

have had to drag me, or I would have remained on the way, so ill was I. It is true that nature has more resistance than she makes believe; I experienced this that day, when I was so weak that, if I sat down upon the snow occasionally to rest myself, my limbs would tremble, not from cold, but from a weakness which caused the perspiration to come out upon my forehead. Now, as I was thirsty, I tried to drink some water from a torrent [309] that we were passing. The ice, which I broke with my club, fell under me and separated into a big cake. When I saw myself with my snowshoes on my feet, upon this ice, floating in a very rapid current, I leaped to the edge of the torrent before consulting as to whether I ought to do it or not, and nature, which perspired from weakness, found strength enough to escape from this mass of water, not wishing to drink so much of it at once; I had nothing but the fear of a peril which was sooner escaped than realized.

The danger passed, I pursued my way quite slowly; indeed I was not likely to be very strong, for, besides the malady from which I had been suffering since the last day of January, and which had not entirely left me, during these last days I had not been eating more than three mouthfuls of smoked meat in the morning, and would walk nearly all the rest of the day without any other refreshment than a little water, when I could get any. At last I arrived after the others upon the banks of the great river, and, three days later, [310] namely, on the fourth of the same month of April, we made our twenty-third station, going to erect our cabin on the Island where we had left our Shallop. Here we were very badly lodged; for, in addition to the presence of the Sor-