

Sverdrup; it was he who had fired. Soon Blessing joined us, but all the others had long since left their posts. While Blessing went back to the boat and his botanizing box, Sverdrup and I went on to try our luck once more. A little farther south we came to a valley stretching right across the island. On the farther side of it we saw a man standing on a hillock, and not far from him a herd of five or six reindeer. As it never occurred to us to doubt that the man was in the act of stalking these, we avoided going in that direction, and soon he and his reindeer disappeared to the west. I heard afterwards that he had never seen the deer. As it was evident that when the reindeer to the south of us were startled they would have to come back across this valley, and as the island at this part was so narrow that we commanded the whole of it, we determined to take up our posts here and wait. We accordingly got in the lee of some great boulders, out of the wind. In front of Sverdrup was a large flock of geese, near the mouth of the stream, close down by the shore. They kept up an incessant gabble, and the temptation to have a shot at them was very great; but, considering the reindeer, we thought it best to leave them in peace. They gabbled and waddled away down through the mud and soon took wing.

The time seemed long. At first we listened with all our ears—the reindeer must come very soon—and our eyes wandered incessantly backward and forward along