19, as I said before, I again saw people, as a detachment arrived from the “Fram,” but they went off the next day to the boat-house to fetch more provisions. They returned on the 21st. I had fine weather at this time, for a change, and it continued till March 22, on which day I had several more guests, as Captain Sverdrup arrived from the “Fram,” with the rest of the men who were to take part in the expedition westward. Things began to look quite lively, and there was a village of no fewer than three tents down on the ice-foot; but raised high above them in majestic solitude stood the castle, proud as an eagle when it looks down from its eyrie on a flight of sorry crows. March 22 was a very busy day, as, after Captain Sverdrup’s arrival early in the morning, we all worked at sorting and packing the provisions and other things which were to be taken west. Everything was completed that day, so that the entire force could march the following morning. I went with them westward as far as the place where the ice-foot came to an end; said good-bye to everybody, and stood some time looking after them, before I turned homewards. There was plenty to be done when I got back, for the depot had been scattered to the winds, and most of the things were down on the ice-foot. I worked like a galley-slave that day, and perspired as I can imagine a Turk would do in a Russian steam-bath. Some of the things were very heavy to move, especially a couple of packing-cases containing blubber, which, however, I managed to get back into their places by dragging them with a rope. By evening I had not

only put the depot in order, but had also taken everything out of the hut, swept it, and put all the things in again, after they had been well dried in the beautiful sunshine, which—wonder of wonders—still continued. The depot I arranged with much taste and care, in such a way that my own provisions, which, in my eyes, were the most important, were in the middle. On the top of the two cases of blubber I put some boxes of patent dog-food, and round the whole arranged some empty bread-tins, wooden boxes, and the like, so that, in case they were knocked over by beasts of prey, they would make a noise. By nine o'clock I had had my supper and put out the lamp, well satisfied with myself and my day's work. I thought I heard a slight sound at this time from a little private depot Schei had made about fifty yards below the castle; but I came to the conclusion that I must have knocked the wall of the hut with my arm, and that this had caused the noise. A little while afterwards I was sleeping the sleep of the just, for my worst enemy cannot accuse me of being nervous.

'Later in the night, half asleep as I was, I heard a faint sound from the depot. I must here confess that when I wake in the morning I am perhaps rather longer in taking things in than at other times; neither am I in possession of that amiable frame of mind with which, later in the day, I usually regard the world in general. To this phenomenon (which in others I call "morning crossness") I attribute it that I only turned round in the bag, and inwardly cursed Hassel's dogs, which were loose again and ransacking the depot. I was on the point of falling asleep once more, when it began to dawn on me that my reasoning had been wrong, for there were no dogs within many miles, and therewith I heard a crash, which seemed to make the earth tremble. A moment later I was out of the bag, had dragged my gun from its cover, and cocked it, for it suddenly occurred to me that my guest was a serious one. The first thing I did was to light the lamp, after which I began to move away some tins I had put in front of the door, for the first time that night, to keep it in place. The sounds still continued at the depot; but, in moving the last tin, I happened to make a slight noise, and then everything became as still as death. I raised the door and crept out. It was one o'clock (I had looked

VIEW OF GAASEDALEN.

at my watch when I lit the lamp), and much darker than was pleasant for the work before me.

'The bear meanwhile had made itself quite at home. In order to get at one of the blubber-cases (it had chosen the one which stood on the side of the depot facing the hut) it had thrust the empty boxes out of its way, and had thrown down one of the two dog-food boxes which had been placed on the cases of blubber. The marks of all its claws were clearly visible in the tin. The other box was open, and the bear had tasted a couple of the rations, but had evidently not found them to his liking, for he had spat them out again into the box. It had then very carefully lifted the tin down on to the snow, and then—also very carefully—raised the lid of the blubber-box. But just as it was going to begin its meal, it had evidently heard my clatter inside the hut, and had sat down to listen, with its right paw clasping the edge of the box. It was in this position, at any rate, that I found it, when I raised myself up, after creeping out. The bear was about fifteen yards away from me, and as soon as it saw me, rose, large and fat and hissing; it made the open tin rattle as it put its left paw down on it. It looked just as if it were thumping the table, to show what a fine fellow it was, and reminded me of one of my friends on board—so much so that I half unwittingly addressed it in the way usual between us; a manner, however, hardly fit for publication. Whether the bear felt offended at this I know not, but certain it is that it got up and walked, growling, with long measured steps round the depot, in the direction of the sea. As soon as it was clear of the depot I aimed, and shot it in the shoulder; I could just discern the sights through the darkness.

'The bear uttered such a loud growl that it seemed to make the stillness ring. The fire from my gun had dazzled me, and I could no longer see the sights, and the bear itself I only saw as a shapeless mass, which seemed to have grown most incredibly larger. The other barrel, the small-shot barrel, which was loaded with a large ball, I fired straight into the mass without going through any such formality as aiming. Then I made a well-ordered retreat behind the hut, and put in some fresh cartridges. I do not much believe in hurrying, but I did this in less time than it takes to

tell. To my great astonishment I did not see anything—not that I wanted to—of my enemy during this operation, but as soon as I was ready I began to peer about after it, though at first without success. At last, on bending down, I caught sight of a large dark object a short distance away, at a spot where I knew there was no rock—this, of course, must be the bear, but whether dead or alive it was impossible to tell. I therefore advanced with much caution, and fired a shot at what I supposed to be its head. On closer examination it proved to be the other end of the bear I had bombarded; but as a zoologist I, of course, knew that the head in *Ursus maritimus* is, as a rule, exactly at the opposite extremity to the after-end of the animal, and at last really succeeded in giving it some lead in the right place. The bear had, no doubt, been dead for some time, but discretion is the better part of valour. I then realized that I had killed my first bear.

‘To say that I was proud is nowhere near the mark; but it was too dark for me to enjoy the sight of my fallen enemy, and besides, I was in my stockings. I therefore at once repaired to the tent, lighted the “Primus,” and made myself some coffee. Such a festal meal as I then had, of coffee and Christmas cake from the “Fram,” I had never had before, and can hardly hope to have again. I then lay and read for a while, but as soon as it was half-past two, and a little light, I was constrained to go out and enjoy my triumph. Then I came back and lay down with the intention of going to sleep for a couple of hours, but with only partial success. At six o’clock I was awakened by a raven croaking up on the hillside, and by eight I had had my breakfast and began on the skinning. I had never before skinned a bear alone, and found it anything but amusing work, for the animal had become quite stiff, and was consequently very difficult to manipulate. I must confess, to my shame, that I took six hours to skin and disjoint it. My work was not made pleasanter by a biting east wind with driving snow, though fortunately the temperature remained comparatively mild (from zero to 3° Fahr.). All my shots had hit their mark. The ball (the second shot) had penetrated the chest, and the animal must, therefore, have been coming straight towards me. Whence it had come was not

AN UNBIDDEN GUEST.

[From a drawing by H. Brun.]

apparent, as all the tracks were levelled by the drifting snow. It had thoroughly inspected Schei's depot, and I am pretty sure it was the bear which I had heard at nine o'clock. If my surmise is correct, it must have been about the place from nine to half-past one.

'The rest of the day I spent comfortably indoors, burning the "Primus," cleaning my gun, reading, eating cake, and drinking coffee.

'The next day, March 25, was Sunday, and as it was still snowing, I lay in the bag the whole of the forenoon, and continued my attack on the cake and coffee, and therewith made an end of the former. It was one of the pleasantest Sunday mornings I have ever spent; but at one o'clock I thought it was time to get up, and accordingly lighted the "Primus" in order to warm the hut while I was putting on my "finsko." Meanwhile I felt curious as to the state of the weather, raised the door and crept out, my exit being anything but noiseless. I was soon satisfied as to the weather, for it had not changed. I stood a little way in front of the door, and looked out across the sea-ice, where everything was white, and there was not a living thing to be seen. Suddenly I had a feeling as if there was something wrong behind my back, and this feeling grew so strong that at last I turned round, and in so doing saw a bear standing about fifty yards away, on the other side of the hut. It looked as if it had been coming towards me, but had stopped when I turned round, and we both looked each other hard in the eyes. It was a very little bear, and it seemed to me then, as it seems still, to have had a curious half-ironic, half-wicked expression in its face.

'I was the first to regain self-possession, and scurried like a rabbit into my hole, caught up my gun and dragged off the cover, expecting all the time to be seized from behind and carried wriggling outside. But when I went out again I saw that the bear had not thought of anything of the kind. The short time I had taken to fetch my gun, it had taken advantage of to make off up the hillside. I started after it, but could not get along very fast, as I had not tied the long braids of my "finsko," which trailed behind me. Meanwhile my adversary took things very coolly, and stopped at intervals to look at me, though always

taking care to keep a respectful distance between us. I soon saw that this sort of thing was no use, and as I had no gloves and my hands were beginning to feel cold I returned to the hut, properly tied on my "finsko," got some mittens and my field-glasses, and started off afresh.

'It was not long before I again saw the bear, which was quietly sitting on a little knoll in manifest uncertainty what to do. It was impossible to stalk it where it was, so I went straight ahead, whereupon our former mode of progression began anew. All the same I still had hopes of cheating it, for a little farther on the hills fell back from the coast-line, forming a kind of bay, and if only the bear would go on following the talus westward, I should be able to cut it off at the head of this bay. It was true that a gully led up from it, but there was such a steep drop at the bottom that no living thing without wings could pass it. Everything seemed to be going according to my calculations. The bear went into the bay, and I closed the mouth of it. I was already beginning to triumph when, to my astonishment, I saw the bear head straight for the ledge, which it climbed better than any cat, sticking its claws into the hard snow, just as that domestic animal climbs a tree. When it had got safely across the ledge, and was well out of gunshot, the beast sat quietly down and looked at me as I stood below hurling execrations at it in impotent wrath. It went slowly up the gully, and disappeared from sight over the crest of the hill, whereupon I went home in disgust. I could not discover where this bear had come from either, as the heavy fall of snow had obliterated all the tracks; but it was plain that for some time it had been eating the blubber on the back of the bear I had killed the previous day, for nearly all of it was gone. I began to think that this was not a very reassuring state of affairs, for I had been lying quite still inside the hut, and ought to have heard the bear had it made the slightest noise. I began to wish I had a watch-dog to warn me a little betimes.

