

Wherever I turned the way was closed, and it looked as if advance was denied us for good. To launch the kayaks would be of no avail, for we could hardly expect to propel them through this accumulation of fragments, and I was on the point of making up my mind to wait and try our luck with the net and line, and see if we could not manage to find a seal somewhere in these lanes.

“ These are moments full of anxiety, when from some hummock one looks doubtingly over the ice, one’s thoughts continually reverting to the same question: have we provisions enough to wait for the time when the snow will have melted and the ice have become slacker and more intersected with lanes, so that one can row between the floes? Or is there any probability of our being able to obtain sufficient food, if that which we have should fall short? These are great and important questions which I cannot yet answer for certain. That it will take a long time before all this snow melts away and advance becomes fairly practicable is certain; at what time the ice may become slacker, and progress by means of the lanes possible, we cannot say; and up to this we have taken nothing, with the exception of two ivory gulls and a small fish. We did, indeed, see another fish swimming near the surface of the water, but it was no larger than the other. Where we are just now there seems to be little prospect of capturing anything. I have not seen a single seal the last few days; though yesterday I saw the