

to us on a bare crag. Her cottage lay some distance inland. "I wonder if it can really be us she is waving to," I said to the pilot, who was standing beside me. "You may be sure it is," was the answer. "But how can she know who we are?" "Oh! they know all about the *Fram* up here, in every cabin, and they will be on the lookout for you as you come back, I can tell you," he answered. Aye, truly, it is a responsible task we are undertaking, when the whole nation are with us like this. What if the thing should turn out a huge disappointment!

In the evening I would sit and look around — lonely huts lay scattered here and there on points and islets. Here the Norwegian people wear out their lives in the struggle with the rocks, in the struggle with the sea; and it is this people that is sending us out into the great hazardous unknown; the very folk who stand there in their fishing-boats and look wonderingly after the *Fram* as she slowly and heavily steams along on her northward course. Many of them wave their sou'-westers and shout "Hurrah!" Others have barely time to gape at us in wonderment. In on the point are a troop of women waving and shouting; outside a few boats with ladies in light summer-dresses, and gentlemen at the oars entertaining them with small-talk as they wave their parasols and pocket-handkerchiefs. Yes; it is they who are sending us out. It is not a cheering thought. Not one of them, probably, knows what they are paying their money for.