

and meanwhile our flag for the 'Seventeenth of May' shall wave above the eighty-third parallel, and if fate send us the first sight of land to-day our joy will be twofold.

"Yesterday was a hard day. The weather was fine, even brilliant, the going splendid, and the ice good, so that one had a right to expect progress were it not for the dogs. They pull up at everything, and for the man ahead it is a continual going over the same ground three times: first to find a way and make a track, and then back again to drive on the dogs; it is slow work indeed. Across quite flat ice the dogs keep up to the mark pretty well, but at the first difficulty they stop. I tried harnessing myself in front of them yesterday, and it answered pretty well; but when it came to finding the way in foul ice it had to be abandoned.

"In spite of everything, we are pushing forward, and eventually shall have our reward; but for the time being this would be ample could we only reach land and land-ice without these execrable lanes. Yesterday we had four of them. The first that stopped us did not cause immoderate trouble; then we went over a short bit of middling ice, though, with lane after lane and ridges. Then came another bad lane, necessitating a circuit. After this we traversed some fairly good ice, this time considerably more of it than previously, but soon came to a lane, or rather a pool, of greater size than we had ever seen before — ex-