

even going up to look at all the hurly-burly, but just chatting and laughing as usual. Last night there was tremendous pressure round our old dog-floe. The ice had towered up higher than the highest point of the floe and hustled down upon it. It had quite spoiled a well, where we till now had found good drinking-water, filling it with brine. Furthermore, it had cast itself over our stern ice-anchor and part of the steel cable which held it, burying them so effectually that we had afterwards to cut the cable. Then it covered our planks and sledges, which stood on the ice. Before long the dogs were in danger, and the watch had to turn out all hands to save them. At last the floe split in two. This morning the ice was one scene of melancholy confusion, gleaming in the most glorious sunshine. Piled up all round us were high, steep ice walls. Strangely enough, we had lain on the very verge of the worst confusion, and had escaped with the loss of an ice-anchor, a piece of steel cable, a few planks and other bits of wood, and half of a Samoyede sledge, all of which might have been saved if we had looked after them in time. But the men have grown so indifferent to the pressure now that they do not even go up to look, let it thunder ever so hard. They feel that the ship can stand it, and so long as that is the case there is nothing to hurt except the ice itself.

“In the morning the pressure slackened again, and we were soon lying in a large piece of open water, as we