

deck half an hour later the *Fram* was already drifting down through the channel. All hands were called up immediately, and with our united strength we succeeded in hauling the vessel up to the floe again and mooring her securely.

As we were desirous of getting the *Fram* quite clear of the ice-bed in which she had been lying so long, I determined to try blasting her loose. The next day, therefore, August 9th, at 7.30 P.M., we fired a mine of about 7 pounds of gunpowder, placed under the floe 6 feet from the stern of the vessel. There was a violent shock in the vessel when the mine exploded, but the ice was apparently unbroken. A lively discussion arose touching the question of blasting. The majority believed that the mine was not powerful enough; one even maintained that the quantity of gunpowder used should have been 40 or 50 pounds. But just as we were in the heat of the debate the floe suddenly burst. Big lumps of ice from below the ship came driving up through the openings: the *Fram* gave a great heave with her stern, started forward and began to roll heavily, as if to shake off the fetters of ice, and then plunged with a great splash out into the water. The way on her was so strong that one of the bow hawsers parted, but otherwise the launch went so smoothly that no ship-builder could have wished it better. We moored the stern to the solid edge of ice by means of ice-anchors, which we had recently forged for this purpose.

Scott-Hansen and Pettersen, however, were very near getting a cold bath. Having laid the mine under the floe, they placed themselves abaft with the "pram,"\* in order to haul in the string of the fuse. When the floe burst, and the *Fram* plunged, and the remainder of the floe capsized as soon as it became free of its 600 tons' burden, the two men in the boat were in no pleasant predicament right in the midst of the dangerous maelstrom of waves and pieces of ice; their faces, especially Pettersen's, were worth seeing while the boat was dancing about with them in the caldron.

The vessel now had a slight list to starboard (0.75°), and

\* A small keelless boat.