

advance of nine miles on the straight line, to take them there and back. As an actual fact they could travel for six or seven months if necessary, and the going would probably be better in winter than in summer, for snow is the traveler's friend in high latitudes.

The main party, with an interpreter for communicating with the Eskimos, would start out with sixteen dog teams carrying tents, stoves, fuel, blankets, etc., and two big Peterboro canoes. The fuel would have to be specially constructed. Coal is unsuitable and wood is too bulky. I know from personal experience that an ordinary porous brick soaked in coal oil for twenty-four hours will burn for over two hours, and makes a first-class torch for spearing fish by; and I do not see why compressed bricks made of sawdust soaked in coal oil would not make a capital fuel. In a properly constructed sheet-iron stove it would throw an intense heat and could be lighted in an instant. In summer time, of course, very little fire would be needed except for cooking, but after the thermometer got below zero fires would be necessary night and morning. The best fuel for the purpose could easily be determined by experiment, but whatever its character it must be compact in form and must yield the greatest possible combustion for its bulk. All provisions should be packed in sealed tin cases of a convenient size and weight for handling. They would then suffer no injury from rain. The tents should be conical in shape, eleven feet in diameter at the bottom, and stretched on ten light cedar poles hinged to a ring at the top, and shod with iron at the bottom. This is the most convenient tent made. It can be set or struck in less than a minute, because it opens and shuts like an umbrella. It gives the greatest floor room for the amount of canvas. There is no large space overhead to absorb the heat. And it offers the least resistance to the wind, and if properly spiked can not blow down—a valuable property when the thermometer is away below zero. Four such tents would accommodate the exploring party. The character and quantity of food would be easily determined by the surveyors, but one article would have to be sternly eliminated, and that is alcohol. My allowance for sixteen men for five months would be two bottles of brandy, and I think they would come back unopened. The traveler's standby in cold weather is tea, and men will do more hard work on it than they ever could accomplish on any form of spirit. Of course, there are many minor details which need not be enumerated here.

What difficulties the party would have to contend with above the eighty-second parallel, of course, can not be known. Their motto at starting would be, "Get there somehow," and there is no doubt they would live up to it. If the theory of a Polynia or