

only seventy hours after leaving Upernavik, the most northern Danish settlement in Greenland.

This was a most satisfactory achievement, and all went pretty smoothly until the ships had passed through Smith Sound and reached Cape Sabine, where the real fight with the ice began. From this point almost every foot of the way had to be contested, and delays and dangers were of very frequent occurrence. Fortunately for the rate of advance, "night" had become merely a conventional term for a portion of the twenty-four hours, and for all practical purposes that period was indistinguishable from noon-day.

One evening, while pushing through a narrow channel which lay temptingly open, both ships very nearly came to grief; for before they had gone far the ice closed in around them. Escape was impossible, and the only thing to be done was to anchor to the biggest floe available; but as the pack pressed closer together, the pool in which the ships lay contracted more and more, and a severe nip became imminent; while, to make matters worse, the *Alert* was drifting down upon an iceberg a few hundred yards distant.

Nares signalled to the *Discovery*, "Take care of the iceberg;" and seeing the danger, Stephenson contrived to move his ship a short distance ahead. But the pack closed round her, and held her fast in a most perilous position.

The movements of ice are of a most casual description. In a few minutes the *Discovery* was in com-