

the winter on; around us impassable ice, and our provender very much on the decline. The south coast of the country and Eira Harbor now appeared to our imagination a veritable land of Canaan, and we thought that if only we were there all our troubles would be over. We hoped to be able to find Leigh Smith's hut there, or, at any rate, some remains of it, so that we should have something to live in; and we also hoped that where there no doubt was much open water it would be easy to find game. We regretted not having shot some seals while they were numerous; on the night when we left our last camping-place there were plenty of them about. As Johansen was standing on the edge of the ice doing something to his kayak, a seal came up just in front of him. He thought it was of a kind he had not seen before, and shouted to me. But at the same moment up came one black poll after another quiet and silent, from ten to twenty in number, all gazing at him with their great eyes. He was quite nonplussed, thought there was something uncanny about it, and then they disappeared just as noiselessly as they had come.

"I consoled him by telling him they really were of a kind we had not seen before on our journey; they were young harp, or saddleback seal (*Phoca groenlandica*). We saw several schools of them again later in the day.

"Meanwhile we killed time as best we could—chiefly by sleeping. On the early morning of the 21st, just as I