

the seals are few and far between, there are birds still, I am thankful to say. Last night a couple of ivory-gulls (*Larus eburneus*), were bold enough to settle down on our sealskin, close beside the tent wall, and pecked at the blubber. They were sent off once or twice, but returned. If the meat falls short we must resort to catching birds."

Thus the days passed by, one exactly like the other; we waited and waited for the snow to melt, and worked desultorily meanwhile at getting ourselves ready to proceed. This life reminded me of some Eskimos who journeyed up a fjord to collect grass for hay; but when they arrived at their destination found it quite short, and so settled down and waited till it was long enough to cut. A suitable condition of the snow was long in coming. On June 29th I write: "Will not the temperature rise sufficiently to make something like an effectual clearance of the snow? We try to pass the time as best we can in talking of how delightful it will be when we get home, and how we shall enjoy life and all its charms, and go through a calculation of chances as to how soon that may be; but sometimes, too, we talk of how well we will arrange for the winter in Spitzbergen, if we should not reach home this year. If it should come to that, we may not even get so far, but have to winter on some place ashore here—no, it can never come to that!

"Sunday, June 30th. So this is the end of June, and we are about the same place as when we began the month. And the state of the snow? Well, better it