

month. Driven back instead of forward—and yet this month was so good last year. But one can never rely on the seasons in this dreadful sea; taking all in all, perhaps, the winter will not be a bit better than the summer. Yet, it surely must improve—I cannot believe otherwise.

“The skies are clouded with a thick veil, through which the stars barely glisten. It is darker than usual; and in this eternal night we drift about, lonely and forsaken. ‘For the whole world was filled with a shining light and undisturbed activity. Above those men alone brooded nought but depressing night—an image of that gloom which was soon to swallow them up.’

“This dark, deep, silent void is like the mysterious unfathomable well, into which you look for that something which you think must be there, only to meet the reflection of your own eyes. Ugh! the worn-out thoughts you can never get rid of, become in the end very wearisome company. Is there no means of fleeing from oneself, to grasp one single thought, only a single one, which lies outside oneself—is there no way except death? But death is certain; one day it will come, silent and majestic, it will open Nirvana’s mighty portal, and we shall be swept away into the sea of eternity.”

“Sunday, December 2nd. Sverdrup has now been ill for some days; during the last day or two he has been laid up in his berth, and is still there. I trust it is nothing serious; he himself thinks nothing of it, nevertheless it is very disquieting. Poor fellow, he lives entirely on oatmeal gruel. It is an intestinal catarrh, which he probably contracted through catching cold on the ice. I am afraid he has been rather careless in this respect. However, he is now improving, so that probably it will soon pass off; but it is a warning not to be over-confident. I went for a long walk this morning along the lane; it is quite a large one, extending a good way to the east, and being of considerable breadth at some points. It is only after walking for a while