

the ice to fetch salt-water, had made up the fire, cut up the meat and put it in the pot, and had already taken off one boot, preparatory to creeping into the bag again, when I saw that the mist over the land had risen a little since the preceding day. I thought it would be as well to take the opportunity of having a look round, so I put on my boot again and went up on to a hummock near to look at the land beyond. A gentle breeze came from the land, bearing with it a confused noise of thousands of bird-voices from the mountain there. As I listened to these sounds of life and movement, watched flocks of auks flying to and fro above my head, and as my eye followed the line of coast, stopping at the dark, naked cliffs, glancing at the cold, icy plains and glaciers in a land which I believed to be unseen by any human eye and untrodden by any human foot, reposing in Arctic majesty behind its mantle of mist—a sound suddenly reached my ear so like the barking of a dog that I started. It was only a couple of barks, but it could not be anything else. I strained my ears, but heard no more, only the same bubbling noise of thousands of birds. I must have been mistaken, after all; it was only birds I had heard; and again my eye passed from sound to island in the west. Then the barking came again—first single barks, then full cry; there was one deep bark, and one sharper; there was no longer any room for doubt. At that moment I remembered having heard two reports the day before