Gunnar Astrup

WITH PEARY NEAR THE POLE

BY EIVIND ASTRUP

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND SKETCHES
BY THE AUTHOR

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN
BY H. J. BULL

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PREFACE.

LITTLE did I think when, a few years ago, sitting at the school-table striving laboriously with my Norwegian exercises, which were so limited in length and range, that I should ever attempt the writing of a whole book; for I was by nature a sun-worshipper, and loved a life in the open air far beyond books and writing-desks.

But wonderful are the ways of fate.

It happened that for a couple of years I passed beyond the pale of civilisation, and visited places where none had ever been. These things I had, of course, to describe; and so I wrote some letters telling of my travels to the *Morgenbladet*, after which I considered all necessary results of my strange adventures had been attained.

But then people would come and ask me, "When shall we get your book?" Many were even so friendly as to tell me that they would be glad to read it; so that there was nothing for it but to retire to a quiet place, and play the author. The result of my literary activity I hereby venture to place before the public, hoping that they will not be too critical.

EIVIND ASTRUP.

CHRISTIANIA

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE fine spring morning in the year 1891 I was sitting in one of the large hotels of Philadelphia, reading the latest news of the world. Strikes, murders, and bank-robberies, which filled the columns of the paper, interested me but little. I was revolving bold plans in my mind.

I wished nothing more than to get away from the civilised world as soon as possible; and, animated with a vivid desire to try my strength in new and unknown fields, I could no longer restrain myself. I had to be off to one or other outpost of the world, if I would have my longings satisfied.

My first thought was to make for the west

coast of Africa, and thence, as opportunity might serve, to penetrate into the interior of that vast continent, among its many savage tribes. The climate, certainly, had a bad name; but in this respect I did what so many others have done and will do before and after me, I relied solely on a healthy constitution.

No; the newspaper did not much interest me that April morning. I was just on the point of putting it down, when suddenly my eye caught a small paragraph in one of its corners:—

"Robert E. Peary, Engineer at the Naval Dockyard, is now engaged in fitting out his expedition to North Greenland. As is well known, it is his intention to try to ascertain the extension of Greenland northwards, by undertaking an excursion on sledges over its snow-covered interior. His companions on the expedition are not yet decided upon."

At the very moment that I finished this short paragraph, my resolution was taken. I determined to offer myself as a member of the Expedition.

I gave Africa the slip for the present, and turned eagerly toward the Arctic regions, the very quarter for Norwegian enterprise. It would be magnificent for once to be able to gaze upon

those desolate, ice-covered landscapes, about which I had so often read with keenest interest.

The same day, therefore, I sent to Lieutenant Peary a letter, offering him my services on the adventure.

Soon I received an answer, requesting me to come and see him at the dockyard. How well I remember the particulars of the half-comic scene which was enacted during our first meeting! As a school-boy, I was on the classical side, and I therefore had, at the time I am speaking of, an imperfect knowledge of English. However, in order to be able to express myself with ease and elegance during our conversation, I had cunningly furnished my two largest coat-pockets with an English and a Norwegian dictionary; armed with these, and the required doctors' certificates and testimonials, I entered the corridors of the dockyard's office, certain of victory.

A young man of African origin, the afterwards illustrious "Matt," showed me into Lieutenant Peary's working-room, where I was most heartily received by the explorer. His whole appearance

inspired me with absolute confidence. His tall, lean figure was elastic and sinewy; his features, coarse but determined, were aglow with intrepid resolution.

Scarcely had our conversation begun before I found myself obliged to pull the friendly text-books out of my pocket. With feverish quickness I ran over the leaves during the remainder of my visit, hardly ever finding the words I wanted, but managing at last, in rather laconic sentences, to give expression to what was in my mind.

In the course of conversation, I noticed that Mr. Peary's black servant now and then disappeared through a side door with strange grimaces, returning soon after with an uncomfortably serious and distorted face. He afterwards admitted that this happened whenever he lost control over his risible muscles as he saw me consult my dictionary.

A couple of days after my first meeting Lieutenant Peary, I was told that I had been accepted as one of the five members of his Polar Expedition.

CHAPTER II.

THE TWO PEARY EXPEDITIONS.

IN writing a short account of the two Arctic expeditions in which I have had the privilege of taking part, I will mainly try to give my readers some glimpses of the surroundings among which my own personal studies of Greenland's northern regions were made. A careful and complete account of the history of these expeditions, with notices of the various and regular scientific observations which we secured, I leave to the leader of the two enterprises, the more so as he alone is in possession of all materials necessary for such a work.

As an opening to the history of the first Peary expedition, I give an extract from the report which, after my arrival home in the autumn of 1892, I laid before the Norwegian Geographical Society, leaving out, however, those parts which in later chapters will form

subjects of more complete description—as, for example, the story of the North Greenland tribes, and of life and nature in those cold Arctic regions.

The North Greenland Expedition of 1891—1892.

Lieutenant Peary's plan for this expedition was, shortly, as follows :—

"With a company of five or six members I shall be landed at Whale Sound, on the west coast of Greenland, in 77° 35′ latitude, in the month of June or July. We shall spend the remainder of the summer and autumn in erecting a hut for our wintering; lay in an abundant store of meat, make scientific investigations, and excursions to the inland ice, and, if the season is favourable, also establish a provision-depot near the south corner of the Humboldt Glacier. In the course of the winter we shall prepare sledges, 'ski,' clothes, and travelling outfit, and practise running on 'ski,' and Canadian snow-shoes, for which purpose the head of Whale Sound is well adapted,

"When spring begins, four or five of the company will start over the inland ice for the Humboldt Glacier, one or two remaining behind to take care of the house. If good progress is made, we shall continue from the Humboldt Glacier to the head of Peterman-fjord. From here two or three of us will push on, whilst the others return to Whale Sound with the necessary provisions for the home route. Those in advance will continue to Sherard Osborne fjord, go farther on to the head of De Long fjord, and finally push on towards the northernmost point of Greenland. When this is reached, and its geographical position determined, the party will return by the same route to Whale Sound, and the expedition will take the first chance to return to America."

This was Mr. Peary's plan, and as it was laid down it was in the main carried out.

There were five members of the expedition. Besides Lieutenant Peary, there was the surgeon, Dr. Cook, a very active and energetic comrade of about thirty, who, as the ethnologist of the expedition, proved himself of great service

during ourstay among the natives; Mr. Gibson, as a prominent sporting man and particularly as a very skilled hunter, was of incalculable service to our small company; Mr. Verhoeff, the mineralogist, had contributed two thousand dollars towards the expenses of the expedition; while I was the youngest of the company, not having yet attained my twentieth year when the expedition started. As a matter of course we were all volunteers; and "Matt," the nigger, who for several years had been Mr. Peary's servant, did not hesitate to follow his master as our excellent cook. Our small company was also cheered by the presence of Mr. Peary's wife—a fact which, in America, added not a little to the prestige of our enterprise.

On June 6th the expedition left New York in the sealing-vessel *Kite*. Besides the members of the expedition some scientists from Philadelphia accompanied us, to make observations and collect specimens during the voyage, intending to return by the ship as soon as our small party had been landed.

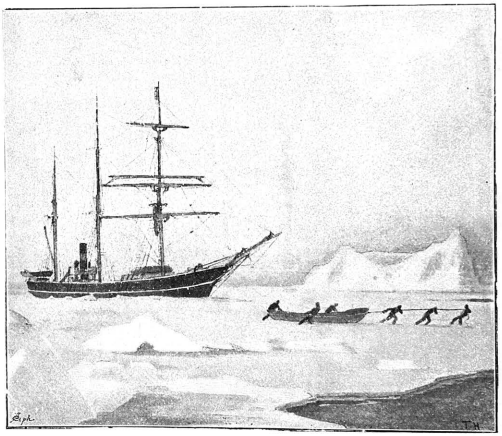
After a rather tedious passage along the coasts of North America and Newfoundland, and through the Davis Strait, we at last, on June 23rd, sighted the land of all our longing and desire.

On the way northward along the west coast of Greenland we called at a couple of the Danish settlements, Goodhaven and Upernavik, where we were treated with great friendliness and hospitality by the Government officials during our short stay. On July 2nd we were stopped by pack-ice, which kept us imprisoned for three weeks. The days seemed interminable, since we were all impatient to reach our destination, the point in Inglefield Gulf chosen for our winter quarters; and their monotony was only broken by shooting seals and sea-birds.

On July 11th Lieutenant Peary had the misfortune to break his leg, receiving a fearful blow from the small iron tiller underneath the wheel, set in motion by the vessel going astern as the rudder collided with a large ice-floe. He bore his mishap bravely, but for four weeks he kept his bed. Confident in himself and his enterprise,

he looked upon the accident with the greatest equanimity.

On July 16th we shot our first bear; and during the following days saw several, without,



THE "KITE" IN THE ICE AT MELVILLE BAY.

however, getting within range. On July 22nd we again got clear of the pack-ice, and the next day came in sight of those barren coasts which through the coming winter would surround us.

The place Mr. Peary had fixed on for winter quarters was on the southern side of MacCormick Bay, a few minutes south of the 78th degree of latitude. We arrived there early on the morning of July 28th, and spent the day in selecting the most suitable site for our station. Towards evening we had finally chosen a dry corner close to the beach, with a spring of fresh water near at hand. During the next week the ship's crew carried ashore all our provisions and other equipments, whilst we began to build our house, having brought with us all necessary materials. It was twenty-two feet long, twelve feet wide, and divided into a large and a smaller room. Walls and roof were built with boards one inch in thickness, protected on the outer side with tarred felt. At a distance of a foot from the inner wall was arranged another lining of common matchboard, on which were hung heavy woollen blankets. Around the house we built a stone wall, three feet high, upon the top of which we placed the numberless cases and barrels in which our provisions were packed. From the roof, and all round the stone wall, canvas was

extended later in the autumn, to form an enclosed passage about the whole building, which, during the severe cold of the winter, contributed considerably to make the house itself warm and comfortable.

On July 30th the vessel left us, Mr. Peary, with his broken leg, having been brought ashore on a litter constructed for the occasion. The house by this time was only in need of a roof.

It was not with any regret that we saw this last connection with the civilised world disappear by degrees on the horizon. We were now alone, and could at our ease start the work we had before us, and to which we had resolved to devote ourselves during the next twelve months.

As soon as our house was completed we began to tackle many other tasks, which had to be finished before the winter set in. It was of the first importance to get hold of some of the Esquimaux living on Northumberland Island, and to persuade them to settle near our house, as in the course of the winter they could be of the utmost service to us, particularly in the manufacture of skin dresses.

On August 12th four of us formed a boat-party and made for the island, where we found some Esquimaux. The first meeting with them was very singular, as we did not understand a word of their language. At last we succeeded, by means of signs and strange grimaces, in making them understand our wishes. A family, consisting of husband, wife, and two children, agreed to go with us in our boat, and as soon as we had them aboard we shaped our course homeward, arriving on August 18th. Summer was now far advanced, and we spent the remainder of the season, with the exception of a few short reconnoitring trips on the inland ice, in hunting reindeer, that we might secure a good stock of flesh for food and of skins for clothing.

These hunting excursions were usually towards the head of MacCormick Bay, and we rarely returned empty-handed. In all we killed thirty-four reindeer that autumn, before the darkness hindered us. On October 26th the sun abandoned us, not to return during the next four months, and for more than half this time there was

scarcely any difference in the light of night or day.

During this long spell of darkness we were quite comfortable in our cosy hut; and, although rather pinched for room, were all bright and happy.

We took three meals a day, of which the last was the principal, consisting of roasted reindeer and various kinds of vegetables, of which we brought with us a considerable quantity in sealed tins.

The day was occupied with manual work of one kind or another, since much had to be done for our equipment for the great sledge journey the following spring. Personally I worked mostly as a joiner, and made sledges and "skis"; of the others, Mr. Peary distinguished himself particularly as a highly-skilled cutter, most of our skin-clothes being made from his patterns, Dr. Cook came out as a tanner of rare merit, whilst Mr. Gibson was busy as a shoemaker. In these various practical occupations we attained by degrees such skill that many a time we jokingly expressed a mutual doubt

if either one or other of our company had ever done anything else in his former life than tanning, shoemaking, planing, or cutting tailor's patterns.

On Saturdays we used to clean the long stove-pipe of the house, and when that job was finished we had a very necessary warm bath in an old petroleum barrel. This bath was taken with or without an attendant, but usually two or three friendly Esquimaux did the scrubbing with soap and brush. On Sunday we would don our more civilised dress; but on Monday morning we wisely set aside all vanity, and crept into our skin-dresses again, which in proportion to their weight offer the best protection against cold. These were sewn by Esquimaux women during the autumn, the skins having been previously prepared in rude laborious Greenland fashion, by crushing between the teeth and masticating the previously dried skins.

Skin clothes, no less than others, are liable to wear and tear; our worthy doctor, however, had the ingenuity to apply a corrective in the form of a huge patch of bear-skin stitched on

in the part most exposed to wear, with the long, hanging white coarse hair; this gave him a most quaint appearance.

Much of our leisure time during the winter was spent in reading newspapers and periodicals a year old, and also in studying scientific notes and books on travel in the Arctic regions, with which we were amply provided. The evenings were usually passed in gossip with the Esquimaux, telling them tales about the distant southern countries, to which they would listen eagerly for hours. But if we asked them whether they would go back with us in our ship, they answered gravely that they would never leave their own country of mountains and ice.

Often they sang and danced for us: a man or a woman would step on to the floor making the most weird grimaces and gestures, the actor reciting more or less improvised songs of very mystic meaning, accompanied by rhythmical blows upon a gut-skin drum. Round about in a circle the other Esquimaux would stand, and enjoy themselves in perfect accord with us all; Matt in the meantime sitting behind on the edge of

his bunk playing hymn-tunes on a concertina out of tune, as a kind of protest against all this paganism.

We received almost daily visits from other Esquimaux during the winter months, especially at full moon. Some of these would build peculiar dome-shaped snow-huts, where they took up their lodgings; whilst others, intending only to stay with us a short time, were allowed to sleep in rows on the floor in our quarters. At first this close contact was far from pleasant, but the force of habit helped us to put up with it; and by this familiar intercourse we soon learned to know them and to speak and understand their difficult language.

Christmas was of course a festival for us, as for those at home, even if we had no sledge excursions or balls. Christmas Eve was celebrated by a sumptuous dinner. At six o'clock we sat down at the little table, dressed in a very parody of fashion, and attacked the dishes with sharp-set appetites.

We then made way for our Esquimaux friends, some of whom were with us at the time. Un-

acquainted as they were with the use of knife and fork, it was a sight to see them carefully putting the food into their mouths, half fearing that the forks would pierce their cheeks. Full of quiet fun, they seemed to amuse themselves most thoroughly.

Later in the evening we put on Christmas masks, and I shall never forget the scene that followed. Women and children shrieked in terror; and all, even the most courageous of the men, disappeared through the hut's door with astonishing rapidity.

This was the end of our Christmas Eve, and not till far into the forenoon of the following day were the good folk persuaded to come again inside our doors. We explained to them the secret of the masks, and when convinced of their true nature they could not sufficiently express their admiration for such ingenious toys.

Before Christmas and the new year we had a succession of heavy snowstorms, and, as far as I can remember at the moment, the quantity of snow that fell during the winter amounted to considerably more than a yard in depth.

We did not notice the Aurora Borealis often in the winter night; for then the moon remains in sight for six or seven days, spreading such glory over the desolate ice-fields that we could easily imagine ourselves living in some fairy-land where everything was made of shining silver.

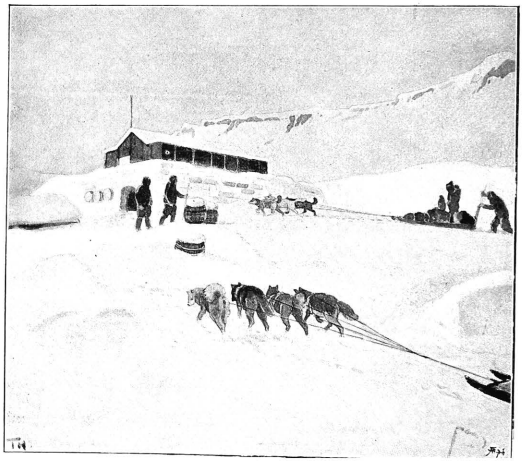
Some time in January we first noticed a gleam of light towards the south, soon followed by the dawn of a short day. On February 13th we welcomed the return of the sun, after an absence of a hundred and ten days; and the dark winter night, which had passed by more quickly and more pleasantly than we had dared to hope, was at an end.

After the return of the sun, the air became milder every day; but the two first months of the new year were cold, with an almost uniform temperature of about forty degrees below zero (Fahr.). The lowest temperature we had in the course of the winter was fifty-three degrees below zero.

In the middle of February it was warmer, and rain came down in torrents; but this soon

changed again to the same low temperature as before.

March and April were busy months for us,



THE WINTER QUARTERS OF THE EXPEDITION (REDCLIFFE HOUSE).

and our equipment was now rapidly advancing, while we made several hunting excursions and journeys for purposes of survey. Thus Mr. Peary made a seven-days' sledge trip round Inglefield Gulf, where he found, among

other things, several glaciers of considerable size.

At the close of April the last finishing touch was given to our preparations for the trip on inland ice.

By barter with the Esquimaux we secured twenty of their most powerful dogs, to be used for draught; and besides "ski," sledges, and Canadian snow-shoes, we had sleeping bags, made of reindeer-skins—which proved, however, of little value, as we soon discovered that our dresses alone were sufficiently warm to sleep in, and the bags were left behind on the road. We did not take with us any tent, on account of the additional weight; when going to sleep we simply laid ourselves down upon the snow to the lee of a sledge, whilst in a storm we crept underneath a light tarpaulin.

Our cooking was done over a spirit lamp. Pemmican—that is, dried and ground meat mixed with tallow—was during the whole journey our chief nourishment. We also carried biscuits, some rank butter, and Knorr's pea-meal. We started with sledges and provisions on April

30th, and made our way from the head of MacCormick Bay to the edge of the inland ice. It was most exhausting labour; for we had to struggle partly through deep snow-drifts, and partly over steep inclines covered with loose stones; each load was consequently small. On May 13th we at last overcame all difficulties, and before us lay the inland ice, sloping evenly and gently in the sunshine.

On May 14th everything was ready for our start, and the small party, consisting of Mr. Peary, Mr. Gibson, Dr. Cook, and myself, set off in good heart towards our distant goal, with a team of only sixteen dogs, as four had died during the previous day's hard work.

On May 24th we reached the Humboldt Glacier; and the party now divided, Mr. Gibson and Dr. Cook, with two dogs, returning to our winter quarters, whilst Mr. Peary and I continued our course northwards.

The time that now followed was extremely monotonous, though full of interest to an explorer.

On June 27th, in about the eighty-second

degree of latitude, we found ourselves at the end of the Greenland inland ice, so we turned towards the east coast, which we reached on July 4th, the United States Day of Independence. We discovered here a very wide and extensive "fjord," which, in honour of the occasion, we named Independence Bay.

That day we succeeded in killing five musk-oxen, three full grown and two calves, the meat of which was most valuable as food for ourselves and for our starving dogs.

On July 8th we commenced the home track, reaching an elevation of 8000 feet, and much retarded by storms and deep loose snow. Our mean speed during the seven last days was thirty-two English miles a day over a fairly good surface. Mr. Peary used during the whole journey Canadian snow-shoes, whilst I wore "ski."

By August 5th we had regained our winter quarters, and shortly after we sighted the vessel which was to take us home to America. Ninety-seven days we had spent on the Greenland inland ice and traversed about eleven hundred

and thirty miles. During seventy-six days Lieutenant Peary and I had been alone, and it was therefore quite a pleasant change to meet and speak with other folk.

Before we started homeward a pitiful disaster befell Mr. Verhoeff, mineralogist and meteorologist to the expedition, who had gone by himself to look for minerals. It was his intention to remain away for two days; but as he had not returned at the end of the third day the most energetic search was made for him, unfortunately without result. For seven days and nights the search was continued in vain, and was at last reluctantly abandoned; for we were driven to conclude that Mr. Verhoeff, trying to cross a glacier, had fallen into one of its many crevices, as his footprints were found in the snow on one side of the glacier, whilst no traces of him could be seen beyond.

Before concluding this rapid sketch of the first Peary expedition, let me briefly sum up its scientific results. Besides the discoveries in Inglefield Gulf, and the correct determination of the northernmost limits of Greenland inland

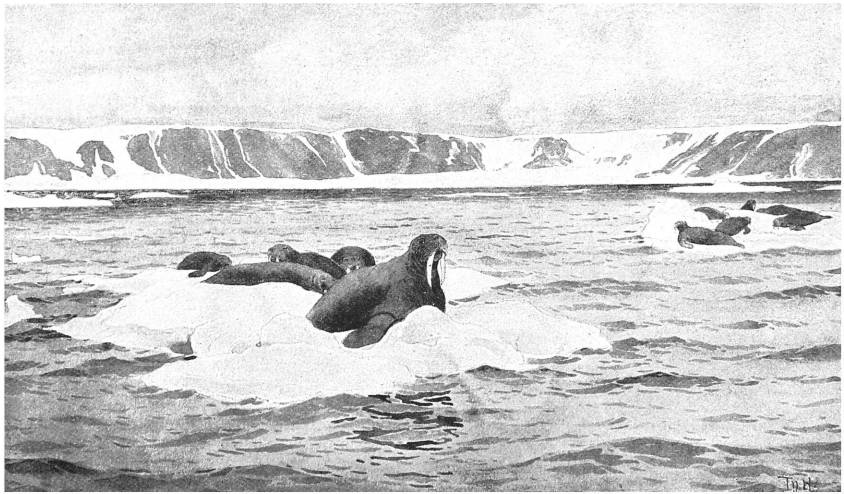
ice, as well as the definition of the form and probable extension northwards of the whole Greenland continent, based on the discovery of Independence Bay, our thorough study of the northernmost human race of the world, about whom so little had been known before, has a very distinct interest and value, as have our extensive collections of all kinds of Esquimaux curiosities, minerals, plants, and birds, brought home by the *Kite* to the Scientific Society of Philadelphia; while complete statistics were drawn up of meteorological and tidal observations taken during the winter.

On August 24th the *Kite* slowly steamed out of MacCormick Bay, and it was with strange feelings that at last we lost sight of those winter quarters where we had spent so many happy hours. Four weeks later, after our sojourn of fourteen months among desolate ice-fields, we were again in one of the centres of civilisation.

* * * * *

Scarcely three-quarters of a year had elapsed after the conclusion of this first expedition before the energetic leader was again moving

northward at the head of a new Arctic enterprise, the object of which was to supplement the discoveries on the north coast of Greenland made by us during our first voyage. I could not, of course, forgo this opportunity of seeing again, and once more exploring, those mystic stretches of land upon which on our former voyage we had but touched, and where our efforts and adventures had quickened our zeal to press forward as explorers in the cause of science.



A SUN-BATH.

CHAPTER III.

THE SECOND PEARY ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

ON July 2nd, 1893, we left New York in the sealer *Falcon*, taking with us eight Mexican mules of a strong and hardy breed, intended for the transport of provisions from our winter quarters to the edge of the inland ice, a distance of about three and a half miles, with a rise of about three thousand feet. In a large dove-cot were a number of fine carrier pigeons, presented to the expedition by a lady friend. Mr. Peary intended to try these pigeons as messengers to our winter quarters during the sledge excursions in the interior of Greenland, but they did not prove well fitted for this.

Besides the usual boats, we took a small petroleum-launch, which was expected to render the expedition valuable services during the summer excursions for hunting and surveying purposes around our winter quarters. This also

proved to be ill-fitted for its work, on account of its light construction and poor engine. Mr. Peary intended, when the sea should be frozen during autumn, to work the engine of this small craft at our house in connection with the dynamo to produce electricity sufficient for eighteen or twenty lamps; but this plan again was never carried out.

Our number at the start was fourteen, afterwards increased to fifteen by Mrs. Peary, who determined to accompany her husband to the Arctic regions, where, during the autumn, she gave birth to a child, which she succeeded in bringing home safe and sound to the civilised world. With her came old Mrs. Cross, who was to do service partly as cook, partly as nurse to the expected child.

The following gentlemen accompanied us:—Mr. Entrikin, engineer, Dr. Vincent, doctor to the expedition, Mr. Baldwin, meteorologist, Mr. Clarke, zoologist, Messrs. Lee, Davidson, and Carr, and Mr. Swain, secretary and shorthand writer. An artist, Mr. Stokes, was also with us, prepared to sketch and paint Arctic scenes and

pictures. Mr. Peary's servant, Matt, completed the party. During our passage northwards we called at several English mission stations on the east coast of Labrador, inhabited by Esquimaux, to purchase sledge-dogs, animals so essential for our success.

We gathered fully twenty dogs on this coast, and then shaped our course direct for Greenland. By July 26th we sighted its lofty snow-clad peaks, and on the same evening we called at the Danish settlement Holstensborg, where we secured some more dogs. Two days of steaming brought us to the settlement of Goodhaven, where we again purchased some powerful animals, and some more from the district of Upernavik, so that our entire stock was raised to eighty-nine, a number ample for all emergencies.

By July 31st we were at the south end of Melville Bay, so dangerous to whaling ships, but which we succeeded in traversing without any mishap; and two days later, on August 3rd, the *Falcon* anchored near the head of Bowdoin Bay, twenty miles east of our first winter

quarters, a spot well sheltered against wind and sea, and with easy access to the inland ice.

This was the place selected as our new station, and now a busy time commenced. First we carried ashore materials for the house, so that the building could go forward, and then we landed numberless casks and cases in which our provisions were packed.

The house was soon roofed in. Its dimensions were naturally somewhat larger than those used for our quarters the previous year. The length and width respectively were thirty-five and fourteen feet, while the whole was divided into several small rooms. Over it was fixed a double glass roof, to make the days of disagreeable darkness as light as possible, and to diminish as far as might be the necessity for unhealthy artificial light. For heating the house and for cooking, Mr. Peary had provided petroleum instead of coal; and on its completion he named our new home Anniversary Lodge.

