

From the experience he had had on the northward voyage, Captain Brown had come to the conclusion that he would find his way out of the ice most easily by first steering in a southeasterly direction towards Novaya Zemlya, which he thought would be the nearest way to the open sea. This proved also to be exactly the case. After having gone about 220 knots through the ice, we came into the open sea at the end of a long bay, which ran northward into the ice. It was just at the right spot; had we been a little farther east or a little farther west, we might have spent as many weeks drifting about in the ice as we now spent days in it. Once more we saw the blue ocean itself in front of us, and we shaped our course straight for Vardö. It was an indescribably delightful feeling once more to gaze over the blue expanse, as we paced up and down the deck, and were day by day carried nearer home. One morning, as we stood looking over the sea, our gaze was arrested by something; what could that be on the horizon? We ran on to the bridge and looked through the glass. The first sail. Fancy being once more in waters where other people went to and fro! But it was far away; we could not go to it. Then we saw more, and later in the day four great monsters ahead. They were British men-of-war, probably on their way home after having been at Vadsö for the eclipse of the sun, which was to have taken place on August 9th. Later in the evening (August 12th) I saw something dark ahead, low down on the horizon. What