

“Saturday, August 17th. Yesterday was a good day. We are in open water on the west coast of Franz Josef Land, as far as I can make out, and may again hope to get home this year. About noon yesterday we walked across the ice from our moraine-islet to the higher island west of us. As I was ready before Johansen, I went on first to examine the island a little. As he was following me he caught sight of a bear on the level ice to leeward. It came jogging up against the wind straight towards him. He had his gun ready, but when a little nearer the bear stopped, reconsidered the situation, suddenly turned tail, and was soon out of sight.

“This island* we came to seemed to me to be one of the most lovely spots on the face of the earth. A beautiful flat beach, an old strand-line with shells strewn about, a narrow belt of clear water along the shore, where snails and sea-urchins (*Echinus*) were visible at the bottom and amphipoda were swimming about. In the cliffs overhead were hundreds of screaming little auks, and beside us the snow-buntings fluttered from stone to stone with their cheerful twitter. Suddenly the sun burst forth through the light fleecy clouds, and the day seemed to be all sunshine. Here were life and bare land; we were no longer on the eternal drift-ice! At the bottom of the sea just beyond the beach I could see whole forests of seaweed (*Laminaria* and *Fucus*). Under the cliffs

* “Torup’s Island.”