

an expedition entails? The fact that there will be two men less is of little importance, for the *Fram* can be handled quite as well with eleven men. A more important point is that we shall have to take with us all the dogs except the seven puppies; but they are amply supplied with sledge provisions and first-class sledge equipments on board, and it is inconceivable that in case anything happened to the *Fram* they should be unable to reach Franz Josef Land or Spitzbergen. It is scarcely likely that in case they had to abandon her it would be farther north than  $85^{\circ}$ ; probably not even so far north. But suppose they were obliged to abandon her at  $85^{\circ}$ , it would probably be about north of Franz Josef Land, when they would be 207 miles from Cape Fligely; or if farther to the east it would be some 276 miles from the Seven Islands, and it is hard to believe that they could not manage a distance like that with our equipments. Now, as before, I am of opinion that the *Fram* will in all probability drift right across the polar basin and out on the other side without being stopped, and without being destroyed; but even if any accident should occur, I do not see why the crew should not be able to make their way home in safety, provided due measures of precaution are observed. Consequently, I think there is no reason why a sledge expedition should not leave the *Fram*, and I feel that as it promises such good results it ought certainly to be attempted."