

Johansen's kayak) were split, and these had wholly or partly to be taken out and new ones substituted, or to be strengthened by lashings and side splints. When the covers were properly patched, and the frames, after several days' work, again in order, the covers were put on and carefully stretched. All this, of course, had to be done with care, and was not quick work; but then we had the satisfaction of knowing that the kayaks were fully seaworthy, and capable, if need be, of weathering a storm on the way over to Spitzbergen.

Meanwhile the time flew by—our precious time; but then we hoped that our kayaks would render us important assistance, and that we should get on all the quicker in them. Thus, on Tuesday, June 4th, I wrote in my diary: "It seems to me that it cannot be long before we come to open water or slack ice. The latter is, hereabouts, so thin and broken up, and the weather so summer-like. Yesterday the thermometer was a little below freezing-point, and the snow which fell was more like sleet than anything else; it melted on the tent, and it was difficult to keep things from getting wet inside; the walls dripped if we even went near them. We had abominable weather the whole day yesterday, with falling snow, but for the matter of that we are used to it; we have had nothing else lately. To-day, however, it is brilliant, clear blue sky, and the sun has just come over the top of our hummock and down into the tent. It will be a glorious day to sit out