

cross, as they were often packed together, they necessitated a winding route. We saw clearly that to continue in this way was impossible. The only resource was to disburden ourselves of everything which could in any way be dispensed with, and start afresh as quickly as we could, with only provisions, kayaks, guns, and the most necessary clothing, in order, at any rate, to reach land before our last crumb of food was eaten up. We went over the things to see what we could part with; the medicine-bag, the spare horizontal bars belonging to the sledges, reserve snow-shoes and thick, rough socks, soiled shirts, and the tent. When it came to the sleeping-bag we drew a long sigh, but, wet and heavy as it always is now, that had to go too. We had, moreover, to contrive wooden grips under the kayaks, so that we can without further trouble set the whole thing afloat when we have to cross a lane and be able to drag the sledges up on the other side and go on at once. If it should then, as now, be impossible for us to launch the sledges, because sleeping-bag, clothes, and sacks of provender, etc., are lying on them as a soft dunnage for the kayaks, it will take too much time. At every lane we should be obliged to unlash the loads, lift the kayaks off the sledges and into the water, lash them together there, then place the sledges across them, and finally go through the same manœuvres in inverse order on the other side. We should not get very far in the day in that manner.