'At the same time it occurred to me that things were very fairly lively at Björneborg, and that it began to answer to its name; but after March 25 the days passed by without any new adventures. Morning after morning my diary begins with the

THE 'COMMANDANT' ON GUARD.

words: "Night passed undisturbed." The weather was still comparatively mild, the temperature varying from -4° to -26° Fahr. (-20° to -32° Cent.). On March 28, 29, and 30 there was wind, though it was not very violent, except in the night between the two latter days. I had now hardly any work to do, but when the weather was fine went instead a couple of constitutionals every day, one east and one west, as far as the place where the ice-foot came to an end. This stretch I called "Langelinie,"

THE SOUTH WALL OF FRAM GLACIER.

after the well-known drive in Copenhagen. I dared not, of course, be very long absent at a time on account of the possibility of bears visiting the depot. On April 3, however, I made an exception to this rule, and, enticed by the beautiful sunny weather, went a walk eastward, which was considerably longer than usual.

'After my return I went another walk to a little knoll near the hut to look for bears, but as usual without seeing any, in spite of particularly careful scrutiny. At six o'clock I went in and cooked some food; I did not, as I was in the habit of doing,

get into the bag while this was going on, but sat outside it, close by the door. When my dinner was ready I crept into the bag, put out the "Primus," and later read a little. A little before eight I went out as usual to take the last meteorological observation. The weather was very fine, and I stood in front of the door for a long time, looking across the ice through the glasses, and at my neighbour, Cape Vera on North Devon. At last I turned round, put the glasses into their case on the roof of the house, and, to my great astonishment, saw a bear standing some distance out of gunshot, up on the talus. Happily it had not seen me, partly because a number of things were lying on the roof, so that I was almost hidden, and partly because it was very much occupied in eating something.

'I was not long in fetching my rifle, but this time, having bought my experience, I put on my "finsko" properly. The bear remained in the same place, and I got out of the house and under cover of a large rock unobserved. Behind this I was within range, but as I stepped to one side to get a free shot I slipped on a hard patch of snow, and lost my balance. The bear looked up and saw me at once; it gave a coquettish little whine and fled higher up the slope, so that when I regained my footing it was once more out of range. But this time I was properly shod, and could follow it quickly; my adversary therefore had not time to strike off to one side, but headed straight up the slope, till I began to think we were both going to heaven. At last, however, it was obliged to turn, and when it had almost reached the firm rock, chose to go west. The range was long, but there was nothing for it but to shoot, which I did—wide.

'The shot, however, was not without effect, for the bear stopped and faced about, so that its right shoulder was presented to me. I went a little nearer, and then aimed very carefully. The bullet, an expansive one, broke the animal's right fore-leg, penetrated the lungs, and went out again through the upper part of the right side, where it made such a hole that I could put four fingers together into it. In spite of this terrible wound the poor animal still endeavoured to escape, and dragged itself across a very hard and steep slope of snow; but I had come nearer by this time, and put

OUTER PART OF STORDALEN.

a shot in its left shoulder. This made it lose its footing; it began to slide, and at last rolled over and over for a couple of hundred feet, till it was stopped by a stone. I followed it as quickly as I could, and gave it another shot in the head, which completely did for it, and then rolled it down to the bottom of the slope. It was a very small and unusually thin he-bear. Judging by the size and—as I chose to imagine—by the expression of its face, it was possibly the same bear which visited me on March 25. I set to work at once on the skinning, and this time accomplished it quickly, for by ten o'clock the animal was flayed and portioned out. I then went in and celebrated my victory in the usual manner—that is to say, by making coffee.

‘Next morning I dragged the skin and meat down to the hut, and then went over the battle-field. I saw that the bear had come quickly from the west, had mounted the ice-foot, and from there come straight to the door of the hut, without once stopping. Judging by the tracks, it must have stood a while in front of the door to get scent. If this had happened at the time when I was cooking my food, I could have touched it by merely stretching out my arm, and I think it very probable that the bear was there just at that time, and that the bubbling of the cooking-pot prevented me from hearing it. Something had evidently frightened it, for it had run a little distance to the east, and had then climbed to the outlook, where it had sat looking down on the hut. It had then come down to the latter, had passed the depot, and had made straight for the bear-meat, where it had eaten the remaining blubber and the greater part of the entrails. When I began to move about the hut it took the rest of the entrails away with it, and that is what it was eating when I first saw it.

‘I must confess I thought this was a little too much; I should have the beasts coming into the hut to me next, and as I am an unusually sound sleeper, might have one upon me before I was fully awake. My wish to have a dog, therefore, became still greater, but for the present I had to be content with the wish only, and all that I could do to increase my personal security was to take my gun out of its cover in the evening, cock it, and put

it in readiness beside the sleeping-bag. In addition to these precautions, I barricaded the door outside with some bars, which would make a noise if any animal should try to break in. I was not likely to be surprised through the sides of the hut, thanks to the wall of snow, but, on the other hand, it was quite possible that I might receive a visit *viâ* the roof. However, nothing happened of the kind, for on April 4 no bear came, and on April 5 I, like Isaac, the son of Abraham, saw a caravan approaching. It came from the west, and consisted of the party which had accompanied the Captain and Isachsen on their way. It was quite a curious sensation to see people again, and I immediately invited myself as their guest for as long as they should remain at Björneborg. This was for a couple of days, as on April 6 there was a snowstorm. April 7, on the other hand, was calm, clear, and bright, and all their things were well dried and the necessary repairs done to them. On the morning of April 8 they went west again, to accompany Schei on part of his journey; but they left no fewer than two dogs with me: the mate's "Tiger" and "Indianeren," which were spent from over-work, and in need of rest.

'Now passed a long and monotonous period, broken only by visits from passers-by, for no more bears came to the hut itself. I cannot say that I ever felt really dull. I must confess that I slept a great deal, and, secondly, always made myself some work to do outside the house, and went, in addition, regulation walks. If the weather was bad, which it generally was, I lay in the bag as much as possible and read. A great, nay, momentous, part in my life at this time was, of course, played by my meals, of which, during the greater part of my sojourn, I had two a day—breakfast and dinner. Later on I always had three meals a day. I lived all this time almost exclusively on two kinds of food—soaked biscuit fried in fat and bear-steaks. Practice makes perfect, and I think I really attained perfection in the cooking of these two excellent dishes, which I ate day after day without ever tiring of them. On Sundays and other feast days I generally had something extra, but the two first-named courses always formed the nucleus of my meals. My beverages were coffee and hot milk.

‘But I also celebrated days of mark in other ways. I had, namely, no less than three flags—Norwegian ones—and on occasions of particular rejoicing I hoisted all three. Such days were the birthday of H.M. King Christian IX., the anniversary of the battles in Copenhagen roads and off Heligoland, and the birthdays of some of the members of my family.

‘This time might suitably be divided into periods, extending from one visit to another. The first period lasted till eleven on the night of Good Friday, when Captain Baumann, the mate, and Stolz arrived from the west. It was chiefly remarkable for its bad weather; there were snowstorms all the time, and it was only calm once or twice for a space of a few hours. The wind was much more violent than it had ever been before, particularly on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (April 12 and 13); and the drift was so thick that in broad daylight I could not see so much as a glimpse of the ruins of Fort Juliana, only thirty yards away. On the evening of the latter day, as aforesaid, Captain Baumann and his party arrived. Both my dogs gave tongue so loudly that I thought it was a bear, and had got ready for it, when I heard Stolz’s voice outside. As the new-comers’ tent had come to grief during an attempt to pitch it, we all four spent the night in the hut, in a rather uncomfortable manner. The next day was calm, and the tent was repaired and pitched, and the day after that they went off to the “Fram.” I kept one of the two dogs which had been with me, namely, the mate’s “Tiger.”

‘The period which now followed was the least pleasant of my stay at Björneborg, chiefly because I had come to an end of my literature, and was obliged to read the only book in my possession (the others had been sent back to the “Fram”) over and over again. By way of compensation, however, the weather was now comparatively good. There was quite a number of sunny days, and I find many notes in my diary mentioning that on such and such a day the sun burned quite powerfully. A phenomenon of the kind, however, was not unnatural, although there were still a good many degrees of frost in the shade; for, as everybody knows, the sun “strikes” hotter on black than on any other colour, and it was now a considerable time since I had washed myself.

‘On April 17, I hoisted all three flags in honour of a birthday in my family. It was intended, of course, that the day should be one of rejoicing, but instead it turned out to be a day of mourning, for as I was going my walk to the outlook, I saw away under Stormkap something which was plainly moving. This something proved on further investigation to be a bear, which was walking slowly and majestically along the old sledge-tracks. I lay long on my stomach, in good cover, up at the outlook, and watched the animal. The wind was in the east—that is to say, favourable—and I began to look forward to a fray, when suddenly the bear, apparently quite without motive, turned away from the tracks, and, still in the same slow time, marched off to the pressure-ice. I went after it, but never saw the animal again.

