

“The sledges have again been unloaded and brought on board in order that this may be done, and here we are again to-night. I am glad, however, that this happened when it did; it would have been worse to have had such an experience a few days later. I will now take six sledges instead of four, so that the load on each may be less, and so that it will be easier to lift them over the irregularities of the ground. I shall also have a broad board fitted lengthwise to the sledge, underneath the crossbars, so as to protect them against projecting pieces of ice. As a great deal of time is saved in the end by doing such things thoroughly before starting, we shall not be ready to start before the day after to-morrow. It seemed strange to be on board again after having said good-bye, as I thought, forever, to these surroundings. When I came up on the after-deck, I found the guns lying there in the snow, one of them turned over on its back, the other had recoiled a long way aft, when saluting us; from the mizzen-top the red and black flag was still waving.

“I am in wonderfully high spirits, and feel confident of success; the sledges seemed to glide so easily, although carrying 200 pounds more than was originally intended (about 2200 pounds altogether), and everything looks very promising. We shall have to wait a couple of days, but as we are having a southeasterly wind all day long,

three or four pieces of rattan cane lashed together; it is to this bow the hauling-lines are fastened.