

voyage. A highly remarkable convoy we must have been, laden as we were with sledges, sacks, guns, and dogs; a tribe of gypsies, Johansen said it was. If any one had suddenly come upon us then, he would hardly have known what to make of the troupe, and certainly would not have taken us for polar explorers. Paddling between the sledges and the snow-shoes, which projected far out on either side, was not easy work; but we managed to get along, and were soon of the opinion that we should think ourselves lucky could we go on like this the whole day, instead of hauling and wading through the snow. Our kayaks could hardly have been called water-tight, and we had recourse to the pumps several times; but we could easily have reconciled ourselves to that, and only wished we had more open water to travel over. At last we reached the end of the pool; I jumped ashore on the edge of the ice, to pull up the kayaks, and suddenly heard a great splash beside us. It was a seal which had been lying there. Soon afterwards I heard a similar splash on the other side, and then for the third time a huge head appeared, blowing and swimming backward and forward, but, alas! only to dive deep under the edge of the ice before we had time to get the guns out. It was a fine, large blue or bearded seal (*Phoca barbata*).

"We were quite sure that it had disappeared for good, but no sooner had I got one of the sledges half-way up the side than the immense head came up again close beside the kayaks, blowing and repeating the same ma-