On August 20th the *Falcon* left us to return to Newfoundland, and all communication between us and the civilised world was from this time cut off.

My particular task was to bring up provisions, weighing about five thousand pounds, from the coast to the inland ice, and twenty natives were told off to assist me in this work, which, according to our original plan, should have fallen to the share of the mules that were brought with us; but three only were alive of the eight that came on board in Philadelphia, and these proved themselves unfit for the wild unbeaten track.

The months of September and October were occupied in hunting to secure the necessary meat for use during the winter, and partly with the erection of a provision depot on the inland ice, in preparation for our sledge journey the following spring. The endeavours of our hunters were crowned with such success that about seventy reindeer, and more than twenty walruses were killed before the end of October. These latter were in the course of the winter used as food for the dogs.

The autumn was uncommonly mild, but rainy and disagreeable. Not till the beginning of November did the ice freeze over Bowdoin Bay, exactly one month later than in 1891. On

October 26th we bade farewell to the sun for more than four months, and our monotonous winter life commenced.

A catastrophe happened a few days later, which might have had a serious influence on the fate of the expedition. A terrific tidal wave, caused by the loosening of a large iceberg from the vast glacier near our station, overflowed the beach and the surroundings of the house to a height of more than twenty feet above high-water mark, tearing away in its resistless grasp all the casks of petroleum, which during the long winter were to heat and lighten our abode and to cook our food. Happily four casks only were completely crushed, though the remainder, which were fished out, had nearly all sprung leaks, which we did not discover till there had been much waste. It became, therefore, necessary to limit the daily consumption of petroleum, and, worse still, the electric lighting had to be abandoned.

With the commencement of winter came, as usual, the friendly Esquimaux, who so heartily helped us on all occasions, and often gave

us food for our dogs whilst their own were starving.

November and December were devoted to making final preparations for the projected spring journey. Skins were dried, cut, and sewn together for dresses and sleeping-bags. Sledges had somehow to be made, as the sledge material brought from America all proved to be useless, whilst two of the three sledges I had brought with me had been lifted high into the air during a gale on the inland ice the preceding autumn, and hurled down the adjacent mountain slope.

Happily, from Norway we had brought several extra pairs of *ski*, and with these I contrived eight sledges, while Mr. Entrikin made a few short imperfect ones produced from some seven-feet ash boards.

On Christmas Eve we held high festival, and the new year saw us at work with redoubled energy. Frequent long journeys to the surrounding Esquimaux settlements were now made, to procure food for our South Greenland dogs, of which about forty were still alive. Several

hunting parties were also sent out after reindeer, who seldom returned empty-handed.

The severest cold in the course of the winter was registered in the beginning of February, but it was not below thirty-five degrees Fahr., as against fifty-three in 1891-2. The winter was this year on the whole somewhat milder than the previous one; the spring, on the other hand, was cold and late. On February 14th we again greeted the uprising sun, and shortly afterwards final purchases of sledge-dogs for the projected journey were made. Of these the natives had this year a superabundance, so that we easily obtained about thirty good ones, bringing the total up to over seventy. March 6th saw the whole of our equipment brought to the edge of the inland ice, and everything ready for a start.

While at the depot, I was so upset by eating some tainted pemmican, that I did not consider it advisable to take part in the adventure, so I remained there a couple of days, and on March 14th returned to the station with Mr. Lee, who had had the misfortune to have one foot

seriously frozen, and was unable to put it to the ground.

On Monday, March 26th, scarcely two weeks after our return, Dr. Vincent reappeared with Mr. Davidson, who had had one heel badly frozen during the terrific equinoctial gale that visited these regions on March 22nd and 23rd, when the glass fell to nearly minus forty-nine degrees Fahr. below zero—a register phenomenal in such terrific wind. Several of the dogs were found frozen to death when the storm abated, and all were more or less suffering. This was the last news I heard of the expedition till May 1st. Meantime I undertook a sledge journey to the unexplored coasts of Melville Bay, which I had long wished to visit, during which I succeeded in making several interesting discoveries.

On my return to winter quarters, I found Mr. Peary and his companions back from the inland ice, with the pitiful result that the whole journey had had to be abandoned. Many dogs had died during the fearful gales; and Mr. Entrikin, whilst lashing together an improvised sledge, had had both feet frozen, so that

he could scarcely use them. The rest of the party were all in an exhausted condition, so that it would have been too risky to persevere.

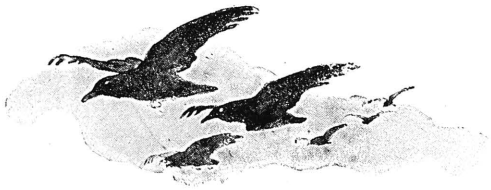
A LITTLE ESQUIMAU.

There is little to tell of the remaining part of our sojourn in Greenland during this expedition: suffice it to say that the longing for the *Falcon*, engaged by Lieutenant Peary for the coming summer, gradually grew very great.

One sunny evening at the end of July two natives came at last with the good news of the arrival of a vessel. Great was our feeling of relief. Enthusiastic hurrahs resounded through the cool evening air, and echoes thundered back from Mount Bartlett's perpendicular rocks, slowly dying away among the distant mountains.

The home passage by the *Falcon*, which commenced soon after, was made quickly and

without accident, but was throughout rather void of interest. Mr. Peary remained at the winter quarters to pass another year in those desolate regions, having taken ashore provisions and coals from the *Falcon's* stores. Young Mr. Lee remained with him, as well as Matt, his ever faithful servant.



CHAPTER IV.

A POOR COAST.

OUR small merry brethren in the Arctic regions represent an extremity of the human race; an insignificant section of it, who take up the battle of existence in regions which to our eyes offer poor prospects for life's sustenance, and where icy death would seem to reign supreme. Sparingly scattered along the north coasts of Europe, Asia, America, and Greenland, and on islands north of America, they live out their lives, easily contented, far from the noise and bustle of the civilised world, protected from the severe cold of Polar regions in their primitive "gammer," or dark earth-huts, or behind the walls of a skin-tent, or under the vault of a dripping snow-cave. Of these Polar tribes the most northern are the Esquimaux, or "Innuits" as they call themselves.

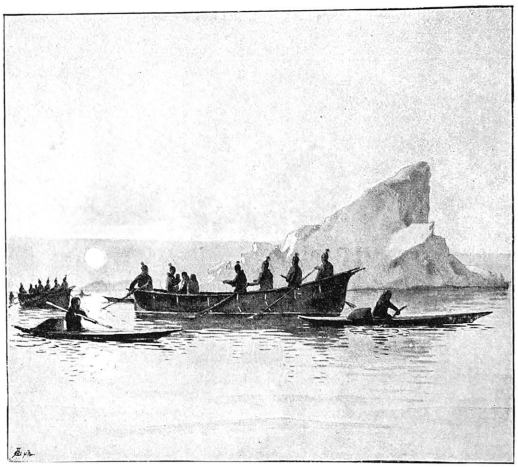
From the upper coast of America these restless

people have by degrees spread over the northern archipelago, and thence even over Smith's Sound and Baffin's Bay, to gain a footing in Greenland. A natural curiosity and a longing for the unknown has no doubt caused them to press forward, while strong competition in the hunting-fields farther south, and consequent disagreements, have increased their rambling propensities.

These emigrations ,have been made partly during the long, light summer days in their skin-boats, partly in spring-time by the aid of the dog-sledge, when the ice was still covering sound and "fjord." On these voyages, especially along the coasts far north, they must have been exposed to extreme privations and trials. Not everywhere in these regions can one count upon a sure supply of food by hunting, and if through a long period this resource should fail, then famine and death must follow.

Some twenty years ago a crowd of native men, women, and children were travelling northward along the west coast of Smith's Sound to look for new hunting-grounds. On the coast of Ellesmereland, particularly distinguished by its

cold, lifeless character and severe climate, they met with such ill luck that most of them succumbed to hunger and privation. This was told me by a couple of survivors, who succeeded



TOWARDS NEW HUNTING GROUNDS.

in crossing Smith's Sound to the "Innuits" on the Greenland side, among whom they are still living. I have myself seen many graves in regions now deserted.

In the course of these wanderings, extending

over many centuries, a small number of the ancestors of the present Greenland population gradually settled on the east side of Smith's Sound, at the point farthest north; and it was amongst the descendants of this hardy race that the members of the two Peary expeditions lived during the darkness of the long weary months of winter, and through a bright Arctic summer.

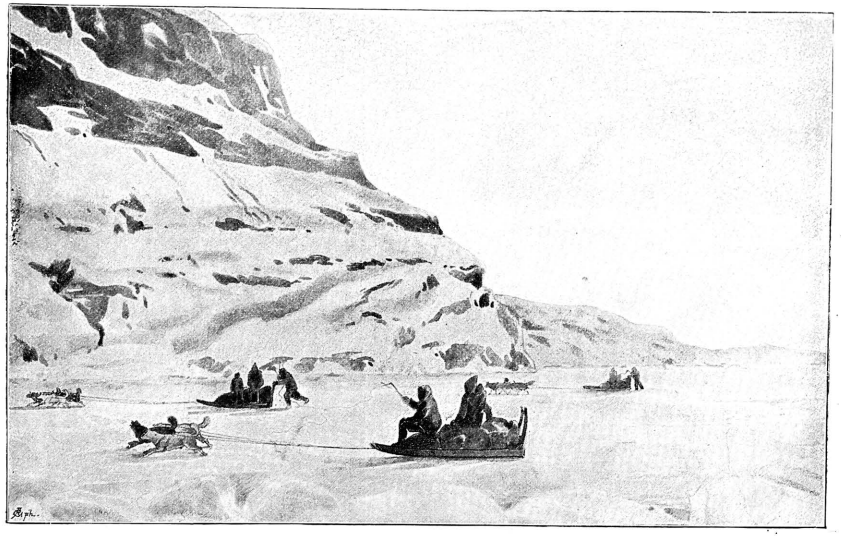
How thoroughly the "Innuits" at Smith's Sound have chosen this desolate corner of the world for their fatherland is proved by the touching affection with which they still cling to its cold, naked mountains, which to the eyes of dwellers in the temperate zone have such a barren and lifeless appearance.

When on a calm summer day we approached the Greenland coast, reaching the tract at Smith's Sound between latitudes 76° and 79°, we could discern in the clear and pure air, even at a distance of thirty to forty miles, those long, finely curved snow-domes, which almost everywhere crown the dark, flat shores. Coming nearer, we gradually noticed more and more of the

undulating mountains on the coast, which are seen at very great distances with remarkable distinctness.

Distances are most deceptive on the Greenland coasts, where the eye lacks that guidance which is afforded in more southerly and civilised regions by such known objects as houses and trees; so that a distant and lofty mountain range will, in North Greenland, have exactly the same appearance as a nearer and much lower hill, while the air, which naturally varies in transparency, helps these illusions.

We had a good instance of this when, in the sealer *Kite*, we reached the opening at MacCormick Bay, and found it covered by *débris* of ice of the preceding year. In order to inspect a promising hunting-ground for reindeer at the head of the bay, the Doctor, Mr. Gibson, and I determined to take an early walk over the ice before breakfast. The surface was certainly somewhat water-soaked, and full of holes, so that we had a right to expect a wetting. But then the distance was fortunately such a "mere trifle." Our little trip, however, did not come off.



ESQUIMAUX SLEDGES.

We soon found that our progress over the ice was hindered, and later measurement proved that the excursion on which we so cheerfully started before breakfast would have extended over sixteen miles.

Only on close approach to the coast-mountains can the traveller receive a correct impression of their imposing grandeur and striking forms. As a rule the height of the outer mountain-walls varies between two and three thousand feet, rising in the terrace formation so common in North Greenland. Where the plateau's more or less horizontal line is broken at short intervals, the gaps are usually filled by steep glaciers, or hanging masses of snow and ice. Sometimes, during the summer, portions of these accumulations will break loose, with a tremendous report, tumbling down upon the incline of loose stones or scanty layers of moss below. Through these stony slopes the mountain brook in summer-time takes its wild course towards the ocean, now completely hidden beneath primæval stone blocks, now again pouring its crystal stream in the light of day, shining merrily and brightly in the rays of the polar sun.

The chief characteristics of the North Greenland coasts are gigantic glaciers, which stretch towards the surface of the ocean from inland. It is in the valleys alone that these enormous ice-streams are found, especially at the head of fjords and bays, where the depression of the country is particularly deep and wide. They all originate from one common source—namely, the immense ice-sheet, which through the snow-fall of ages has gradually formed the interior of Greenland.

Desolate is this picture of the interior. All the valleys are levelled, all the mountain-tops with their domes and lofty peaks are buried in their grandeur and glory beneath this cold, wide-spread winding-sheet. Only now and then, near the coast, some weather-beaten giants appear through this pall of snow, standing out as monuments of the buried landscape.

How a material so solid and so brittle as ice can move as a thick-flowing stream, is a difficult problem to solve, but it is certain that large glaciers as they push forward have such qualities, the single ice molecules being turned into water

through the pressure of the superincumbent layers, and put into motion by the force of gravity.

No one can realise the vastness of those masses of ice of which the glaciers consist, without having had the opportunity of seeing them at close quarters. The glaciers of Europe, some of which have been famous to a great extent on account of their imposing size, would scarcely be noticed among the North Greenland ice streams.

These masses of ice are full of gaping fissures, and usually end in a perpendicular ice wall of more than thirty yards in height, above the level of the sea, fretted with all kinds of fantastic caves and grottoes, and enormous overhanging shelves, that glisten with prismatic tints of green and blue.

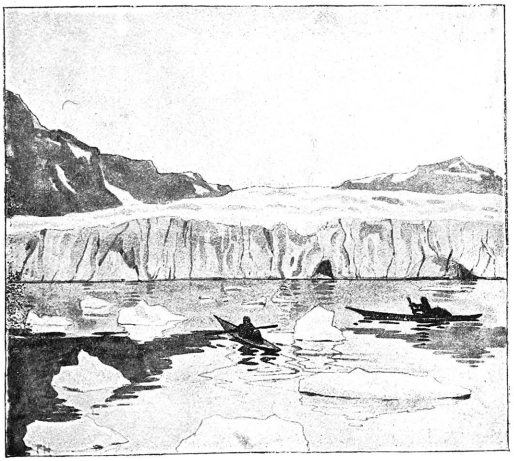
The most striking specimen of a North Greenland glacier is Humboldt, just a little north of Smith's Sound, the largest of all known glaciers in the Northern Hemisphere, and only surpassed in volume by the ice-stream discovered by Ross in 1841, in the Antarctic regions of Victoria-land. This Humboldt glacier has the enormous width of more than a hundred miles.

If we calculate the mean thickness at the outlet into the ocean at about two hundred yards, and the mean speed of the whole ice-mass in motion during one year at upwards of a hundred yards, it is plain that hundreds of millions of cubic yards of solid ice are in this way yearly carried out into the ocean as floating icebergs, that melt in warmer latitudes. When an iceberg suddenly breaks away from such a glacier the severance is always accompanied by a deafening crash, no less appalling than the roar of thunder, and the sea for a great distance round is set in heavy motion by its violent rolling as it gains its equilibrium.

It was a plunge and reaction of this sort that did us so much mischief in 1893, when old Mrs. Cross was fully convinced that the day of judgment at last was at hand, as, in utter darkness, she heard the crash and upheaval, and the consequent breaking of young ice, which covered the inner harbour.

The next day was occupied with salvage work, and picturesque and merry were the scenes we witnessed on the ice-floes. Now a cask, saved

with endless trouble, vanished in a moment of inattention through the thin ice-crust, curtseying deeply as it sank; now one of our company disappeared, with a plaintive cry, through the



A NORTH-GREENLAND GLACIER FACE.

treacherous ice-floor into water several degrees below freezing point.

We have been discussing icebergs and their origin from gigantic glaciers; let us now touch on their dimensions. With respect to their usual

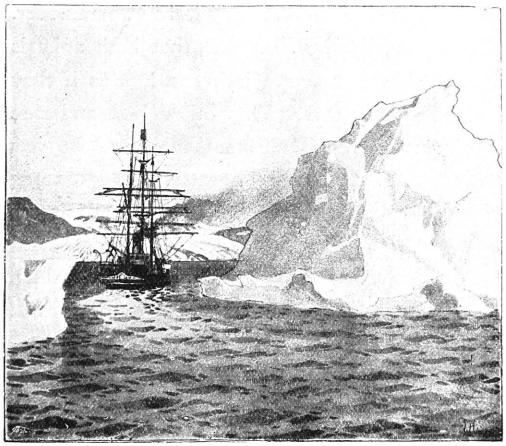
height above the surface of the water, I believe that among people in general there exist rather erroneous ideas, thanks to the exaggerations of many travellers. It is but seldom that an iceberg extends higher above sea-level than the mast-head of a modern sealing or whaling vessel—say thirty or forty yards. This is particularly true of those bergs which have retained their horizontal position after breaking from the parent glacier. If, however, a more or less pointed corner rises in the air, this may tower a hundred yards upwards. We have even seen some giants rising to twice that height.

Some of these blocks of ice are but of the length and width of a common ship's hull, while others are large floating islands, where villages might be planted on the surface. When we endeavour to imagine such a mass of ice, we must bear in mind that what we can see above water is but a small part of the whole; for a piece of glacier ice will, in salt water, have about seven parts of its volume beneath the surface.

Now let us take a small trip inland, to gain

sight, if possible, of some of the few animals that are hardy enough to thrive in these frost-bound lands.

We have scarcely made many steps up the



THE "FALCON" AMONG THE BERGS.

beach before we get a glimpse of a pair of snow-white dots, which seem to move far up on a mountain precipice. Let us look well, to make sure that these are two hares, for our senses too often are misled in this new world, so wholly

different from that in which we are accustomed to move.

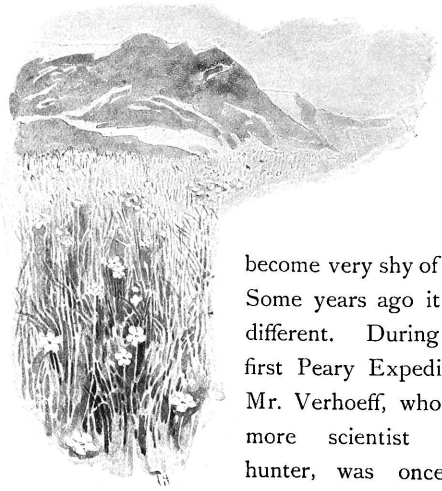
I well remember how I was once stalking, with all possible precaution, two greyish-white hares, in the belief that they were two reindeer. The one bewildering fact was, that both animals seemed able to move their horns, just as if they had been long ears. Was this a new and rare specimen of the Greenland reindeer? I was not to remain long in uncertainty. A stone yielded to the pressure of my knee, and, at the noise of its fall, the two strange animals bolted up the incline in such characteristic hare-fashion that there could be no longer any doubt about them.

One day during our last expedition, while eating roasted hare for dinner, I told this story, which till then I had guarded under the veil of silence, with the unexpected result that from others present at the table came a succession of frank confessions, which entirely placed my small delusion in the shade. One said that he had suddenly retreated from a hare, fully believing that it was an ice-bear he was near. This might

be tolerated, but when another boasted of mistaking a ptarmigan for a reindeer, we could not but shout him down.

But we must resume our journey, following the route up an even and comparatively wide stretch of valley, bounded by dark mountains, steep at the top, but lower down sloping evenly outward. In the middle of this valley a brook is flowing, now and then forming small glittering pools, which enliven the landscape. The ground we are crossing is covered for the greater part by gravel or cobblestones, with a few green spots at intervals, overgrown with mosses, grass, and wild flowers of variegated colours. Sometimes we pass a mountain-crag, but cannot discover any sign of minerals of special interest or value, though everywhere we find traces in the rocks of quartz, and other crystals in different proportions. Old broken horns, which we often notice on our road, give us good hope that we may soon see some reindeer, though they are not common in these tracts. If we do catch sight of a herd we may presume, even if they are ever so far off, that the bull on guard has

been watching us for some time; and when this is the case they will soon take to their heels, and seek refuge on the mountains, for they have



A BIT OF GREENLAND FLORA.

become very shy of late. Some years ago it was different. During the first Peary Expedition, Mr. Verhoeff, who was more scientist than hunter, was once so engrossed in the study of stones and minerals, which he discovered on his wanderings, that he suddenly found himself gathering his treasures in the midst of a grazing herd.

Very hardy are these reindeer that knock about

the Greenland mountains. But nature has amply protected them against the severe climate. Their winter coat is the warmest hair-clothing known; they live always under the open sky, and so they can endure the lowest temperatures and the most violent gales. When we remember that darkness reigns all through the winter, that the snow conceals the scattered blades of grass on which they feed, we are necessarily astonished at their being able to thrive and multiply under such unfavourable conditions. Happily for the reindeer, but little snow falls in normal winters, and every snowfall being usually accompanied by a stormy wind, a fair part of the grazing ground remains available.

Here, too, the small polar fox is enjoying himself to his heart's content, in view of the happy days in store for him, and the fact that he can always remain comfortably within doors, when cold or wind outside are raging at their worst. Reynard knows well enough how to keep house for self and family, either between large snow-clad crags, or down below the ice-crust in some cosy and dry watercourse. The polar fox,

which is brownish-blue, or rarely white, is certainly much smaller than his illustrious brother in the south; but it does not follow that he is less clever and cunning. It has even been said that during the summer, when times are good, he gathers stores for the coming winter. Before I knew anything of this Arctic fox and his cunning, some of these animals very cleverly managed to open the lid of a large tin case, which I had neglected to weight with stones. The case was filled with pemmican cut in half-pound pieces. When I returned, five days afterwards, the case was well-nigh empty, whilst a well-used fox track explained who had been the impudent pilferers. That the pemmican in this instance had simply been transported as fast as possible to the dwelling of the thief or thieves, there can scarcely be a doubt. To have consumed it on the spot the original finder would have had to send for all the polar foxes in the neighbourhood for assistance, a degree of considerate kindness for which it is difficult to give him credit.

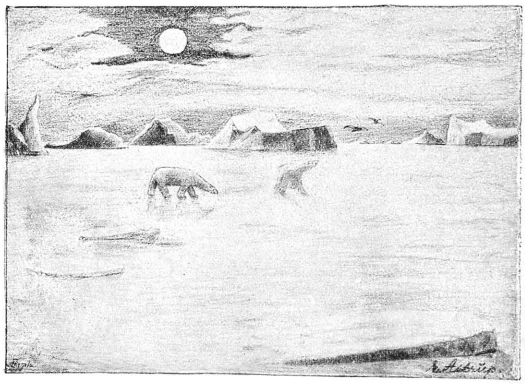
While the ice is frozen along the coasts, say for about eight or ten months of the year, the fox

will frequently take long journeys over the ice-fields, doing brilliant business in the remains from the meals of the ice-bear, or from the game of the Esquimaux. In Melville Bay I have even encountered a fox more than twenty miles from the nearest shore. When I first discovered him he was in the act of consuming a young seal. On our approach with a sledge and eight savage dogs, he wisely let go his prey, disappearing in the distance at a great rate.

It is an imposing sight to see a full-grown bear when, light and supple as a cat, he is moving forwards over the uneven surface of pack-ice. With regard to his courage and fury when brought face to face with man, opinions differ. It is certain enough that a bear which has learned to know the hunter will quicken his retreat at sight of man. There are, however, instances where he has not only pursued men, but even killed without being first attacked. That the bear is inquisitive in a high degree is certain; and the cool manner in which in earlier times it would satisfy its curiosity speaks well for its courage.

One evening, during the passage of the *Kite*,

one of the engineers discovered a bear far off. In a moment we were on deck, rifles in hand, and soon saw Bruin advancing towards us at a swinging pace. So long as he continued to approach it was, of course, useless to do anything;



NIGHT STRAGGLERS.

we remained, therefore, quietly hidden behind the bulwarks. Nearer and nearer came the huge brute. That such a strangely constructed monster as a vessel might prove dangerous did not seem to occur to the bear; for when now and then it stopped, scenting the air, it was only to

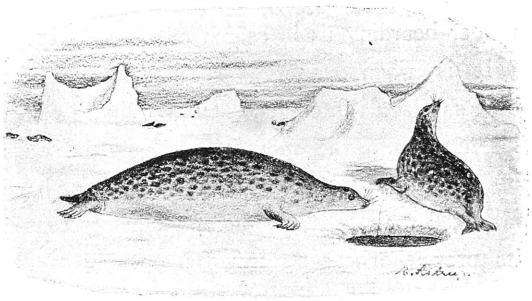
resume its course towards us with increased speed.

At last, at a distance of little more than fifty yards, the first shot was fired, and immediately afterwards others, which rolled him over. Had we been able to restrain ourselves from shooting, we should undoubtedly have had the foolhardy robber boarding us in search of stores.

It is when capturing seals that the bear best shows his intelligence. Carefully he pokes his nose into the snow-drifts along the walls of icebergs, beneath which the seals have arranged their breathing holes. Having scented its prey, the bear scratches an opening to the snow-chamber that lies over the hole. Through this it stretches its head, patiently awaiting the moment when the seal comes up to breathe, and thus to fall an easy prey.

The seal most often met with in these regions is the so-called "netchik" (*Phoca fœtida*), or as the "Innuits" call it "pŭ-si." It is usually somewhat more than a yard long, and as fat as any pig. Being found in fair numbers, it is of great use, for the Esquimaux prepare clothes,

boots, tents, and boats (*kajaks*) from its skin. Another and much larger seal is the so-called "ogsok," or "ugsuk" (*Phoca barbata*), which may reach three yards in length. It is, however, not so common as the first. Its skin is used by the Esquimaux for boot soles, and harpoon lines.



