

seen in troops alongside the ship progressing through the water by series of bounds, just like porpoises.*

The anchor was dropped every night, it being impossible to proceed without daylight, because of the intricacy of the channel. Every evening I went on shore at some wild harbour, to wade through swamps and crawl through the dense undergrowth, in pursuit of wild geese, ducks, snipes, and woodcocks. In some of the harbours it was impossible to get away from the sea-shore, so dense was the barrier of forest everywhere. The ground is encumbered with prostrate trees and logs, which are overgrown with the most delicate and beautiful ferns, mostly *Hymenophyllums*, which thrive in the constantly moist atmosphere.

At one place we fired the forest. The fire spread rapidly for miles, covering the mountains with clouds of smoke, and somewhat endangering Mr. J. J. Wild, one of the members of the scientific staff, who was on shore alone. After an anxious hue-and-cry he was found safe on a rocky promontory, and brought back to the ship in one of the boats in triumph.

About Sandy Point there is more open country, and wide stretches of grass-land, on which we found abundance of mushrooms. A curious accident happened at Port Churruca, in Desolation Island. The ship's anchor was let go in a glassy calm, and apparently the ship was safely anchored. A short time later, however, a slight breeze sprang up, and the officer of the watch found that the ship was drifting freely before it. He had just time to let go another anchor and save the ship from drifting on shore, which was a very short distance off in the narrow fjord. It was found that the anchor, falling heavily on the rocks when let go, had broken in two short off, so that the remnant did not hold at all—a fact which had not been apparent during the calm.

Many deserted huts of the Fuegians were seen at the various harbours; but to my great disappointment we met with no natives. Only one day, as we steamed along the middle of the main Strait of Magellan, near the southernmost point of America, Cape Froward, in a bitterly cold blast, we saw on the shore, in the distance, three fires, with their smoke streaming out before the gale, and we could make out through the rain the forms of the natives around them.

At Sandy Point there were two Fuegian girls and a boy, who had been picked up in a canoe by a Chilian war-vessel. I was struck by the ruddy colour of the cheeks of the girls, which closely resembles that of Japanese women, especially of many of the older ones. Two Fuegian men who belonged to a

* See p. 229.