

the awning that is now stretched over the ship.* The only part I have left open is the stern, abaft the bridge, so as to be able to see round over the ice from there.

“ Personally, I must say that things are going well with me; much better than I could have expected. Time is a good teacher; that devouring longing does not gnaw so hard as it did. Is it apathy beginning? Shall I feel nothing at all by the time ten years have passed? Oh! sometimes it comes on with all its old strength, as if it would tear me in pieces! But this is a splendid school of patience. Much good it does to sit wondering whether they are alive or dead at home; it only almost drives one mad.

“ All the same, I never grow quite reconciled to this life. It is really neither life nor death, but a state between the two. It means never being at rest about anything or in any place—a constant waiting for what is coming; a waiting in which, perhaps, the best years of one’s manhood will pass. It is like what a young boy sometimes feels when he goes on his first voyage. The life on board is hateful to him; he suffers cruelly from all the torments of sea-sickness; and being shut in within the narrow walls of the ship is worse than prison; but it is something that has to be gone through. Beyond it

* We had no covering over the ship the first winter, as we thought it would make it so dark, and make it difficult to find one’s way about on deck. But when we put in on the second winter we found that it was an improvement.