Still bigger is the walrus, which by the natives is called "a-vok." Its length exceeds three yards, and its flesh is the principal food of natives. It is eaten, one may say, with "hide and hair," for its thick gristly skin is highly esteemed as nourishment for their dogs. The walrus is provided with two monstrous tusks, which give the animal an utterly repugnant appearance, the more

so as its countenance can hardly be said to have been constructed according to any rules of beauty. Its eyes are often bloodshot, which induces a certain sottish expression. This sea-horse always lives near open water, at the edge of the ice, towards the open waters of Smith's Sound, which even during winter are not frozen. To the natives their tusks are of considerable importance, being used in the manufacture of various parts of their gear and tools.

Of frequent occurrence in these regions is the narwhal, with its spiral tusk upwards of two yards long; and also the white whale, or white fish, which during winter seeks southern waters. Other varieties of whales are also found, though less frequently.

Of the very few fish that swim in these waters, the most important is the salmon trout, which frequents the lakes.

Bird-life abounds; the auks, and particularly the small auks, predominating. They build their nests by the thousand along perpendicular mountain walls and inclines, at such inaccessible spots that even the small fox finds it difficult

to rob them. Their skins are used by the natives for parts of their clothing.

Of other birds of passage may be mentioned the eider duck, which, however, is far from being so numerous as the auk, the gull, the tern, and the black guillemot. Of birds remaining in the place during winter are the ptarmigan, the owl, and the raven; these last, however, seem to retreat southwards for a time.

CHAPTER V.

THE NATIVES AT SMITH'S SOUND.

IT was on the evening of July 23rd, 1891, that in one of the *Kite's* boats we slowly approached the shore somewhere on the south side of Whale Sound, having a short time before discovered from the deck of the vessel what we supposed to be human dwellings.

These dwellings, which soon proved to be a collection of tents and earth-huts, were situated at the end of a low projecting promontory, where we succeeded with some difficulty in landing.

Of the eleven inhabitants of the place, the men immediately came down the beach to meet us, whilst the women and children cautiously kept in the rear. A couple of us involuntarily extended our hands towards them in friendly greeting; but, to our surprise, instead of grasping them they stood staring at us, without the slightest idea of what such an advance should

signify. Soon, however, they saw that we intended well, and then they gave us a warm welcome. One of our sailors, who happened to be smoking a short pipe when landing, attracted their particular attention, and the volumes of smoke which now and then escaped him seemed to strike them as something quite supernatural. The impression was deepened when soon afterwards, by a quick movement of the hand along his sleeve, he set fire to a match, and proceeded with its assistance to produce new and increased clouds of smoke from his mouth. It was evident that they had never been in touch with the civilised world, or seen a vessel, which was to their eyes most remarkable.

And if we were a surprise to them, the natives in turn made a strong and lasting impression on our minds. Savages to look at, dirty, and far from handsome, they were but poor specimens of humanity. Their long raven-black hair was hanging tangled and matted down the skin-covered shoulders, covering in some cases their dark contracted eyes, and giving them a gloomy and forbidding appearance.

I learned afterwards that all the natives were not so ignorant of the art of hair-dressing. The women, notably the younger ones, frequently bunched their tresses in a tuft upon the crown of the head, using for the purpose a fine seal-skin strap. Some of the men, too, wore a similar strap around the head, to keep their eyes free from the long greasy locks.

The foreheads of the Esquimaux are low, their faces broad, and their features generally ungraceful. The eyes are small and oblique, but their sight is keen. The nose is small and wide, the mouth large with thick lips, so that even with the fair sex it has so little likeness to ideal "cherry lips," that the men, instead of kissing their wives, prefer to show their fondness by pressing their already flat nose still flatter against the other's face—a form of caress usually accompanied by a loud sniff. Within these swelling lips a row of strong teeth shine, the use of which extends far beyond the mastication of food. Fastened as they are to sinewy cheeks, they form a patent vice, largely used in their daily work.

Thus if a man has to lash his sledge—a performance requiring great strength—he puts one end of the strap between his teeth, supporting the sledge, to which the other end is fastened, with his knee and left hand, whilst with the right hand he pulls the middle of the strap with such violence as apparently might dislocate his neck.

The women, too, make much use of their mouths. It is their duty to chew inch by inch every skin brought home from the hunt by the men, the skins having first been carefully stretched out and dried. By this masticating process the skins are made flexible, and fit to be employed for clothing the members of the family.

Certainly the Esquimaux for charm of face would be black-balled at a European beauty show. Bodily, however, they approach nearer to our ideal, and their hands and feet are neat and well-shaped.

Both men and women are short, their hips project a little ; while they are decidedly rotund, which may probably be due to the need of

copious nourishment in Arctic regions. The men are unusually muscular—a result, of course, of the fatiguing life they lead. Young boys begin early to share the hunter's hard life, and are by this seasoned to an extent which afterwards makes them capable of enduring with ease the greatest exertions and privations.

Often compelled to go without food for a longer period than is pleasant, they suffer partial starvation without a murmur. No wonder, therefore, that in prosperous and idle times they extend their meals throughout the day. They have on this account been accused of gluttony; but we have as little right to bring such an accusation against them as we should have to upbraid an overgrown school-boy for seeking spoil between meal-times in his mother's larder.

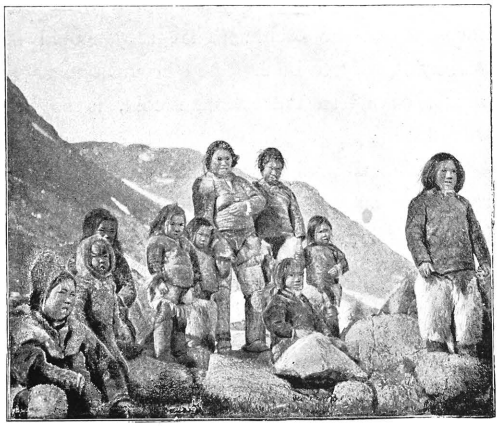
Small as is the Esquimau, his athletic feats will sometimes arouse no small astonishment. When, for instance, he, with wife and children, starts for the mountains to hunt the reindeer, he puts into the voluminous "swag," formed by his folded skin-tent, most of his belongings,

hangs this round his forehead by a strap, and marches merrily along. One may follow him with the eye as he moves up the inclines, the ravens circling above his ungainly form.

What may be their colour is not so easy to decide, on account of the abundant dirt which covers them. New-born children have a uniform light yellow-brown or grey-brown tint, a grown-up man appears somewhat darker with black spots, and an old man black with light spots; but these variations are more due to dirt than to any natural difference.

One can hardly blame the Esquimaux at Smith's Sound for their filthiness; it is almost an unavoidable consequence of the rough and primitive conditions under which they are compelled to live. All the water required for drinking or their plain cooking must, for nine or ten months on end, be procured by laborious melting of snow or ice in stone vessels over blubber-flames. A bath, or thorough wash, is to them an unknown luxury, which, in spite of our comparatively good example, they will never be able to introduce under their present

conditions, though a good deal might be done with nothing more than a moist bird-skin, or, in case of need, with a sharp stone, if once the sense of cleanliness could be awakened in them.



A GROUP OF ESQUIMAUX WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

During our stay with the Esquimaux we succeeded, to some extent, in arousing this sense, if we may judge from some small attempts at tidiness shown by the women, whose desire to please is not less in these latitudes than under the equator.

Much astonishment was caused when, for the

first time, some of the natives saw us plunge our heads into a tub, and afterwards rub ourselves briskly with our hands. The reason why they are lacking in cleanliness is, no doubt, that the dirt neither causes them any trouble, nor affects their health. That they should be healthy is only to be expected in an atmosphere which, owing to the extreme cold, is so free from bacilli.

Their dress undoubtedly has peculiarities to rouse the astonishment of civilised people. It is difficult indeed to characterise a costume so entirely opposed to our familiar rules for health that, instead of protecting the more vital parts of the wearer, it allows the north wind to sweep across his middle, and the snow crystals to melt against his naked loins; and this in a region where the thermometer may go down far below freezing point, and among men who have long studied the subject of suitable clothing. Men, as well as women, wear on the upper part of the body an under shirt of bird skins (the feathers inwards) made from the skins of the common or small auks. As these skins are

very small, many of them are required to make one shirt. They are first cut and trimmed into regular squares, and then sewn together by the aid of threads made from sinews.

The manner in which the bird skins are prepared is quite simple. Through a cut the housewife thrusts her forefinger beneath the skin, with a dexterous motion loosens it completely from the body of the bird, turns it inside-out and hangs it up to dry. When dry, she puts it, still turned inside-out, into her mouth, where it is thoroughly masticated, and the process of preparation is then finished.

It is a sight not easily forgotten to see one of the larger auk-skins disappear into the mouth of a young housewife. The bird-skin shirt of the men is provided with a cape, which fits closely round the face when turned up; that of the women is without one. The skirt of each sex reaches a little below the hips, where the trousers commence.

Men's trousers are prepared of ice-bear skins, or, in very rare cases, of dog-skins, and reach just below the knee. The legs are in direct

touch with the coarse, uneven, and inelastic hide. These bear-skin trousers are kept suspended in a mystic way without braces. Their upper lining does not, as with us, reach above the hips, but exactly to the upper joint of the thigh bone, and is fastened behind by a seal-skin lace within the lining.

When a native is seen for the first time dressed in this fashion—which, however, is not adopted by the Esquimaux outside Smith's Sound—one is immediately inclined to look upon the fellow as a careless bachelor, who has lost four of his six brace-buttons, and to wonder how this necessary garment can be kept properly in place; until we find that he is gifted with a more marked depression in the muscles behind the thigh-joint than we can display, which provides the solution of this mystery.

Between the trousers and the bird-skin shirt the air has free access to his naked body; for though the shirt reaches slightly beyond the upper border of the trousers, which are drawn close at the top, as the shirt fits loosely there is left all round the body an opening, through

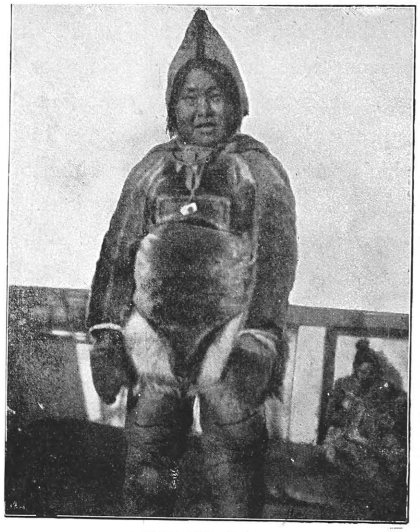
TWO NORTH-GREENLAND HUNTERS.

which the dark skin may be seen at each movement.

The purpose of this opening is to maintain an effective and regular ventilation for the upper part of the body, a matter of most vital importance on their hunting excursions or sledge journeys. It is only when so worn that the fur clothes prove themselves superior to all varieties of artificial stuffs, which have hitherto been supplied for voyages in Arctic regions. If no means are adopted to ventilate the skin dress, the least bodily exertion is followed by excessive perspiration, which may even entail serious risks to health. Seldom after a fatiguing march can one lay down to rest in other clothes than those worn throughout the day, and to escape a cold and sleepless night and its possibly fatal consequences, one must endeavour at any cost to prevent such undue heat.

The trousers are ventilated through openings at the knee-caps, which, at first sight, may seem to give the fresh air access to the whole body. On their sledge travels in the winter, however, when the biting wind across the knee-joints

would be keenly felt, the Esquimaux tie a fox tail, of which every man carries a couple for this purpose, round each knee, and thus



A KIND OLD GRANNY.

close the hole. A similar ornament, in the shape of a short boa made of fox-tails, is used occasionally to cover the opening below the shirt.

The Esquimaux women wear no petticoats, but

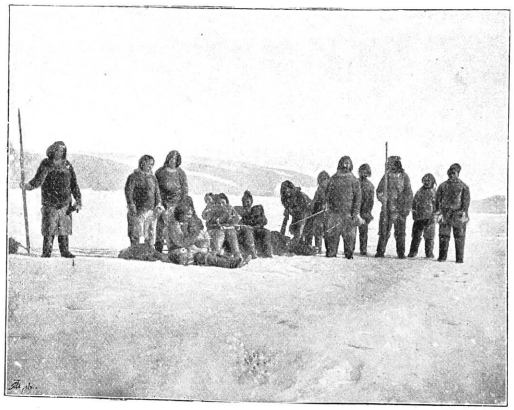
trousers similar to those of the men. They are, however, much shorter, and less elegant, being made of fox or dog-skins without the slightest trimming, save those which can be obtained by placing some little white skin at the side of darker ones. Inside the outer trousers of fox or dog-skin is worn a lighter pair of seal-skin, which even indoors are never taken off.

Of outer pelts for the upper part of the body, the natives have two kinds, both of the same shape as the bird-skin shirt already described. For use in spring, summer, and autumn, they have a seal-skin jacket with a cape. In the winter, however, a much warmer pelt of fox-skin is worn. Among the men, reindeer-skin is sometimes preferred.

Women with infants have on the back of their outer garments a bag, in which the baby lies smiling placidly when the mother is out of doors, often without a thread on its body, so that its naked, almost hairless head and plump little shoulders are exposed to the cold winter breeze—without, however, any ill effect.

All the pelts and the shirts are cut at the top

of the sleeves in such a fashion that the person who wears them can move one or both arms out or in without difficulty. This is a comfort in two ways: for if hands and arms are cold they can thus



A GROUP OF NATIVES ON THE ICE.

be easily warmed by keeping them for a while pressed upon the chest—a common habit among the Esquimaux; and, again, there is the ease with which the wearer can hunt those enemies that infest the dark fields of his bird-skin shirt.

Their means of protecting the feet are, like all

other parts of the Esquimau dress, simple and ingenious. Boots, called "kamiks," are made of seal-skin, the hair taken off; whilst the stockings within are made of hare-skin, or, for women, of dog-skin, the hairy side turned inwards. Between this and the stocking is placed a layer of dried grass, contributing warmth and comfort to the feet.

To protect the hands seal-skin gloves are generally used; in very cold weather reindeer-skin. Inside these dry grass is also used.

When looking at a crowd of native hunters, one is surprised at the similar clothing of each individual. Not one of them has a single dress which is not cut exactly from the same pattern, and made of skins from the same source.

At present the isolated tribe of natives at Smith's Sound numbers 243, as against 234 in 1892, the amount of births in the intermediate years having exceeded that of deaths by nine. From this fact one can scarcely draw the conclusion that the number of the tribe is increasing. The natives themselves, however, appear to hold this opinion; whilst they also boast that once upon a time they were much more numerous than now.

CHAPTER VI.

HUNTING.

IF we care for a more intimate acquaintance with these people, whose appearance and dress I have depicted, we must watch them in their daily life, and, above all, we must hunt with them.

Autumn has arrived, and as each day passes the sun describes his arc closer and closer to the southern horizon. Suddenly one fine day he dives his golden disc down behind the long range of blue mountains on the south side of Inglefield Gulf, shedding across the desolate landscape a last glowing greeting as he disappears. Four months will pass before we can again bask in his reviving beams. For the last time the rays of the sun are gleaming and glittering on the dark waves of the Gulf, where icebergs rock like floating fairy castles; for the last time the shining snow-domes glow in the distance over the mountain plateaux.

In the midst of this grand and sublime change of scene in Nature's silent kingdom, we may see far away in a remote and protected "fjord" a little, lively, rosy-cheeked Esquimau, who has succeeded, by several daring jumps over the ice-floes nearest to the land, in setting foot upon the newly-frozen autumn ice. His face beams with joy and happiness; for life offers him unlimited attractions. Summer was just beginning to be a little monotonous, with its sunlit days and nights, and winter is now at hand as a most welcome guest. Yes, he can commence the exciting autumn chase after seal; for the young ice is frozen. On the beach, his wife is standing in front of the low stone cabin, smiling at the thought of the pleasant change some fresh seal meat will bring them, after the tough narwhal meat of the summer, or the perpetual auk.

The man is carefully trying the strength of the ice with his seal lance, quickly as he moves over its mirror-like surface. His figure grows smaller and smaller, till at last he disappears behind a large iceberg. This is too much for his three

faithful dogs. With ears pointed, and strained attention, they have followed their master's movements from the beach; they tug impatiently at the long straps that hold them tied to a heavy stone slab, and send their long, plaintive howls across the ice. They can see that it is safe, and yet he leaves them behind, forgetting how often they have pulled him merrily along over the smooth surface: this is too much! They bark louder and more plaintively; the housewife goes to console them; at last they give it up, and lie peacefully down to sleep upon the cold rocks, while we may accompany the husband on his wandering among the ice-bergs in the "fjord."

He is still moving forward, but more slowly, as if in search of something. Besides his seal-lance, which he carries in his right hand, with its line, he has hung on his left arm a light stool of remarkably neat construction, its thin, weak legs made of many small pieces of wood tied together, and strengthened by fine leather straps stretched across. In his left hand he carries a bear-skin, whilst on his back, in a seal-skin

sheath, is a half-worn hunting knife with a walrus-tooth handle.

Suddenly he stoops towards the ice: there is a hole not two inches in diameter, which is attracting

WAITING FOR A RISE.

his attention. It is one of the breathing-holes of the "Fiord"-seal. Cautiously he places the small piece of bear-skin upon the ice close to the hole, drops his stool into position, and then sits quietly down to await the appearance of the seal.

Since every seal has several breathing-holes, it may be a long time that he has to wait; but there he sits patiently, hour after hour, till the seal's nose is at last seen at the little opening. Now all depends on the sureness of his hand: the target is small, and should he fail he has spent his time in vain; then, if food is scarce in his home, he has nothing to do but to resume his watch, unless he knows its other breathing-holes; in which case he may happen to meet the seal again, with better success. Should he succeed in striking his prey it is still too big to be pulled out through the hole, which is only large enough for the protrusion of its nose. The hunter must therefore enlarge the opening, which he does, by means of his knife, with an extraordinary skill born of long practice.

No sooner is the seal brought up on the ice than it is killed, and the wound carefully closed with the aid of a bone-needle, in order to prevent unnecessary loss of blood. The native now trudges back, well satisfied, for his sledge and dogs to bring home the game, although he might without great difficulty have tugged it after him

over the clear ice. But the desire to enjoy with them the first game of the season is too strong to be ignored. He soon stands beside his three pets, unties them from the stone slab amidst a deafening uproar, and a moment later they, with the sledge scarcely fastened to the straps, are running down the crags towards the beach. It is only by a desperate effort that he at last checks them, to bring the harness into proper position.

We will make use of this pause to take a closer look at the sledge. It is plain and simple in form, and, in fact, seems clumsy to one who is accustomed to the elegant sledges and toboggans of civilised countries; nor does one, at the first glance, suspect that it may serve as a model to the most experienced explorer in the matter of shape and construction.

With the exception of the "shoeing," which is of ivory, the materials of the North Greenland sledges consist almost exclusively of wood, which is no longer so scarce as it once was among the Esquimaux. Many sledges are still found, how ever, in which most of the lesser pieces are made

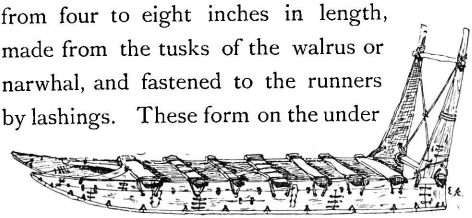
from reindeer horn, and these are so small that one is surprised that such patchwork can really be built up into a substantial whole. The natives, however, are particularly successful in this: first on account of the care they exercise in fitting the several pieces, and secondly on account of the firmness of all the joints and fastenings.

The reason why large pieces of wood are seldom seen in their sledges, or indeed in anything else they construct, is that under ordinary circumstances they have to be contented with fragments of boards or staves which they succeed from year to year in bartering, at the Cape York Settlement, from English whalers passing by; within the last few years, however, on account of their intercourse with the two Peary expeditions, they have had a comparatively abundant supply of wood, which has led to a considerable increase in the number of sledge owners.

It is worth mentioning that the driftwood, which has played, and still plays, such an important part among the Esquimaux of South

Greenland and those on the east coast in the manufacture of their tools, is hardly ever found within the limits of the Greenland coast where the dwellers in Smith's Sound at present have their permanent home.

Underneath the runners of the sledge is a "shoeing" of ivory, consisting of small pieces from four to eight inches in length, made from the tusks of the walrus or narwhal, and fastened to the runners by lashings. These form on the under



SLEDGE FROM SMITH'S SOUND.

side a smooth polished surface, admirably adapted to glide easily across the snow-crust or the ice.

All lashings of the sledge are made with skin straps. On the lower part of the runners these are sunk in the wood, so that when in use they cannot be damaged by ice or the hard crust of snow. The natural consequence of all these joinings and lashings is an elasticity which renders the sledge remarkably fit to resist the

many violent shocks and jolts to which it is subject when driven on uneven ice. The usual length of a North Greenland sledge is from two to two and a half yards, whilst the height of the runners as a rule is about eight inches. The distance between the runners is quite the same in all sledges. By this arrangement they gain the advantage, which is wanting on the Norwegian railways, of uniform gauge.

This is of no small importance for quick travelling between native settlements. If, for instance, a couple of families, after a heavy, perhaps somewhat sticky, snowfall, have with no little fatigue accomplished a long stretch on dog-sledges between two settlements, then travellers who the next day are covering the same road in beautiful clear winter weather may be said to drive on a tram-road. Hour after hour their dogs may run without a rest, whilst the polished ivory of the runners rattles merrily over the icy track.

To be condemned to make a sledge with the materials and tools at the disposal of the natives, would almost cause grey hair to grow upon the

crown of a bald-headed joiner. Only imagine what a trial it would be to him when, for instance, he was compelled to convert a plank into two boards by means of a saw, the blunt blade of which was shorter than the width of the plank; or to bore two hundred holes with an old nail fastened to a wooden handle; or to cut the ivory shoeing of a sledge with the blade of a knife made from an old piece of hoop-iron! To the natives, however, these feats are trifles, which they have performed through a succession of years with the utmost patience. Three-quarters of a century ago their tools must have been of even a more primitive nature; for these Esquimaux were at that period not yet discovered by the outer world, and were consequently without any resources not derived from their own barren coasts.

But if their tools are of the poorest kind and their work progresses slowly and laboriously, they have, happily, between the hunting seasons ample time for their tasks. Indeed, it is fortunate, from this point of view, that the manufacture of a sledge is the work of an entire

winter, and that the tools are not exactly of the finest kind; for otherwise what would these people find to do during the long winter darkness in their small sooty huts?

No sooner has our friend arranged his harness than with skilled hand he flourishes his whip, furnished with a lash quite five yards long, flings himself upon the sledge, and off the dogs go full gallop across the smooth surface. He uses no reins to direct his giddy team; his whip rules them completely. If he strikes the ice to the left or right, they turn left or right accordingly. Should he wish to urge on this one or that, he knows how to hit him on the most tender place—always, however, with the greatest gentleness.

Soon the seal is reached and placed upon the sledge. On the way home our friend may possibly pay a visit to some spot where he has a fox-trap set, that ought to be in order now the winter is at hand.

The trap is built of regular, flat stones, in an oblong square, the opening of which is so arranged that when the fox snaps at a piece of blubber fastened inside, it is closed immediately

by the fall of a large, flat stone, connected by a strap to the bait in an ingenious manner. How many fox-skins the members of the tribe collect in this fashion every year it is not easy to say, but the total must amount to several hundred, since the grown-up members require eight skins, and the fox-skins are not remarkable for their lasting qualities.

For the capture of bears, traps similar to those described above are sometimes used, built, of course, on a much larger scale and of much heavier stones. I saw and examined the remains of an old stone bear-trap of this sort on the east coast of the now uninhabited Ellesmereland, in the summer of 1894. But at present this way of catching bears has been altogether abandoned.

A large number of bears are still slaughtered every year, but in a far more sportsmanlike manner. The finest hunting-field for them is south of Cape York, upon the ice-covered waters of Melville Bay. Far out upon those desolate expanses the Esquimau has fought many a hard combat with the powerful white bear. Courage and presence of mind are needed

for such an encounter, and for this reason not all the natives are equally well qualified as bear hunters.

One of the more prominent among them at present is a man named Akpallia. In the year 1891 he called himself Nordingjer; but when, two years later, we met him again, he had, without any apparent reason, taken upon himself to change his name. We knew him well as a clever bear-hunter of about forty, who had slain many a shaggy giant. On his return from his last expedition it happened that I took shelter for several nights in his hut, and questioned him about his adventures; for the rumour had already spread that the bears for once had been treating him badly, slashing his one arm and killing two of his dogs. After much inquiry I drew him into giving an account of his adventures, from which may be gathered a very accurate idea of a typical Esquimau bear-hunt.

It was in the month of March that Akpallia was suddenly overcome by an irresistible longing to revisit his old hunting grounds in Melville

Bay. He mended his decrepit old sledge, patched up his ragged bird-skin shirt—for he was a widower—and gave the dogs a really substantial feed. After a good night's rest he started early in the morning, leaving his three darlings, a boy and two girls, to the care of some neighbours. Four days afterwards he was at Cape York, more than a hundred miles south-east of his home on Herbert Island. Here bear-hunters have their headquarters, the place being usually the home of several families, whose bread-winners to a great extent are occupied in the chase.

For a couple of days Akpallia rested among the flesh-pots of Cape York Settlement, and it was agreed that two local hunters should accompany him on his expedition. One of these was but a half-grown boy, and his selection was doubtless due to the fact that he was the possessor of an actual gun : this he had bartered from one of the crew of an English whaler for a considerable quantity of ivory, a deal by which he was highly elated. True, he had only some few charges of powder left, and no bullets, so

that he had to rest satisfied with pebbles, while the length of the barrel had, through bursting, been shortened by half a yard; but the gun, notwithstanding its faults and defects, was a formidable weapon, and gave to its young owner as high a standing among his comrades as if he had already slain a dozen bears.

