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DR. NANSEN'S "FRAM."

THE CRAFT THAT WILL NOT BE CRUSHED BY ARCTIC ICE.

Facts About the Nansen Expedition—The Party Will Have Games and Music With Which to While Away the Winter Nights—35,000 Pounds of Rye Biscuits.

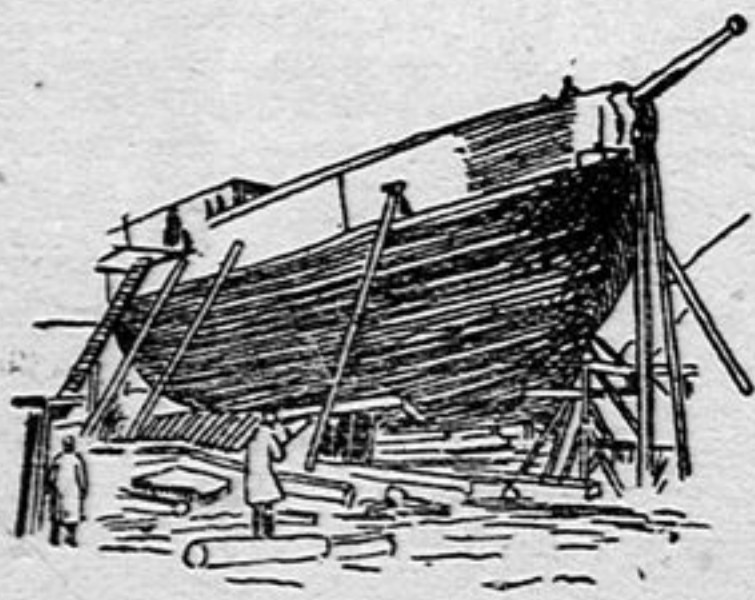
The London Illustrated News has some interesting pictures of the little vessel in which Dr. Nansen's summer will enter the Arctic ice in the hope that it may carry him from the northern shores of Euro-Asia across the polar basin to East Greenland. Dr. Nansen said in London a few weeks ago that this expedition had been in his mind for many years, and that he had practically decided upon such a journey before he went on his trip across Greenland. From the first his plan had been to build a strong vessel, which should practically be proof against crushing in the ice; to go north of Euro-Asia as far as possible in the summer, and then to strike into the ice and drift with what



DR. NANSEN.

he believes to be the current across the polar regions to the Greenland side. Dr. Nansen says his expedition will cost about \$90,000, of which nearly \$60,000 was voted by the Norwegian Storting. He will have a crew of eleven picked men besides himself. Hundreds of applications have reached him from all over the world. Men in the most varied positions of life are anxious to go on his expedition. He says the only difficulty is how to select the eleven men who will be most helpful to him. He thinks it likely that all his companions will be Norwegians.

As to the difficulties of his journey, the Doctor says he expects to meet with a great many, but he does not regard them as hopeless difficulties. He expects to be able to overcome them. With the best provisions, and wholesome methods of living, he sees no reason why they should run any undue risk of scurvy. With a naturally strong, healthy crew, careful living and plenty of exercise, the Doctor thinks he ought to be able to keep his men from disease.

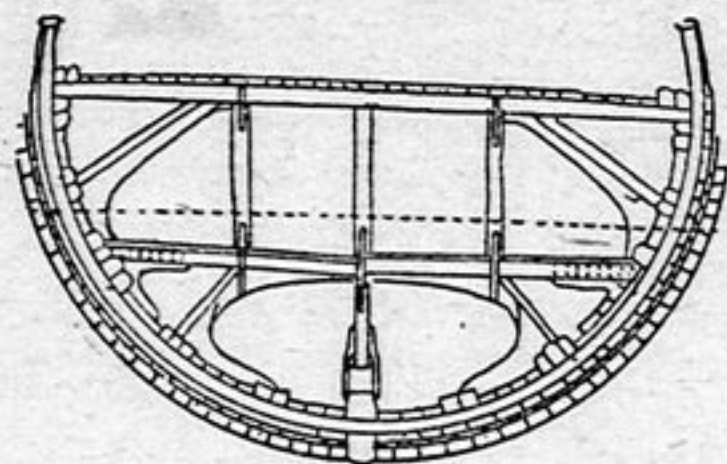


THE FRAM ON THE STOCKS.

