

the middle of the channel I was startled by all at once seeing the bottom grow light under us, and had nearly run the boat on a shoal of which no one knew anything. There was scarcely more than two or three feet of water, and the current ran over it like a rapid river. Shoals and sunken rocks abound there on every hand, especially on the south side of the strait, and it required great care to navigate a vessel through it. Near the eastern mouth of the strait we put into a little creek, dragged the boat up on the beach, and then, taking our guns, made for some high-lying land we had noticed. We tramped along over the same undulating plain-land with low ridges, as we had seen everywhere round the Yugor Strait. A brownish-green carpet of moss and grass spread over the plain, bestrewn with flowers of rare beauty. During the long, cold Siberian winter the snow lies in a thick mass over the tundra; but no sooner does the sun get the better of it than hosts of tiny northern flowers burst their way up through the fast-disappearing coating of snow and open their modest calices, blushing in the radiant summer day that bathes the plain in its splendor. Saxifrages with large blooms, pale-yellow mountain poppies (*Papaver nudicaule*) stand in bright clusters, and here and there with bluish forget-me-nots and white cloud-berry flowers; in some boggy hollows the cotton-grass spreads its wavy down carpet, while in other spots small forests of blue-bells softly tingle in the wind on their upright stalks. These flowers are not at all brilliant specimens, being in