When these three hunters finally set out from Cape York, they took with them fifteen dogs and three good sledges. Two days passed without sign of game. They were by this time so far out upon the icefield that a light blue streak, towards the north, alone indicated the presence of land. On the morning of the third day, they at last hit upon a fresh bear-track. One can hardly imagine what an exciting effect such an event as this has upon Esquimaux, those ardent sportsmen, and upon their eager dogs, until one has had the opportunity of personally watching them upon the spot. The dogs strain impatiently at their leash, gazing with pointed ears across the white plain; whilst their masters whisper hurriedly, stoop to listen, stretch themselves to scan the ground, run a little, and stop

again, until one begins to doubt if people, so excited because they have discovered a bear-track or two, can really be such master-hunters as one was led to believe. But on closer observation it is evident that, in spite of their restless nature, they well know how, even under the most trying circumstances, to preserve their presence of mind.

The tracks our friends have discerned are those of a she-bear with her two cubs. For some time they all follow the same trail; but meeting suddenly fresh traces of a single bear, that has been travelling in an altogether different direction, they separate, and Akpallia chooses to pursue the one bear single-handed.

At length he catches sight of it quietly basking in the sun at the foot of an iceberg, but yet so far away that it looks only a dark unshapely mass.

No sooner does the native sight the bear than his excitement increases, and he talks to the dogs in a subdued, hoarse, almost hissing tone.

"Takkotakko! takkotakko!" ("Look! look!") he cries with astonishingly rapid utterance. The

dogs at the same instant turn their heads enquiringly towards their master. Has he really discovered something? From the lesser height of their eyes above ground they cannot themselves see anything but the monotonous snow-cornices and ice-blocks round about them.

So he continues—"Nannuk, Nannuk, Nannuk, Nannuksua!" ("A bear, a bear, a bear, a big bear!") Scarcely has he spoken these words when the five dogs are alert with frantic ardour. They cease to follow the long curves of the track, rushing madly forward in the right direction by sheer instinct.

Now there is only half a mile between them and the bear; then the latter, with a sudden jerk, raises himself, and stands for a moment motionless, head and neck extended towards the sledge. In his new position he has become visible to the dogs, and, with renewed violence, they drag the sledge over the many ridges of the ice.

The bear appears to know only too well the bloodthirsty Esquimau and his fleet dogs, for, with prompt agility, he makes off at a run,

flying swift as an arrow from this dangerous spot; but Akpallia jumps from the sledge to ease the dogs, holding fast to the steering arms behind, whilst his legs are dancing wildly under him. The bear certainly is a good runner, but he is no match for the dogs. More and more they gain upon him as he presses forward; but Akpallia scrambles back on to the sledge in order to spare his strength, as in a few minutes all his power and elasticity will be required. He is comparatively a large and heavy man, so that his weight retards the dogs considerably; but he knows that the bear must soon slacken speed, as he is no long-distance racer.

At last he is within a few hundred yards of the bear; then he bends forward, and, with a quick slash, cuts the loop that connects the traces with the dogs. The sledge stops short, and the liberated pack now seem almost to fly upon the heels of their quarry. The bear, finding that further flight is vain, now stands at bay.

Akpallia, in the meantime, snatches the lance from his sledge, and hastens to join the fray.

Fear is unknown to this bold son of the ice-desert. He is alone on the vast snow-expanse; for his two comrades have long ago disappeared with their sledges over the horizon. He is about to join issue with a beast that with one stroke of its paw may deprive him of dear life, a battle in which he will need at once courage and coolness, agility and strength, art and skill.

As soon as Akpallia comes up with the bear, he grasps his lance with both hands, and drives it with all his strength at the monster's heart. But a quick movement of the brute mars the sureness of his aim: the lance strikes aslant, and stops short against its strong shoulder-blade. The next moment it is broken in pieces by a single stroke of the bear's paw, and Akpallia is weaponless.

The bear now directs its attack wholly against the hunter, ignoring the barking dogs. Akpallia springs across the snow to reach his knife, which, during the attack with the lance, he has flung down close to the battle-field. But, alas, one of his feet unexpectedly sinks through the

treacherous snow-crust, he stumbles, and in a moment one of the bear's paws is resting heavily upon his left arm. He summons supernatural strength to get loose, and howls up against the immense open mouth of the bear, to frighten him, striking him with his fist upon the chest. But he cannot get loose; the claws have already penetrated too deeply into his flesh. If the bear for the moment causes no further harm to the Esquimau it is only because it has now something else to do. As soon as the dogs see their master fall to the ground, crushed under the paws of his powerful opponent, these faithful animals spring at the body of the bear, attacking it with the ferocity of tiger cats. The leaders of the team, a pair of splendid wolf-like animals, their master's companions in many hard fights, do not desert him, but attack the bear face to face, one even snapping at the paw that holds the Esquimau pressed to the white snow. But Bruin does not release his grasp; with a quick movement he strikes his most formidable assailant a stunning blow. The position, already dangerous enough, begins now to be desperate, and, as

though this were not enough, another bear appears from behind an iceberg. It is pursued by Akpallia's comrades ; they shout at the sight of their friend, who answers them with loud cries of distress.

The bear lets go his victim, and runs towards the other animal, which has already passed the spot, and Akpallia is saved. A moment later the two friends' dog-teams are set at liberty, the escape of the bears is stopped, and with the help of a shot from the injured gun, they succeed, after a short sharp fight, in slaying both the brutes. Then Akpallia's wound, which, fortunately, has not caused any serious loss of blood, is bandaged with long strips cut from an old sealskin, the bears are skinned, and most of the meat is packed on the sledges.

Only one of the two faithful dogs that during the battle had been wounded by the bear was alive, and was taken home on the sledge to recover. The other was killed on the spot. Two days later the hunters were again back at Cape York, where their adventures were recounted in detail to a delighted audience.

Akpallia was another time out bear hunting on the ice-fields in Smith's Sound, just between Greenland and Ellesmereland. He was then in company with a young but uncommonly clever hunter named Kolotengua. In the pursuit of a bear, Kolotengua, who had never killed one, strayed away from Akpallia. Suddenly he met a bear behind a small iceberg, and, as a matter of course, had to attack it single-handed. Joyfully he seized the opportunity to win his spurs, and raise his reputation in the eyes of his long-selected mother-in-law.

Scarcely had his three dogs, after being cut loose from the sledge, reached the bear, when the brute climbed up the small iceberg, where neither Kolotengua nor his dogs could follow him. But the young huntsman was not to be so easily defrauded. He remembered that he had brought with him on the sledge his bow and the few arrows he possessed, thinking that during the journey along the coast he might hit upon reindeer; and he now planted his lance in a snow-drift and hurried away to fetch them. In a twinkling he was

back again, taking aim, and bending the bow as far as the length of the arrow would permit; and the bear soon afterwards made a furious forward spring, hit full in the chest by the slender shaft. The wound, not sufficiently deep to be dangerous, only enraged the bear. At the second shot, his fury increased; he broke the arrow into fragments with his paw, and growled at the sight of his own blood. The third arrow was the last. It hit the bear in the shoulder, and, in a moment, was between the monster's teeth, torn out of the wound and tossed far into the air, passing the place where Kolotengua was standing. He caught it adroitly, but it was broken in two places, and hung together only by the sinews that bound it. To lash it together again was the work of a moment, and for the fourth time the brave lad aimed and hit. The fury of the bear had reached its highest pitch. With one spring it was down the slope of the iceberg so suddenly that Kolotengua escaped being crushed only by a hurried bound sideways. Now his presence of mind was shown to advantage: he seized

his lance, and thrust its point with all the strength at his command beneath the left shoulder of the bear. The lance broke in his hands, he had only a fragment left, and, in spite of its bleeding wounds, the strength of the bear did not seem to diminish. It made tremendous jumps with its huge body, trying with raised forepaws to strike Kolotengua. But the three dogs threw themselves in the way, and drew the bear's whole attention towards themselves; until at last, after some further convulsive plunges, when only the utmost agility and presence of mind enabled the native to escape the furious brute, its strength failed and it sank dying on the snow.

Such scenes as these are not uncommon during the wild-bear hunting of the Esquimaux. Their life is like a game of hazard, in which none can avoid taking part. Life itself is the stake; food and clothing for a short period the coveted prize.

Let me give one more bear story, before leaving the subject. Kaschu, a native with whom we are to make closer acquaintance in a later chapter, spied a bear one autumn day upon the

young ice at the south side of Inglefield Gulf. Although he had no lance at hand, it never for an instant occurred to him to let the bear escape unattacked; he was too reckless a fellow for that. He quickly lashed his old and worn hunting-knife to a small seal-spear that he carried with him, and made for the bear. But just as he was at the point of attack, the bear showed some hesitation, probably because Kaschu, as his habit was when excited, made frightful grimaces with his owl-face. It turned round, at all events, and ran off at full speed towards a wide opening close by in the ice.

Excited at the prospect of losing his prey, Kaschu thrust his new-fashioned weapon into the bear's back, hoping thereby to stop it. This he had better not have done; for, in drawing the weapon back again, the knife remained fixed in the bear's body, and the animal, plunging into the water, appeared a moment later crawling up on the opposite edge, and disappeared. Kaschu is no longer the man he was. His grief is not at the escape of his prey; it is at the thought of the bear having robbed him

without ceremony of his knife, a weapon of such prized value in North Greenland that his sorrow is likely to take root and to thrive as long as he lives.

When attacking the walrus, the Esquimau usually employs only one weapon—the lance—so made that it can be used equally well as a harpoon. The iron piece tied to the butt end of the lance serves to hold in the harpoon point, which is connected with a long line often more than forty yards long, and of quite extraordinary strength. This line is made of *ogsuk* skin, and rarely has any join in the whole of its length, being obtained by cutting spirally a large wide strip from a whole hide.

Owing to the tough, thick texture of the walrus's skin, the native prefers to make his attack by a thrust, holding the weapon in his right hand, rather than by throwing it, the line being held carefully coiled in the left. The blow struck, the lance is as rapidly withdrawn, leaving its harpoon point firmly wedged in the flesh. When the wounded animal dives back into the sea, it is important that it should be

prevented from running off with the entire gear; for when opposed to a walrus it is of little use for a hunter to rely upon his own physical strength. So he thrusts the lance perpendicularly into the ice, makes two or three quick turns of the line around it as near to the ground as possible, and with knee and shoulder braced against the solid shaft is prepared any moment for the violent shock that may follow the extension of the line to its utmost limit. One by one its twists and coils slowly run out, and at last it lies along the surface of the ice, strained and shivering like a taut bow-string. If at this critical moment the iron point slips, or the ice gives way, the game, with the harpoon and line, must inevitably be lost; nay, it may even happen that as the last coils of the line are running out the hunter's legs become entangled, and he must perforce be dragged down into the cold waves. Everything considered, walrus hunting is certainly a dangerous pastime; for between the year 1891 and 1894 two experienced hunters of this one small tribe have thus lost their lives.

Let us suppose, however, that ice and gear hold, that everything goes well. The strained line begins slowly to slacken, the hunter's breathing is easier, and while the animal is reascending, as it must to gain a fresh supply of air, he has time to seize his knife, and to commence cutting a couple of holes close to the spot on which he stands. Again and again the line will grow taut and relax, and always at the critical moment he must leave the work he has in hand to throw his whole weight upon the quivering pike. So soon as the two holes in the ice are ready, he seizes a moment when the line is slack to haul in some fathoms, and, running the noose a couple of times down through the one hole and up through the other, he obtains a much more reliable hold for the critical moment when the game is to be secured. Now that the lance is free he is able once more to use it as a weapon, and with this in his hand he stands over the breathing-hole, striking the walrus about the head and shoulders unerringly each time that it ascends. Time after time the blows fall, until the animal passes

through various stages of exhaustion to the inevitable end.

Perhaps some of the hunter's friends may be within sight on the white plain, and he hails them to help him in the task of drawing the monster to the surface of the ice. If no one is in sight, he must accomplish the task as best he may. Since the walrus weighs upwards of a thousand pounds, it would appear impossible for one man with so few facilities to handle such a mass. To the Esquimaux, however, who are essentially resourceful, it is no impossibility, as we shall soon see. A couple of fresh holes are cut in the ice by the hunter, who also makes some parallel incisions in the finger-thick skin of the walrus, and, by passing the line through these and through his fresh ice-holes, he obtains the most effective purchase that could be devised; for, as may be readily understood, a line will run as if it were greased through ice-holes and blubbery loops. If the ice is strong enough to bear its weight, the hunter will bring the entire carcase of his prey to the surface; if not, he will be content with raising a part of it above the

level of the sea, and cut it to pieces section by section, until the whole ice around him is covered with queer-looking joints of walrus.

Leaving these in the security of isolation, the Esquimaux now returns for his dogs, the sledge is loaded with half of the flesh and he turns his steps homeward. By the way he will try to come across other members of the hunting expedition, in case they have had no luck themselves. At last, tired and hungry, he arrives at the outskirts of the settlement, where inquisitive children will meet him with lighted torches.

In the first half of the month of February 1894, I myself had an uncomfortable experience while hunting the walrus, in company with Kaschu. I was on a visit to Nokki, where at the time a large number of walrus hunters had constructed their snug huts. I wanted, if possible, to secure a couple of sledge-loads of walrus meat, which were sorely needed for our dogs and for our own winter quarters. The natives, however, seemed reluctant to part with any of their stores, so we determined to join

a party of local hunters who were to set out in the early morning, hoping that we might possibly kill an animal or two on our own account.

At seven o'clock in the bright moonlight we left the settlement behind us, driving for a couple of hours towards Smith's Sound, where thin ice was to be encountered. At a distance of about seventeen miles from the coast, Kaschu and I, who had long ago separated from our companions, at last made a pause. Lashing our dogs to a rough ice block, we went on foot about a mile farther out, where we fancied we could see in the moonlight some dark spectral figures, slowly rising and falling through the glassy covering.

The whole forenoon passed without discovering our game; and it was not until a little after twelve o'clock that we succeeded in slaying a large female walrus which had crawled to the top of the ice to sleep, the capture being effected with comparative ease, since we were well provided with harpoons and rifles. Leaving Kaschu to quarter the game, I set off at a run to fetch the dogs and sledge, and, finding them where we had left them, returned at full speed

to where I had left my friend. See him, however, I could not; for, although but just after noon, the twilight was dim, and only a strong red glow in the southern vault of heaven indicated the direction whence we might expect the longed-for sun. Suddenly the sledge made a small jump as it ran noiselessly out upon a dark, velvety, soft stretch of bending ice. I suspected that the dogs in the semi-darkness were taking a bee line across a freshly-frozen way, and, in spite of the unpleasant undulations that the sledge was making, it looked for a moment as though I should reach the other side without catastrophe. Then one of the sledge runners crashed through the ice, the speed slackened, and in a moment the fore part of the sledge was partly buried beneath the ice.

Into the sea I must go—that I knew immediately; and so I slipped slowly off the sledge, at the same time giving a somewhat rash pull at the steering arm, so that the fore-end again bounded to the top of the ice crust. Now an uncomfortable struggle commenced, while we slowly fought our way across to the

farther side of the course. Needing no encouragement, the sagacious dogs strained themselves to the utmost, fully understanding the crisis. By good luck, it happened that the sledge was drawn by more dogs than usual, and I had twelve powerful animals in the traces; at one moment most of them were plunged in the water, gaining a footing again in the next by means of their sharp claws, only to be once more drawn down again into the biting waves. At last, however, after perhaps a minute, which seemed to me an eternity, the dogs obtained a firm footing on the other side of the channel, which must have been fifteen yards wide, and we were saved. A rifle and a hunting knife that had been left loosely on the sledge had of course disappeared, a fate which had also befallen my big reindeer mittens, that were now drifting about on the dark water. To reach the hut again as soon as possible was now my first thought, for I was soaked through up to the armpits, and the temperature was nearly twenty-two degrees Fahr. below zero, and I was glad enough when shortly after-

wards I was on the sledge of one of my fellow-hunters and on the road to Nokki. Now and then I tried to run a little behind the sledge, that I might not be altogether frozen as I sat. But I had always to give in after a few minutes; for even in this brief time my dress had changed to a rigid ice case, glistening as silver armour in the moonlight. Still I did not feel the cold to any great extent, having taken the precaution to tie up all the openings in my skin clothes directly after the accident. A couple of hours later I found myself safe and sound in a native earth cabin, where all shiverings were soon expelled by eating masses of grilled seal blubber, and swallowing scalding pea soup.

In summer time whole herds of walruses are often met with, and, if attacked or disturbed from an open boat, they may prove rather dangerous to deal with. In a *kajak* it would be simply suicidal to interfere with them. On one occasion, during a boating excursion across Whale Sound, in August 1891, with Dr. Cook, Mr. Gibson, the mineralogist, and Mr. Verhoeff,

we fell in with a number of walruses basking in the sun on some ice floes directly in our course. In our innocence we attacked some

WALRUS HUNTING IN NORTH GREENLAND.

of them, and to our surprise found ourselves a moment afterwards surrounded by what I should judge to be upwards of a hundred of these monsters, as they came roaring and snorting towards our boat from all directions.

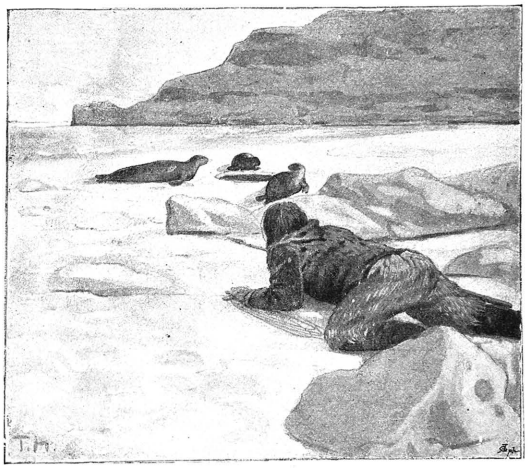
Fortunately we were all armed with repeating rifles; and an Esquimau, Ekba, who-happened to be on board, had with him both harpoon and lance. It is, however, no exaggeration to say that it was only with the greatest difficulty that we succeeded in defending ourselves against the enraged animals. Not till after a long and severe fight, during which we had to make use of all sorts of weapons, such as an axe and a boat-hook, upon the more daring brutes, did we succeed in beating them back, and this not till several old monarchs of the herd had succumbed to our shower of bullets. How many we killed during the affray it is not easy to say, since the slain were immediately dragged by means of their long tusks beneath the surface of the water by their solicitous comrades. Only two of the dead bodies were secured by means of a native harpoon and line. Had some of them had the chance to fasten their teeth upon the gunwale of the boat, they would have easily capsized it—a fate which in former times often befel the Norwegian walrus-hunters of Spitzbergen. In such cases there is scarcely

any hope of being saved, unless another boat is close at hand.

Besides the method of seal hunting already described in this chapter, another and more important system of attack is resorted to during the summer and spring, when the seals are for the most part passing their time sleeping or resting upon the sunny surface of the ice-fields. In April, when the hunting commences, the ice in the fjords is about six months old, and since it is about five feet thick, it is only by maintaining and widening the breathing holes made in the past autumn that the little fjord seal keeps open a passage for itself through the mighty ice layer. The Esquimau starts on his expedition in the early morning hours, that he may gain as much time as possible. At the end of April the sun is on the horizon day and night, and from that month onwards during the summer, the seals may be seen upon the ice day and night as well. But it is in the day-time, when the heat is greatest and the glare of sunshine most intense, that the best conditions for hunting offer, for the

seal is then drowsy and less alert than usual. It is not long before the native with his trained eye discovers one or perhaps a group of black spots far away upon the wide snow plain. Once within a distance of about a thousand yards from the seals, he stops his dogs rather than run the risk of driving the animals away before he can get near enough for his attack, and, harpoon in hand, advances cautiously on foot. Should his team be composed of dogs accustomed to this form of hunting they can be trusted to remain motionless; otherwise, the hunter must take the precaution of turning the sledge upside down to check any possible attempt to run away. As he approaches the seals he assumes a stooping position, until at length he is practically flat upon the ice. From this moment his progress is made on all fours, his one idea now being to make the seals believe that, so far from being a treacherous enemy, he is in reality one of themselves. If one of them glances up, the hunter immediately ceases to advance, at the same time scraping the snow with one foot or

hand in true seal fashion, while producing from his throat a faithful imitation of the strange hissing sound of the animal.



STALKING SEALS IN SPRING AND SUMMER.

It is interesting to study the seals and their movements at close quarters. Some are resting leisurely upon the side, like a recumbent man; others on the stomach, with the head dropped drowsily upon the snow; and others

again stretch themselves upon their backs with an air of supreme indifference, lazily brushing their round bodies with their short flippers. Now and then some seal suddenly rears the fore part of its body into the air, stretching the glossy supple neck, looking and scenting about with newly roused suspicion.

Arrived near his prey the hunter suddenly rises, and makes a couple of quick forward jumps to get as close as possible to them; and the next moment his harpoon, with its quivering line attached, flies through the air. One of the seals is hit in the back as it was on the point of gliding down into the sea, and is then secured. So soon as he has the seal upon the ice again, he need only send a friendly shout echoing back to the dogs, if they have been left loose, and they will arrive upon the scene at the top of their speed.

The harpoon used for this kind of seal-hunting is as a rule rather less than a yard and a half long. It consists of two main parts: the harpoon handle, which is of wood, strengthened at one end with ivory, and the harpoon point

itself, furnished with an iron tip only connected with the handle by the line so long as the whole gear is at rest, or in the air. When the seal is hit, and the line tightens, the handle immediately frees itself, the deadly point remaining fixed in the animal's body.

Of the hunting of large sea-animals by the Esquimaux, the capture of the narwhal only remains to be mentioned. Until some twenty years ago this sport was conducted entirely from the ice, and by the side of lanes and other large openings; for the natives at that time were without any means of moving on the sea, with the exception of a few natural rafts they had made from drifting ice floe. At present, narwhal hunting is carried on from *kajaks*. The reason why the Innuits were so long without this means of conveyance is that, in their constant progress northwards, they gradually deserted those regions where a supply of wood could be obtained, so that by degrees the art of building was forgotten. This explanation is given by the Esquimaux themselves, who say that, although a generation ago they were able to obtain a wood supply, owing

to the intercourse held between the Cape York Innuits and English whalers, they still lack the necessary knowledge for building those remarkable boats of which they retain some dim tradition. Barely twenty years ago, however, when a little crowd of natives who survived the famine so fatal to their tribe reached the Greenland coasts across Smith's Sound, the manufacture of *kajaks* was again introduced. The boats therefore resemble in their peculiar shape those in use on the American side of Baffin's Bay, although they have none of those large skin-boats called *omiaks*, or boats for women, even if they are now acquainted with the secret of their build. Two teachers of boat building, the very venerable Kommanapek, and Mektascha, are alive to this day, and still recount with trembling voices how they, famished and empty-handed, at last reached an unknown tribe on the Greenland coast, a generous people who unhesitatingly received them, and whose kindness they have certainly been able to repay by means of the information they could impart of the more fully developed civilisation of lower latitudes.

From what has been said as to the comparatively recent introduction of the *kajaks* among the Innuits in North Greenland, it will be understood that these people are far from possessing the same skill in navigation as their more practised brethren have acquired through the use of centuries; nor are their boats so neat and elegant in shape, though more steady and less dangerous. Still we must admire the consummate skill with which they have already learnt to handle their frail craft at sea. Indeed, in latter years they have frequently ventured across Inglefield Gulf at the entrance of Bowdoin Bay, a stretch of about fifteen miles, where sudden strong east winds often throw the sea into a state of wildest tumult. And yet these *kajaks* are practically open boats—that is to say, they are provided with an open space in the middle far larger than is necessary to accommodate the body of the sculler, and without an arrangement common to the *kajaks* of the South Greenlanders of a watertight tarpaulin or skin, which guards the boat from the danger of being swamped in high seas.

A young Esquimau, named Kolotengua, was the first to perform this daring feat, in 1893. It is not hard to understand what a desperate degree of courage is needed to undertake such a voyage in so frail a boat, more especially when we recollect that a native, should his boat capsize or fill, must inevitably sink to the bottom like a broken pot, on account of the icy temperature of the water, and his entire ignorance of the art of swimming.

As I have already stated, narwhal fishing is done principally from the *kajak*. The hunters as a rule keep near to each other, and as soon as one has successfully cast his harpoon, the others press forward to assist at the death. The deed accomplished, the narwhal is towed home by the whole company, each member getting his share according to certain definite arrangements for the division of spoil. Whoever is the first to wound or attack an animal, whether it be narwhal, bear, seal, walrus, or reindeer, is always regarded as the slayer, and takes to himself almost all the glory as well as the greater portion of the prey.

The meat of the narwhal is tough, but the natives appear to find it both nourishing and tasty, and, since it is obtained in abundant quantities during the summer, it forms a much valued means of sustenance. The sinews from the backbone when dry yield a valuable sewing thread, which in strength far surpasses that obtained from reindeer's back. The skin, spotted black and white, and decidedly gristly, is eaten raw with the keenest relish, being cut into tiny squares which resemble some tempting form of sweetmeat.

We now come to the hunting of land-animals in North Greenland, beginning with the chase of the reindeer, which naturally stands first. In former years the pursuit of reindeer was much neglected among the North Greenlanders. Though plentiful in those regions it was only with the greatest difficulty that they could be killed, as all had to be accomplished with no more formidable weapon than the bow and arrow. It was looked upon therefore more or less as a sport, cultivated particularly during the spring and summer months, and not strictly as a

necessary means of obtaining food and clothing for the population. It follows, therefore, that the reindeer were in those days found in large numbers. But as the natives gradually learned the use and advantages of a rifle, more and more hunters of the tribe became possessors of this weapon, principally through their intercourse with the two Peary expeditions. Reindeer soon became a familiar food, whilst the skin grew fashionable for the manufacture of men's coats. When we first arrived on these coasts, in 1891, the chase was still carried on with bow and arrow: at our departure, in 1894, these were put away upon the shelf, and the time is not far distant when they will be on view only in the glass cases of a few collectors, while of the reindeer itself no traces will be left. The opportunity of killing the deer wholesale with a volley is to such sportsmen as the Esquimaux an occupation far too fascinating to be missed, whether the deer are required for their immediate necessities or not. They are children of the moment, who afterwards must pay dearly for the surprises of civilisation. Now that the reindeer can be shot

at a distance of from fifty to three hundred yards, it is being gradually forgotten that with a little patience, and with some craft, one may approach within a few steps, so that it can be killed with bow and arrow, or even by a well-thrown stone.

