

makes us deceive ourselves, and ever sends us forth on paths we have not ourselves laid out—paths on which we have no desire to walk? Was it a mere feeling of duty that impelled me? Oh no! I was simply a child yearning for a great adventure out in the unknown, who had dreamed of it so long that at last I believed it really awaited me. And it has, indeed, fallen to my lot, the great adventure of the ice, deep and pure as infinity; the silent, starlit polar night; nature itself in its profundity; the mystery of life; the ceaseless circling of the universe; the feast of death—without suffering, without regret—eternal in itself. Here in the great night thou standest in all thy naked pettiness, face to face with nature; and thou sittest devoutly at the feet of eternity, intently listening; and thou knowest God the all-ruling, the centre of the universe. All the riddles of life seem to grow clear to thee, and thou laughest at thyself that thou couldst be consumed by brooding, it is all so little, so unutterably little. . . . 'Whoso sees Jehovah dies.'

"Sunday, November 4th. At noon I had gone out on a snow-shoe expedition, and had taken some of the dogs with me. Presently I noticed that those that had been left behind at the ship began to bark. Those with me pricked up their ears, and several of them started off back, with 'Ulenka' at their head. Most of them soon stopped, listening and looking behind them to see if I were following. I wondered for a little while whether it could be a bear, and then continued on my way; but