

—8 or 9 fathoms right up to the shore. However, we were stopped by ice in the evening, and as we ran the risk of being frozen in if we pushed on any farther I thought it best to turn. We certainly ran no danger of starving, for we saw fresh tracks both of bears and reindeer everywhere, and there were plenty of seals in the water; but I was afraid of delaying the *Fram*, in view of the possibility of progress in another direction. So we toiled back against a strong wind, not reaching the ship till next morning; and this was none too early, for presently we were in the midst of a storm.

On the subject of the navigability of Taimur Strait, Nordenskiöld writes that, "according to soundings made by Lieutenant Palander, it is obstructed by rocky shallows; and being also full of strong currents, it is hardly advisable to sail through it—at least, until the direction of these currents has been carefully investigated." I have nothing particular to add to this, except that, as already mentioned, the channel was clear as far as we penetrated, and had the appearance of being practicable as far as I could see. I was, therefore, determined that we would, if necessary, try to force our way through with the *Fram*.

The 5th of September brought snow with a stiff breeze, which steadily grew stronger. When it was rattling in the rigging in the evening we congratulated each other on being safe on board—it would not have been an easy matter to row back to-day. But altogether I was dis-