It is in the spring-time, when the snow is still covering the ground, that the hunter sets out after reindeer. He is provided with fur soles (for the most part made of bear-skin), and these, so soon as he arrives at the hunting field, are tied underneath the *kamiks*, to deaden the sound of his approach as he steals forward over the hard crust of snow. In an exceedingly filthy sealskin case which he carries on his arm are stored his bows and arrows, the latter in a little compartment by themselves. Upon his back, as is usually the case when hunting on foot, he carries his big knife fastened to a thin skin-strap tied round the shoulders. North Greenland bows are usually made of three pieces of reindeer rib, united by putting other pieces of bone over and under the joints, and lashing the whole together. To increase the elasticity

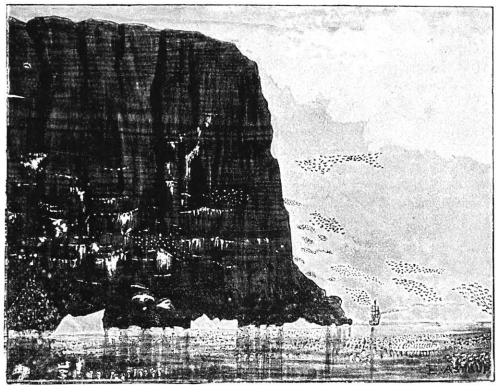
of the bow the strong sinews of the narwhal are stretched along its back, and usually the length of the bow is about three-quarters of a yard. The arrow shafts are of wood, or sometimes of bone, strengthened at one end by a slender piece of ivory, and fitted with a sharp iron tip. Often, however, the shafts consist of several small pieces of wood carefully bound together—a remarkable illustration of the scarcity of wood upon these coasts. The arrows are half a yard or more.

Long before they come within an ordinary person's range of sight, the Esquimau with his sharp eye is able to detect the presence of reindeer. From this moment he advances with the utmost care, his great object being, even if the animals have once seen him, to prevent the possibility of their suspicions being confirmed. His thorough acquaintance with their nature and characteristics, his great patience and inexhaustible energy, will now stand him in good stead. Time is of no importance, neither does he yield to the demands of fatigue, or the voice of his stomach. Should the herd from one reason or

another take to their heels, he pursues them unhesitatingly all through the light spring night; and he will be hours advancing only a few hundred feet, if he thinks thus to gain a better chance of securing them. When he succeeds in killing more than one deer, he is compelled, if no comrades are within hail, to leave a portion of the meat on the spot, and guards against a visit of the Arctic fox by carefully burying his treasure beneath a weight of heavy stones; then flinging on his back a couple of hindquarters, and the paunches with their highly-valued vegetable contents, he carries this home to renew the supplies of the family larder. The remainder of the meat is sent for when opportunity offers.

If the spot frequented by the reindeer is difficult to approach unobserved, the Esquimau adopts different tactics. The animals are led to approach their pursuers. The hunter repairs to the spot where he counts on finding his game before the animals have arrived, and, heaping together some loose stones behind which he may secrete himself, he is quite

prepared to wait hour after hour for the completion of his strategy, when the unsuspecting deer approach him, as they move from spot to spot engaged in desultory grazing. Indeed, the resources of the Esquimaux when hunting deer



A NORTH GREENLAND AUK-CLIFF.

are inexhaustible. Our friend Kaschu was once on a hunting expedition towards the close of autumn. He caught sight of his prey at last, but their position was such that it was impossible to approach unseen, except to windward. Now, it must be confessed that the skin clothes of

the Esquimaux have a somewhat rank smell, and this smell the cautious reindeer cannot bear. The moment they distinguish it they are off. Kaschu, knowing this, and determined to come within gunshot, had to effect his purpose by other means—quite of his own invention—which consisted in casting off his clothes and approaching the place by a considerable *détour*, clad only in his new breech-loader. He really succeeded, and deserved to succeed, in getting within range of the deer without being detected. But the quickness with which blue-frozen Kaschu, the moment the deer had fallen, was dancing across the snow in search of his clothing is said to have been quite phenomenal.

Hares are caught in North Greenland by means of snares placed near to each other upon long skin straps extended across the snow in narrow glens and other likely places, but of late years they have been commonly shot with the rifle.

The ptarmigan, strangely enough, is not sought after by the tribesmen. Some superstition must account for this, as its flesh is excellent. The only sea-birds caught by natives are the auks

and the auk-kings or lesser auks, which they snare by means of a net fixed to a long stick. This pursuit is carried on during the summer to a very large extent by families living in their tent-homes near the bird-frequented rocks, and is conducted with considerable risk, for the birds choose as their resorts the steepest and most inaccessible parts of the coast.

Not many years ago an aged tribesman met with a horrible death while auk catching at the south-west part of Saunders Island, christened by the natives Akpan (Auk Island), on account of the extraordinary abundance of auks that make it their home. In company with a half-witted fellow named Aningana ("Moon"), who, by the way, has the honour of being a brother of Kaschu, he had mounted to the plateau, about seven hundred yards in height, which crowned almost the entire length of the island. Having descended to the very lowest point of the declivity, the fowler must be lowered over the perpendicular cliff in order to reach the narrow clefts and ledges where the birds nest in summer time. For this purpose they use those lines

which at other times are employed for walrus hunting; and, strange to say, do not hesitate, whatever the giddy height of the abyss, to trust their whole weight to the support of a single person on the brow. Hardly, however, had the poor idiot Aningana commenced to lower his comrade, when he could no longer hold on, and the unhappy man fell at terrific speed, to be dashed to death on a projecting foot of the rock below. Once, when on a sledge journey with Kolotengua, we passed close to the very spot where this accident occurred; and, as I looked up at the grey mountain wall, it appeared to me inconceivable that people should ever dare so much for the sake of a few eggs or birds.

Upon another occasion, an Esquimau had his leg crushed while auk hunting high up on one of the large stone heaps which may be seen in many places at the foot of the mountains, and which are more especially the resort of the auk-king. Swoon the poor fellow could not: it was a practice unknown to him; and he immediately commenced to drag himself homewards. His

leg was shortly afterwards amputated by the advice of some wise men and women, and it was not long before he was about again on his stump, as hale and hearty as ever, amusing himself and the whole colony immensely.

It is not easy to understand how this and similar operations have been accomplished successfully, when we bear in mind the primitive nature of the instruments used by the Esquimaux surgeons in such circumstances—a filthy knife and some blubbery sealskin straps. But here upon this lonely domain Nature seems to bring all her forces to man's aid, healing in an almost off-hand fashion sores and fractures which at home would require the most careful nursing.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SLEDGE JOURNEYS OF THE ESQUIMAUX. THE NORTH-GREENLAND DOGS.

WHEN we picture to ourselves two hundred and fifty people scattered in tiny groups of a score or so apiece, along the stretch of coast between Ramsgate and Scarborough, we shall have a more or less correct idea of the population in the northernmost country of the Innuits. And when we find that, in spite of the comparatively great distances, the Esquimaux ladies at one end of the country know all about the latest domestic events, and the small scandals amongst their cousins at the other end, we may be perfectly sure that this news has been conveyed by means of the dog-sledge.

When the roads are in good condition, journeys may be made by this method which seem almost incredible from our point of view. For instance, it is no uncommon occurrence for the distance between the northernmost and most southerly settlement—more than a hundred and seventy miles—to be covered in four days and nights with a single team of dogs, while the trip has even been accomplished in three days. To the Esquimaux, as a general rule, however, it is a matter of small moment whether their destination is reached a day earlier or later: nothing, in fact, is more striking to a white man who may be accompanying them on their long sledge journeys, than their complete carelessness of everything relating to time.

In the estimation of the Esquimaux, the sledge is the most comfortable conveyance that man could wish for. As for the cold to which he is exposed, he never stops to think of that, since it rarely causes him discomfort; while the white fields, across which he is travelling, fail to make upon his mind that same desolate and forsaken impression that they do upon a Southerner.

Let us accompany him for awhile on one of his journeys. At a point beneath the tall blue promontory to the north, old acquaintances are living, in whose comfortable huts he may expect to enjoy unlimited hospitality, and, turning to look backward over his shoulder towards the south, he may still faintly discern the Reindeer Mountains behind his own home. Exactly here upon this very spot where he is at present resting, in the very middle of the traffic line of the limited little world in which he moves, two years ago he killed a big *ugsuk*, the skin of which still supplies the material of which his shoes and his harpoon lines are made.

Perhaps during the journey we may meet with a rugged, irregular belt of ice. A scraping sound is heard beneath one of the runners, and we discover that a length of ivory shoeing has been torn from its place. This will cost us a delay of ten minutes, and, whatever the indifference of the native, we cannot refrain from fretting a little at the thought of this unexpected hindrance. But the matter grows even worse when the native informs us that the lashing is worn, and

must be removed. Hunger and cold are alike forgotten, however, as we watch our friend making a new hole in the wooden runner, through which he will insert his fresh lashing. From the sledge he has taken a drill, consisting of three parts—the drill itself, the bow, which is made from the rib of a reindeer, and a skin strap—and besides these a knob of ivory fitted on the under side with a round hole, ready to receive the wooden shaft of the drill. The point of the drill consists usually of an old nail ingeniously sharpened for its new purpose. As the Esquimau holds the oblong piece of ivory in his mouth, which for the occasion must be widened in at least four different directions, we notice to our joy that he is now compelled to cease his song. Stooping towards the sledge, which has been laid on one side, he places the iron point of the drill upon the runner, puts it into the depression of the mouthpiece, and, with his right hand firmly closed around the bow, proceeds to draw the latter backwards and forwards; and the string of the bow, having a hitch round the drill, causes it to revolve rapidly,

so that in a moment the work is done, and the tool frequently becomes quite hot with the friction.

The sledge is soon repaired, and we continue our journey. After a while we again reach even ice, but its surface is covered by fine dry snow packed closely into snowdrifts, over which the sledge drags heavily, as if it were so much sand. Once more the native makes a halt, and, filling his mouth with snow, completely overturns the sledge so that the runners are uppermost. Moistening his hand with the water that has melted in his mouth, he rubs this over the polished plane of the runner, where it immediately freezes. Once more he moistens his hand, and again rubs it along the shoeing. Continually melting more snow, he repeats the manœuvre until both runners are encased in a coating of smooth ice.

After this, not even the sandy condition of the snow will check the sledge from running as smoothly as on the mirror surface of an ice-sheet. Perhaps when, on our return journey, we are sitting quietly absorbed in our medita-

tions, the sledge will make a sudden bound, the dogs in a state of frenzy deviating from the right course towards a fixed spot on the ice. They stop, and all their noses meet at one point, where nothing is to be seen. The Esquimau, however, advances, thrusts his whip handle into the snow, and, as his foot presses against the surface, the crust yields beneath him, and we catch sight of one of the round breathing-holes of a seal. When the dogs have sniffed to their hearts' content, he pushes them aside and stoops down to take a long sniff himself. It is a very decided smell that rises from these holes—a smell that is much appreciated by all hunters of the tribe—so much so, indeed, that it is only with the greatest difficulty they can be persuaded to pass a seal-hole, without stopping to enjoy the luxury of a whiff.

When at last the place is reached where we intend to put up for the night, if this happens to be uninhabited it is the work of a very short time to run up a suitable snow-hut. A snow-drift conveniently packed by the wind is

chosen for the purpose, and by means of his long snow-knife the native carves out a series of huge blocks, which he places in a circle, and then piles one above the other in such a fashion that they join and form a solid arched dome, large enough to shelter all the members of the party.

Let us take a glimpse of the interior of this hut, after all the crevices in walls and roof have been filled in with loose snow, and the oil lamp comfortably lighted. To enter, one must crawl upon all fours through the little hole to the leeward. If entry is sought by a member of the Caucasian race, he must be careful not to tear down some of the recently erected building, or worse, to bring the edifice about his ears ; for the opening is calculated only for small people—the country's own children.

Within the hut a comparatively high temperature is gradually acquired, which, by commencing to melt the snow of the ceiling, makes the hut so much the stronger, as the several snow-blocks shrink and freeze together into one hard cupola of ice, which glistens

like glass over our heads. Little by little the melting snow trickles slowly down the walls of the cabin, until the tiny rills of water reach the

ARRIVAL OF TRAVELLERS AT A WINTER COLONY. YOUNG MOTHER IN FOREGROUND.

floor, and form themselves into fairy icicles. As night goes on the lamp burns more feebly, and finally the melting process ceases.

Upon the snow platform at the back of the

hut the hunters lay out their skins, and on the top of these stretch their exhausted limbs, perhaps after having first cast off all, or the greater portion of, their clothing. After a long day's drive, it is the feet which have suffered more than anything from the cold; but now their turn has come, and the Esquimaux tuck them snugly away each upon the other's stomach. Never shall I forget the first time that I accepted the offer of a dirty but friendly hunter, and soon found him to be as warm as he was warm-hearted. But then the fellow actually claimed in return, quite as a matter of course, to warm himself in a similar way upon me. This was unlooked for. I glanced at his feet, and found them to be as black as pitch; for he was a man of more than twenty-five. Nevertheless he might need to have his feet warmed quite as much as I did, and there seemed to be a promise of interest in experiencing both sensations.

"All right," I said, in good Esquimau, closing my eyes, and waiting in suspense. I have several times tumbled into the sea near the

seventy-eighth degree, and I have bathed in snow upon the inland ice of Greenland; but I will say this, that a more terrific shock than that with which I was seized when I felt for the first time a pair of ice-cold paws planted upon me I have never experienced.

In the evening, when supper is over, some hunters may be seen to take out needle and thread, setting to work to repair their clothes with an adroitness which even their wives could not surpass.

It is only in the winter and early in the spring that the Esquimau builds himself snow-huts, when he has to put up for the night in some desolate region. When the spring is more advanced, or in summer-time, he sleeps either in a skin tent, or out in the open air, just as he is. In the latter case he flings himself down upon a patch of moss, pulls both arms out of the sleeves of his outer garment, and, folding them across his chest, soon drops off into the snoring sleep of the just.

Often, when on his sledge travels, the Esquimau has to cover long stretches of country

where the sea ice is here and there unsafe, or broken into fragments. It is then he exhibits his full power, handling his wild team with exquisite skill up and down steep glens, dangerous glaciers, and awful moraines.

On the other hand, I once, with Kolotengua, descended a steep glacier in the most easy manner imaginable. We had been away for more than a month on our sledge journey in Melville Bay, and, in order to shorten the road homeward, we had chosen a route across a broad tongue of land surmounted by a grand snow dome. For our descent we selected a valley down which a tongue of the glacier extended almost to the sea ice. Kolotengua was inspired with a desperate longing to be back in the arms of his young wife, and found it both too tedious and too slow to check the speed down the long inclines with his brake. So he let loose the dogs, and, mounting the sledge astride, endeavoured to make me follow his example. At first I hesitated a little, but, seeing that it promised some amusement, I finally gave way. Little use would it

be for me to attempt a description of the speed with which we shot downwards over the glassy surface of that glacier, now and then rushing through loose snow-drifts that threw up clouds of diamond dust about us. The sensation was similar to that which an aeronaut must feel when a balloon suddenly collapses, and he finds himself tumbling downwards towards the house-roofs of a town far below. We were, I think, as much in the air during that descent as we were upon the sledge, only occasionally thumping down upon the latter "to draw breath." No time, however, was saved by this aerial flight; for no sooner had we stopped, close to the brink of the sea-ice, than we had immediately to ascend that long incline again in search of lost objects, such as a knife, a stone pot, a mitten, and other things which had fallen abroad.

It is interesting to observe how the Esquimau economises time when he finds himself face to face with those long open lanes and canals in the ice which can only be rounded with the greatest difficulty. In this case some drifting

block-ice, which can always be discovered close at hand, is made to answer all the purposes of a raft; but when the lane is so narrow that the sledge can reach from one side to the other the native releases the dogs, allowing them to jump or swim across, and they will wait for him in the most docile manner, while, holding fast to the steering arms of the sledge, he swings himself across on their tracks. During such manœuvres as these one sees proofs of the rare hardiness of the Esquimaux; for even if they fall into the water—which, however, does not often happen in winter-time, owing to the great thickness of the ice—the accident is not looked upon as in any way a serious matter, though swim they cannot, and frozen they certainly will be.

In February 1892 a man named Tavenoe had the ill luck to fall into the water. He was pulled out by his comrade, wet to the skin, and the day was intensely cold. Though his home was within sight he would not return to it, but calmly continued his journey as if nothing had happened. By the time we had reached our

quarters in the evening his clothes were dry, at least on the inside, and he was smiling as complaisantly as ever.

But if it may be said of the North Greenland Esquimaux that hardiness and toughness are their characteristics, the same remark applies in even a higher degree to their faithful dogs. The fatigue and the privation that they can endure really borders upon the incredible. Their appearance reminds one not a little of the Norwegian Finn dog, though their hair is longer, their build more elastic, and their general appearance handsomer. So great is their strength that a man on level ground has the utmost difficulty in holding in check two or three dogs, if they take it into their heads to be obstreperous —provided, of course, he has no whip to cow them with. North Greenland dogs vary in colour, the commonest being grey, white-spotted, and black. There is usually a round, light patch over the eyebrows. Dogs entirely white may frequently be seen, and I believe that these, could a comparison be instituted, would be found almost exactly to resemble the Arctic

wolves found principally in the islands north of America.

It is true that the Esquimau dog, as a rule, carries his bushy tail curled neatly over his back, but there are some which, like the wolf, affect a sombre droop. Indeed, there can be scarcely any doubt that the breed of dogs we speak of, when still running wild in the northernmost woods that creep into the Arctic zone, was absolutely identical with the large species of wolves of the present day; while it is almost certain that since domestication they have not been crossed with other varieties.

Their food consists exclusively of raw meat and blood, varied with blubber, walrus skin, and all sorts of intestines. Water they only get in summer time, whilst the snow is melting, and hundreds of tiny brooks are met with all along every coast line. In winter, even after the most fatiguing work, they must be content to slake their thirst as best they can on the snow-covered ground. Even their food they do not get regularly every day, but on an average three times a week.

When it happens that there is a superabundant stock of meat at the settlement, they may be allowed to help themselves at pleasure; but at other times, especially during the winter, or on sledge journeys, they may have to go without a morsel for three or four days at a stretch. Yet they do not suffer so much as one would expect from this irregularity, having, with certain other animals, the capacity to take sufficient food at a single meal to last for a length of time. Except for the first few days of their existence they live perpetually in the open air. In the severest months of winter, and during the most violent gales, they suffer nothing at all from being without shelter, unless they chance to be snowed up.

In spite of the wild and irregular life of the Esquimau dog, it has gradually, during its service to man, acquired several intellectual qualities, characteristic of its more domesticated brother—such as affection, obedience, and faithfulness towards its master. In return, the Esquimau regards his dog in a spirit of the most touching devotion, though he seldom shows

his feelings by caresses or friendly words. On the contrary, when we first made his acquaintance during his drives, we could not help feeling that his conduct called for some reminder that the whip might be used with less zeal than he seemed to think generally necessary. But this is only at first. We soon learn that the continual use of the whip is as essential in driving Esquimaux dogs as the employment of reins, whip, and spurs is with horses.

The dogs are usually fastened to the fore part of the sledge with straps made from the skin of the *ugsuk*, which radiate from a common loop, so that they run alongside each other. The harness is of the most simple kind, answering its purpose admirably; it is made either of seal or bear-skin. The keenest of the dogs is allowed a somewhat longer strap than the others, allowing him to run as a shining example just in front of his comrades—a position the great responsibilities of which he seems fully to understand.

That there is no lack of intelligence in the Esquimau dog, is especially apparent in their

capacity as thieves. It is exclusively eatables that they steal, including their own harness, as well as their master's tent, his trousers, foot-coverings, and shirts, to say nothing of the lashings of the sledge, and a host of other articles made of skin; so that their owners have their patience perpetually put to the proof—an ordeal which would certainly cause any unpractised Southerner to explode with rage.

I have seen an Esquimau awake to find the hairs of his reindeer-coat scattered to the four winds outside his hut, and the greater part of the skin devoured; but all the anger he could conjure up against the culprit exploded in a muttered "Naav-ajo-tupilaleksjosjo-sinapadujo-takko," or "Look! did you ever see such a miserable fool?" After which the "miserable fool" was again tied to the stone slab from which he had escaped. And then, again, I have seen two sons of the higher civilisation wake up to find their mittens torn to pieces, and lying half-eaten on the snow beside their couch. One of them resorted to the natural relief of swearing, so that lightning seemed

to flash before the eyes of his companion; but the other, who was of graver sort, clutched the heavy whip-handle, seized the dog he judged to be most to blame, and beat it across its lean backbone until the weapon broke into splinters lengthwise and across.

Once I felt constrained to suggest to a native that a little thrashing would be beneficial: it was when one of his dogs had stolen the last little bit of lamp blubber from under the very nose of the man's wife; but I shall never forget the answer that I received. It was himself, he said, who deserved the thrashing, for not having obtained sufficient food for the dog. It is a fact that so long as the dogs are well fed they are not inclined to get into mischief, or to resort to robbery; and when this is borne in mind one can never bear to punish them if occasionally they think of themselves after every one else has forgotten them.

Dogs, I have said, will often eat their pulling straps; but as these are extremely tough to gnaw asunder, they usually go down their throats in pieces of considerable length. During our

last winter's residence, one of the members of the expedition happened to go out one dark afternoon, and caught sight of a dog, among the half-hundred that we had at the time, on the point of devouring his harness. He approached the animal, and, hoping to save the little scrap that was still visible, at which the dog was busily chewing, he attempted to pull it away; but he was considerably surprised as he gradually pulled from the throat of that dog yard after yard of line, until at length he found himself in possession of more than three yards of strap, which was still fit for use, even if it had suffered in appearance. Needless to say, that remarkable relic had to pass from man to man, and finally found a place on the walls of our hut as a curiosity.

When a crowd of dogs are together they must be kept under constant supervision, even though securely tied, for only thus is it possible to escape being robbed and plundered. If, in such circumstances, one quietly goes to sleep, there will often arise quite a competition among the smaller animals as to who will be

the first to break loose and to commit some daring offence. Certainly there are always dogs, particularly among the males, who would never lower themselves by making an attempt to escape; but they cannot resist a violent attack of jealousy when they first perceive some of their less honourable comrades making tracks towards their master's larder. They howl and growl unceasingly in a peculiarly irritating manner, that cannot be mistaken when once one has learnt to know its meaning. Added to the noise of the more moral spectators, there is heard an unholy uproar accompanying the free fight that immediately commences among the thieves themselves, when one or other of them considers himself neglected during that harvest of forbidden fruit, or excluded from the spoil. Thus the rebellion is easily detected, and the sleeping masters may possibly arise in time to prevent any serious damage.

Given the chance of continuing their thievish designs, they are not to be stopped by trifles. Stones piled upon the meat stores are easily thrown upon one side with their noses. Nailed-

up cases they tackle with their teeth, seeming to divine exactly the weakest points; wire is severed, rope torn to atoms; indeed their depredations are worse than those of many two-legged criminals. Only if they chance to hit upon a cask of biscuits one may feel perfectly secure from fear of burglary; for though they will eat the soles of boots with keen relish, they would never stoop so low as to bite into one of those hard dry objects which people call "ship-bread."

At home, when we hear the dismal howls of a dog piercing the stillness of the night, we take it as a sure sign that his heart is heavy with sorrow or trouble. Not so in North Greenland. While at our last winter quarter, where we had frequently more than a hundred dogs together, we learnt beyond doubt that these howls were indeed the outcome of joy and gladness; in fact, that these utterances were their songs. As choristers indeed they shone, but their concerts were never held save in moments of glee, after a sumptuous meal perhaps, or after a good night's rest and sleep. To bring the whole chorus up to the scratch it was necessary that one of the

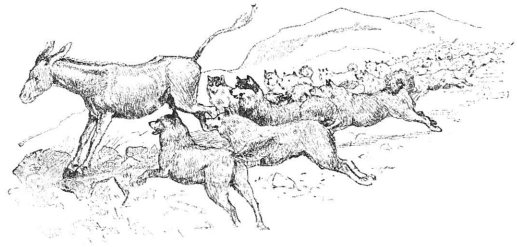
company, by preference an elderly gentleman of repute and distinction, should start a long "o-au o-au o-au o-au o-au." If, on the contrary, a young swell attempted to boss the concert, it generally ended in a complete fiasco. He would utter a faint howl or two, and would at best receive an answer from some other volunteer, after which he would drop the attempt and collapse into bashful silence.

The noise of a chorus of some fifty dogs baying in unison cannot fail to create an impression upon the listener who has no musical ear. Upon those who happen to be musical the effect is so genuinely comical that they can hardly help laughing at the serious countenance of the orchestra leader; for amidst the general uproar one seems to distinguish tremulous or bass tones of old fellows, shrill notes of spinsters, or of those whose voices are cracking; and as one feels that each performer corresponds in some sort to those of whose voices one is reminded, it is easy to understand how amusing and unique such an *opéra comique* becomes. In August 1893, during just such a concert as this,

in which more than eighty dogs took part, our two St. Bernards, as usual, forming a silent and appreciative audience, it chanced that one of the four surviving asses belonging to the expedition suddenly appeared amidst the orchestra and struck in with all his energy. This unexpected blast had quite a magical effect. For a moment there was a deathlike stillness, and then such tumult arose that the performance was at once postponed. Here at last was the opportunity of silencing this impostor. All the dogs were loose, and with a single purpose they turned upon the poor brute, who, with one short abortive trumpet-blow, set off, the whole array close upon his heels, at thirty miles an hour. In the wake two of us who had witnessed the whole scene ran to see the end. Down the hill in front of the house went the entire cavalcade, stones spurting in all directions. Then up another hill, never checking speed except for a flying kick at some aggressive dog. The race continued across a flat piece of ground behind the house, until, struck with a bright idea, the donkey took a sharp turn to the right,

and bolted through the stable-door. In another moment the poor creature was out of danger. A few nights later, however, another and smaller of our long-eared companions was so badly bitten by the dogs that we were compelled to shoot it—a case, no doubt, of mistaken identity.

