

too, directly. A little while afterwards we heard them again. As we were lying in the bag to-day and waiting for breakfast we suddenly heard a hoarse scream over the tent—something like the croaking of a crow. I should imagine it must have been a gull (*Larus argentatus?*).

“Is it not curious? The whole night long, whenever I was awake, did the sun smile in to us through our silken walls, and it was so warm and light that I lay and dreamed dreams of summer, far from lanes and drudgery and endless toil. How fair life seems at such moments, and how bright the future! But no sooner do I turn out to cook at half-past nine than the sun veils his countenance and snow begins to fall. This happens nearly every day now. Is it because he will have us settle down here and wait, for the summer and the slackening of the ice and open water will spare us the toil of finding a way over this hopeless maze of lanes? I am loath, indeed, that this should come to pass. Even if we could manage, as far as provisions are concerned, by killing and eating the dogs, and with a chance of game in prospect, our arrival in Spitzbergen would be late, and we might not improbably have to pass the winter there, and then those at home would have another year to wait.

“Sunday, June 2d. So it is on Whitsunday that this book* finishes. I could hardly have imagined that we

* It was the first diary I used on the sledge journey.