

in on all sides. In vain did we hope that the wind would detach it; day by day the cold became more intense; the ice got stronger, and we had no alternative but to land what little had not been thrown overboard, and to bring in all our provisions. We made cabins which we covered with fir branches; the captain and myself were versed in the way of building them, so that ours was one of the most comfortable. The sailors raised theirs along-side of ours, and, to hold the provisions, we erected a little place which no one could enter without being seen by all. This was a necessary precaution, and to prevent suspicion which might arise against those who had the charge of it, and to prevent any one from consuming in a few days what was to support us for many long days.

The following was the furniture of the apartments we had made for ourselves; the iron pot in which we had heated the tar, served us as a kettle; we had only one axe, but no stone to sharpen it, and our only preservative against the cold, was our clothes and some half-burned blankets. Had any of these failed us, we should undoubtedly have perished. Without the pot, it would be impossible to cook anything to sustain life; without the axe, we could get no wood to keep up our fire, and without our blankets, bad as they were, there was no means of resisting the excessive cold which almost annihilated us at night.

This state, you will tell me, was frightful, and nothing could add to it; pardon me, dear brother, ere long it will be incredible. Its horror augments at every line, and I have much to write you before I come to the extremity of misery to which I was reduced.