It is most amusing to watch an Esquimau



THE DONKEY AND THE DOGS.

feeding his dog. He cuts the meat into pieces about the size of a man's fist, stacks the whole upon a tray, and takes up his position in front of the spot where the dogs are tied up. But not until they are quietly ranged before him with their eyes fixed on the meat does he venture to begin feeding them. Otherwise it would be quite impossible to see that each dog received

its ration, the weak as well as the strong. Piece after piece is adroitly caught in the air by one dog after another, as the turn of each comes. When it happens that the various dogs in a team are old acquaintances, and accustomed to being fed together, the whole performance may pass off quite peaceably; but more often the meal developes into a ferocious fight. On the whole the Esquimau dog is inclined to be pugnacious. The best of friends fight for amusement, pull hair-tufts from each other in the most pleasant manner possible, howl a bit, and go off to fight another friend. But it is very different when two strange dog-teams by chance or negligence come within touch of one another. Then not only hair-tufts whirl into the air, but very soon the trampled snow is stained crimson.

Characteristic of these Esquimaux dogs is the fact that each team has its king, who is not always the strongest, but the most skilled and unscrupulous bully among them, one whose tyrannical fancies no one is daring enough to oppose; so when two strange teams meet a

single combat as a matter of course ensues between the two kings, although at the same time a fight is valiantly carried on in the lower ranks, to settle once and for all the vexed question of the future position of each individual. Only when the results of all these fights have been settled, does a proper balance of power exist within the small community. The conquered king is like a crushed and ruined man: the tail, once carried so proudly over his back, now droops dejectedly between his legs; the proud head is bent, the eyes look askance at every movement of the hated victor. Meanwhile the conqueror stalks among his comrades, bursting with inflated vanity.

The Greenland dogs are subject to a disease which carries them off in great numbers year by year, and even threatens to exterminate the species, if one may believe the reports of the natives. An attack is manifested first by a loss of appetite. The dog grows more and more ill-tempered, until it will bite even its own master, and finally runs mad. The exact cause of the disease medical skill has as yet

failed to determine, but it is noteworthy that it occurs in the cold season only, and seldom before the winter solstice, when darkness prevails, or after the March equinox, when the sun first begins to renew its light and warmth. The disease also claims a large number of victims year by year among the foxes. That in some way or other the epidemic is connected with the protracted darkness, the intense cold, the lack of drinking water, and the continual consumption of snow and frozen meat, there can be little doubt. As a matter of course a disease with symptoms so closely resembling those of hydrophobia gave rise to considerable anxiety amongst us white folk, a couple of cases occurring among the dogs we had with us at Redcliffe House. We soon found, however, and this was confirmed by the natives, that a man bitten by a dog suffering from this disease runs no danger whatever. Since it is a matter of great importance to future Polar explorers who may purpose making use of the Esquimau dog on their sleighing expeditions to prevent the occurrence of this disease so far as may be possible,

I venture to express my conviction that this end may be accomplished by employing electric or other artificial light during the winter months, and providing some shelter for the dogs during severe weather; by insisting that all meat given to them should be in a thawed, and not in a frozen state; and, last but not least, that, by hook or crook, they should have an abundant supply of drinking water.

In North Greenland, a marriage between two dogs is often binding for life—a state of affairs worthy of imitation among flighty street dogs all the world over. At our winter quarters a number of the females were entitled "Mrs." If a dog is to have a litter in winter time, a retreat is found for her upon one of the side bunks in the hut, as close as possible to the spot where lamps are burning; and here she usually remains with her pups until the worst part of the winter is over. At short intervals she disappears into the cold and darkness, and licks snow from the ground, the need of water being considerable during the time of nursing. Nowhere else do pups meet with

such affection upon their entrance into this world as here, and nowhere do they receive such proofs of tender and genuine love during their puppyhood, as in the earth hut of the poor Esquimaux. The father of the house plays with them and christens them, the mother of the house makes handsome white neckties of bearskin for the dark-skinned little ones, while the children pat and caress them all day long. Perhaps during the course of spring they reach a size when their master may commence their training; and so, on a fine day, he fits each with a tiny set of harness, and takes them out, one or two at a time, for short drives in company with older animals. They soon learn the meaning of the different calls, and grow familiar with the whip, until their education is completed. Were it not for these remarkable animals, we should never have completed the journey which I shall describe in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

NORTHWARD ON THE GREENLAND INLAND ICE.

IN the spring of 1892 the sun, after an absence of nearly four months, had scarcely illuminated the sea-ice, the snow-mountains, and the glaciers around our small winter quarters, when life appeared once more outside our desolate hut. Out upon the hard snow-drifts skilful joiners were at work completing the *skis*, sledges, and the many other requisites for our intended journey to the interior. At last everything seemed ready for our start, and during April we were able to begin the transport of all the provisions and the outfit that we wanted during the journey from our winter quarters to the head of MacCormick Bay, a distance of more than twenty miles. For this work we used dogs recently purchased from the natives, and a couple of newly built sledges. When the various articles

were collected at the head of the bay, there still remained the task of removing the whole to the top of the inland ice, the nearest point of which was here about eighteen hundred feet above the level of the sea, and upwards of two miles from the coast. On April 30th Dr. Cook, Mr. Gibson and I, in company with five friendly Esquimaux, commenced this exceedingly fatiguing work; for the road, leading through heavy snow-drifts, and up steep stony inclines, compelled us to make each load a light one. In three days, however, we managed to accomplish the worst part of it, and were able to dismiss our Esquimaux friends, who were growing impatient. During the time thus occupied we had spent the nights in the open air, and so well were we protected by our skin coats that the cold (several degrees below zero) did not trouble us in the least. By May 3rd Mr. Peary arrived from the winter quarters, accompanied by Matt, and bringing with him the remainder of the dogs; and that same day we discovered, to our delight and surprise, that the long, unevenly-sloping mountain plateau which lay between us and the inland

ice was covered by a sufficiently-connected series of snow-drifts to enable us to use our sledges.

After two days more of hard work, in which we were much assisted by our twenty powerful dogs, we at last succeeded in getting the whole outfit pulled up to the very edge of the inland ice; but in spite of this encouragement all our troubles did not end here.

On the height, close to a projecting crag, we built a spacious snow-hut, the sky having by degrees assumed a more and more threatening aspect; and presently a snowstorm arose, but was at first not so severe as to prevent us making a temporary division of provisions and outfits upon the various sledges, and determining how many and what dogs each man was to have at his disposal. During this week Matt, who in the earlier part of the spring had been badly frost-bitten in the heel, but had recovered, began to complain of pains in the foot, so that Mr. Peary had to abandon the idea of taking him with us during the first part of the voyage; for Matt had, in the course of the spring, acquired no inconsiderable practice in the art of handling

the boisterous dogs. So he was sent back to Redcliffe House.

Our outfit was in many respects different from that of previous expeditions. Most of the articles of which it consisted, such as sledges, *skis*, sleeping-bags, and skin clothes, we had manufactured ourselves in the course of the winter and spring with materials brought from America, and were the outcome of rather extensive experience and practical trial. The first object we bore in mind was to make everything as light as possible, where this could be accomplished without sacrificing too much strength. We made in all eight sledges of four different types, although we scarcely expected to use half that number. Our sole object was to be prepared should the roads during spring and summer fail to come up to our expectations. Directly we had definitely ascertained the nature of the roads, we left behind the four superfluous sledges, of which one was flat-bottomed, another almost entirely of corrugated iron, and two others on runners with ivory shoeing. The four that remained were all of one type, suited for a long journey,

with flat ash runners, unprotected by any shoeing whatever. Of these the largest was thirteen feet in length and two feet wide, and was provided along the runners with upright supports six inches high; on the top of these rested the cross-beams, which together with some longitudinally running ash and bamboo sticks supported the load. The runners were four inches wide. Brackets of reindeer horn strengthened the somewhat obtuse angles between the side and cross-beams, and the various parts were knit together by sealskin thongs. The total weight was forty-eight pounds, and it was capable of carrying a load of a thousand pounds without overstraining. Another sledge was exactly of the same build, with the difference that it was two feet shorter, with runners three and a half inches in width. It weighed thirty-five pounds, and was calculated to carry a maximum weight of about eight hundred pounds. The third sledge, which I had made, was ten feet long and sixteen inches across; its runners were three inches wide, with uprights two inches high. Its weight was only thirteen pounds, in spite of which it carried

during the greater part of the voyage a load of four hundred pounds. Of all the sledges this one alone came back to the starting point.

During our journey the three Americans made exclusive use of the native snow-shoes, except that Mr. Peary for a short time adopted a pair of light skis. For my own part I used a pair of ash skis, nine feet long, of my own make, which lasted excellently during the whole journey, although towards the end of it they appeared to be pretty ripe for a new pair of soles. At the outset we carried with us as a reserve some light pine skis, but most of these were soon utilised in the service of the cook.

Our clothes were almost entirely made of skin, and were nearly of the same pattern as those of the natives. On the upper part of the body we wore a reindeer *koletah* with cape, or in calm weather a sealskin *netcha*. Our trousers, reaching to the knee, all differed from one another with regard to the material used. Those of Mr. Peary were of black and white dogskin, obtained shortly before our departure. They were joined together in such a manner that

they were white in front and jet black behind, with the relief of a white stripe across the centre. Dr. Cook had reindeer trousers, Mr. Gibson trousers of bearskin, whilst mine were of sealskin, which, as a matter of course, could not compete with the others in warmth. Upon the feet we wore sealskin *kamiks*, the stockings inside being either of reindeer skin or thick wool. For underwear we adopted woollen garments, covering the hands usually with woollen mittens, and a pair of sealskin gloves outside. Part of our equipment was, necessarily, a pair of snow spectacles, which were hardly taken off throughout the trip, the sun proving almost as embarrassing by night as by day.

Thus dressed, we were thoroughly protected against cold, and even the piercing winds of the ice desert were not able to trouble us much. And yet this dress, under-garments included, did not weigh more than fifteen pounds. In calm weather we wore upon the head a thin knitted skull-cap, throwing back the skin cape of the cloak. However, I often went bareheaded; for my hair, having grown to a great length,

afforded me all the protection that I wanted. But the moment the wind commenced sweeping, however lightly, about our ears, we wasted no time in burying our heads in the capes.

Our sleeping-bags, made of reindeer skins with the hair turned inwards, were surely the lightest and the warmest that had ever been used on a sledge expedition in the Arctic regions. They weighed ten or eleven pounds, were open at one end, and, once safely inside of one, the tenant could so lace the opening around his neck that only his head projected from the delightfully close envelope. The head, which during sleep was wrapped in the warm cape of the skin jacket, might with indifference be laid upon a snow block, a teapot, or any other article equally suitable for the enjoyment of a pleasant night's rest.

These sleeping-bags were of less importance to us than we expected, since we soon discovered that our dresses, supplemented merely with a pair of heavy sleeping-leggings, were sufficiently warm for all purposes. Moreover, this simple method had the advantage that if during our

camping time we were suddenly awakened by one of our dogs breaking loose, it was no longer necessary to crawl out of a warm sleeping-bag and struggle with one's *kamiks* before setting about the recapture of the animal. We took no tent with us, on account of the weight; and in calm weather, when the wind was not too strong, we always slept in the open air. In times of storm, or snow-falls, we had intended to take refuge in snow-huts built Esquimaux fashion—a plan, however, that was soon abandoned. They took too long to build, and our marches were so fatiguing that we slept with pleasure wherever we could find room to lie down. However, we hit, as will be seen, upon an effective and economical means of protecting ourselves against storm and snow.

A COMING BEAR-HUNTER.

Of instruments we took with us one theodolite, a pocket sextant with artificial horizon, several minimum and maximum thermometers, and common quicksilver and swing-thermometers, some aneroid barometers, one telescope, one anemometer, or instrument for registering the speed of the wind, various compasses, and three pocket thermometers. Several of these instruments were made of aluminium, and we were also provided with two specially constructed cameras of the Kodak type.

A hypsometer, manufactured by one of the first instrument-makers of New York, to be used along with the aneroid barometers in taking altitudes, proved to be so carelessly constructed, when tested before our sledge journey, that it was not even taken with us on the trip.

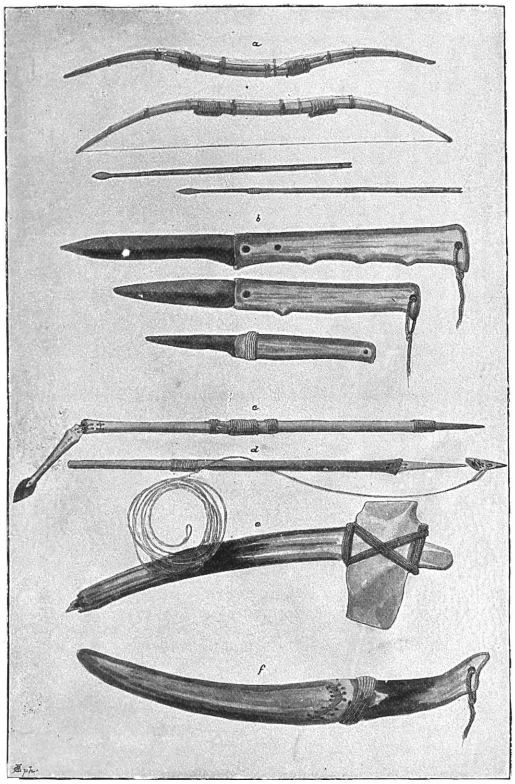
We had, besides, a Winchester repeating rifle, some ammunition, a small box of medicines, mostly in solid form, some tubes of vaseline, sewing materials, knives, and other small conveniences.

For the measurement of distance while travelling we employed a so-called odometer

wheel, a lightly-constructed wooden cycle, six feet in diameter, which was fixed behind one of the sledges. The axle was provided with an instrument upon which the number of revolutions made by the wheel might be read, and the distance covered thus easily calculated. We found this apparatus both practical and useful, and since it had never been previously employed on Arctic expeditions, I can safely recommend it for the use of future explorers.

Our cooking was accomplished by means of a small spirit lamp, that in the course of an hour's time enabled us to prepare scalding hot pea-soup enough for four men. Pemmican (*i.e.* dried and ground meat, mixed with melted tallow) was our chief nourishment during the whole journey. We had besides biscuits, some butter from which the salt had to be separated, Knorr's meal, condensed milk, and for luncheon powdered beef and chocolate. We found this diet satisfactory, and came to like it so much that even on our return to winter quarters we were glad to make a meal of it.

On the 8th of April we made an attempt to



ESQUIMAUX ARMS AND TOOLS.

a. Bow with and without string and arrows.
b. Knives with walrus handles.
c. Lance for walrus and bear.
d. Harpoon for sealing.
e. Stone axe with bone handle.
f. Snow knife of walrus tooth.

set out from our first camping-place on the inland ice; but the steepness of the ground, and the terrific force of snow drifting into our eyes, discouraged the dogs, and compelled us to give up. A little later, when the wind had fallen, we made a second attempt, and succeeded in moving part of the provisions almost a mile, in a slanting direction across the first of the three snow-domes forming that tongue of inland ice upon which we were at the time. Here, as the gale increased considerably, we constructed a new snow-hut. The snow at this point, however, was ill suited for work of the kind, and our structure was necessarily so small that it would hold only two of us, for which reason Mr. Peary and Mr. Gibson returned to our abandoned *iglu*. Now followed thirty-six long hours, during which in our different retreats we were kept completely imprisoned by the fury of the storm. Both the doctor and I slept like stones during the first ten hours of our captivity, and while we slept the wind had worked so diligently at our frail hut that leaks had started in more than one place, and in through these

there poured a smoke of fine snow-dust which slowly and treacherously in ever-increasing layers had buried our weary limbs. By the time we awoke we were half snowed up, and afterwards had to continually shift and wriggle in order to keep ourselves upon the top. When the gale at last ceased, and we were able to emerge from our retreat, a pitiful sight met our eyes. Our sledges were almost buried beneath the gigantic snow-drift. A couple of tins containing biscuits had disappeared, and had been swept down the steep incline into an inaccessible depression of the glacier. Half a score of our dogs, restless as these animals always are during a snow-storm, had broken loose by gnawing off either their straps or traces, while three were suffering from severe attacks of the already described "hydrophobia," and were already at the point of death. Things therefore looked extremely bad for us, since it was more than likely that the other dogs would perish by the same malady. Had this happened, our journey could never have been extended as it was.

Hungry as the loose dogs had naturally become

during their long fast, they had devoured every eatable which remained unburied by the snow. Happily this did not amount to much, since all our provisions were packed in hermetically-sealed tins, quite able to resist the teeth of any dog. The recapture of the runaways, who had hardly yet learnt to obey their new masters, was a task of great difficulty—nay, a trial so severe that our usually dauntless courage dropped below zero. Our method was to allure them towards us by scattering very small pieces of pemmican upon the snow. At the critical moment one had to make a sudden lunge at a dog's neck, and, holding the brute fast, press its nose down into the snow until the other could put on its harness. "When this was done, with that practice which experience quickly gave us," Lieutenant Peary writes, in a short description of our journey published in 1892, "we might escape without being bitten more than two or three times." With two of our dogs, however, this subterfuge was ineffectual. We had to catch them with double lassoes; and not till the two lines tightened, one upon each side, and one of

us with a powerful grip on the brute's neck had forced its head to the ground, was it possible for a fourth person to put on new harness or repair the old. Once the loose dogs had been captured, and the harness of the others dug out, we were in a position to think of advancing. First, however, the remaining part of the outfit had to be brought up from the other *iglu*, and taken forward in small loads. It was slow and depressing work, and occupied us for several days; but at last, on May 14th, we had left behind us the hollows and corresponding slopes—which fortunately proved free of fissures—and ahead the inland ice extended, spacious and smoothly-trending to the north-east, as it shone intensely in the strong crimson of the sun. From this time we made a habit of travelling by night, when the reflection of the sun's rays was least trying to our eyes, the daytime being devoted to sleep, and to the worship of the gods who presided over the cooking of tea and of pea soup.

We were then at an altitude of three thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea, and

about eleven miles from the head of MacCormick Bay. Four of our dogs had already died of "hydrophobia," so that we were left with sixteen out of the original twenty. The condemned sledges, and all other articles that were adjudged useless, were at this point abandoned, and late in the evening we set out with our whole outfit, which at the time weighed about eighteen hundred pounds, sledges included.

During the night we succeeded in advancing about six miles, a performance with which we were very well pleased, considering that the incline was still rather rough. Towards morning we encountered a fresh wind, which caused the snow to whirl about like smoke, but trouble us in our sleep it could not. The following entries in my diary, though brief, give a distinct impression of many characteristic aspects of our journeys through that snow-white desert.

"*Monday morning, May 16th,* 1892.—We did not start yesterday evening before eleven o'clock. The weather was thick, and the road heavy during the first couple of hours; the sky clearing afterwards, we soon found ourselves in

bright sunshine. Camped at seven o'clock this morning, having advanced six miles. Before turning into the sleeping-bags we had a pleasant supper, or rather breakfast, consisting, besides the usual cup of pea-soup, of a piece of pemmican, and a large cup of scalding chocolate, famous food which I can safely recommend to any one."

"*Tuesday morning, May 17th.*— Yesterday again we started at eleven o'clock. The march was chiefly through loose snow, which, combined with the considerable incline, made the sledges run heavily. Towards midnight we lost sight of the last blue traces of the country to the south. The distant snow-domes of North Cumberland Island, moving as in restless waves behind the quivering snow-drifts close by, were the last landmarks we saw. At seven o'clock in the morning, after an advance of ten miles, we camped, apparently at the highest point between Inglefield Gulf and Kane Basin; in front of us the inland ice is sloping slowly, almost imperceptibly, downwards towards the north and north-east.

"Dr. Cook, who has a lucky gift of being

able to make good and useful things out of strange materials, proposed, directly we had camped here, to use a broken pine ski to light a blazing fire, promising to make us a dish that would put us all into good humour. And he kept his word; for seldom had any of us eaten a meal with more satisfaction or with greater delight than that. I may as well give the prescription. Put into a quart of hot pea-soup some bits of pemmican; should the pemmican be hard frozen it must be chopped into small pieces with an axe, so that it may melt quickly; the whole is stirred over the fire until a thick porridge is produced, which tastes well and is easily digested."

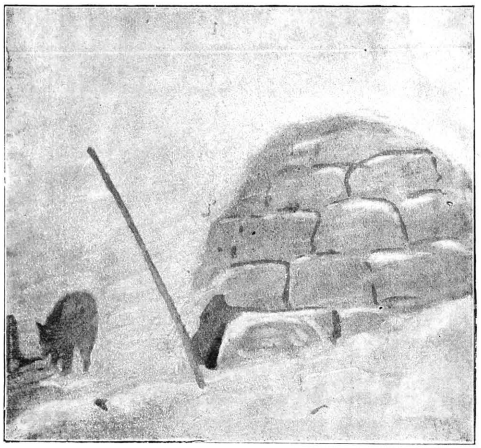
On May 18th and 19th we, for the first time, made somewhat longer marches, advancing on both days more than twenty miles. On the 20th we were compelled to camp earlier, after an advance of only ten miles, being overtaken during the march by a violent south-easterly wind thick with snow, which forced us to stop. We at once set about building a snow-hut; but such work requires time, and the wind was

ever increasing and the snow growing thicker. None too soon were we able to take refuge within the comfortable walls of the hut. The cooking apparatus was set agoing, our tongues loosened, and with pleasant gossip we beguiled away the hour; but by degrees conversation grew less spirited, and sleep lulled us into the realms of dreamland. Half-dozing, we listened to the gale outside, now rising to a thundering roar, now sinking to a low whisper.

For two days this wind kept us in the hut—an involuntary delay we should no doubt have appreciated more had we known that two months and a half were to elapse before we should again be under cover.

Not until May 22nd did the storm abate sufficiently to admit of our moving. Upon digging out the snowed-up sledges, we found to our vexation that six out of the ten small packets of sweetmeats we had with us, which represented the only luxuries in all the store of our provisions had disappeared, without leaving any clue as to their whereabouts. But the explanation was soon forthcoming: during the gale the dogs

had, as usual, taken advantage of the want of supervision, bitten through their traces, made a raid upon our sledges, and attacked the first edible



SNOW-HUT NEAR HUMBOLDT GLACIER DURING THE STORM OF MAY 20TH–22ND.

thing they came upon, which happened to be our sweetmeats. But the poor culprits had to suffer for it, for the strange tit-bits did not agree with them.

Meanwhile the gale had made the surface of

the snow as smooth as porcelain, so that, in spite of the roughness of the ground, we soon made up for the delay. The two next days we advanced more than forty miles, using neither snow-shoes nor ski.

On May 24th we were due east of the Humboldt Glacier, and were then two hundred and ten miles east of the shores of MacCormick Bay. Soon after the meal was finished Mr. Peary informed us that the moment had arrived when our small party must separate, and two of the members return to Redcliffe House. The fact was that the journey which lay before us promised to be a long one if its purpose—the determination of the northernmost limits of the continent of Greenland—was to be attained. Consequently it was necessary that we should travel quickly and carry provisions for a considerable period. As a dog can, on inland ice, draw a load of about a hundred and twenty-five pounds at a consumption of only one pound of pemmican per day, it was most desirable that we should have the largest possible number of dogs and the least possible number of persons. By such

an arrangement we should not only be able to carry provisions for a much longer time, but also to take with us a more complete outfit of scientific instruments.

Our full strength of dogs consisted then of sixteen animals, a number which might be managed by two persons with the practice we had already acquired; and so, for more reasons than one, the continuation of the journey by the whole party was not to be thought of. A party of three might have been more pleasant and safe in case of any accident; but it would have been unwise to send one man back to winter quarters from such an out-of-the-way place as we were then halting at. Mr. Peary now asked that the one of us who was willing to accompany him on his trip to the North Pole should volunteer. It appeared that all were ready to go with him. I was, however, selected for his companion.

We slept together in camp for the last time, turning out during the afternoon to commence at once the necessary arrangements for the provisioning of the party. Mr. Gibson and the doctor

took one of the smaller sledges, two of the dogs, and provisions for twelve days to last out the homeward journey. For ourselves we took the remaining dogs, fourteen in number, and the rest of the sledges, which we fastened behind one another with ropes. They contained in all a

A HOYDEN.

stock of provisions weighing twelve hundred pounds. The sledges were lashed, the dogs put to, and we were once more ready to move forward. There was a moment of hand-shaking, the whips cracked, and we were again on the road—Mr. Gibson and Dr. Cook southwards to Redcliffe House, and we two north-eastward to the far off unknown goal, the northernmost

cape of Greenland. There was a certain solemnity about this hour of separation, and it will be a long time, I think, before we shall all forget that moment when at midnight we slowly lost sight of each other in the midst of that desert of snow.

We succeeded in covering about four miles that night, and next morning camped, for the first time, a party of two.

"*Thursday morning, May 26th.*—We advanced to-night only four miles; the reason that we did not get farther was that one of the two large sledges went to pieces all along one side, at about eleven o'clock. There was nothing for it but to stop to repair the damage. Our reserve lines were taken out, our mittens were pulled off, and for two hours we were busy lashing our two largest sledges together, which in this way became one with three runners. During the whole operation a bitterly cold wind was blowing, compelling us to warm our numbed hands as best we could. At last, however, we were ready to continue on our way, though on three nights we made the poor progress of

fifteen, five, and ten miles, the snow being deep and loose, and the road heavy.

"On May 28th we shot our first dog. As the stock of provisions decreased, making the sledge lighter, we could afford to reduce their number, thus saving provisions and providing fresh food for the other dogs. After a time we became quite clever at skinning and quartering dogs, though it was never a pleasant occupation; while it was with sore hearts that we parted one by one with these faithful friends.