‘On April 22, a deserter, young “Mr. Peary,” one of the puppies, turned up from Schei’s corps. He was at once arrested and embodied in the Björneborg garrison, though not without audible protest. He was rather tired, but not at all hungry, and had probably spent some days at the walrus shot by the Captain’s party, until most likely a bear had driven him off, for he had run away from Schei as long ago as April 15.

‘On May 8, at one in the morning, Captain Baumann, the mate, and Stolz arrived from the “Fram.” They had all sorts of good things with them for me in the shape of cake, fish-pudding, books, and a bottle, little but good. They only stayed till the evening of the next day, when they went on west.

‘The following period was short, but the pleasantest I spent at Björneborg—new books to read, good food, and good weather. On the night of May 10 the garrison was alarmed by both the dogs giving tongue, and when the commandant emerged, “Tiger” was standing looking down at the ice-foot, right below the house, where I could not see it. When I crept, gun in hand, to where he was, I saw that it was not a bear, but one of Captain Baumann’s dogs, which had run away from him, and was now lying in its old place. At ten o’clock at night on May 13, Captain Baumann and his party arrived; they stayed till the evening of the 14th, when they went east. I then kept only the puppy, called “Krybdyret” (The Reptile), and sometimes “Basiliken.”

‘During the following period the weather entirely changed its character, and whereas before there had been a great deal of wind, there were now heavy falls of snow. From May 14 to May 22 it snowed hard and uninterruptedly ; and this was very much worse than wind, for the weather being so mild (as a rule, 14° to 23° Fahr., or -5° to -10° Cent.) the snow on the roof melted during the daytime, and several times began to come through on to me. By the help of some poles, I managed to raise the roof from the inside sufficiently to prevent it dripping, at any rate, on to my sleeping-bag.

‘The Seventeenth of May came during this period, and I had long wondered how to keep it, for although I am not a Norwegian, I quite thought that something extra ought to be done. I had only one flag, however, Captain Baumann at different times having borrowed the other two ; but in the afternoon I took it down (it had, of course, been flying since the morning), and walked in solemn procession up to the outlook. “Basiliken” also took part in the procession, but was manifestly oppressed by the situation. The train stopped at the top of the hill, whence the commandant of Björneborg addressed the crowd.* I regret to say that when the procession returned to the castle, some of the dregs of the populace (“Basiliken”) took this opportunity of attacking the depot of the expedition. The police were obliged to step in, and the excitement was not quieted until after assiduous and energetic use of the constables’ clubs, and an arrest, had been made. This occurrence made no difference in the good feeling during the festal dinner which ensued, and at which certain enlivening beverages were not wanting.

‘Another disagreeable consequence of this mild weather was that the bear-meat began to grow rather high, so that I had to begin on the provisions which had been set apart for my personal use. Of game I got nothing whatever, not even a hare or a ptarmigan ; nor did I see a single gull or other sea-bird, and not so much as a seal on the ice.

‘On May 29 I saw from the end of “Langelinie,” as I was

* During this ‘Basiliken’ fell asleep, and was whipped for his unseemly behaviour.

chipping some fossils out of a rock, a seal far out on the ice. I had no stalking-sail, but as the animal, a ringed seal (*Phoca hispida*), was in the pressure-ice, I made an attempt to stalk it. This succeeded beyond all expectation, for it was one of the most accommodating seals I ever came across. Although the snow creaked and crackled under my feet, and the seal lifted its head several times, and, as I thought, stared me in the face, I got within thirty yards or so of it, and made an end of it with a shot in the head. I had no knife with me, or line with which to tow the seal to land, so I had to go back to fetch both. I thought it would be amusing to drag my booty home whole, and promised "Basiliken" and myself an extra good dinner; in a word, I was very proud of my achievement,—but pride comes before a fall.

'I returned to the seal and made the line fast to its head by slitting the skin of its forehead and under-jaw, and passing the line under the skin. The towing presented no difficulty, and I arrived without mishap at the end of "Langelinie," where I had to drag my booty up on to the ice-foot. Unfortunately this sloped, and the tide was very low, so that there was a very large tidal crack, which was both broad and deep. I got across it all right myself, and was going to jerk the seal after me, but it proved to be too heavy, and slid into the sea with a tremendous splash, nearly dragging me after it. This I escaped, but in trying to haul it up again, the strips of skin gave way, and all my and "Basiliken's" good food disappeared into the depths. I could see the seal lying at the bottom, but it was impossible to reach it. However, I did not give up the attempt at once, for I went home, and fetched two long poles from Fort Juliana, but when I returned with them, the seal had disappeared from sight.

'I now went home again, but my cup of bitterness was not yet full, for when I began to clean my gun I found that, for some reason or other, my last cartridge had broken across, and that a bit of it was lodged fast in the chamber, so that I could not load again. I had a good deal of trouble in getting it out, and only succeeded in the end by the sacrifice of the point of my scissors. By this time it was half-past twelve at night. This episode was no sooner well over than I heard voices outside, and found on

looking out that they belonged to Schei and Hendriksen. We then had a great feast in their tent, and I listened enviously to the narration of their exploits, for I had myself none to relate. After supper Schei and I went out again to the place where I had lost the seal. We could see the animal, but in our attempts to fish it up it sank. On our return to Björneborg, I turned in and tried to get some sleep, but I was out again at twelve o'clock to see after my lost booty, which I now found had disappeared for ever. Later in the day Schei and I went a longer walk westward, when he shot at a seal, but missed it. We looked at some Eskimo meat-larders which I had found on a previous occasion. They were four feet high and about the same in diameter, and were particularly interesting, being built with unusual care, of pretty, oblong, flat stones. They were almost cylindrical in shape, and were just like the ruins of small towers.

My visitors stayed till the evening of May 31, when they left Björneborg. I had all my meals with them, and have seldom lived so well, for they had invented quite a number of new dishes on their journeys. It snowed the whole of this day, and when I awoke at ten o'clock on June 1, I was surprised, though hardly agreeably so, to hear the sound of dripping water inside the hut. When I went out, I found that it was still snowing, which sent me back into the bag in anything but a good temper. I observed on this occasion positive temperature in the shade for the first time (33° Fahr., 0.7° Cent.). Not long afterwards, I heard voices and the howling of dogs, and when I went out to look, found my new guests down on the ice-foot, though at first I saw only an arm moving backwards and forwards in regular time, as ceaselessly and inexorably as fate itself. The arm held a whip, and each lash was answered by a howl from the unfortunate hound which had disobeyed, and was now undergoing punishment. The arm proved to be Fosheim's, and I went down to meet him and the Captain. They pitched their tent on land, where Schei and Hendriksen's had been, and I spent the day with them. During the evening it was decided that I should return to the ship with the Captain, and Fosheim succeed me as commandant of Björneborg. On the morning of June 2, I accordingly left the castle where

I had lived for almost a quarter of a year. It was not without a feeling of sadness that I saw the last glimpse of the spot as we rounded the steep bluffs of Stormkap, for although my life there had been solitary and monotonous enough—except on occasions when it had been extremely lively—I felt I was leaving a home where I knew every stone and every irregularity of the ground; a place I had known in calm and the glory of sunshine, as well as during the raging of the storms. And then, too, I had a feeling as if peace and quietness were at an end, for east of Storinkap began for me the great busy world, which for so long now I had almost forgotten.’

As we sat talking in the tent after Bay had related his experiences, he hinted that perhaps it was time for him to return on board. The animals and plants would be more advanced near the ‘Fram’s’ harbour than here; and probably too the insects would soon be showing themselves up on the slopes there. The melting of the snow had long begun, and there were signs of an early spring and summer—in other words, he asked permission to resign his appointment.

Three months alone at Björneborg—during the latter part of the time undergoing a sort of cold-water cure—was no joke, even for a person who is something of the nature of a wader, and he was immediately and honourably released from office. As Isachsen and Hassel were still north, however, the post could not forthwith be done away with; they must have a fortress to fall back on, and Bay consequently a successor in his appointment. Fosheim immediately offered to take his place, and his services were accepted.

We then arranged the following plan: as soon as I arrived on board I would send a party west with a double duty. If Isachsen and Hassel had not returned to Björneborg by the time the party reached it, they were to go on northward at once, to Land’s End, to look for them, taking Fosheim with them, and if they fell in with them there, pilot them across the mountains. If they did not meet Isachsen and Hassel, they were to leave the necessary instructions at Land’s End, and go back to Björneborg.

They were to return thence to the 'Fram,' with the greater part of the depot, while Fosheim remained behind with a sufficient supply of provisions for the two men who were expected from the north.

We thought, however, that the various things to be done at Björneborg after the return from Land's End would keep the 'Fram' folk at the depot long enough for Isachsen and Hassel, in any circumstances, to catch them there, and that then they could all return together to the 'Fram.'

If it so happened, which was greatly to be desired, that the northern party had already reached Björneborg before the 'Fram' party arrived there, the Land's End journey was, of course, to be given up, and all were to return home as quickly as possible with the depot. The 'Fram' party were to take with them a loose team for Fosheim's baggage.

It can be imagined how busy the retiring commandant was later in the day, packing his things and getting ready for a start. We say a mouse is busy even when it is in 'the straw,' but certainly a mouse is a trifle compared with Bay in the present circumstances. He had not time even to eat, which speaks volumes for his state of mind. Fosheim and I invited him to a sumptuous six o'clock repast, which was doubly a farewell dinner, for not only was Bay leaving his fortress, but I was also taking leave of Fosheim.

