

for ourselves, besides a good deal of food for the dogs; and we could, moreover, carry a dog or two on the deck. In other respects they were essentially like the Eskimo kayaks, full decked, save for an aperture in the middle for a man to sit in. This aperture was encircled by a wooden ring, after the Eskimo fashion, over which we could slip the lower part of our sealskin jackets, specially adjusted for this purpose, so that the junction between boat and jacket was water-tight. When these jackets were drawn tight round the wrists and face the sea might sweep right over us without a drop of water coming into the kayak. We had to provide ourselves with such boats in case of having to cross open stretches of sea on our way to Spitzbergen, or, if we chose the other route, between Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya. Besides this aperture in the middle, there were small trap-doors fore and aft in the deck, to enable us to put our hands in and stow the provisions, and also get things out more readily, without having to take out all the freight through the middle aperture, in case what we wanted lay at either extremity. These trap-doors, however, could be closed so as to be quite water-tight. To make the canvas quite impervious to water, the best plan would have been to have sized it, and then painted it externally with ordinary oil paint; but, on the one hand, it was very difficult to do this work in the extreme cold (in the hold the temperature was  $-20^{\circ}$  C.,  $-4^{\circ}$  Fahr.), and, on the other hand, I was afraid the paint might render the canvas