

we used as fuel. For cooking on the journey we would use the pot belonging to our cooking apparatus; and our lamp we used as a brazier in which to burn blubber and train-oil together. These provisions and this fuel did not constitute a particularly light equipment; but it had this advantage, that we should probably be able to replace what we consumed of it by the way. It was to be hoped that we should find plenty of game.

Our short sledges were a greater trouble to us, for of course we could not get them lengthened now. If we failed to find open water all the way over to Spitzbergen, and were compelled to drag them over the uneven drift-ice, we could scarcely imagine how we should get on with the kayaks lying on these short sledges, without getting them knocked to pieces on hummocks and pressure-ridges; for the kayaks were supported only at the middle, while both ends projected far beyond the sledge, and at the slightest inequality these ends hacked against the ice, and scraped holes in the sail-cloth. We had to protect them well by lashing bearskins under them; and then we had to make the best grips we could contrive out of the scanty wood we had to fix on the sledges. This was no easy matter, for the great point was to make the grips high in order to raise the kayaks as much as possible and keep them clear of the ice; and then they had to be well lashed in order to keep their places. But we had no cord to lash them with, and had to make it for ourselves of raw bearskin or walrus hide, which is not the