

made an end of, as we had had it lying spread over our meat and blubber heap in the autumn to protect it against the gulls. The foxes had gnawed and torn it in all directions, and had carried off great strips of it, which we found scattered around. We speculated a great deal as to how we could make ourselves a new tent. The only thing we could think of was to put our sledges, with the kayaks upon them, parallel to each other at the distance of about a man's height, then pile snow around them at the sides until they were closed in, lay our snowshoes and bamboo staffs across, and then spread our two sails, laced together, over the whole, so that they should reach the ground on both sides. In this way we managed to make ourselves a quite effective shelter, the kayaks forming the roof ridges, and the sails the side walls of the tent. It was not quite impervious to drifting snow, and we had usually a good deal of trouble in stopping up cracks and openings with our wind clothes and things of that sort.

But the most important part of our equipment was, after all, our firearms, and these, fortunately, we had kept in tolerably good order. We cleaned the rifles thoroughly and rubbed them with train-oil. We had also a little vaseline and gun-oil left for the locks. On taking stock of our ammunition, we found, to our joy, that we still had about 100 rifle cartridges and 110 small-shot cartridges. We had thus enough, if necessary, for several more winters.