

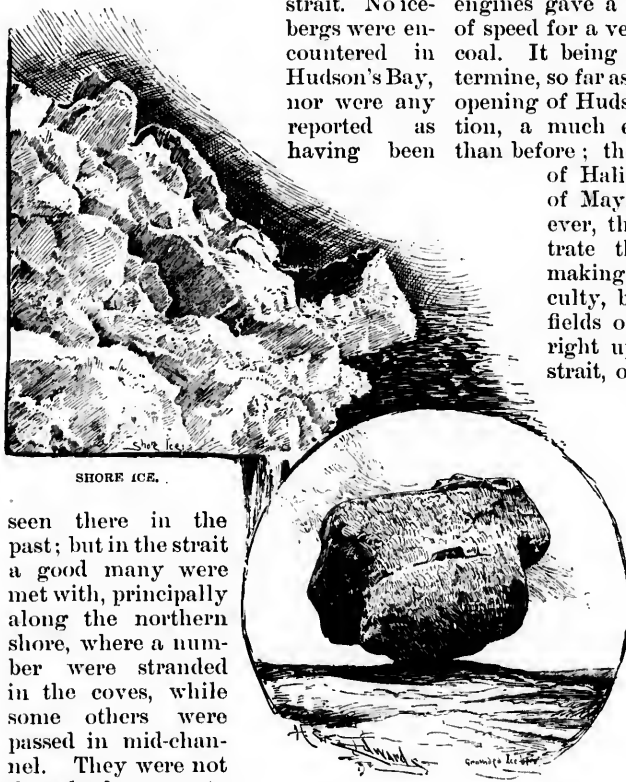
the commander of the expedition, reported that on close inspection its terror very largely disappears. The ice met with during his cruise could be divided into three classes, each class having a separate origin: namely, icebergs from the glaciers of Fox Channel, heavy Arctic ice from the channel itself, and ordinary field ice, being that formed on the shores

of the bay and strait. No icebergs were encountered in Hudson's Bay, nor were any reported as having been

in a much superior vessel, H. M. S. "Alert," which had been lent for the purpose by the British naval authorities. In every respect, except, perhaps, speed, a better vessel than this steamship could hardly have been selected. She had been specially rebuilt for the Nares Arctic expedition of 1876, and was so constructed as to be capable of resisting great ice-pressure, while her engines gave a very creditable amount of speed for a very small expenditure of coal. It being deemed essential to determine, so far as possible, the time of the opening of Hudson's Straits for navigation, a much earlier start was made than before; the "Alert" steaming out of Halifax Harbor on the 27th of May. Unfortunately, however, the fates saw fit to frustrate this design; for, after making her way with much difficulty, but no mishap, through fields of ice and banks of fog right up to the mouth of the strait, on the 16th of June the

ice set solid to the ship fore and aft, rafting and piling up all around her, and the next day it was discovered that the iron stern-plates had been broken off some distance below the water. This was a most serious injury, as Lieut. Gordon did not dare drive his ship at all hard through the ice, and from that day until July 6th was compelled to let her drift about, the plaything and sport of the

pitiless ice-king. Thus, much precious time was lost, and a still further delay occasioned by the necessity of returning to Newfoundland for repairs, which took until nearly the end of the month, so that August had come before the first station, Port Burwell, was reached. The observer and his assistants were found in excellent health, and reported having passed a very pleasant winter, even if the cold did happen to freeze the mercury solid sometimes.



SHORE ICE.

GROUNDED ICEBERG.

seen there in the past; but in the strait a good many were met with, principally along the northern shore, where a number were stranded in the coves, while some others were passed in mid-channel. They were not thought, however, to form any greater barriers to navigation than do those met with in Belle Isle Strait, nor were they more numerous than they frequently are in these waters. The field-ice encountered, although it would have compelled an ordinary iron steamer to go dead-slow, gave no trouble to the "Neptune," the vessel running at full speed between the pans, and rarely touching one of them.

The following summer a second expedition, in charge of the same commander as before, went up to the bay, this time