Fosheim and I had gone through a long and arduous journey in company, and two people so live themselves together, so to speak, on an expedition of the kind, that even though the parting is not likely to be of long duration, one in a way feels the separation. Fosheim was as capable a fellow as he was a pleasant companion; he was ready for everything, and was never at a loss. He often took upon himself the toughest jobs, and had our doing as much as possible greatly at heart. In our daily work he was always cheerful and even-tempered, and on commemorative occasions often had a surprise in the background, with which to add to the brilliance of the festivity, as, for instance, his cigars, and song composed for the Seventeenth of May. Altogether I have a very great deal to thank him for. He had also been the acting botanist on this journey, though he had not been able to collect much.

Then came the solemn moment when we were to begin our

festal meal. I had gone through the depot and brought out all sorts of delicacies, such as sausages, green peas, tongue, bacon, etc., while an omelet figured on our bill of fare by way of sweet.

We did not forget our faithful companions, the dogs, in the enjoyment of our own good cheer. They had stuffed immoderately ever since we had shot the bear, and as they had not had much to take it out of them the last few days, we had every reason to hope they would be very fresh when we started anew next morning. We sat long talking that evening, and it was late before we felt inclined to turn in.

The day afterwards—it was Whitsun Eve—we said good-bye to Fosheim; and Bay took his place and his team. The first thing Fosheim was going to do after he was alone was to put a sloping roof on the house, as he had neither desire nor ability to play commodore to the squadron of tin boxes, and there were enough fragments of sailcloth left from the old Björneborg to cover the roof.

It had been snowing all night, so that everywhere there was deep, loose snow. Often it reached the dogs' bellies, and sometimes up their flanks. The sledges travelled remarkably well all the same, for there was hardly any friction, though we did not go fast, the snow being so deep. We drove steadily on all day, and when that is done, although the pace may not be very great, the distance mounts up in the end.

We camped in a raging storm that evening, on an old floe to the east of Baadsfjord. The weather was mild, but nevertheless it was a bitter pleasure getting up the tent. Nor had we any very clear idea where we were; for the air was so thick that we could see nothing of our surroundings, but, judging by a hummock close by, we concluded we were at the boundary between the pressure- and fjord-ice, somewhere east of Baadsfjord.

We started again at seven the next morning in the same loose snow as before, and, twelve hours later, camped at South Cape. We gave the dogs a good feed, cooked ourselves some supper, and lay awhile inside the tent, but started again at two, in weather that was as thick as ever. We shaped the course, as far as we knew, for the southern point of Skreia, and made all the haste we could,

hoping to get on board for breakfast—which we actually did, at eight o'clock, but we had hard work to do it.

Our companions on board caught sight of us driving up the bay, and came out on the ice to greet us. They were all in good health, and everything had gone well with them; but a serious event had taken place, the most serious which had happened to the expedition during the whole of the voyage.

The 'Fram' had nearly been burned to ashes.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FIRE ON BOARD THE 'FRAM.'

It was Sunday, May 27, 1900, about noon. Simmons was walking up and down the deck, immersed in his own thoughts, when he suddenly discovered that the large winter-awning was on the point of bursting into flame. A spark from the galley chimney had probably been blown on to the canvas which had caught fire.

He at once gave the alarm, and, a few seconds afterwards, the crew, consisting of nine men, were on deck. Baumann, who was the first to come up, made straight for the awning, in order to cut away the burning canvas, but the flames were already licking up to the ridge of the roof, and the steel rope which ran along the awning prevented him from carrying out his intention.

At this juncture the mate came running to his assistance, but it was in vain. A few seconds afterwards the mainsail was in flames, and, with the same rushing speed, the fire also ate downwards to a heap of dry thin boards, and to the fifteen or sixteen paraffin-prepared *kayaks*, which were lying under the awning.

The danger was now imminent. The flames hissed up the mainmast; the winding tackle on both sides, and the serving up the shrouds caught fire, likewise the mainmast, and the smoke poured forth, grey and choking, from the flaming *kayaks*. The deck grew burning hot, and every moment it seemed as if the powder cases, which stood close beside the awning, must explode and make an end of everything. But the men went at it without flinching, and dragged away the boxes one by one out of the burning heat, without doubt at the very last moment.

In the midst of this sea of fire, however, the greatest source of danger still threatened. This was an iron tank, containing over

THE 'FRAM' ON FIRE.

[From a drawing by Otto Sinding.]

fifty gallons of spirit. It was so placed that it was impossible to move it, and if it once caught fire, the fate of the ship was sealed, and perhaps that of the entire expedition also. It held, thank Heaven; but so great was the heat that, on looking at it afterwards, it was found that it had melted the tinning on the outside of the tank.

On both sides of the conflagration the doors were open, and, before it was possible to shut them, the flames had spread to the 'tween decks, though without doing much harm.

Luckily there was plenty of water to be had close by the ship's side, and, when the cases of gunpowder had been safely removed, the work of extinguishing the flames went on rapidly. Bucket after bucket of water was thrown, hissing and steaming, over the deck; men shouted and ran in and out of the heat, the sweat on their brows and their hands black with soot. They hurried backwards and forwards to the ice and up to the vessel again; for our craft was dear to us, and fight they meant to for every plank of the old 'Fram'—our only bit of Norway up there in all that solitude.

After a good half-hour had passed, some breathless, steaming men stood on the deck who pointed, spat, and gazed—sometimes up at the mainmast, sometimes across the deck; but the fire was quenched, and the 'Fram' saved.

The fire caused us considerable loss. First and foremost, all the *kayaks* were burned; then, also, a quantity of 'ski' and wood, as well as a score of prepared polar-ox skins, and some bear-skins. The main-rigging sails lay under the tarpaulin which covered the mainsail, and were all burned; we lost the main-boom and gaff, as well as all the coils of running rigging and some blocks, while the rack on the starboard side was also destroyed.

The actual hull did not suffer any injury worth mentioning. The deck was only slightly burned. Nor had the mast suffered to any great extent, and after planing away the charred wood, it was as right as ever again. If we were to have a misfortune of the kind, we could hardly have got off more cheaply than we did. We had plenty of spare rope and sailcloth, and the vessel soon carried her sails as before.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

SCHEI'S NARRATIVE.

SCHEI and Peder had arrived on board on Whit-Sunday morning, that is to say the morning before we did, and were in good health and spirits. Schei himself shall describe their journey, and this he does as follows:—

‘On March 20, Hendriksen and I left the “Fram” in company with Captain Sverdrup, Isachsen, and Fosheim, and after going back with the returning party as far as the depot at Björneborg, I started on a shorter journey westward. This journey was first to be to North Kent and an island or group of islands north of the former, and afterwards to a large fjord tract in King Oscar Land.’

‘On the morning of Good Friday, April 13, 1900, we thus found ourselves in camp on the east shore of North Kent, with full loads and rather exhausted dogs. We had had bad weather—the previous day it had compelled us to camp here, right under land—and bad weather we had still. No sooner had Baumann, the mate, and Stolz, who had come with us from Björneborg and were now going back, started, than they were hidden from sight by the driving snow from the north.

‘We also were soon under way, and drove northward along shore. The weather and the going were equally unpleasant; the dogs went badly, and the sledges stuck fast every few minutes. We camped under a steep river bank, where there was some shelter for the tent and the dogs, and easy access, through a short, narrow valley, to the higher parts of the island. Next day, when the weather was more reasonable, I went an excursion up this valley, where a couple of peculiar drifts engaged my attention for some time.

‘Of glaciers proper there are none in this part of the island, but the large patches of snow, sixty to a hundred feet thick, which collect during the winter on the slopes, sheltered from the prevailing winds, lie from year to year, and that part of them which does not melt during the summer months is transformed into ice. When this mass, as it often does, presents a high perpendicular or even overhanging wall of stratified ice, it has great outward similarity to a real glacier.

‘This was the case with one of these patches which the southerly winds had built up under a crag on the south side of the valley. Here the edge of the drift hung over to such an extent that the cornice, so to speak, had at last broken off, and now lay a regenerated drift at the bottom of the valley.

‘The higher part of the valley lay from south to north, and a smaller side valley joined it from the west, before a narrow gorge bounded by steep mountain-sides, where the main valley turned off sharply to the east. Northward, in the aforesaid lateral valley, the north-west wind had built up a drift under the lee of the declivities, which completely cut off the valley. The depression above, thus obstructed by the drift, was filled with snow accumulated by the southerly winds. Through this mass of snow rose a number of mounds, with pointed tops, one behind the other, running in the direction of the valley. They were composed of grit and pebbles, results of the river’s structural action, as by degrees it had worked itself backwards up through the drift during the course of the summer.

‘In a valley north of Land’s End, in King Oscar Land, there was a similar drift, in similar circumstances, which had so dammed the valley as to form a lake, in consequence of the river being unable to cut its way through the drift. Later on the river formed a tunnel under the snow, and the lake consequently diminished in volume, although it did not entirely disappear. I saw it frozen in the autumn.

‘But to return to North Kent: I had passed the before-mentioned drifts, had been up on the plateau above the north side of the valley, and had already begun to retrace my steps when I saw the track of an animal. The track was old and almost

obliterated, but it was quite enough to make one's blood run quicker in one's veins. It led across to the other side of the valley, where I was constrained to follow it, and it was not long before I found myself on the lower marginal tracts of the gently rising plateau, which, speaking generally, forms the surface of the northern part of North Kent. The lower part of the valleys here, where they cut through the abrupt fall of the plateau towards a narrow anteriorly low glacier, were narrow and deeply cut, but rose quickly at a steeper gradient to the depressions which intersected the edge of the plateau, until little by little they merged into the plateau itself. On the even rounded ridges and mounds between these depressions, which for the most part were filled with snow in huge drifts, the sheet of snow was thin and of remarkable formation. Instead of a solid mass, the snow was powdery, lying under a thin, shining crust, uneven, loose, and deceptive, like a kind of coarse granular rime. Through this protruded the larger stones and a few blades of grass, and when one trod through the crust the underlying crystal powder fell together and covered the ground in a thin layer, through which the scanty vegetation was visible, consisting of lichens and a few blades of grass.

