

ness was unquestionably the worst work of the whole expedition, and had it not been a sheer necessity we should have let the animals lie where they were; but we needed fuel for the winter, even if we could have done without the meat. When at last the task was completed, and we had two great heaps of blubber and meat on shore, well covered by the thick walrus hides, we were not a little pleased.

During this time the gulls were living in luxury. There was abundance of refuse, blubber, entrails, and other internal organs. They gathered in large flocks from all quarters, both ivory and glaucus gulls, and kept up a perpetual screaming and noise both night and day. When they had eaten as much as they could manage they generally sat out on the ice-hummocks and chattered together. When we came down to skin they withdrew only a very little way from the carcasses, and sat waiting patiently in long rows on the ice beside us, or, led on by a few bold officers, drew continually nearer. No sooner did a little scrap of blubber fall than two or three ivory-gulls would pounce upon it, often at our very feet, and fight over it until the feathers flew. Outside the fulmars were sailing in their silent, ghost-like flight to and fro over the surface of the water. Up and down the edge of the shore flocks of kittiwakes moved incessantly, darting like an arrow, with a dull splash, towards the surface of the water, whenever a little crustacean appeared there. We were particularly fond of these birds,