

dogs and put up the tent. They were fed once in every 24 hours, at night, when the day's march was done.

"I had not gone far when I came upon excellent spacious plains; good progress could be made, and so far everything was all right; but the load had to be diminished and the number of sledges reduced. Undoubtedly, therefore, it would be best to return to the *Fram* to make the necessary alterations on board, and get the sledges we were to take with us further strengthened, so as to have perfect confidence in their durability.

"We might, of course, have dragged along somehow towards the north for a while, and the load would gradually have decreased; but it would have been slow work, and before the load would be sufficiently lightened the dogs would perhaps be worn out. It was cold for them at night; we heard many of them howling most of the night. If, however, we diminished the load, and consequently allowed a shorter time for the journey, it would be preferable to wait, and not start till a little later in the month, when we could make more out of the time, as the days would be lighter and not so cold and the snow-surface better. Having spent another night in the tent—into which it was a hard job to get, dressed in a fur that was stiff with frost, and then into a bag that was also hard frozen—I decided next morning (Sunday, March 3d) to return to the *Fram*. I harnessed a double team of dogs to one of the sledges, and off they went over pressure-ridges and all other obstacles so