

observed, but even then, before he is within striking distance, there is a great spluttering in the water, as the band scatters in every direction, vainly beating the water with the curious-looking stumps that soon will wear their plumage and once more do duty as wings. Some dive below the surface and come up a great way off, and always just where you are not looking for them; but as the flock takes alarm, the hunter dashes forward, feeling the necessity for speed rather than for caution. He is soon within fifteen or twenty feet of the struggling mass, and, seizing a curious-looking spear, with three barbs of unequal length, he poises it for a moment in the air, and then hurls it with unerring aim at the devoted bird, impaling it with a sharpened iron or bone spike in the center of the barbs. The handle of the spear is of wood, and floats on the surface of the water, so that the hunter can recover his weapon and the game at his leisure.

In some sections of the Arctic, the game thus captured forms a great staple of food; for winter use the birds are packed in bales of about three feet in length and two feet square on the ends, looking very much like small bales of cotton that have been tarred and feathered, for it must be remembered that the inside and outside of the birds remain intact when packed away. It is no objection to an Esquimaux palate that they decay before winter freezes the bale as solid as a rock.

While traveling through the Oookjoolik country, on the west coast of Adelaide Peninsula, we found the natives well supplied with this delicacy, and did not hesitate to accept some of the many cordial invitations to game dinners that we received from these hospitable savages. We found here, also, that the natives were supplied with goose-grease preserved in bags for winter use, and a most seasonable and dainty fare it proved to be. Salmon-oil is also similarly preserved, and is equally palatable. In a temperate climate it would probably seem objectionable, but in the Arctic winter everything of that character is demanded by the system, and, fortunately, instead of proving nauseous, is really delicious. The roe—called by the natives *shu-way*—of the salmon is kept in bags, and only needs pickling to rival the famous Russian caviare.

Nearly all the rivers and lakes that empty into the Arctic seas are filled with fish, usually salmon and trout of unusual size. Pahpah, an aged Inuit from Amitkoke,

which is about half-way up the Melville Peninsula, on the Fox Channel side, told me that in an immense lake near his old home were salmon "as large as a man," and so strong, that, in capturing them, occasionally the fishermen were drawn into the lake. They sometimes caught them by striking them with a seal spear, the head of which separates from the shaft and turns in the wound like a harpoon. These, however, were larger than the usual salmon, though I saw some, while on Back's Great Fish River, that would measure more than twelve inches across. As a general thing, they are speared while passing the rapids; their bodies are then piled upon the ground, and stones are built around and over them to protect them from the ravages of wolves and wolverine. Like the ducks and geese, they are "cachéd" without cleaning, and the summer sun soon reduces them to a condition that would seriously impair their value at a Fulton Market stand. Around the numerous rapids in the vicinity of our *igloos*, at the point on the river which is marked as the Dangerous Rapids, and is known to the natives as *E-tam Nartz-zook*, we found a great many caches, covering several tons of fish. The rapids occur at intervals of a mile or two for a distance of about ten miles, and it was here that Lieutenant Back, upon the voyage in which he discovered the river, was compelled to disembark and convey his boats and material by portages, a task in which he was materially assisted by the natives.

It is more the position than the nature of the animal hunted which gives the spice of danger to the sport, and adds the excitement of action to the chase. Seal-hunting through the ice is intensely monotonous and dull, while, on the contrary, when the seal is lying upon the ice, half dreaming and half awake, on the slippery edge of his hole, the question as to whether or not the devices to deceive and ensnare him will prove successful adds great interest to the work, which increases in proportion as the distance between the sportsman and his game diminishes. It is no unusual experience to see the provoking animal slip swiftly into his hole just as the hunter is about to pose himself for a shot or to throw his spear. This occurs, perhaps, after about an hour's work in sliding closer and closer to the seal, while he is lying upon one side,—the hunter hitching himself along during the occasional naps indulged in by the unsuspecting animal. But so accus-