

a long distance N.N.E., past a large opening that I had skirted before Christmas. It was shining, flat ice, splendid for sledging on, always better the farther north we went. The longer I wander about and see this sort of ice in all directions, the more strongly does a plan take hold of me that I have long had in my mind. It would be possible to get with dogs and sledges over this ice to the Pole, if one left the ship for good and made one's way back in the direction of Franz Josef Land, Spitzbergen, or the west coast of Greenland. It might almost be called an easy expedition for two men.

“ But it would be too hasty to go off in spring. We must first see what kind of drift the summer brings. And as I think over it, I feel doubtful if it would be right to go off and leave the others. Imagine if I came home and they did not! Yet it was to explore the unknown polar regions that I came; it was for that the Norwegian people gave their money; and surely my first duty is to do that if I can. I must give the drift plan a longer trial yet; but if it takes us in a wrong direction, then there is nothing for it but to try the other, come what may.

“ Tuesday, January 16th. The ice is quiet to-day. Does longing stupefy one, or does it wear itself out and turn at last into stolidity? Oh that burning longing night and day were happiness! But now its fire has turned to ice. Why does home seem so far away? It is one's