

evening's observations place us in  $77^{\circ} 43'$  north latitude and  $138^{\circ} 8'$  east longitude. This is farther south than we have been yet. No help for it; but it is a sorry state of matters; and that we are farther east than ever before is only a poor consolation. It is new moon again, and we may therefore expect pressure; the ice is, in fact, already moving; it began to split on Saturday, and has broken up more each day. The channels have been of a good size, and the movement becomes more and more perceptible. Yesterday there was slight pressure, and we noticed it again this morning about 5 o'clock. To-day the ice by the ship has opened, and we are almost afloat.

" Here I sit in the still winter night on the drifting ice-floe, and see only stars above me. Far off I see the threads of life twisting themselves into the intricate web which stretches unbroken from life's sweet morning dawn to the eternal death-stillness of the ice. Thought follows thought—you pick the whole to pieces, and it seems so small—but high above all towers one form. . . . *Why did you take this voyage?* . . . Could I do otherwise? Can the river arrest its course and run up hill? My plan has come to nothing. That palace of theory which I reared, in pride and self-confidence, high above all silly objections has fallen like a house of cards at the first breath of wind. Build up the most ingenious theories and you may be sure of one thing—that fact will defy them all. Was I so very sure? Yes, at