

from land and got into deeper water, so that the *Fram* could come on again at full speed.

From time to time our petroleum engine took to its old tricks and stopped. I had to pour in more oil to set it going again, and as I was standing doing this the boat gave a lurch, so that a little oil was spilt and took fire. The burning oil ran over the bottom of the boat, where a good deal had been spilt already. In an instant the whole stern was in a blaze, and my clothes, which were sprinkled with oil, caught fire. I had to rush to the bow, and for a moment the situation was a critical one, especially as a big pail that was standing full of oil also took fire. As soon as I had stopped the burning of my clothes I rushed aft again, seized the pail, and poured the flaming oil into the sea, burning my fingers badly. At once the whole surface of the water round was in flames. Then I got hold of the baler, and baled water into the boat as hard as I could, and soon the worst was over. Things had looked anything but well from the *Fram*, however, and they were standing by with ropes and buoys to throw to us.

Soon we were out of Yugor Strait. There was now so little fog that the low land round us was visible, and we could also see a little way out to sea, and, in the distance, all drift-ice. At 4 o'clock in the morning (August 4th) we glided past Sokolii, or Hawk Island, out into the dreaded Kara Sea.

Now our fate was to be decided. I had always said