

After having supplied ourselves with as much meat and blubber as we thought we needed for the moment, as well as a quantity of blood, we pitched our tent close by and boiled a good mess of blood porridge, which consisted of a wonderful mixture of blood, powdered fish, Indian meal, and blubber. We still had a good wind, and sailed away merrily with our sledges all night. When we got to the promontory to the south of us we came to open water, which here ran right up to the edge of the glacier-covered land; and all we had to do was to launch our kayaks and set off along by the glacier cliff, in open sea for the first time this year. It was strange to be using paddles again and to see the water swarming with birds—auks and little auks and kittiwakes all round. The land was covered with glaciers, the basaltic rock only projecting in one or two places. There were moraines, too, in several places on the glaciers. We were not a little surprised, after going some way, when we discovered a flock of eider-ducks on the water. A little later we saw two geese sitting on the shore, and felt as if we had come into quite civilized regions again. After a couple of hours' paddling our progress south was stopped by shore-ice, while the open water extended due west towards some land we had previously seen in that direction, but which was now covered by mist. We were very much in doubt as to which way to choose, whether to go on in the open water westward—which must take us towards Spitzbergen—or to leave it and again take to our sledges over the