

where I stand gazing out at the welter of ice-masses that resemble giant snakes writhing and twisting their great bodies out there under the quiet, starry sky, whose peace is only broken by one aurora serpent waving and flickering restlessly in the northeast. I once more think what a comfort it is to be safe on board the *Fram*, and look out with a certain contempt at the horrible hurly-burly Nature is raising to no purpose whatever; it will not crush us in a hurry, nor even frighten us. Suddenly I remember that my fine thermometer is in a hole on a floe to port on the other side of the opening, and must certainly be in danger. I jump on to the ice, find a place where I can leap across the opening, and grope about in the dark until I find the piece of ice covering the hole; I get hold of the string, and the thermometer is saved. I hurry on board again well pleased, and down into my comfortable cabin to smoke a pipe of peace—alas! this vice grows upon me more and more—and to listen with glee to the roar of the pressure outside and feel its shakings, like so many earthquakes, as I sit and write my diary. Safe and comfortable, I cannot but think with deep pity of the many who have had to stand by on deck in readiness to leave their frail vessels on the occurrence of any such pressure. The poor *Tegethoff* fellows—they had a bad time of it, and yet theirs was a good ship in comparison with many of the others. It is now 11.30, and the noise outside seems to be subsiding.

“It is remarkable that we should have this strong