

Now the morrow has come, but whether the improvement has come likewise, and the lane has closed more together, I do not yet know. We camped about nine yesterday evening. As usual latterly, after nearly a whole day of dismal snow, it suddenly cleared up as soon as we began to pitch the tent. The wind also went down, and the weather became beautiful, with blue sky and light white clouds, so that one might almost dream one's self far away to summer at home. The horizon in the west and southwest was clear enough, but nothing to be seen except the same water-sky, which we have been steering for, and, happily, it is obviously higher, so we are getting under it. If only we had reached it! Yonder there must be a change; that I have no doubt of. How I long for that change!

“Curious how different things are. If we only reach land before our provisions give out we shall think ourselves well out of danger, while to Payer it stood for certain starvation if he should have to remain there and not find *Tegethoff* again. But then he had not been roaming about in the drift-ice between  $83^{\circ}$  and  $86^{\circ}$  for two months and a half without seeing a living creature. Just as we were going to break up camp yesterday morning we suddenly heard the angry cry of an ivory gull; there, above us, beautiful and white, were two of them sailing right over our heads. I thought of shooting them, but it seemed, on the whole, hardly worth while to expend a cartridge apiece on such birds; they disappeared again,