

of striking, especially in the night, and they therefore hasten to change their course when ice is sighted ; and this vessel would most likely do the same, if it noticed the islet at all.

The alternations of hope and despair through which the anxious watchers passed may be imagined, but cannot be described. Until two o'clock in the afternoon they were able to believe that Heaven had at last taken pity on them—that help was coming—that their safety was assured. The vessel continued to approach in an oblique direction, and was presently not more than six miles from the islet. Signal after signal was tried, gun after gun fired, and some of the planks of the shed were burnt.

All in vain—either they were not seen, or the vessel was anxious to avoid the islet.

At half-past two it luffed slightly, and bore away to the north-east.

In another hour a white vapour was all that was visible, and that soon disappeared.

On this the soldier Kellet burst into a roar of hysterical laughter, and flinging himself on the ground, rolled over and over like a madman.

Mrs Barnett turned and looked Madge full in the face, as if to ask her if she still hoped, and Madge turned away her head.

On this same ill-fated day a crackling noise was heard, and the greater part of the islet broke off, and plunged into the sea. The cries of the drowning animals rent the air, and the islet was reduced to the narrow strip between the site of the engulfed house and Cape Bathurst. It was now merely a piece of ice.