'The animals had discovered this state of affairs, and there were numerous tracks and the signs of much scraping, which showed that they had often grazed here. Although the tracks were old, I could not help going on a little farther.

'It was very still, and the sun shone brightly, through a faint haze, down on to the glaciated snowfields, where the light was refracted from the ice-prisms and thrown back from the numberless crystal facets so that the sunshine seemed to quiver in the air above the hills, dazzling and confusing the eyesight in whatever direction one turned. Everything seemed alive and moving. Suddenly I saw away on a mound the dark forms of polar oxen—a few steps farther and I discovered them to be only a couple of dark boulders quite near to me. All this lured me on, and at last I reached the highest point of the crest where it fell down towards the strait. In the south and west were the sunny hills of North Kent; beneath and before me the ice of the strait, broken off to

the right by the open sea. On the other side of this, I saw, that day, King Oscar Land: northward, with rounded mountains and broad valleys issuing towards a narrow expanse of level country; southward, a high undivided plateau ending in inaccessible declivities, and intersected by steep gaps, with great drifts in them, which threatened to fall at any moment into the sea far below. Northward, land and ice, white and again white, heightened by the blue shadows of the valley; southward, black unbroken mountain

PEDER WITH SCHEI'S DOGS.

walls like giant dams, which stemmed the tide of the snow from the sea beneath.

'As I turned away from this imposing panorama, and happened to glance inland, I again saw a dark speck on a little knoll in front of a valley which sank through the ridge of the mountains, southward towards the strait. I did not think I had seen it before, and pulled out my field-glasses. While I was adjusting them, the speck grew larger, and by the time I had it in the glasses, I saw a reindeer! Shortly afterwards another one mounted the knoll. I had never seen wild reindeer before, still less shot one, and

shooting fever shook me so that my gun and glasses rattled as I looked at them. There I stood, trembling and wondering; the wind was between me and the animals, but we were each on our separate hills, so that it was impossible for me to stalk them across the level depression which divided us. The reindeer were seven or eight hundred yards away, and I thought of trying to find cover and crawl across to them, but hardly had I begun to move than they winded me, stood still a while to gaze, and then away on the other side of the knoll. I ran up it, and saw them a few hundred yards below me. They had stopped, and were looking up; they caught sight of me at once, although I immediately lay down on the ground. When I peeped up again they were trotting in my direction, looking inquisitively at me. Then they stopped and began to graze; but their curiosity was too much for them, and they had to take another little run to find out what this dark object might be which lay bobbing up and down on the hilltop; but again they stopped and looked, then ran back, and at last settled down to graze quietly, only glancing up at me now and then.

‘Meanwhile I lay ready to shoot with my little stump of a rifle, looking up now and then, partly in order to keep an eye on the animals, and partly to animate them. But at last they would come no nearer, and although I thought the range pretty long, I crawled as far forward as I dared, and with the case of the field-glasses for a rest and the sight at two hundred and twenty yards, full sight, I possessed myself with courage and let blaze.

‘The reindeer merely looked up, sniffed, and went on grazing. I loaded and shot again—again—and again! Then I half raised myself and saw that the range was short, put down the sight, and tried again. The animal sprang into the air and galloped away downhill. Furious, I shouted to the second one as it set off at a trot after the other, that it might have *that* for a farewell, and flung a shot after it. The animal fell! Yes, really, fell! I rushed down to it, and finished it off with a shot in the nape of the neck—then gazed long after the first one. Great was my astonishment when I saw that it had lain down; I approached it, but it did not appear

A HOLIDAY ON BOARD.

to notice me, and I then went close up to it. It did not move—it was stone dead!

‘After this I slowly came to myself, and realized that I had shot my first and my second reindeer. I had something now with which to score off the others on board! I then thought of my poor hungry dogs, and rejoiced on their account. I went up to fetch my glasses and various other things where I had first lain and shot, and, to my shame and annoyance, found six empty cartridge cases lying about; but I had my two reindeer, and to judge of distance in certain conditions is difficult, and can only be learned by practice, which I had not.

‘Thanks to the fine weather, the reindeer were soon skinned, and I perspiring down under a load of marrow-bones and pieces of venison rolled up in one of the skins. But I perspired willingly, and the hour and a half’s walk to camp was over almost before I knew anything about it.

‘Hendriksen had for once tried in vain for a seal, which was lying up on the ice, and greeted me with the news that the sign of the times had come, when I met him on his way home. We had often talked of what a good feed the dogs should have as soon as the seals began to take to the ice. Meanwhile I said nothing about my shoot, but as we approached the tent, he noticed the bundle of reindeer-skin. He stared at it till he was so near that he could be certain what it was. “Hast thou shot a deer?” he asked, in his northern dialect. “Well, well, well. Hast thou shot two? What a gorge the dogs shall have!”

‘Our spirits were unusually high that evening, raised by the marrow-bone soup and a dram, and an animated conversation on reindeer-shooting on King Oscar Land and Spitzbergen continued until far into the night.

‘The day afterwards the dogs were to “have their gorge,” and they had it—till nothing remained but a few well-gnawed bones.

‘I had the annoyance at this time of losing a dog. It was a puppy, and did not belong to the team. It had been lent to me in the place of my old “Bas,” of honoured memory, who had died of old age and sickness. The puppy came up with us to be fed, but was lost on the way back, and had not turned up the following

morning. I had, therefore, to go off after it, but as I was unsuccessful in my search, we had to start minus a dog. I consoled myself by thinking that the rascal had dodged us and run away home. A week later it arrived at Björneborg, as fat as butter and thoroughly well pleased with itself. The intervening time it had spent probably at the walrus-meat in Hvalrosfjord, leaving it only when a bear had come and driven it away. It had thus gone forty-three miles on its own account.

‘After a day’s toil in rugged ice—we ended it, however, in a hare-hunt—and half a day’s easy driving, we came to De Lazy Point, where I meant to stay a day for excursions on land, and to take observations for position. But the weather was so uncertain, or, more correctly, so certainly bad, that our stay was prolonged to three and a half days.

‘During this dull time a bear-hunt was the only enlivenment we had. On our second morning there, just as we had begun breakfast, my dogs began to bark, and Hendriksen, who was “rigged”—that is to say, had on his “finsko”—at once crept out of the tent. The dogs were still barking—they sat gazing in one direction—and, on looking that way too, he saw a large bear, which was standing contemplating the camp, twenty paces behind the tent. When Hendriksen raised himself up it appeared to come to the conclusion that it was safer to retire, at any rate for the present, and, on Hendriksen’s first shot, considerably accelerated its retreat. Meanwhile I had got my boots on, and came out just in time to see the bear make his last jump for the second shot from Hendriksen’s rifle. There it lay, big and fat; useful to us and a joy to the dogs. They ate for two days, as long as they could swallow, and when we began to drive again on the third day it was as if we had new teams; they ran along with their heavy loads which before they had hardly been able to draw.

‘We were now taking a presumptive line for an island, or group of islands, which we had caught a glimpse of some days before, but it was not until we were just about to camp in the evening that we really saw them. The day afterwards we went ashore.

‘It proved that we had landed on the smaller and more

southerly of the two islands, both of which were of peculiar formation. On the more southerly, Buckingham Island, there was no firm rock.

‘In the centre of this island was a hill of grit, which rose to an approximate height of 500 feet. From this radiated numerous river-beds, which were deeply cut in the margin of the hill, and in the evenly sloping fore-land of grit and clay-plains around it. They ended in large estuary sands, which formed a flat shore-belt of low points and shallow bays, above which the fore-land, which was rugged on a small scale, rose gradually in the shape of clay-plains of slight gradient, grass-grown in the hollows, and broken by bare mounds of grit which, particularly in the vicinity of the larger river-beds, were disposed terrace-wise along them.

‘Numerous tracks of reindeer seemed to show that the animals had come from the south and had gone north. We also saw tracks of hares, ptarmigan, and foxes.

‘After we had broken camp and had driven a short way along the shore we came across a she-bear with her cubs sitting outside the crack, and we decided to feed the dogs. Mine had already noticed that I had taken my gun off the load; they began to look round, and at once observed the bears. These were some four hundred yards away, and as the snow was heavy, I at once let go the dogs in hopes that they would quickly bring the dam to bay, the more so as she had a small cub with her. But in this I was doomed to disappointment. The cub was a one-year-old, and both bears and dogs set off so quickly that soon I could hardly distinguish them on the ice. I followed them as quickly as I could, while Hendriksen took my sledge in tow, and really managed to get them both along, as his dogs, which had winded the game, hauled like mad. The bears made off at such a pace that it was a long time before the dogs caught them up, and when they did so the bears made no stand, but went steadily on over the flat ice. They were going so slowly now that I gradually gained well on them; but then the cub parted company from its dam, and set a course for the other cub which had hitherto been followed, accompanied by one of the boldest of the dogs. I passed them as I was following the she-bear, and she in

the end turned and came back after the cub, so that I could head them both off. We met at last as I advanced from behind a pressure-ridge. The bear fought desperately with the dogs, but when it discovered my insignificant presence in front, it first of all cast a contemptuous glance of surprise at me, as much as to say: "Why, there's another of them," and then grew angry, hissed, and had at the same time to repulse an attack from "Rotta," during which I gave it a shot in the shoulder. This brought the bear to the ground, but it got up again and faced about, hissing with rage, so that I had the "mark-spot" in the middle of its chest to aim at; then it fell heavily backwards and lay motionless, dead. A shot in the mark-spot hits the heart, and it was when trying to bite the wound in its breast, as the bear generally does, that it fell backwards.

