

north latitude, or about 14 miles from what is marked as the mainland on Nordenskiöld's or Bove's map. It was hardly to be expected that these should be correct, as the weather seems to have been foggy the whole time the explorers were here.

Nor were we successful in finding Hovgaard's Islands as we sailed north. When I supposed that we were off them, just on the north side of the entrance to Taimur Strait, I saw, to my surprise, a high mountain almost directly north of us, which seemed as if it must be on the mainland. What could be the explanation of this? I began to have a growing suspicion that this was a regular labyrinth of islands we had got into. We were hoping to investigate and clear up the matter when thick weather, with sleet and rain, most inconveniently came on, and we had to leave this problem for the future to solve.

The mist was thick, and soon the darkness of night was added to it, so that we could not see land at any great distance. It might seem rather risky to push ahead now, but it was an opportunity not to be lost. We slackened speed a little, and kept on along the coast all night, in readiness to turn as soon as land was observed ahead. Satisfied that things were in good hands, as it was Sverdrup's watch, I lay down in my berth with a lighter mind than I had had for long.

At 6 o'clock next morning (September 7th) Sverdrup roused me with the information that we had passed