

I take a stroll every morning, greeting the dawning day, before I go down into the hold to my work at the snow-shoes and equipment. My mind is filled with a peculiar sensation, which I cannot clearly define; there is certainly an exulting feeling of triumph, deep in the soul, a feeling that all one's dreams are about to be realized with the rising sun, which steers northward across the ice-bound waters. But while I am busy in these familiar surroundings a wave of sadness sometimes comes over me; it is like bidding farewell to a dear friend and to a home which has long afforded me a sheltering roof. At one blow all this and my dear comrades are to be left behind forever; never again shall I tread this snow-clad deck, never again creep under this tent, never hear the laughter ring in this familiar saloon, never again sit in this friendly circle.

“And then I remember that when the *Fram* at last bursts from her bonds of ice, and turns her prow towards Norway, I shall not be with her. A farewell imparts to everything in life its own tinge of sadness, like the crimson rays of the sun, when the day, good or bad, sinks in tears below the horizon.

“Hundreds of times my eye wanders to the map hanging there on the wall, and each time a chill creeps over me. The distance before us seems so long, and the obstacles in our path may be many; but then again the feeling comes that we are bound to pull through: it cannot be otherwise; everything is too carefully prepared