

separate body detached from the ice block, even in the height of summer. In the event of the destruction of the vessel, the boats—necessarily fully stored, not only for the retreat, but for continuing the voyage—are to be available. This is well in theory, but extremely difficult to arrange for in practice. Preparation to abandon the vessel is the one thing that gives us the most anxiety. To place boats, etc., on the ice, packed ready for use, involves the danger of being separated from them by a movement of the ice, or of losing them altogether should a sudden opening occur. If we merely have everything handy for heaving over the side, the emergency may be so sudden that we have not time to save anything. . . .”

As regards the assumed drift of the polar ice, Nares expressed himself on the whole at variance with me. He insisted that the drift was essentially determined by the prevailing winds:

“As to the probable direction of the drift, the *Fram*, starting from near the mouth of the Lena River, may expect to meet the main pack not farther north than about latitude  $76^{\circ} 30'$ . I doubt her getting farther north before she is beset, but taking an extreme case, and giving her 60 miles more, she will then only be in the same latitude as Cape Chelyuskin, 730 miles from the Pole, and about 600 miles from my supposed limit of the effective homeward-carrying ocean current. After a close study of all the information we possess, I think the wind