He has no doubt whatever about the existence of the current upon which he depends to carry him across the polar wastes. He says there is enough evidence in favor of his theory to satisfy him of the existence of such a current. It may be said that most Arctic authorities who have carefully studied his evidence agree with him that there seems very strong reason for believing that the polar current he desires to

never really exists. The Doctor says that many relics of ships which have got into the ice on the Euro-Asiatic side have drifted across Greenland and have been picked up by the Eskimos; also that the Eskimos have seen whole ships which have drifted across, frozen into the ice.

He regards the fact that he has no base of supplies to fall back upon as a positive advantage. "If you have no base to go back upon," he says, "you must go forward whatever the difficulties. Without a retreat it means to go or die. It is go forward or go nowhere. I believe that one great reason why my expedition across Greenland was successful was because I had no retreat. In this large expedition the venture is worth the risk. At the most one can only die once, and I feel certain we shall get through."

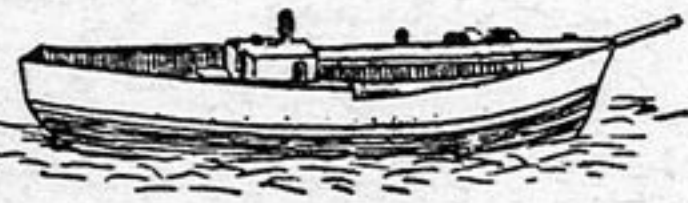


THE STRUCTURE OF THE HULL.

The Fram is the name of Nansen's vessel. The word means "forward." The Doctor says that her power of resistance to a crush of ice is much greater than the force which would be needed to lift her on the ice, and he expects that ice floes strong enough to crush her will merely lift her out of danger. There is nothing new about the U shape of her hull. It is only a case of the U shape being developed a little more than usual. Nansen says that whalers built in this way have been lifted upon the ice, although they had been built with the disadvantage of having to find room for cargo. As the Fram will take no cargo except the necessary supplies for the voyage, she will be more easily lifted.

If by any combination of circumstances the Fram should be crushed, the Doctor says, "We shall take to the ice in our two large boats. The Hansa crew in 1869-70, lived nine months on the ice, and in 1777 Dutch whalers drifted on the ice for a great distance along the east coast of Greenland. It was not the ice that brought disaster upon the whalers, but the fact that their provisions gave out. We shall have provisions for five or six years, and if necessary we can travel on the ice. You see, therefore, that even if we lost our ship we should not be quite done for. We should still be able to drift with the ice toward the coast of Greenland."

It is noteworthy that no Arctic expedition now talks of going in search of the North Pole. It is really no more important to reach the North Pole than any other point in the polar regions. Expeditions are sent north not to reach the northern apex of the world, but to make investigations within the polar area. On this point Dr. Nansen says: "I cannot say that I am setting out to get to the pole. I should like that point to be clearly understood. My purpose is to cross the polar regions in order to make scientific investigations. If we get to the pole so much the better. If we do not then it cannot be helped. Our purpose is a purely scientific one—to cross the polar regions to make scientific investigations."



THE FRAM AFLOAT.

The Doctor thinks that time will not hang heavily on the hands of his crew during the dark winters. "In winter," he says, "the scene is almost as beautiful as in summer. The nights are clear, and the moon and stars shine brightly upon the sea of soft, white snow. We shall always be occupied in taking our soundings and repairing the ship's gear, or in playing chess, draughts, or dominoes. We shall take some musical boxes with us." The commissary stores will include about 35,000 pounds of rye biscuits and a considerable supply of tinned food. The Doctor expects to rely largely upon the flesh of seals and bears, which will be hung frozen in the rigging.

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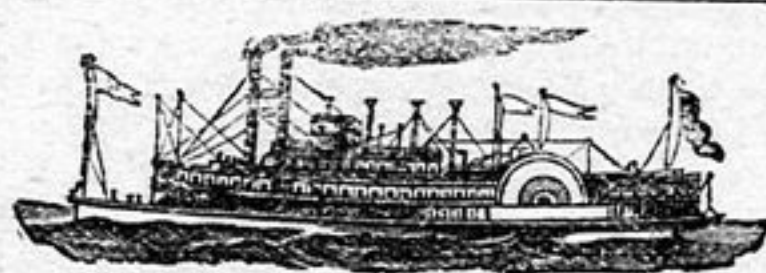
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