

got within a short distance of him he took alarm, and swam out into the large channel, where he remained rolling about, turning over on his back for some four or five minutes at a time with his head above water, puffing away, and positively jeering at us. When at length we had wearily worked our way back again to the large channel, intending to assist him a little in his performances—pop, away he went.

Some days later we again received a visit from a troupe of these comedians in another channel newly formed in close proximity to the vessel. Three of them had long, heavy tusks, which they showed high above the water, and then used to scratch their female friends on the back with. We immediately prepared ourselves with rifles and harpoons, and ran towards the channel as fast as our legs would carry us. But before we got there the beasts had fled. It was of no use trying to get within range of these shy creatures, so, after that, as a rule, we allowed them to remain unmolested.

Once, however, during the spring of 1896, we were near catching a narwhal. I had been out fowling, and was just busily taking out of the boat the birds I had shot, when suddenly a narwhal appeared in the channel close to our usual landing-place, where the harpoon with the line attached lay ready for immediate use. I quickly seized the harpoon, but the coil of line was too short, and when I had got this right the whale dived below the water, just as I was ready to harpoon him.

An occasional large seal (*Phoca barbata*) also appeared at this time; we chased them sometimes, but without success; they were too shy.

With the fowling our luck was better, and so early as June 7th we shot so many black guillemots, gulls, fulmars, and little auks that we partook on that day of our first meal of fresh meat during the year. The flesh of these birds is not, as a rule, valued very much, but we ate it with ravenous appetites, and found that it had an excellent flavor—better than the tenderest young ptarmigan.

One day three gulls appeared, and settled down at some distance from the vessel. Pettersen fired twice at them and missed,