"At first only a few of them cared for the flesh of their companions; but later on, as hunger became more pressing, they began to learn the value of such excellent food.

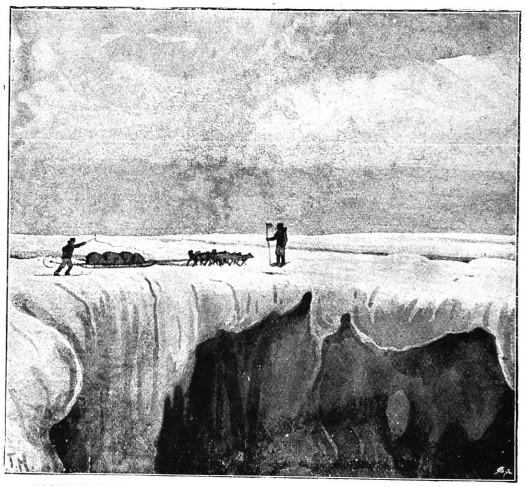
"*Monday morning, May 30th.*—We have still loose snow and heavy roads to contend with; last night, owing to a slight downward slope in our course, the odometer, to our surprise, indicated fifteen miles after ten hours' march. Land was sighted at four o'clock this morning towards the north-west. We have at present bright sunshine, but, as usual, a sharp breeze from the interior, which makes the fine snow-dust whirl

high above us; it is disagreeable, for it penetrates everywhere, and is melted by the warmth of the body.

"*Tuesday morning, May 31st.*—To-day was a great success: shortly after midnight we came upon fine roads of hard-packed snow, and, stopping at six o'clock, we had covered fully twenty miles. The sharp weather continues, and keen wind; to the north and north-east snow-covered mountain plateaux are visible in the distance. It is probably the region round the Petermann Fjord.

"*Wednesday morning, June 1st.*—We have gone forward only a short distance after breaking up our camp, when suddenly we come in view of the full extent of the Petermann Fjord. Through the transparent air, where steep mountain sides form a gigantic gate, we can see Hall Basin, lying considerably to the north of latitude 81°. Still farther north we see the inland ice, stretching in the dim rays of the midnight sun as far as eye can reach. We stop early, checked in our course by formidable fissures in the ice.

"From the camp we now took bearings of some land-tracks, and made some astronomical observations. The temperature in the sun at



PASSAGE OVER THE CREVASSE NEAR SHERARD-OSBORNE FJORD.

noon is seventy-seven degrees Fahr. In the shade at the same time it is only twenty-three degrees, and not a breath of wind is felt."

"*Thursday morning, June 2nd.*—Left Petermann Camp last night, but in order to avoid

the fissures, some of which were of great width, we had to change our course from north-east to east, in which direction we proceeded during the whole of our last march of ten miles.

"*Friday morning, June 3rd.*—Set out again at six o'clock last night; continued for ten and a half hours uninterruptedly, except for a short rest at midnight. Advanced altogether according to the odometer twenty-one miles. The weather is still brilliant. To-day we slaughtered a second dog, dividing it among the others. In a few moments it was consumed. We have now twelve left."

During the night of the 4th the road was heavy with deep loose snow, so we only covered about ten miles. Next day, however, the conditions improved, so that, in spite of an upward gradient of seven hundred feet from the beginning to the end of the journey we put fifteen miles to our credit. According to the aneroid barometer we were then at an altitude of 5500 feet above sea level. During the first half of the next march we rose still higher, reaching at midnight 6000 feet,

when we once more began to descend. We advanced about eighteen miles; but the next stage was a very short one, amounting to a little over ten miles, as we were detained for some time at our last camping-place, taking observations.

During the following night we still descended, with a strong southerly wind blowing at our backs, and succeeded in advancing twenty miles in less than ten hours. During the next day's march we came in sight of the Greenland coast mountains, after having been more than a week on the "open sea." The last portion of the journey had been over glassy ice-fields, sloping steeply to the north and north-east.

During the morning's halt we had been caught in a trap from which it was to cost us several days' labour to escape. On the night of June 9th the southerly wind had increased to a strong gale with an accompanying snowstorm, so that there was nothing for it but to remain patiently under cover of a light tarpaulin that we had brought with us, raised somewhat in the middle by means of a pair of snow-shoes.

This improvised sleeping berth was anything but water-tight. We had repeatedly to get up to sweep the snow in great masses from our skins, and to save our small cooking-vessels from being completely buried. However, by the night of June 10th the weather was once more clear and beautiful, and after taking some observations we determined to set out again. We had not been half an hour on the road before we found our course cut off from the north-east by large gaps in the ice, running eastwards inland from the glaciers at the head of the fjord to the north-west of us, which proved to be that of St. George. Those wide depressions were covered with ice that was free of snow, and shone like burnished steel, intersected by dark fissures in all directions. We saw now that we had approached dangerously near one of the gigantic glaciers of the coast-line, and that we were on the down grade of a deceptive hollow that it behoved us to give as wide a berth to as possible.

"It took two full days," Mr. Peary writes, "of the hardest and most depressing work of

the whole journey, to regain our position on the even snow-covered slopes towards the east, and during those two days we lost about sixteen miles of the advance towards the north we had gained so laboriously. Steep ice inclines which we had to work up with the raging wind in our faces were enough to exhaust our dogs, while Mr. Astrup and I suffered by continual falls upon the glassy ice-fields."

During this work Nalegaksuak, our best dog, and king of the whole team, strained a sinew of his leg, and became unfit for work. We let him walk behind the sledge for a day, when he disappeared: the poor animal probably became so exhausted that he could not keep up with us. We also lost an excellent telescope in a fissure, and only escaped losing another of our dogs by a hair's breadth. Quite suddenly Lion disappeared from the surface of the snow; and when we cautiously approached the spot where we had last seen him, we found the poor creature three yards below, hanging over a deep abyss, but fortunately in no great danger, since his trace gave no sign of breaking under the strain.

We got him up without delay, and, with his tail between his legs, he took his place again among his companions.

Even after reaching a height of six thousand feet we met with many large fissures in the ice, by which we were forced out of our north-east course. Not till the night of June 15th were we able to recommence our journey in that direction, advancing next day about sixteen miles. Throughout the day a strong south-west wind blew, accompanied by drifting snow. The heaviness of the road indicated that we were advancing too far into the interior, where the snow is as a rule heavier than on the coast. We were now 6300 feet above the sea, and Mr. Peary decided to steer directly northwards, in order to reach a lower level. We set a sail, but the wind was not strong enough to assist us much.

No sooner had we started than the big sledge went to pieces once more, delaying us for three hours for necessary repairs, and so when we halted at last we had made but little way, especially as we had been compelled to go

over much of the ground twice, as the latter part of the road had been too bad for the dogs to draw both sledges at once. The same day we killed another of our team, leaving only ten. During the next stage we had again to make two journeys with the sledges; and the following night we noticed a falcon hovering over our camp and finally disappearing to the east. We regarded this as an indication that Greenland, at the latitude we had then reached, could not be of any considerable width across.

"*Saturday morning, June 18th.*—We made no advance to-day, delayed by a S.W. gale with drifting snow, and for the first time a temperature so mild that the snow balled under the runners and the skis. After vainly trying for an hour to get the sledges along, the dogs finally refused to exert themselves any further, so we whiled away the time as best we could, sleeping, gossiping, and eating, beneath our tarpaulin, while every thread upon our bodies was wet through and through. Next night came; we were still unable to proceed, and passed the time in unloading and re-loading our sledges, dis-

carding every article that was not of the first importance. There was the sleeping bag, for instance, and a medicine chest which certainly did not weigh more than a couple of pounds; but by judicious discarding we managed to get rid of about seventy-five pounds weight in all.

"*Monday morning, June 20th.*—Last night we had clear weather, with eight to ten degrees of frost, but in spite of this we had to take the sledges by double journeys, although we did not spare ourselves in assisting the dogs. Our complete advance was less than seven miles."

Fortunately the road was far better the next night, and we had scarcely started when we sighted land, this time just in front of us. It was the coast of the real Sherard-Osborne Fjord. There was then no alternative but to deviate a second time from our course and to steer eastward. When, after fifteen miles, we stopped, a violent wind was blowing as usual near the coast, driving the drifting snow through the smallest openings in our dress.

"*Wednesday morning, June 22nd.*—We had moved on scarcely eight miles from our last

HEAVY GOING NEAR THE EIGHTY-SECOND DEGREE.

camp, when we found ourselves in such a labyrinth of crevasses that our easterly course was no longer possible. We were not disposed to retrace our steps, and therefore set to work to ascertain the strength of the snow-bridges which here and there span these tremendous rifts. We found them solid enough for our purpose, but had to content ourselves with a south-easterly course. Many of the fissures we passed that night were more than thirty yards in width, and scarcely one was less than fifteen yards.

"The dogs appeared to realise that there was some danger connected with the passage over these narrow banks, and hesitated before venturing upon them. But once they seemed to understand that there was no other road open, and that they had to go, they would set off at such speed that we had the utmost difficulty in keeping pace with them."

A couple of trivial accidents occurred during the march. Once it was two of our dogs that tumbled over a fissure; another time our hindmost sledge, containing all our biscuit and a considerable quantity of pemmican. By the greatest good fortune the sledge was caught and supported for a moment on an ice-ledge close to the brink, thus giving us time to haul it up, before it disappeared down the abyss. Owing to the many obstructions which we met with in forcing our passage across these fissures, our advance was extremely slow, but, by keeping on the move for the best part of twelve hours, we had the satisfaction of finding that the odometer registered sixteen miles.

During our next journey, when we covered eighteen miles, we were able to resume our north-easterly course, which we continued during the two following days. We had now reached a height of six thousand feet, and were cheered by bright sunshine and an absence of wind. The prospect of accomplishing our end now seemed more certain. Not only were all the difficulties apparently overcome, but we were still in possession of sufficient provisions to last for a considerable time, while all the dogs were in the very pink of condition. No wonder, then, that we were high-spirited. On the way I occasionally heard Mr. Peary whistle, though he was far from musical; while, for my part, I sang Norwegian ditties to the best of my ability, at which the dogs would turn their heads with a look of wise inquiry, as if to make sure that it was still a human being who accompanied them.

On the night of the 26th we again advanced over twenty miles. I remained up till noon to get an observation of latitude, being anxious to know how far north we were by this time.

The result was 81° 51′, which I immediately shouted to Mr. Peary.

During our course on the inland ice few superfluous words passed between us. We were usually content with thinking, and I admit that before falling asleep on those days I gave wings to my thoughts. Northwards they flew, past the nearest latitude, until they reached the 85th parallel, where in my imagination I had depicted the northernmost point of Greenland. Another week, and we should be there. "We must be there. If only the inland ice does not fail . . . does not stop . . . But then why did we push on so rapidly downwards to-day? Was it not because the "imperial highway," as Mr. Peary called it, was drawing to a close? . . . Are we really to live to penetrate farther northward than any other mortal? . . . Close to the very Pole itself? . . . And with such simple means. . . . There is sufficient strength and enthusiasm. . . . If only the blessed inland ice does not suddenly play us false!"

I lay for a long time wandering like this before I fell asleep. Arctic fever, so well known to

Polar explorers, had at last attacked me seriously. But life is full of bitter disappointments. Scarcely were we on the road that evening when, for the third time, we came in sight of land that barred our course. To the north-north-east we could trace distinctly the mouth of a fjord between the coast mountains. There was nothing for it but to skirt round this, and once more the course was changed eastwards. To make matters worse, the weather grew more boisterous, the air thickened with falling snow, we lost sight of land, and, finding that we were descending with great rapidity, Mr. Peary decided that it would be wiser to wait until the weather cleared. During the following days it seemed as if this fjord, Victoria Inlet, would never come to an end, and our suspicion that it formed a canal between the east and west coasts grew daily stronger. At last we noticed an opening in the high mountains to the north-east of us, and we felt more certain than ever that we had before us a canal dividing the wild landscape to the north from the true continent of Greenland.

It was useless to waste more time travelling

in a south-easterly direction, the main point being to ascertain whether the wide clefts that we saw ran out into the Arctic ocean, on the east coast of Greenland. This had to be looked into at once, and we accordingly shaped our course to the nearest land. We were by this time five thousand feet above the sea, but we found ourselves descending rapidly as we approached the mysterious edge of this wonderful red-brown mountain range. During our hurried march, Mr. Peary, who had recently become proficient in the use of the ski, had the bad luck to break one. The slope of the ice was now so tremendous that we had to descend diagonally, to prevent the sledges from running away from us. So deceptive were distances in these surroundings, and in the wonderfully transparent air, that while still a mile and a half from the coast-land we were both of us under the delusion that it was within a stone's throw.

Before long we were able to make out on the fringe of the snow-masses below us small inlets with their green icy water, and the glacier brooks with their cascades, from which came up a

subdued and monotonous murmur, which made soft and pleasant music to our ears, tired with the everlasting silence. Though it seemed to take a long while, we came by degrees nearer and nearer to the dark headland, which reared itself above the surrounding ice. It was this that we had chosen for our goal, and it was here that, after two months of unceasing ski and snow-shoe running, we at last set foot once more upon dry land.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE WAY TO NEW COASTS.

IT was about midnight when we reached the moraine, situated at a height of nearly four thousand feet above the sea-level. A couple of snow sparrows greeted us with their merry twitter, and amongst the large round stones with which the ground was covered we stood listening to the welcome sound of running water, and did not long resist its invitation. Stretching ourselves at full length, we quenched our thirst to our hearts' content. Never had life appeared more beautiful.

Without any delay Mr. Peary set out across the mountain ranges nearest the inland ice, to get, if possible, an open view of the coast. Fifteen hours later he returned without having achieved his purpose; but on the road he had discovered something that quickened the sporting blood in our veins—fresh traces of musk oxen. On the

following morning, Sunday, July 3rd, when we prepared for a four days' journey on foot, there was no fear of forgetting either rifle or ammunition. Our outfit consisted further of the theodolite, some thermometers and barometers, photographic and cooking apparatus, and provisions for four days. We set out, each carrying his own bundle, Mr. Peary in front, and I behind him with the dog-team of seven. The sledges and the remaining outfit were left high up among the dark heaps of stone. For the first part of the journey, perhaps about half a mile, we went down an easy slope covered with a wet snow sludge intersected by numerous brooks. Then we crossed the second moraine, rushing at a furious rate down a very steep ice hill for some sixty or seventy yards; at its foot we waded across a rapid glacier river, and were at last upon the coast-land—a rocky region covered with loose sharp stone blocks scattered broadcast in the wildest disorder.

Up and down, across valleys and ridges, along rushing rivulets, and through small dark lakes, we toiled the livelong day; and every-

where we met with the same endless masses of loose sharp stones, that made the march, clad as we were in thin-soled sealskin *kamiks*, a pilgrimage of pain. We did our best to correct this by putting all sorts of things between our feet and the soles of our boots, such as a knitted skull-cap, mittens, even moss, and later on making use of some musk-ox skin; but we gained little by our trouble, except this—that our wet and elastic *kamiks* widened into unshapely skin bags, and our feet, in full sympathy, reached dimensions reminding us of the flippers of a walrus. During this stage we collected several minerals, and some flowers, red, yellow, and white, which here and there gave a touch of bright colour to the sombre landscape. More than once we came across fresh traces of the musk-ox. After twelve hours' continuous course we halted, sore-footed and exhausted, and almost before we had

PEARY'S KAMIKS.

finished our slender meal of pemmican and biscuits were asleep.

The next day, July 4th, the American Independence Day, was a festival with us. About an hour after starting we reached the summit of a steep crag about four thousand feet high; and it was from this point that we first saw the sea far away to the north-west, covered by a glistening white carpet. We had reached the east coast. But it was only a glimpse that we obtained of what we hoped would be near us, and so we again pushed onward. Our way now lay across steep and stony inclines for a couple of hours, when our travelling came to a sudden end for the day. Right before us, at a distance of about half a mile, we discerned something that arrested our whole attention. A joyful cry of surprise escaped from us both, as we simultaneously pointed forward at two black specks that seemed to drift across a rough stretch of land. They were musk-oxen.

Now followed a small pantomimic scene, which resulted in Mr. Peary pursuing them with a rifle, whilst I had hurriedly to find a safe hiding-

place for our seven dogs, which were not on any account to get scent of our precious game. It was not long before Mr. Peary disappeared down one

MUSK COW WITH CALF.

side of the steep watercourse, while I remained at a point where its channel made a sharp turn. I sat down listening anxiously, and soon

heard four quick reports from the rifle, which only served to increase my excitement. At last the tall figure of Mr. Peary appeared on the brow above me. He waved, and gesticulated, and laughed, so that I at once knew what was the matter—fresh meat! In a couple of leaps I was by his side, the dogs with me, and together we hurried off to the spot where our prize was outstretched.

In a kind of marsh covered with loose stones, where some scattered moss, rank grass, and a few flowers were growing, the animals had been grazing when they were surprised by Mr. Peary. The bag consisted of two grown-up cows and two calves. Three of them were killed, the smaller of the young ones, a little long-legged calf, being still alive and vainly trying with its faint lowing to implore protection from its lifeless mother. Having securely fastened our dogs to some large stones, we quickly approached the dark, long-haired, savage-looking beasts. The two larger animals were the size of a two-year-old cow, and their black hair was of such a length that it would touch the ground when they stood erect.

The head was large—out of all proportion to the body; and this, in connection with the thick curved horns, and the face half-hidden by the shaggy mane, gave them an appearance at once wild and alarming. Our first thought was to take photographs of them in various positions. We then set to work to skin them, and, having finished this in the course of a few hours, we started out to find our baby calf, but fright had already killed the poor creature.

As a matter of course, there had now to be a great feast and celebration of the event for ourselves and for our dogs, and we started preparations at once. One of us set the cooking apparatus at work in a snug place, the other, in the meantime, cutting quite a large quantity of appetising slices from the best conditioned carcase, which were served upon a mighty sand-stone from a heap close by. Then followed such a feast as none but hungry hunters could appreciate, and a few cups of tea, with a dash of milk obtained from one of the victims, brought to a fitting conclusion this memorable meal. Meanwhile we had by no means forgotten the work

of feeding the dogs, a function that took place earlier in the afternoon, and which has been described by Mr. Peary in the following words: "As soon as the hind-quarter was skinned, and cut away from the body, I seized it and ran towards the dogs. When I sighted them they were all asleep, exhausted by the heat and the fatigues of the journey. 'Miss Favenöe' was the first to notice me, proving, as usual, the most wideawake of the troop. She greeted my appearance with a bark of joy, which soon brought the sedate 'Lion' upon his legs, simultaneously arousing all the others. As soon as it dawned upon them that it was meat, fresh raw meat, that I was bringing them, the air resounded with their glad howls of expectation. Even 'Pau,' the latest appointed 'King,' even he, who during the last two days had shown unmistakable signs of being out of sorts, took up his usual threatening position, forcing his way to the front to secure the first and largest pieces. Some few moments later but two bones remained, one in possession of Pau,' the other carefully guarded by Lion. I now returned

to assist Mr. Astrup with the skinning. A couple of hours afterwards, when this work was completed, we took one of the carcases between us, carrying it down to the dogs. Again the same wild excitement followed. We stopped close to them, giving the big body a swing, so that it fell into the midst of the pack. When, some time afterwards, they had finished their meal, only the bones of the huge creature remained."

It was unusually late before we rested at last, tired out by the many adventures of the day, and rolled ourselves each in his long-haired hide of musk-cow. Robinson Crusoe and his adventures naturally haunted our minds. These fancies followed us into the realms of gentle sleep. Meanwhile a cold, raw night-mist rose from a glacier below us to the eastward, extending like a gossamer veil across the shrouded landscape. Only the midnight sun was on guard throughout that cool summer night. Red and brilliant, he moved majestic along the mountain plateau towards the north, throwing long cold shadows athwart the glowing

snow-fields of that inland ice, which swelled grandly towards the deep-blue southern sky.

Quite early the following morning the night-mist disappeared, and the day dawned with promise. On the point of preparing breakfast I caught sight of some musk-cattle grazing in our immediate neighbourhood—this time a troop of six. It was my turn to use the rifle, and off I went. Since we had no need for the meat of more than one, and not caring for unnecessary slaughter, I made up my mind to select a bull, if possible, as my target—which would naturally be of most interest, since both the animals killed by Mr. Peary the day before were cows; and it turned out as I had planned. When within range I fixed upon one with a pair of splendid horns upon his head, evidently a prince of the party, and at him I fired. The remaining five scampered off a couple of hundred feet or so at the report of the rifle, and then quietly resumed their grazing; my prize, however, tumbled to the ground mortally wounded. Having, at the moment, no time for closer inspection, I returned quite satisfied

to the camp. Our plan for the day was to reach a mountain some five miles distant, from the summit of which we expected to obtain excellent observations and photographs of the coast, returning to the camp before evening.

We took with us provisions for one meal only, a camera, a theodolite, the chronometers, and a few dogs. By nine o'clock we had reached the mountain top, and from a height of 3800 feet we obtained a magnificent, never-to-be-forgotten view. Mr. Peary christened the rock upon which we were standing "Navy Cliff"; it terminated towards the north in a steep mountain wall, continuing with but few interruptions to the verge of the sea-ice; and there below us, at its foot, a large bay opened out eastward, shut in by four rocky sides. How far inland this bay or fjord penetrated we could not determine with any certainty, for mountains in front of us barred the view to the north-east; but it is probable that it is connected with the large inlet on the west coast, called Victoria Inlet, forming with the latter a canal which separates those tracts of land

situated north of the eighty-second parallel from the proper continent of Greenland. At all events, it is certain that between those two fjords run continuous wide clefts bounded by mountain walls several thousand feet in height,

BY THE CAIRN ON NAVY CLIFF.

and the only question about which any doubt exists is whether the bottom of this depression is situated above or below sea-level. Looked upon geographically the latter alternative must be regarded as more probable. Further, we may presume with some certainty that the most northerly land-tracts are intersected by canals

that run in different directions, and form several separated islands. To the right, just beneath us, an imposing glacier more than fifteen miles in width was sloping down to the sea-ice in almost fan-shaped regularity.

On the opposite side of this large flood of ice another perpendicular mountain uprose far above that upon which we were standing, its height being nearly five thousand feet. This mountain plateau crowned by a projecting tongue of inland ice terminated in an abrupt and conspicuous headland to the north-west of us, at a distance of about sixteen miles from the Navy Cliff. To the north-west long red-brown mountain-chains rose boldly to their summits, perpendicular towards the top, and with sides sloping gently towards the ice-bound sea. We noticed a great resemblance between these coast mountains and those upon the eastern side of MacCormick Bay near Redcliffe House. A single lonely snow-dome crowned the central mass, while the heights on either hand were bare. Beyond these, and northward as far as the eye could reach, extended further steep

ranges, probably some two thousand feet high, completely free from snow at their summits, and also on their sunny slopes.

Why the northernmost coast of Greenland is not, like the countries of the eighty-second parallel, covered by perpetual snow and ice, is difficult to say. Most probably it is due to a combination of causes, such as a marked diminution of the rain- and snow-fall in these northerly parts of the Polar regions, and their comparatively low elevation above sea-level. Having for the time being feasted our eyes on the sublime scenery, we took up the theodolite and other instruments, and proceeded to make a series of astronomical observations to determine the bearings of the surrounding mountains and landmarks, afterwards employing the camera most diligently, and making copious entries in our sketch-books and diaries.

At last, having finished the more serious part of our work, we gathered some flowers, collected a few specimens of ore, and sat comfortably down on the mountain side in the burning sun to enjoy our meal, during which Mr. Peary

produced a small flask of whiskey, which he brought in case of possible illness, and we toasted the newly discovered inlet, christened "Independence" Bay, in honour of the National Festival of the United States, since it was on July 4th that we first looked down upon it. We built upon the spot a high cairn of stones, in the midst of which we planted a bottle containing a short narrative of our adventures on the journey northward. Then two silken flags which we carried with us were for a time unfurled in the fresh summer breeze, from a thin bamboo pole supported between stones.

In the afternoon we repacked the few things we had carried with us, and were ready to commence the home-journey; but before we left we turned to take one parting look across the new and attractive coasts before us. The ice covering the bay was apparently quite even. Far out in the midst of it we could discern dark shadows, formed no doubt by numerous water-pools, which in summer-time are constantly formed in places where the ice begins to melt. Numerous icebergs scattered over the plain bore

witness to the fact that the sea, even in these high latitudes, must be open for a short period of the summer.

We wondered whether we should encounter human beings, who might be living their contented life even so much farther north than the friends we had left upon the colder side of that ice-clad barrier. This was not impossible, for I feel sure the merry Esquimaux have passed over these parts with their strange caravans of sledges and dogs. Had we gained the east coast earlier in the year, when the snow was still filling the watercourses and converting them into practicable trails for the sledges, we might have searched for traces of such travellers; for we could then have reached the coast ice with an ample stock of provisions. As it was, however, it had only been with much trouble, and with a severe strain upon our energy, that we had succeeded in advancing the five-and-twenty miles to the Navy Cliff; and the worst part of the road was still before us—a descent from a height of four thousand feet to the level of the sea.

It was with heavy hearts that we turned our backs upon the north, leaving behind us this mysterious and northernmost area of the globe, when we actually stood upon the threshold; but having the consolation that our plans had been executed, our end gained, and the protracted labours of our expedition crowned with success.

By the evening we were again back in camp, and, after a solid meal, we went to have a look at our game, which had been left since the morning. My prize was a fine bull. I succeeded with great difficulty in cutting off his beautiful horns with my penknife, my purpose being to bear them back as trophies; but I might have saved myself all this trouble, for later they were left far away upon the inland ice, and may even at this moment be found north of the eighty-first parallel.

Before our start the next morning we allowed the dogs to feast on the remainder of the game, and not until their ravenous appetites were so completely satisfied that they turned away from their food with piteous lingering regret, did we

take the road. Presently we passed the skeleton of a musk-ox; and the fact that most of its ribs were broken, and scattered all around, as well as other indications, led us to believe that wolves were to be met with in those regions.

