

friction, corrosion, oxidation, etc., that we were compelled not only to use them most cautiously, but also to limit the number of soundings far more than was desirable. It sometimes happened that the line would break while being hauled in, so that a good deal of it was lost.

The first sounding after the departure of Dr. Nansen and Johansen was taken on April 23d. We thought we should be able to lower away down to 3000 metres (1625 fathoms) in one run, but as the line commenced to slacken at 1900 metres (1029 fathoms) we thought we had touched bottom and hauled the line up again. As it appeared that the line had not reached the bottom, we now let down 3000 metres of line (1625 fathoms), but in doing so we lost about 900 metres of line (487 fathoms). Accordingly I assumed that we had touched ground at 2100 metres (1138 fathoms), and I therefore lowered the line to that depth without touching bottom. The next day we took new soundings at depths of 2100, 2300, 2500, and 3000 metres respectively (1137, 1245, 1353, and 1625 fathoms), but all without touching bottom. On the third day, April 25th, we sounded first at 3000 metres, and then at 3200 metres (1625 and 1733 fathoms) without touching bottom. The steel-line being too short we had to lengthen it with a hemp-line, and now went down to 3400 metres (1841 fathoms). While hauling up we perceived that the line broke, and found that, in addition to the 110 fathoms' length of hemp-line, we had lost about 275 fathoms of steel-line. We then stopped taking soundings till July 22d, as the hemp-lines were so badly worn that we dared not venture to use them again until milder weather set in.

Wind and weather were, of course, a favorite topic on board the *Fram*, especially in connection with our drift. As is but right and proper, we had a weather-prophet on board—to wit, Pettersen. His specialty was to predict fair wind, and in this respect he was untiring, although his predictions were by no means invariably fulfilled. But he also posed as a prophet in other departments, and nothing seemed to delight him more than the offer of a bet with him on his predictions. If he won he was beaming with good humor for days at a stretch,