'It was an insignificant little beast, considering that it was a full-grown bear; its coat was yellow and dirty, and its flesh thin and nearly black. We did not touch it, but our four-footed hunters eat up the whole animal during the course of the night.

'Meantime the two sledges had become too much for Hendriksen's dogs, and while he was waiting for me he walked after the cub, and watched the dog and bear alternately chasing each other, with short resting periods in between; but then they went farther afield, and he turned back. It was not till we had driven on the sledges a little further, skinned the fallen bear, and afterwards pitched the tent—for we would not go on without the dog—that it came back to us thoroughly tired out.

'This chase, which we had thought might delay us an hour at most, had by this time spoiled the best of the day; so there was nothing to be done now but to let the tent stand, creep into it, and wait for the morrow.

'This was announced to me by a shot just outside the tent-walls. Hendriksen, who had been lying awake, had heard the dogs beginning to bark; he had gone out at once, but before he had had time to raise himself up, after getting out of the tent, had been obliged to seize my rifle, which was lying ready to hand by the tent door, and try to check an old he-bear, which was coming full tilt at the tent. Fifteen paces off the bear received a shot which

brought him half-dead to the ground. At this juncture, as afore-said, I awoke. Hendriksen took his own rifle, and gave the bear a finishing shot, and I heard a defiant: "You can hiss as much as you like now, old fellow," and realized what had happened. I asked if the bear had harmed the dogs in any way, but learned that it had come from another direction, and had made straight for the tent, quickening its pace rather than otherwise when it saw Hendriksen. This was an enemy which had attacked us, and

THE MOST SOUTHERN OF 'THE AWLS.'

which we shot in self-defence—we did not require it, and let it lie untouched.

'It was now four o'clock, and I made breakfast. While we were drinking our coffee a ptarmigan came and sat cackling and clucking close by the tent. It was a lucky bird, Peder said, and we should have fine weather! Snow-buntings, on the other hand, he did not approve of; he declared they brought bad weather.

'A couple of days later—we were then camping in Graham Land—I made an excursion across the fore-land to a couple of valleys, which led up to the inner part of the island. The

weather was thick, with strong north-westerly wind. In the middle of the day the drift cleared for a little, and, among other things, I was able to see a herd of polar oxen which were grazing on the low-lying land a couple of miles away—but soon it was as thick as ever again. One can see nothing in such weather, least of all the snow on which one is about to take one's next step. Blinded in this way I was rushing down through a little valley, under the impression that I had a plain-sailing slope in front of me—I was, of course, on "ski"—when I suddenly found myself buried in a loose drift, which ran out from a point in the side of the valley.

A PAUSE.

As soon as I was on my legs again I continued my way till I reached the lower part of the valley where it opened out on to level country. The valley here made a turn, and as I was taking a diagonal line across a projecting spit of land, I suddenly stumbled on a white animal which was lying on the ground, and in the thick atmosphere looked most fearsomely large. My gun was ready in a moment, and when I raised myself up again—I had bent down to get hold of it at the moment when I became aware of the animal—the monster rose to its long legs, and I saw that it was a buck reindeer, which had been taking its noonday rest. While it stood doubtful what to do I let my "ski" glide

with me straight towards it, and apparently it did not at first notice the movement, for it continued to stand quite still. When at last it moved off I stopped and shot it.

'This was a deed of mercy rather than anything else, for life had probably been a burden to the poor animal of late. Solitary, it had dragged out a melancholy existence; and its last meal had consisted as much of earth as of lichen, leaves, willow-twigs, and the like.

'With the greater part of the meat on my back, besides other heavy things in the shape of my gun, hammer, and divers stones, I had a heavy march home to camp. The drifting snow had obliterated my tracks of the morning, and I had to keep my course by the direction of the wind. When I got back, Hendriksen was walking to and fro in front of the tent thinking, he said, that I should lose myself.

'But again the sun shone warmly, it was calm, and thirteen below zero promised us a good driving day. Our way led across level country to a valley, where I expected to find a pass, which would bring us across to the north side of the island.

'From a landscape point of view Graham Island is a tableland, averaging centrally 1200 to 1500 feet, and is surrounded by a sharply defined belt of low level country. Speaking generally, the tableland is of even surface, but in detail its evenness is broken by the troughs of torrents and by low but abrupt step-like precipices. Short deep valleys intersect the edge of the tableland and cross the level country to the sea. It is up a valley such as these that is reached, at its upper part, the flat depression where the river or stream takes its source from the afflux of water in the clayey rock-bed.

'On the one side the depression borders on ground covered with low débris leading up like a step to a sloping plateau; on the other a slight incline soon brings one to the edge of a similar stony slope, whence step-like plains lead downwards, in sinking ground, to the last expanse of stony ground with its fall of as much as a thousand feet, which forms the boundary of the level country surrounding the tableland. These screes or stone-strewn slopes face south-east, while the plains sink towards the north-west.

‘Here the great builder of the earth, the sea, has piled up layer upon layer of sand to a height of several thousand feet; to begin with, loose sand, in which is imbedded here and there indistinct remains of a strain or stratum of coal, as if it would show that the land it washed had had a vegetation and had sustained life whose kind and importance posterity might be permitted to gain an idea of, but not look upon. At any rate, up to this date, no more abundant remains have been found.

‘When the sea left off its work, the layers of sand stiffened, under the effects of other forces, into stone, became broken in pieces and displaced with regularity, so that the north-westerly edges of the fragments came to lie lower than the south-easterly ones, and the whole expanse to look like a colossal ploughed field. On this surface fell rain and snow, and then running water began to chisel out forms in greater variety. First of all it ran in small streamlets over each “furrow” and each slope, collected along the upper edge of the underlying “furrow,” and ran along it until it came to a break, which it followed and thus continued on along the next edge, and so on, until the water, now in the form of a river, reached the margin, where it fell over in a steep fall. Little by little the river dug down its bed, widened it behind and at the sides, and conquered by degrees the additional furrows.

‘The aggregation of water from several directions now met, and, in the shape of busy streams, hastened through the steep gullies to the deep-cut valleys, with their precipitous walls and flat bottom, through which the now largish river wound its way down to the level country and the sea outside.

‘Low down the valley sides was land of stony clay, which, in its lowest and dampest parts, supported a humble vegetation, chiefly consisting of *Andromeda* in the damper places, and willow-scrub on the comparatively dry grass-bogs. The screes were clad with lichens and moss, more especially at their bases; and below the drifts which melt in the spring, I saw occasional patches of moss, a tuft of heather, or some kind of grass. Sparse, but general, were also quite a number of flowering plants, such as the little violet saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*), the Arctic poppy (*Papaver nudicaule*), with its pale yellow flowers, and the mountain avens

(*Dryas octopetala*), etc., etc. Quite barren, or only clad with some kind of lichen, was the upper margin of the slopes, as well as the country which continued downwards like a sea of large, sharp-edged blocks of stone, until at its lower parts they became stone-mixed clay, with here and there a few blades of grass; here and there a tuft of mountain flowers—*Cerastium alpinum*, *Stellaria longipes*, etc., etc.

‘Just as the vegetable life is correlated to the geology of a region, so the animal life, its pursuer, and the geologist go of physical necessity hand-in-hand. The screes are the haunt of the small game. Here the hare finds a sheltered and well-hidden form when she has done foraging among the rocks in the valley below; and here, on the patches of moss between the stones, the ptarmigan have their nests. Round about, the Andromeda, willow-scrub, and other plants provide food for the young birds before they can fly, and require the cover afforded by the greyish-brown speckled colour of the stony ground, and by the hiding-places between the stones. It is not till later in the year, when the snow falls on the heights, that the coveys, now able to fly, go down to feed on the tufts of grass along the river-side, which is kept bare by the wind. Their permanent quarters, all the year round, however, are first on one scree and then on another.

‘Whereas the screes, partly in the valleys and partly on the heights, are the haunts of the small game, the big game is found in the large valleys and on the level ground. The reindeer and polar oxen migrate up the sheltered valleys to find shelter from the storms, and to pass the nights, or because they have good places of defence there when attacked, but their food they find on the level country outside.

‘This is an old sea-floor and shore, chiefly built up of loose masses from a recent geological period. The lower parts are flat plains of sand and clay, while higher up it is more hilly. The rivers, which come from the inner elevated land, have built up mounds of grit and cut deep precipices, and the sea, when it acquired the material thus carried down, formed the grit into terraces and points at the mouths of the bays, and spread the clay in flat depressions for longish distances along the shores. Scattered

planless over the whole, like old grey quarry-stones in the even grass-carpet of the clay, were large fragments of rock, which the ice had carried up from the steep shores and strewn about at random, leaving, when it floated away, one on the top of a hillock, another in a hollow of the ground.

‘The stony ridges of this slightly undulating level country are bare of snow, in winter-time, and thus afford food for big game, even during the long winter. This is not only the case in these islands, but on the whole of the west side of Ellesmere Land, and in the tracts about Heureka Sound. In the hollows between the ridges, on the other hand, the snow lies packed, providing a good driving way; and this we made use of one sunny May 2, driving from the ice-foot up the level country, along the east side of a largish river. The weather was fine and the going good, so that we went very quickly until, on looking ahead, beyond a slight rise in the ground, I saw something which made me pull up suddenly. In front of us, a little to the left, were four reindeer, quietly grazing. As soon as the dogs saw the animals they, of course, began to bark and howl because they were not allowed to give chase—we had taken our usual precaution and overturned the sledges—and the reindeer then set off, but stopped again at a little distance. Later in the day we passed another herd of three animals; they took no notice of us.

