

“‘Would'st thou be free from care and pain,
Thou must love nothing here on earth.”

“ But longing—oh, there are worse things than that! All that is good and beautiful may flourish in its shelter. Everything would be over if we cease to long.

“ But you fell off at the end, old year; you hardly carried us so far as you ought. Still you might have done worse; you have not been so bad, after all. Have not all hopes and calculations been justified, and are we not drifting away just where I wished and hoped we should be? Only one thing has been amiss—I did not think the drift would have gone in quite so many zig-zags.

“ One could not have a more beautiful New-year's-eve. The aurora borealis is burning in wonderful colors and bands of light over the whole sky, but particularly in the north. Thousands of stars sparkle in the blue firmament among the northern lights. On every side the ice stretches endless and silent into the night. The rime-covered rigging of the *Fram* stands out sharp and dark against the shining sky.

“ The newspaper was read aloud; only verses this time; among other poems the following:

“‘ TO THE NEW YEAR.

“‘ And you, my boy, must give yourself trouble
Of your old father to be the double;
Your lineage, honor, and fight hard to merit
Our praise for the habits we trust you inherit.