

“ In the early morning two thundering reports were suddenly heard from the *Fram*, followed by the ringing cheers of the crew in honor of their absent comrades. The inhabitants of the place, who were fast asleep, were quite startled, and soon got out of bed ; but when it finally dawned upon them that it could be none other than the *Fram*, they were not slow in turning out to have a look at her.

“ As they anchored here, the fragrance of the new-mown hay was wafted to them from the shore, and to them it seemed marvellous. The green meadows with their humble flowers, and the few trees bent and almost withered by the merciless wind and weather, looked to them so delightful that our poor island was a veritable Eden in their eyes. ‘ Yes, to-day they would have a good roll on the grass.’

“ For the rest, Mother Nature was as smiling and festally arrayed as could be expected so late in the year in these northern latitudes. The fjord was calm, as though it feared by the faintest ripple to interrupt the tranquillity which enveloped the tried and weather-beaten warrior now resting upon its smooth surface.

“ They were all quite enthusiastic about the vessel. I do not believe there is a man on board who does not love the *Fram*. Sverdrup declared that a ‘ stronger and finer ship had never been built, and was not to be found in the wide world!’ ”

On my way to the fjord I met five of our comrades. Nordahl hurried at once on board with the glad tidings, while the rest of us settled down with the telegraph manager around a smoking cup of coffee, which tasted delicious. A better welcome we could not have had. But it did not end with the coffee or with the telegraph manager. Soon the popping of champagne corks sounded successively in the houses of the store-keeper and local magistrate, while the telegraph manager sent message upon message announcing our arrival to Dr. Nansen, his Majesty the King, the Norwegian Government, and to relations and friends.

At 10 A.M. we weighed anchor and set off to meet Nansen