‘When, about noon, we reached the foot of the higher ground, we saw a polar ox right in front of us. They are good dog-food, and we decided to shoot it. Hendriksen had not shot a polar ox before, so he got out his rifle, and I gave him my dogs, which were ahead, to let loose on the animals. The ox was walking on a ridge of stones on the north side of a hill, and the animals—there were three of them—had not even remarked us as we came driving from the south on the opposite bank of the stream, only three or four hundred yards away. Two of them were lying down, and consequently we did not see them at first. The dogs had long had wind of the animals, and pulled like fury; and, now that they saw them as well, set off like rockets when Hendriksen let them go. I let loose the second team too.

‘It was not till the dogs had crossed the stream and were

running up the hillside that the animals saw them. They immediately formed a triangle, and stood quietly waiting till we came up, now and then, only, making a sortie after a dog. Hendriksen had the first shot, and fired at the old cow, under the horns, as she was standing with her head lowered. She, of course, remained standing, but bled profusely, and Hendriksen asked, half aghast, half angrily, where these animals were to be hit in order to bring off one's shot the first time. As an old Arctic Ocean walrus-catcher he thought he ought not to expend more than one shot on each animal. At this moment the bull, which was right in front of me, lowered its head for an attack on a more than usually importunate dog, and I gave it a shot in the nape of the neck. It sank together as if struck by lightning. Hendriksen shot the two others in the same spot, and we thus had the whole family—an old cow, and two quite young animals. All were thin. Then came pitching the tent, and the skinning. We kept the best of the meat for ourselves, and the rest was eaten up by the teams during the night. Next morning only a heap of gnawed bones and a few bits of skin indicated the spot where thirteen beasts of prey had made havoc.

'The day afterwards we continued driving, in fine weather, easily found the pass we wanted, and reached the ice-foot on the north side of the island. A buck reindeer, which we passed at five hundred yards' distance, saw us, and came running after us several times to investigate the convoy. Finally it stood still and gazed at us for a long time, then apparently gave up troubling itself any more in the matter, and began to graze instead.

'A few days later we left the islands. Three days' driving brought us to "Hyperitodden" (Hyperite Point), and further to "Björnesund" (Bear Sound), in Heureka Sound, tracts which both before and since have been visited by others—that same year by Isachsen, and both the following years by Captain Sverdrup.

'After a few days' stay we started back to the ship, and at five o'clock on Whit-Sunday morning those on board were aroused from their slumbers by protracted howls—our four-footed friends' greeting to the home-comers. Our own dogs had an extra feed, and were tied up: that was the thanks *they* got for work well done.'

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE RETURNING PARTY'S EXPERIENCES.

BAUMANN related that the returning party met their first bear a couple of evenings after they had parted from us, up in Norskebugten. It came stalking straight up to camp, just as they were beginning to cook their supper. A couple of our fellows were inside the tent, but most of them were still out, and so busy at their work that they did not see 'Bamsen' till he was close on it. Nor did the dogs remark him—they were gnawing fish. The bear marched straight through a couple of the teams, hit out to right and left, scattering the dogs in all directions, and set his course straight on the camp.

Stolz, who was a little way from it, trying to get some cooking ice, suddenly saw 'the white 'un' right in front of him, and ran off to fetch his carbine. When he had dragged it out of its cover, however, he found that the mechanism was so full of ice that it would not act, so he shouted to the others that they must shoot, and the intruder was eventually laid low by Baumann and Schei. It was a fine, very fat bear, and came in well for the dogs.

As long as the weather was calm the returning party followed our tracks down the bay, but when they came to 'Trangsund' (Narrow Sound), as we called the narrowest part of Hell Gate, the wind got up, and several times they had to take to road-making before they could advance farther. A great quantity of the fast ice had drifted away, so that progress for them was worse than it had been for us, excepting inasmuch as they had next to nothing on their sledges.

They saw a great deal of open water in the western part of Jones Sound, especially near the western cape of Hvalrosfjord. When they drove up to the place where we had left the walrus-

meat, they found a bear there eating for all he was worth. An attempt to shoot it was unsuccessful; it was wounded, but saved itself by taking rapid flight.

They arrived at Björneborg in bad weather on April 5, after six days' driving. They set to work at once on some small repairs, and on taking out and apportioning Schei and Peder's provisions; and then, as they were lucky enough to get a fine

GLACIER IN RUTHERFORD BAY.

day, made use of the opportunity to dry the sleeping-bag and fur clothing before they started north again with Schei and Peder.

On April 8 they were again on the way from Björneborg, keeping to their own track west to Hvalrosfjord. When they arrived there they saw another bear lying gnawing at the meat and blubber, but he was wise in time, and made off before they could get a shot at him. But in any case they had no time to spend on bear-hunting just now, for they had plenty of meat.

There was nearly always wind in the sound, and we hardly ever had a thoroughly calm day there; this time it was really very bad. On April 8 and 9 they had a violent snowstorm, which on

the afternoon of the second day made short work of Baumann's tent. The wind cracked the ridge-pole, and they had to spend a couple of hours splicing it and re-pitching the tent; no sooner had they done it all than the wind went down!

Next morning they began to cook at five o'clock, but found so much to do repairing all the damage, and digging out the sledges, that they did not get off before nine. They had before them a bit of nasty driving. The ice-foot had been carried away for a couple of hundred yards, obliging them to drive along the talus at some little height. Farther on their progress was still very slow on account of the drift and the number of stones on the ice-foot.

At Trangsund they cached some dog-food, consisting of blubber and fish; and in a biting wind from the north set diagonally across the sound, towards North Kent. This was on April 12. Although Baumann and the mate took it in turns to drive first, they were both badly frozen, Baumann chiefly on the wrists, and the mate chiefly on the upper lip, with the sad result that he lost his moustache. Happily neither of them had any lasting ill-effects from it. They pitched their tent close inshore, and braced it with a number of extra storm-guys. It was the returning party's last day with Schei and Peder, and the two latter stood drinks in honour of it.

Next day the two parties said good-bye to each other. The weather was fairly fine, but the returning party had not gone far from land on their way back, when the wind sprang up as violently as the day before. But it was now at their backs; the empty sledges were light; and they covered the whole of the previous day's march in an hour.

This day again they were put to a good deal of trouble by the stones, which had lately rolled down from the talus; the German silver on the sledges creaked and groaned till it could be heard quite a way off, but it was not possible to take much heed of it.

By three in the afternoon they were through the sound, and went on at once to Hvalrosfjord, where they arrived half an hour later, but as they could not find a sheltered camping-place there, they drove on to the cape between Gaasefjord and Hvalrosfjord. Not much lee was to be found there either, but still it was possible to pitch a tent.

Hardly had they raised this when a squall of wind snapped one of the tent-poles. They lashed and supported it as best they could, but later on moved out to the crack, to a place that seemed to be more sheltered. No sooner had they conveyed everything thither than the wind began to blow there worse than ever, so back they went to their first camping-place. While they were re-pitching the tent a gust of wind from the north snapped the other tent-pole, and, although the canvas was unusually strong, made a large rent in it.

To have their tent torn to pieces in a gale with the temperature at thirteen below zero was hardly a pleasant experience for them. As a rule, in such circumstances, the best thing to do is to dig one's self a hole in a snowdrift, but it is a last resource, for the snow clings so to one's clothing that it soon becomes icy, and one cannot sleep out in that way for long, especially if the weather be continuously bad as it was that year.

They therefore chose the only wise course: decided to collect their things, strike camp, and drive on as soon as possible to try to reach Björneborg during the course of the night. The loads were hurriedly lashed to the sledges, and they started off in the gloom and darkness of the stormy night, first with the wind abeam, afterwards abaft. The pace along the polished ice-foot was tremendous, and scattered about on it, here and there, were stones firmly frozen into the ice, causing them continual shocks; for of foothold by which they could steer there was none, and it was as much as the dogs could do to keep ahead of the sledges at all. How many times the sledges overturned I know not, but certainly not a few. The teams too ran into one another, for it was impossible to stop them in time.

The dogs being so animated, it was hardly to be expected that they should not fight, and fight they did, every now and then. The result of this was that their traces became interlaced, and some time was taken up in disentangling them.

They arrived at Björneborg, however, about eleven o'clock, and turned Bay out. The Commandant's residence did not offer much accommodation for the three homeless men, but it was further proof, if proof were needed, that where there is heart-room there is

house-room, and the circumstances being what they were, the wayfarers were glad enough to spend the night each sitting in a corner of the warm tent instead of outside in the snow. At any rate they suffered no hardship. The next day the tent and tent-poles were mended, the tent pitched, and they turned into their bags. The day after this again, April 15, being well rested, they started east to the 'Fram,' taking with them three bear-skins; and arrived on board on April 17.

Raanes.

THE DAY'S WORK ENDED.

They set to work at once to put the tent and baggage in repair, in order to be ready for the next trip, and did a little bear-shooting and their daily work of taking observations, etc., until May 4, when they started on Journey No. 2, on which they were to take observations at Land's End and fetch the boat from Baadsfjord on their way back.

