

our hopes, and were ready to utilize the very first chance which should present itself.

Late in the evening of July 17th the ice began to slacken so much that we decided to get up steam. True, it closed up again at once, but nevertheless we kept up steam. Nor were we disappointed, for at 1 o'clock in the morning the water opened so much that we were able to steam ahead, and we made 3 miles in a southerly direction. Later in the morning we were stopped by an immense floe of ice, extending many miles; and we had to make fast. The whole day following we remained there. About midnight the ice slackened a good deal, but the fog was so dense that we could see nothing. At last, on the 19th, we made what we considered excellent headway. Starting when the fog lifted a little in the forenoon, we made about 10 miles from 12.30 P.M. till 8 P.M. This stroke of good luck made our spirits revive wonderfully, and they rose still more the following day when, notwithstanding the fog and though we had to stop three times, we advanced from $83^{\circ} 14'$ in the morning to $82^{\circ} 52'$ at noon and $82^{\circ} 39'$ midnight. From the 20th to the 27th we continued to make good progress. By midnight on the last-named day we had reached $81^{\circ} 32'$ north latitude.

From July 27th till August 2d it was slow and tiresome work. By August 2d we had not got beyond $81^{\circ} 26'$ north latitude. At the same time we had been carried some distance eastward—namely, to $13^{\circ} 41'$ east longitude.

On Monday, August 3d, we made about 2 miles to the southwest, but had to remain moored in impossible waters till the 8th, when it slackened so much around the vessel that we were able to proceed again at 9 A.M. However, we had only made about 6 miles, when we were stopped by a long, narrow strait. We tried blasting with ordinary gunpowder, and later with gun-cotton, and time after time we steamed full speed against the smaller floes that blocked the strait, but without effect. These floes, as a rule, are not so small and innocent as they appear. They consist generally of the fragments of old, thick, and very tough pressure-ridges which have been broken up. When these pieces get free, they sink deep below the surface of the water,