

CHAPTER VII

THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1894

So came the season which we at home call spring, the season of joy and budding life, when Nature awakens after her long winter sleep. But there it brought no change; day after day we had to gaze over the same white lifeless mass, the same white boundless ice-plains. Still we wavered between despondency, idle longing, and eager energy, shifting with the winds as we drift forward to our goal or are driven back from it. As before, I continued to brood upon the possibilities of the future and of our drift. One day I would think that everything was going on as we hoped and anticipated. Thus on April 17th I was convinced that there must be a current through the unknown polar basin, as we were unmistakably drifting northward. The midday observation gave $80^{\circ} 20'$ northeast; that is, $9'$ since the day before yesterday. Strange! A north wind of four whole days took us to the south, while twenty-four hours of this scanty wind drifts us $9'$ northward. This is remarkable; it looks as if we were done with drifting southward. And when, in addition to this, I take into consideration