

of packing ice. In the midst of this empty waste of white there is but one little dark spot, and that is the *Fram*.

“ But beneath this crust, hundreds of fathoms down, there teems a world of checkered life in all its changing forms, a world of the same composition as ours, with the same instincts, the same sorrows, and also, no doubt, the same joys; everywhere the same struggle for existence. So it ever is. If we penetrate within even the hardest shell we come upon the pulsations of life, however thick the crust may be.

“ I seem to be sitting here in solitude listening to the music of one of Nature’s mighty harp-strings. Her grand symphonies peal forth through the endless ages of the universe, now in the tumultuous whirl of busy life, now in the stiffening coldness of death, as in Chopin’s Funeral March; and we—we are the minute, invisible vibrations of the strings in this mighty music of the universe, ever changing, yet ever the same. Its notes are worlds; one vibrates for a longer, another for a shorter period, and all in turn give way to new ones. . . .

“ The world that shall be! . . . Again and again this thought comes back to my mind. I gaze far on through the ages. . . .

“ Slowly and imperceptibly the heat of the sun declines, and the temperature of the earth sinks by equally slow degrees. Thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of years pass away, glacial epochs come and go, but the heat still grows ever less; little by little these