

dead-water, and made hardly any way, in spite of the engine going full pressure. It was such slow work that I thought I would row ahead to shoot seal. In the meantime the *Fram* advanced slowly to the edge of the ice with her machinery still going at full speed.

For the moment we had simply to give up all thoughts of getting on. It was most likely, indeed, that only a few miles of solid ice lay between us and the probably open Taimur Sea; but to break through this ice was an impossibility. It was too thick, and there were no openings in it. Nordenskiöld had steamed through here earlier in the year (August 18, 1878) without the slightest hinderance,* and here, perhaps, our hopes, for this year at any rate, were to be wrecked. It was not possible that the ice should melt before winter set in in earnest. The only thing to save us would be a proper storm from the southwest. Our other slight hope lay in the possibility that Nordenskiöld's Taimur Sound farther south might be open, and that we might manage to get the *Fram* through there, in spite of Nordenskiöld having said distinctly "that it is too shallow to allow of the passage of vessels of any size."

After having been out in the kayak and boat and shot

* In his account of his voyage Nordenskiöld writes as follows of the condition of this channel: "We were met by only small quantities of that sort of ice which has a layer of fresh-water ice on the top of the salt, and we noticed that it was all melting fjord or river ice. I hardly think that we came all day on a single piece of ice big enough to have cut up a seal upon."