

no! but in these nights such longing can come over one for all beauty, for that which is contained in a single word, and the soul flees from this interminable and rigid world of ice. When one thinks how short life is, and that one came away from it all of one's own free will, and remembers, too, that another is suffering the pain of constant anxiety—'true, true till death.' 'O mankind, thy ways are passing strange! We are but as flakes of foam, helplessly driven over the tossing sea.'

"Wednesday, October 10th. Exactly 33 years old, then. There is nothing to be said to that, except that life is moving on, and will never turn back. They have all been touchingly nice to me to-day, and we have held fête. They surprised me in the morning by having the saloon ornamented with flags. They had hung the 'Union' above Sverdrup's place.* We accused Amundsen of having done this, but he would not confess to it. Above my door and on over Hansen's they had the pennant with *Fram* in big letters. It looked most festive when I came into the saloon, and they all stood up and wished me 'Many happy returns.' When I went on deck the flag was waving from the mizzenmast-head.

"We took a snow-shoeing excursion south in the morning. It was windy, bitter weather; I have not felt so cold for long. The thermometer is down to 24° Fahr. below zero (−31° C.) this evening; this is certainly

* An allusion, no doubt, to his political opinions (*Trans.*).