

away, and the whole town slept the loathsome sleep of the drunkard.

There was not a man to be got to help with our coal-shifting next day. Most of them slept all day after the orgie of the night. We had just to do without help; but we had not finished by evening, and I began to be impatient to get away. Precious time was passing; I had long ago given up the *Urania*. We did not really need more coal. The wind had been favorable for several days. It was a south wind, which was certainly blowing the ice to the northward in the Kara Sea. Sverdrup was now positive that we should be able to sail in open water all the way to the New Siberian Islands, so it was his opinion that there was no hurry for the present. But hope is a frail reed to lean on, and my expectations were not quite so bright; so I hurried things on, to get away as soon as possible.

At the supper-table this evening King Oscar's gold medal of merit was solemnly presented to Tronheim, in recognition of the great care with which he had executed his difficult commission, and the valuable assistance thereby rendered to the expedition. His honest face beamed at the sight of the beautiful medal and the bright ribbon.

Next day, August 3d, we were at last ready for a start, and the 34 dogs were brought on board in the afternoon, with great noise and confusion. They were all tied up on the deck forward, and began by providing more