At the eastern headland of Gaasefjord they met with so much open water that they were obliged to take to the ice-foot, some distance inside the place where we had driven on it earlier in the spring. They took a line thence in to Hvalrosfjord, not knowing

at the time that practically speaking they were one and the same fjord, for as far as sledge-expeditions were concerned, the low narrow spit of land between the two was not worth taking into account. After driving for a while they reached Indre Eide, and a little farther on realized that they were in Gaasefjord. All the land they could see three or four miles inwards was steep and precipitous, the sea being close in to the foot of the mountains. They camped in the evening near the mouth of a river running through a large valley, which cut its way into the land in a westerly direction, and they decided on this way for their advance towards the west coast. It was agreed that Baumann and the mate should go on with one team, while Stolz remained at the camp to shoot.

They found a fairly good pass, and it was not many hours before they reached the watershed, whence they could see across to the sound on the other side of the land. On the way down they followed a small glacier, and after six hours' march reached the shore at 'Renbugten' (Reindeer Bay).

The impression they now received of the sound was very different from our earlier one; but it must be remembered that they did not pass through the narrowest part of it—the part which invariably showed itself worthy of its later designation.

They had brilliant spring weather on the way north. It was the middle of the melting season, and there was water and slush on the ice. To them it seemed like coming from the deadness of a desert to a land full of life and warmth. It was just like a spring day at home in Norway: the ice was melting; the streams running. Havnefjord was not to be compared with Hell Gate at this time. Seals and walrus basked in the sun in numbers on the ice, and the tracks of the bears crossed and re-crossed one another in all directions. In a word, Hell Gate, the redoubtable, presented itself to the astonished 'Fram' folk as a veritable Eldorado for sportsmen. The temptations were too strong for them, and they stalked two walrus, though without success, for both animals got wind of them and took to the water.

Farther north they met a bear, and put the two most warlike of the dogs on to it, but they did not seem to think it was any business of theirs, and let the bear go its own way. It was only

when it had gone some distance that they set off after it, and all three were soon lost to sight. The dogs then went a journey on their own account, and it was they Fosheim and I met on our way to Björneborg. The party were more fortunate at Land's End, where they shot a harbour seal; and on the way south when they despatched two bearded seals.

On May 10 they reached Land's End, where they took observations for latitude and longitude. It was here that according to arrangement they were to leave an account and sketch-map of the

SCHEI RETURNS TO CAMP A MIGHTY HUNTER.

pass across to Hvalrosfjord, and then return home. However, they found no materials on the point with which to erect a cairn, and they therefore built one inside the bay, a little north-east of the point, and left our beautiful Norwegian flag waving from the top of it.

On May 12 they started south, in splendid weather, keeping the route by which they had come. They passed Björneborg and went into Baadsfjord, where they dug out the boat and lashed it on to the 'water-sledge.' Being of oak, the boat was exceedingly heavy, and made great demands on the strength both of the sledge and the dogs. Stolz drove first with the baggage, and then

Isachsen.

Hassel.

HOME FROM THE JOURNEY.

came a team with an almost empty sledge but with long tow-lines from it attached to the boat, which towered on the 'water-sledge,' drawn by the mate's team.

On the morning of May 17 they left Lille Sandör, and drove down from the ice-foot to the ice. The sledge received a severe shock at the change of gradient, and it is a marvel it withstood it, considering its load. On the rugged, rubbly ice outside the sledges skipped along, not always in time, it is true, but covering the ground quickly, despite snow and wind, which helped the bad going all in their power to hinder progress. The day was solemnized by a simple feast, with hot grog afterwards.

Bad as had been the weather on May 17, the 18th was no better. A span of all sixteen dogs was harnessed to the sledge, but with so little result that they thought it best to camp out on Sydkapfjord, although it was still the forenoon. About midday a snowstorm blew up from the south-west, and the tent required all the support they could give it. A little later the wind changed to the east and increased to a gale, whereupon the tent was nearly blown away. They had to vacate it forthwith, and turn it round so that the door was no longer on the weather side. Later on they saw that it would be a great advantage to pitch the tent under the lee of the boat, and they accordingly set to work to do this, but it was no easy matter. The boat had first to be dug out of a drift, driven a little distance so as to be clear of it, and then turned round. The idea, however, proved to be a good one, for the boat effectually sheltered the tent. The men crept in again and thoroughly secured the door, having brought in with them a good supply of provisions in case of emergencies.

Next day the weather was a trifle more reasonable, though the going was as bad as ever. Things went pretty well, however, until they had passed the rocks south of Skreia, after which the snow grew worse. The sledge had to be dug free every few minutes, and the dogs toiled inordinately. In the afternoon the party camped not far from a point in the offing off Havnefjord, and made some coffee, while the dogs had a three hours' rest. At eight they started again, but were not able to get the boat farther than the middle of the bay. They accordingly left it there, and

drove straight to the 'Fram,' which they reached at dawn on Sunday, May 20. A couple of days later the boat was fetched by five men and twenty-six dogs, who all together made very short work of it.

When it was known on board that I proposed to send a sledge-expedition west to Björneborg, and then north to Land's End after Fosheim's party, Schei and Baumann at once offered their services. They equipped in the course of the day, and were ready to start the morning after my return, that is to say, the Tuesday after Whitsuntide. They took my dogs as a loose team, as Fosheim required a team for the transport of the depot, and thus Baumann's dogs, which Fosheim had driven since we parted at Norskebugten, came back into the hands of their rightful owner.

Stolz and Simmons joined company with Schei and Baumann, as they had to fetch some of the boat's tackle, which was still in Baadsfjord. Simmons hoped to make use of the opportunity to collect some plants. On June 5, accordingly, about seven in the evening, they all left the ship.

Our comrades on board had experienced some exciting bear-hunts during the course of the spring, and there were tales in particular of a chase in which Olsen had played the chief part. Olsen was the keenest of sportsmen, but as he was so shortsighted that he could not see many gun's-lengths in front of him, the results were not always equal to his expectations. For a long time now it had been his greatest wish—perhaps interwoven with his evening prayers—to have a chance of shooting a bear. He had amused himself the whole of the spring, since the days had become light, by breaking in the puppies. I will not say that he was quite the right man in the right place as far as this duty was concerned, but at any rate he thought it was all very satisfactory, and there was such good stuff in the dogs that it was wonderful how fast they got over the ground.

One day when he was driving down the sound, to the best of his ability, to see if he could find a bear out by the rocks, the puppies winded game, and set off at full speed. The game proved to be a bear with two cubs, but they soon disappeared from view behind some big hummocks. Olsen, with his keen sight, at once

thought the bears had 'gone away,' and was not a little surprised when, on turning round a hummock in hot pursuit, he nearly tumbled over the dam, which was standing snarling at him. He immediately loosed the puppies, and sprang from the sledge. No sooner did the puppies find they were free than they made off after the cubs, on the principle, I suppose, of like seeks like; but just as Olsen was running up to give the bear a taste of his Krag-Jørgensen rifle, he fell head foremost into a drift, and drove his gun so fast into the snow that he spent some time fumbling for it.

The bear was not so fierce as it appeared to be, for it stood still, snarling, and waited patiently till Olsen had got hold of his gun again; and when he had aimed and let blaze, it was good enough to receive the bullet and allow itself to be laid low. That it was killed outright I will not say—I think it got a shot or two more—but it is enough that it remained where it was without moving from the spot.

Meanwhile the puppies had taken in hand the pretty little cubs; they were not many weeks old, and their powers of defence consequently not very great. Olsen captured them both, and made an end of one, at any rate; while the other, I believe, was brought on board alive. After a good deal of trouble the happy sportsman succeeded in hauling his bear on to the sledge, put the cubs on the top of the bear, and drove home in triumph.

This was the proudest day of Olsen's life, and I doubt not he will keep the memory of it green till the end. He often talked of the event, which always brought him into high good humour, and he invariably ended up by saying: 'I went out a beggar and came back a fine fellow.'

After Whitsuntide the mate and Peder set to work to remove the blubber from and salt the skins of the bears which had been shot during the autumn and winter. This provided them with work for many days, and a good many barrels were filled with the blubber. Then came the deck's turn; it had to be scraped and holystoned, for it was in a terrible state from all the meat and blubber which had been lying on it for so long. We rigged out a couple of large spars on the starboard side, and hung the

remaining walrus- and bear-meat from them, to avoid the perpetual dripping of fat and train-oil. The greater part of the walrus-meat had, however, been used up, and what we had left was chiefly the carcasses of bears. Of them we had plenty, and consequently dog-food in abundance for as long as we should remain in Havnefjord.

There was a great deal of work to be done before we could leave our winter quarters; the most extensive being the repairs to the main rigging, which had to be served for a long way up, and the dead-eyes spliced in. The mate and Peder set to work on this as soon as they were able to do so. But there was still more to be done before we were ready for sea. A new mainsail had to be made, and the spars got ready for it. In the engine-room also were several things to be completed before we were clear. This latter was in Olsen's domain.

About June 9 fine weather made its advent in Havnefjord. The snow on the slopes began to melt, and the streams to flow and rush over the precipices. We were no longer obliged to fetch cooking ice—we could take water on board straight from the ice-foot. If only this weather would continue a little longer the ice in the fjord would soon melt, and we could begin dredging and other summer work before we moved out to Jones Sound.

After a few days' absence Simmons and Stolz returned with all the things that had been left in Baadsfjord; but the botanical results amounted to little more than *nil*, as there was still a great deal of snow in the fjord. It would not be many days now, however, before Simmons could begin to botanize under the steep cliffs on the north side of our harbour. On the sunniest days, too, Bay also went off, and soon announced with glee that he was beginning to see flies, humble bees, and other old friends and acquaintances of the insect world; but his joy was not complete until he had seen the first butterfly of the season, and it had fluttered into his clutches.

END OF VOL. I.

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