

such a pitch that Pettersen and I had to get up and have a dance, a waltz and a polka or two; and we really executed some very tasteful *pas de deux* on the limited floor of the saloon. Then Amundsen also was swept into the mazes of the dance, while the others played cards. Meanwhile refreshments were served in the form of preserved peaches, dried bananas, figs, honey-cakes, etc., etc. In short, we made a jovial evening of it, and why should we not? We are progressing merrily towards our goal, we are already half-way between the New Siberian Islands and Franz Josef Land, and there is not a soul on board who doubts that we shall accomplish what we came out to do; so long live merriment!

"But the endless stillness of the polar night holds its sway aloft; the moon, half full, shines over the ice, and the stars sparkle brilliantly overhead; there are no restless northern lights, and the south wind sighs mournfully through the rigging. A deep, peaceful stillness prevails everywhere. It is the infinite loveliness of death—Nirvana.

"Monday, October 22d. It is beginning to be cold now; the thermometer was -34.6° C. (30.2° Fahr. below zero) last night, and this evening it is -36° C. (32.8 Fahr. below zero).

"A lovely aurora this evening (11.30). A brilliant corona encircled the zenith with a wreath of streamers in several layers, one outside the other; then larger and smaller sheaves of streamers spread over the sky,