

sparkling with its eternal whiteness all around me, tried my eyes severely, and I seemed to get no nearer the bears. My prospects of coming up with them were ruined by the dogs, who were keen enough to frighten the bears, but not so keen as to press on and bring them to bay. I would not, however, give up. Presently a fog came on and hid everything from view except the bear-tracks, which steadily pointed forward; then it lifted, and the sun shone out again clear and bright as before. The *Fram's* masts had long since disappeared over the edge of the ice, but still I kept on. Presently, however, I began to feel faint and hungry, for in my hurry I had not even had my breakfast, and at last had to bite the sour apple and turn back without any bears.

"On my way I came across a remarkable hummock. It was over 20 feet in height (I could not manage to measure it quite to the top); the middle part had fallen in, probably from pressure of the ice, while the remaining part formed a magnificent triumphal arch of the whitest marble, on which the sun glittered with all its brilliancy. Was it erected to celebrate my defeat? I got up on it to look out for the *Fram*, but had to go some distance yet before I could see her rigging over the horizon. It was not till half-past five in the afternoon that I found myself on board again, worn out and famished from this sudden and unexpected excursion. After a day's fasting I heartily relished a good meal. During my absence some of the others had started after me with a sledge to

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