

clay and large and small stones strewn over moss and grass flats. Before us we saw points and headlands, with islands outside, and sounds and fjords between; but it was all locked up in ice, and we could not see far for the fog. There was that strange Arctic hush and misty light over everything—that grayish-white light caused by the reflection from the ice being cast high into the air against masses of vapor, the dark land offering a wonderful contrast. We were not sure whether this was the land near Taimur Sound or that by Cape Palander, but were agreed that in any case it would be best to hold a northerly course, so as to keep clear of Almquist's Islands, which Nordenskiöld marks on his map as lying off Taimur Island. If we shaped our course for one watch north, or north to west, we should be safe after that, and be able again to hold farther east. But we miscalculated, after all. At midnight we turned northeastward, and at 4 A.M. (August 28th) land appeared out of the fog about half a mile off. It seemed to Sverdrup, who was on deck, the highest that we had seen since we left Norway. He consequently took it to be the mainland, and wished to keep well outside of it, but was obliged to turn from this course because of ice. We held to the W.S.W., and it was not till 9 A.M. that we rounded the western point of a large island and could steer north again. East of us were many islands or points with solid ice between them, and we followed the edge of the ice. All the morning we went north