

had a height of 18 to 23 feet; and I can maintain with certainty that the packing of sea ice to a height of over 25 feet is a very rare exception.\*

“Saturday, October 14th. To-day we have got on the rudder; the engine is pretty well in order, and we are clear to start north when the ice opens to-morrow morning. It is still slackening and packing quite regularly twice a day, so that we can calculate on it beforehand. To-day we had the same open channel to the north, and beyond it open sea as far as our view extended. What can this mean? This evening the pressure has been pretty violent. The floes were packed up against the *Fram* on the port side, and were once or twice on the point of toppling over the rail. The ice, however broke below; they tumbled back again, and had to go under us after all. It is not thick ice, and cannot do much damage; but the force is something enormous. On the masses come incessantly without a pause; they look irresistible; but slowly and surely they are crushed against the *Fram's* sides. Now (8.30 P.M.) the pressure has at last stopped. Clear evening, sparkling stars, and flaming northern lights.”

I had finished writing my diary, gone to bed, and

\* Markham's account gives us to understand that on the north side of Grinnell Land he came across hummocks which measured 43 feet. I do not feel at all certain that these were not in reality icebergs; but it is no doubt possible that such hummocks might be formed by violent pressure against land or something resembling it. After our experience, however, I cannot believe in the possibility of their occurring in open sea.