

round, just as if each had dug out a hole for itself in the sandy plain.

With the oars of our boat and a large tarpaulin we had made a sort of tent. We were lucky enough to find a little dry wood, and soon the tent was filled with the fragrant odor of hot coffee. When we had eaten and drunk and our pipes were lit, Johansen, in spite of fatigue and a full meal, surprised us by turning one somersault after another on the heavy, damp sand in front of the tent in his long military cloak and sea-boots half full of water.

By 6.30 next morning we were on board again. The fog had cleared, but the ice, which lay drifting backward and forward according to the set of the tide, looked as close as ever towards the north. During the morning we had a visit from a boat with two stalwart Samoyedes, who were well received and treated to food and tobacco. They gave us to understand that they were living in a tent some distance inland and farther north. Presently they went off again, enriched with gifts. These were the last human beings we met.

Next day the ice was still close, and, as there was nothing else to be done, some of us went ashore again in the afternoon, partly to see more of this little-known coast, and partly, if possible, to find the Samoyedes' camp, and get hold of some skins and reindeer flesh. It is a strange, flat country. Nothing but sand, sand everywhere. Still flatter, still more desolate than the