

her, but no sooner did we get into the current again than it mercilessly drove us back. Beaten again! And again we tried the same manœuvre with the same result. Now we saw them lowering a buoy from the ship—if we could only reach it we were saved; but we did not reach it. They were not exactly blessings that we poured on those on board. Why the deuce could they not bear down to us when they saw the straits we were in; or why, at any rate, could they not ease up the anchor, and let the ship drift a little in our direction? They saw how little was needed to enable us to reach them. Perhaps they had their reasons.

We would make our last desperate attempt. We went at it with a will. Every muscle was strained to the utmost—it was only the buoy we had to reach this time. But to our rage we now saw the buoy being hauled up. We rowed a little way on, to the windward of the *Fram*, and then tried again to sheer over. This time we got nearer her than we had ever been before; but we were disappointed in still seeing no buoy, and none was thrown over; there was not even a man to be seen on deck. We roared like madmen for a buoy—we had no strength left for another attempt. It was not a pleasing prospect to have to drift back, and go ashore again in our wet clothes—we *would* get on board! Once more we yelled like wild Indians, and now they came rushing aft and threw out the buoy in our direction. One more cry to my mates that we must put our last