

times; but that was self-deception, intoxication. A secret doubt lurked behind all the reasoning. It seemed as though the longer I defended my theory, the nearer I came to doubting it. But *no*, there is no getting over the evidence of that Siberian drift-wood.

“But if, after all, we are on the wrong track, what then? Only disappointed human hopes, nothing more. And even if we perish, what will it matter in the endless cycles of eternity?”

“Thursday, November 9th. I took temperatures and sea-water samples to-day every 10 yards from the surface to the bottom. The depth was  $9\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms. An extraordinarily even temperature of  $30^{\circ}$  Fahr. ( $-1.5$  C.) through all the layers. I have noticed the same thing before as far south as this. So it is only polar water here? There is not much pressure; an inclination to it this morning, and a little at 8 o'clock this evening; also a few squeezes later, when we were playing cards.

“Friday, November 10th. This morning made despairing examinations of yesterday's water samples with Thornöe's electric apparatus. There must be absolute stillness on board when this is going on. The men are all terrified, slip about on tiptoe, and talk in the lowest possible whispers. But presently one begins to hammer at something on deck, and another to file in the engine-room, when the chief's commanding voice is at once heard ordering silence. These examinations are made by means of a telephone, through which a very faint