

the edge of the ice, and hardly feel a shock when she touched.

Just as we were approaching we saw a fox jumping backward and forward on the ice, taking the most wonderful leaps and enjoying life. Sverdrup sent a ball from the forecastle which put an end to it on the spot.

About midday two bears were seen on land, but they disappeared before we got in to shoot them.

The number of seals to be seen in every direction was something extraordinary, and it seemed to me that this would be an uncommonly good hunting-ground. The flocks I saw this first day on the ice reminded me of the crested-seal hunting-grounds on the west coast of Greenland.

This experience of ours may appear to contrast strangely with that of the *Vega* expedition. Nordenskiöld writes of this sea, comparing it with the sea to the north and east of Spitzbergen: "Another striking difference is the scarcity of warm-blooded animals in this region as yet unvisited by the hunter. We had not seen a single bird in the whole course of the day, a thing that had never before happened to me on a summer voyage in the Arctic regions, and we had hardly seen a seal." The fact that they had not seen a seal is simply enough explained by the absence of ice. From my impression of it, the region must, on the contrary, abound in seals. Nordenskiöld himself says that "num-