

if it wasn't a dog!' he replied. 'Ice-bear' it was, true enough, for so we called this dog. It had seemed so large in the fog, scratching at the meat hummock. 'Did you aim at the dog and miss? That was a lucky chance!' 'No! I simply fired at random in that direction, for I wanted to see what it was.' I went below and turned in again. At breakfast to-day he had, of course, to run the gantlet of some sarcastic questions about his 'harmless thunderbolt,' but he parried them adroitly enough.

"Tuesday, August 21st. North latitude, $81^{\circ} 4.2'$. Strange how little alteration there is: we drift a little to the north, then a little to the south, and keep almost to the same spot. But I believe, as I have believed all along, since before we even set out, that we should be away three years, or rather three winters and four summers, neither more nor less, and that in about two years' time from this present autumn we shall reach home.* The approaching winter will drift us farther, however slowly, and it begins already to announce itself, for there were four degrees of cold last night.

"Sunday, August 26th. It seems almost as if winter had come; the cold has kept on an average between 24.8° Fahr. (-4° C.) and $21.2'$ Fahr. (-6° C.) since Thursday. There are only slight variations in the temperature up here, so we may expect it to fall regularly from this time forth, though it is rather early for winter

* It was two years later to a day that the *Fram* put in at Skjervö, on the coast of Norway.