Later we saw traces of foxes and of hares, and caught sight of two ravens, several snipe, and some bumble bees, butterflies, and flies. The return journey up the moraine was not less fatiguing than the down-trip had been. Both Lieutenant Peary and I had filled our reindeer jackets with scraps of meat before rolling them up and flinging them across our shoulders. The four strongest dogs also carried about twenty pounds apiece, after the manner of pack-horses. In ordinary circumstances this experiment would never have succeeded; but the good animals were for the moment so well fed that the delicate morsels hanging and swaying about their shoulders had no powers to tempt them from the paths of strict virtue. It took us two days to regain our sledges, and on our arrival both we and the dogs were so sore-footed that it was quite out of the question to

go farther without a halt, and rest for at least twenty-four hours. Among the few preparations required for the journey, the large sledge with three runners was reduced to its original dimensions, we repaired our somewhat worn skin coats and trousers, patched up our *kamiks*, looked after the straps and lashings of the skis and snow-shoes, and were once more ready to traverse the snow-fields of the interior, and to defy its gales.

CHAPTER X.

HOMEWARD THROUGH THE CLOUDS.

IT was on the evening of July 8th that we commenced our journey homewards, looking with keen emotion for the last time upon those desolate, mysterious regions amidst which we had for six days spent such a memorable time. Never before had those solitary mountain plateaux and dark silent valleys been trodden by the foot of white men, nor could we guess how many years would elapse before they would again be visited by human beings. When we halted the following morning we had advanced ten miles in a south-westerly direction. The road was excellent; and on our next stage we considerably improved upon our record, the odometer this time reading twenty miles, while the barometer showed a rise of thirteen hundred feet.

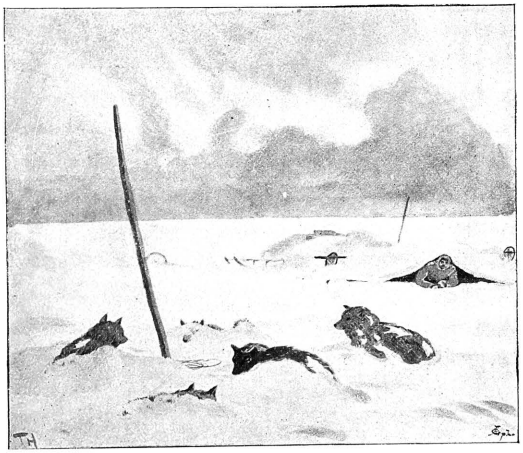
By the next night we had mounted a further thousand feet in little more than nineteen miles,

and finally six hundred feet in eighteen miles. At the end of this last stage we were compelled to shoot the weakest of our seven surviving dogs. That we were ultimately to end in the clouds was evident, for we were seven thousand three hundred feet high, and ahead the snow-fields were still rising. Strangely enough, the downward slope to the east from our camping places was considerably greater than to the north; from which we were led to believe that we were on the eastern side of the high plateau running parallel to the Greenland inland ice. Throughout the four first days of our homeward journey we had been favoured with the most brilliant weather, but the glory of this we were now to leave behind for a long time.

Upon the evening of July 12th we were awakened to find a terrific snowstorm upon us—a snowstorm more violent than anything we had experienced since our sojourn at the Humboldt Glacier. To go forward was out of the question; we had no choice but to remain where we were: Mr. Peary to leeward of the kitchen—a few snow-blocks covered by a small cotton sail

—and I underneath the tarpaulin, half-snowed up. It was useless to think of conversation; we had an occasional snatch of sleep, and occupied our time listening to the howling of the storm and the shrieks of the wind rushing from the interior of the plateau in its wild career down the slopes to the eastern coast. For two days and nights we were imprisoned by the fury of the weather, but as the gale still continued, we determined to defy it. Indeed, to us, accustomed as we were to stages of from ten to twelve hours, it was a trial to remain inactive. We turned out at seven o'clock in the evening, at a moment when the weather seemed to mend; and while Mr. Peary was at work digging out the snowed-up sledges I was busily engaged in loosening the Gordian knot presented by the pulling strap, after the restless tugging of the dogs during the gale. At eight o'clock we started, and the roads being by no means bad we succeeded in covering eighteen miles before it was found necessary to call a halt, because the storm had recommenced with all its former fury.

We noticed during the night that, on account of the height we had reached above the sea-level, we were passing constantly through dark



AFTER THE STORM.

and threatening clouds, and every now and then we found ourselves enveloped in an impenetrable fog. This would clear sometimes for a moment, but only long enough to give us a chance to consult our compass, without which, of course, we should have been utterly at a loss. Mr.

Peary speaks of this stage as one of the most depressing during the whole journey After our halting at lunch-time he writes: "I was compelled to change places with Mr. Astrup, undertaking the steering of the dogs, that I might have something to occupy my thoughts; the monotony of moving ever forwards towards nothing was no longer bearable."

From this day we would often change places, and I would walk ahead giving the course, while Mr. Peary ran beside the sledges encouraging the dogs on those rare occasions when such encouragement was necessary. I am inclined to think that this slight variation in our daily life on that homeward journey saved us from succumbing to a state of mental apathy that might have induced most serious results.

Let me describe a day and night of our life on the inland ice as day and night were spent, month after month, with unfailing regularity.

It would be about five in the afternoon when, after a refreshing sleep, we first began to stir, and to exchange a few commonplaces about the time of day, the weather, and so forth.

When it was time to think of breakfast, one of us—we used to take turns—lighted the small spirit lamp and brewed the tea ; but it was first necessary to melt sufficient snow to provide the water, and as soon as the latter began to boil a tiny square of compressed tea was dropped gingerly into the steaming pot. To this condensed milk was added, and, owing to the liberal supply of sugar which the latter contained, no other sweetening was necessary. Breakfast was ready. Whoever had not undertaken the cooking was usually indulging in a late snooze, and had to be aroused.

The breakfast consisted of tea, six biscuits, from four to eight ounces of pemmican, a small frozen lump of unsalted butter, and, as a dessert, a cup, or half a cup of water, if the stock of spirit in the lamp permitted this luxury. Breakfast over, I would undertake the packing of the sledge, while Mr. Peary released the dogs from an ash pole rammed into the snow close by, arranged the straps, and hitched the animals to the sledge.

It was impossible to prevent the dogs during

the interval from making a wild raid in the direction of the little depression in the snow made by the kitchen, in search of remnants, consisting usually of soaked tea-leaves, and paper used in wrapping them. It was amusing to see Mr. Peary's tall figure dragged away with seven-league steps to this attractive spot, where a free fight was raging. Evening after evening the race was repeated, although the result was a foregone conclusion. Little Miss Favenöe, whose straps were the longest, got the tea-leaves, but gentle Panikpa secured the paper; the remainder of the pack got a thrashing from Pau, whose royal temper at being always cheated of the aforesaid delicacies was justly aroused.

At seven o'clock we were ready to move; the barometer, the thermometer, and odometer were read, and Mr. Peary would set out a short distance ahead of the sledge enticing the dogs forward, I, in the meantime, working the whip, until, in a fortunate moment, all the traces were tightened together. A little energy on my part, accompanied by a sudden pull at the front part of the sledge, put the load of nearly a

thousand pounds in motion. A moment afterwards the line to which the light sledge behind was attached grew taut, the whip cracked again, and the caravan was under way.

A few minutes before midnight we stopped to compare the chronometers, and the readings of the temperature, of the odometer and barometer were recorded. We seized this opportunity to partake of a frugal luncheon, consisting either of a piece of pemmican pure and simple, or of a few small plates of sustaining compound of meat and chocolate. Then we looked after the dog-straps, chatted upon any subject that occurred, such as the sledge, the dogs, the road, until the night-wind blowing from the interior began to play about our faces, our feet turned cold, and for very comfort we were driven to start out once more. Altogether our halt would not occupy more than half an hour.

The march before midnight was tedious enough, and afterwards it did not improve. Conversation was impossible, the distance between us being too great; and we had to

content ourselves with speculating in how short a time we should develop into true philosophers. All those burning questions which before our departure from civilisation were consuming the minds of mankind we carefully considered—nay, immediately settled. Future plans were conceived, castles in the air were built, periods of life long left behind reviewed, happenings at home recalled, and the time we had spent at school became a vivid and absorbing picture. The whole course of our imagination ran riot. Dead people were pulled out of their graves in order to renew half-forgotten acquaintances, beautiful melodies were mal-treated, whilst all the young ladies for whom one might have felt some attraction from the age of seven and upwards had to dance a fairy dance upon that Arctic snow. But at last the brain struck work, fresh thoughts refused to flow, originality was paralysed, all material was consumed, and the nightmare of emptiness possessed us.

It was during the home journey especially that this monotony seemed killing; for on the road northwards we had with each day ad-

vanced farther towards new and unknown regions. The expectation of what the future might bring forth, and the uncertainty as to where the end would be, so stimulated us that the terrors of the journey were wholly forgotten. But now it was different. We only knew that the road homeward was long, that it led across a cold and lifeless plain, where for weeks all our energy would be exhausted in the endeavour to cross it safely. A further drawback was the utter absence of all variation in the light of days and nights. It was one continuous weary day, during which the sun moved slowly and unceasingly on his cycle round the heavens, only now and then hidden by clouds of fantastic form, which through our blue goggles assumed a strangely heavy and gloomy character. The appearance of the inland ice on a beautiful day beneath the bright sunshine was grand and imposing. There were always two predominating colours, the infinite expanse of white snow, and the deep azure vault of the heavens above—a picture so unusual and yet so simple and so radiant that

it could never be forgotten in after life. On account of the absence of all life the effect in the long-run is inexpressibly fatiguing, and I still remember with what vivid delight, on our arrival at the East coast, I gazed upon the dark mountain ranges, which appeared to me like a smiling landscape.

Our stages usually lasted for ten to twelve hours; setting out at about seven in the evening, it would be about six the next morning before the end was reached. As on an average we made nearly two miles an hour, the entire distance would amount to about eighteen miles. We felt a particular satisfaction when we could register this distance, which corresponded to twenty thousand revolutions of our odometer wheel.

So soon as it was determined to camp, Mr. Peary, who was usually two hundred yards ahead of me with the dog-team, set to work sounding the snow here and there with a thin bamboo pole he always carried in his hand, persisting in this operation until he found a place where the snow was hard enough for us to

cut snow-blocks. When he stopped, he planted the bamboo pole at his side, and cried "Keima" (Esquimau for "This will do") at the top of his voice. At that the dogs would forget their fatigue for very joy, and set off at top speed until they came up with Mr. Peary, when they would throw themselves upon the ground to stretch their tired limbs at leisure. Once more all the instruments were read, the lashings loosened that bound the load upon the sledge, and the dogs tied up and fed each with a pound of pemmican. Whilst Mr. Peary was thus fully occupied, it was my business to set the "brick-work" of the kitchen, using my long hunting-knife for the purpose. The plan of construction was this:—

First a hole was made in the snow a foot and a half deep, and measuring eight feet by three. The blocks of snow thus obtained were employed in constructing a wall stretching across one end of the hollow, and half-way along its two sides. Upon the wall one or two skis were laid, across which was spread a small cotton sail kept in place by means of

snow weights. In the innermost recess of the shed thus formed was placed a "kitchen box," containing the day's rations of milk, tea, pea-meal, Liebig's meat extract, biscuits and pemmican, with two pannikins, two teaspoons, a dessert-spoon, a knife, a spirit-lamp, and a box of matches carefully wrapped in waterproof paper. Immediately the kitchen was ready the cook of the day lighted the lamp and set on the pea soup, the other usually making entries in his diary, or rubbing his cracked face with vaseline. This done, he would promptly fall asleep, only to be roused for a cup of steaming pea soup. With a feeling of growing contentment this and half a pound of pemmican would be consumed. Meanwhile the lamp was busily at work boiling water for our tea, which was soon ready. By this time our hunger was appeased, and, if not too much exhausted by the day's march, we would converse during the remainder of the meal, which consisted of six biscuits and a cup and a half of tea to each.

Thus finished our chief meal, and we would

succumb to that sense of comfort familiar to every lover of outdoor life after the demands of a fatiguing day. The cook now retired to his lair, the other disappeared beneath the tarpaulin, and soon the whole camp was fast asleep. One duty, however, fell to my share before I could retire. This was to tie each dog's nose with a strap, to prevent them from gnawing at their harness, a dodge we picked up from the Esquimaux during our stay with them the previous winter. If a dog, in spite of everything, succeeded in getting loose during our sleep, it was the duty of the cook to turn out from his comfortable quarters to effect the recapture. Such was our life, Sunday and work-day, week after week, without variation.

Neither of us being smokers, tobacco was never used during the journey. We took a minimum of sleep, the average not being more than seven hours: a hardship we endeavoured to correct without success, for we could not shorten our daily stages without damage to the whole enterprise; hot tea and pea soup we

were unable to forgo under any circumstances; the dogs had necessarily to be looked after, and repairs made; while to neglect our astronomical observations was impossible; and so we had to put up with loss of sleep.

We awoke on July 15th to discover a change to brilliantly clear weather with twelve degrees of frost. No time was lost in digging out the sledges and hitching up the dogs, but only too short a time did that beautiful sunshine last. Before one o'clock it was evident that a storm was brewing, and when at last we had advanced eighteen miles it was snowing and blowing violently, drifting masses of clouds every now and then enveloping us in a dense mist, which powdered upon man, dog, and sledge a coating of the finest crystal.

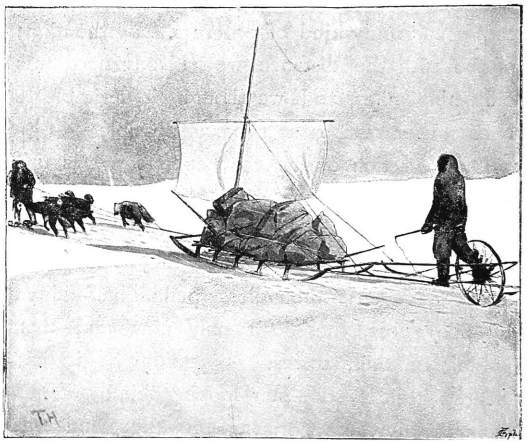
During the night of the 17th we were delayed by several accidents. After a march of fifteen miles we were compelled to kill a dog. We had now five left, all in excellent condition; and we could not doubt but that these would reach their homes again, unless, as Mr. Peary remarked reflectively, some utterly improbable occurrence

should compel us to eat them. We had now reached a height of eight thousand feet, and the road was gradually becoming so loose and heavy that it was only by putting forth our utmost strength to assist the dogs that we could make any kind of progress. By the night of the 18th the distance we had advanced was only nine miles, and we thought it desirable to reach lower regions as soon as possible.

Our direction during the next stage was due west, and as a strong south-easterly snowstorm attacked us in the rear, we rigged up a sail on the leading sledge, by which they were both swept across the boundless plain, half-hidden by fairy dust, the dogs only now and then pulling at their traces. By midnight it had cleared a little, the sun looking kindly at us from the northern horizon; but the wind was still strong, and the temperature at midnight was fourteen degrees Fahr. Though the wind had abated towards morning, there was still sufficient to fill the sail up to the moment when we halted. Throughout the next stage a strong gale with snow-fall raged, this time

from the west, and it was with the utmost difficulty that we could fight our way against it.

"*Thursday morning, July 21st.*—It seems as if July is a somewhat boisterous month here



SNOW-NAVIGATION.

upon the inland ice plateau. After a cloudy but otherwise fine night there are fresh indications of a storm, and it is now blowing heavily, with snow. In the course of eleven hours we advanced, however, the usual eighteen miles.

"*Friday morning, July 22nd.*—Thick weather when we started yesterday morning, and before midnight a furious snowstorm from the west was beating in our faces. The road became by degrees so heavy that we had to stop at the end of eight miles and a half.

"*Saturday morning, July 23rd.*—Weather overcast, with strong contrary winds. Our course continues almost due west, being still at the same altitude as of a week ago; and wishing to drop down to the slopes nearer the coast, where the road is harder and better, we left behind in the camp last night the large sledge, hoping to manage during the remainder of the journey with the small one, weighing only thirteen pounds. Advanced seventeen miles."

During the whole of the next night we were wrapped in dense sheets of cloud. The snow was even and loose, showing such slight traces of wind-marks that they could not be distinguished in the fog, and since we had not the least breath of air for our guide, it was impossible to keep our course without stopping

every few minutes to consult the compass. So after a few vain efforts there was nothing for it but to camp, and to await finer weather.

It is indeed a wonderful experience, that of travelling for hours across a snow plain wrapped in an impenetrable shroud of vapour. During previous stages, relying on the strong wind for a guide, we had been able to push on in spite of such hindrances. It was as if we were walking vaguely in a grey-white room, with nothing on which to rest the exhausted eye: no shadows, no ascertainable source of the strong light; nothing but dark clouds, silently gliding one by one over a solid but apparently void field, are depicted against this shining emptiness. It affected our nerves in a most trying manner.

On the afternoon of July 25th a period of delicious clear sunshine commenced, which, although often accompanied with biting south-easterly winds, was most acceptable after the depressing cloud-passage of the preceding weeks. The angry gods of the air had for a long time done their best to check our advance.

Now they seemed to be relenting. The gales finally abated, and the sun shone until home was reached.

As this good weather set in we arrived on the slopes of the western coast, soon reaching lower tracts, where the going was good, and the day's marches correspondingly long. Five days later we were ninety miles nearer to our goal, and we were five thousand eight hundred feet higher up. We could now keep the course without resorting to the compass, by repeatedly observing the angle of the direction of the path, and our shadows thrown before us upon the glittering snow. Our provisions began rapidly to disappear: one by one we bade farewell to delicacies, such as butter, meat-powder, chocolate; and the inland ice became if possible less and less attractive. Fortunately our journey was soon to come to an end, for each day we made rapid progress. We had reason to be satisfied with the result of the expedition. Had the strength of all our dogs given way during that trip along the north-east coast, as happened to several of

them, or had any accident or illness be fallen one of us, we could scarcely have hoped to see our starting-point again.

The temperature during the journey had not been particularly severe; for, since the sun in these regions is shining day and night, the air is continuously heated. On the other hand, it is certain that the plateau of inland ice between the latitudes of seventy and eighty degrees is throughout the winter, while the sun is below the horizon, one of the coldest, if not absolutely the coldest, of all regions in the northern hemisphere.

During the last part of the journey we made up our minds by a brilliant finish to end our journey in a manner worthy of old sportsmen. On the night of July 31st we quietly commenced with twenty-six miles. When the stage was ended observations were taken, proving that we were already south of the Peterman Fjord. Our altitude was then five thousand feet. We shaped our course in a more southerly direction, and during the following five nights the distances were respectively,

twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-one, twenty-eight, and thirty-four miles. On the last but one of these runs we observed the most magnificent mirage of the coast around Inglefield Gulf, the real outlines of which we only discovered some time later. Highest stood Northumberland Island, with its long shining snow-domes to the south. Lower and far nearer were the well-known landmarks around MacCormick Bay. We had not seen any bare land since leaving Independence Bay.

About midnight, during our last laborious struggle across the snowfields, just on the top of some large snow-waves close to the point where our journey had commenced, suddenly, at a distance of about a mile and a half, we caught sight of some dark specks, moving sometimes in a body and sometimes separately. That they were human beings there could be no doubt: but who? Was it the Doctor and Mr. Gibson with some Esquimaux on the look-out for us? Impossible! It must be some members of the expected relief expedition, on an excursion to have a look along the edges of

the gigantic ice-masses. The vessel by which they had arrived was at this moment possibly at anchor in MacCormick Bay, waiting for us. Before long the unknown company seemed to see us. At least we thought we could hear some distant "hurrahs," and a little later the feeble report of a gun. We immediately replied by a double-shot from our rifles. We pressed on, and the nearer we approached the surer we became; nor had we made any mistake. At the head of a little party dressed in modern touring outfits, and with glittering alpenstocks and ice-axes, was the well-known American geologist, Professor Heilprinn, from Philadelphia, the head of the relief expedition. The remaining seven were all gentlemen of repute from Philadelphia, among them being four scientists, an engineer, an artist, and a journalist. The entire company were without snow-shoes or skis, and, the night-frost not having been strong enough to form any crust on the top of the deep and wet snow here along the coast, every one was wading in snow-powder far above the knees, sometimes sinking up to the hips.

So much more astonishing, therefore, was the unflagging energy and staunch perseverance of these sportsmen, who had already covered about eight miles across almost impassable ground.

When within about a hundred yards of each other, we commenced on both sides to fire with our snapshot cameras, the quick subdued reports of which lent a certain martial finish to our greeting, as of a *fin-de-siècle* infantry fire. Soon we were but a few paces apart, when suddenly a thundering ninefold "Hurrah" resounded through the thin highland air. Hand-shakes and enthusiastic greetings were exchanged with these noble fellows, who, in the sealer *Kite*, had come to carry us back to civilisation. A moment to be remembered was this first encounter with fellow-men after seventy-two days of weary existence upon Polar snowfields; and

DR. FREDERICK A. COOK
(*Doctor to the Expedition*).

with intense enjoyment we received the first interesting news of the world's events during the past year. Slowly, and in lively conversation, we moved downwards to the shore, upon which we soon arrived. Our journey was at an end.

For more than ninety days we had been living upon Greenland inland ice, during which time about twelve hundred miles were covered. The northern extension of the gigantic Greenland ice cover had been determined by us very accurately, and we had also proved, so far as proofs were possible, the northern limit of the mainland.

Beyond this, we had determined that the Greenland coast rapidly converges beyond the seventy-eighth degree of latitude, and that north of this parallel there exist disconnected tracts of land, free from ice, and of comparatively small dimensions. Finally we had in no inconsiderable degree increased our knowledge of the meteorological and altitudinal facts of those portions of the Greenland ice farthest to the north. When we came down the mountain plateau, where

three months before we had laboured and suffered over the transport of our provisions, we suddenly caught sight of the fjord beneath us. We two travellers from afar were for the moment by ourselves, having arrived somewhat in advance of the others. Involuntarily we halted, remaining for a moment in mute contemplation. I believe tears were stealing into our eyes while we stood gazing blankly in front of us; for anything more beautiful we had never looked upon. Green and bright in early summer morning, the fjord lay stretched out; and upon its surface shining icebergs swam like giant swans. Around it the perpendicular mountain sides, with bands of varied colours and all sorts of shades, rose majestically, their reflections cut sharp and clear in the dark sea. And in one of the snug corners of the fjord lay at anchor a small three-masted craft, with steam up, its ascending smoke forming artificial clouds in the calm air. Now and then the lively gibbering cries of a passing flight of auks reached us where we were standing. Farther below two snow-white hares were frisking merrily among

the stones, in a purling watercourse. From a cold, lifeless desert we had returned to a world full of animation and beauty.

An hour later, with our five faithful dogs, we were aboard the small steamer, where the sailors, old acquaintances, offered us their honest tarry fists, congratulating us upon our success. I scarcely need say that our first thought, upon our arrival on board ship, was to indulge in a thorough wash and a change of clothes; and when on the fore-deck a friendly sailor relieved us of several pounds of long entangled hair, we became presentable and could go to table, where we remained for some time.

Two days later, having got all our things on board, the *Kite* steamed away to our winter quarters at the entrance to the bay. Here we were enthusiastically received by the other members of the Expedition, the Doctor, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Verhoeff, and Mr. Peary's servant, Matt, all of whom met us down on the beach.

Behind them were a crowd of our dear native friends, who long ago had lost all faith in the success of our journey on the big

glacier. Their faces beamed at the sight of us, and they listened with breathless suspense when later I gave them a detailed description of our finding musk-cattle on the distant coast. Numerous were the questions that I had to answer as to the appearance of the country, the fitness of the coast for habitation, and so on; and, with their usual intelligence, they did not feel satisfied until I had minutely sketched on a piece of paper our route across the big glacier and the coast beyond.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ESQUIMAUX MANNER OF LIFE, CUSTOMS, CHARACTER, MORAL AND SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

TO us the daily life of the "Innuits" appears most extraordinary. Their winter is passed in low, narrow huts built of stone and moss, always erected in the immediate neighbourhood of the sea. The length and width of the hut is scarcely four yards each way, and the ceiling is so low that a man is compelled to stoop beneath it. Not infrequently two huts are so close together that a wide opening pierced through the dividing wall unites them, while always housing two families. The interior of the hut is reached through a long narrow passage, also of stone. This has to be traversed in a crouching position until a narrow square opening in the upper part of the wall is passed, which is the entrance to the sitting-room. Just

above this is a square window, covered by gut skin, and usually coated with thick white frost. In the centre of this pane there is a small hole through which the tainted hot air makes its escape in winter-time in a thick steaming column. This opening serves also as a peephole at such times when voices are heard without, or some unwonted noise arouses curiosity.

The family sleep at the rear, on a stone platform, raised about half a yard above the floor, and covered with bear or reindeer skins. Upon one of the two side bunks, and on a level with the sleeping place, is a dish-shaped lamp of soapstone, over which hangs an oblong cooking vessel of the same material, suspended from the ceiling by a cord. It is by this long clear lamp-flame, fed by oil and with finely rotted turf as a wick, that the small room is lighted and heated. Little is required for the latter purpose, the walls and roof being comfortably air-tight, and the room at some distance from the walls being provided with a wainscoting of sealskin. Any draught through the entrance, which is always open, is provided against, for

the cold outside air is prevented by its specific gravity from rising into the house.

When the flame burns out for want of attention, which is likely to occur during the night, the light is rekindled by striking sparks from a piece of flint, or magnetic iron, on to exceedingly fine and dry turf fibres. In the immediate neighbourhood of the winter huts some small stone chambers are usually built, half over and half under the earth, where the housewives keep their stock of ready tanned skins and other valuable raw material, and the hunters store their winter pelts.

The meat stores are usually at a distance from the house, and covered by heaps of stones. Towards the end of spring, when the days are growing long and light, and the sun's rays are spreading a little warmth over the landscape, the Esquimau quits his oppressive winter quarters, packs the family sealskin tent on the sledge, and takes to the road, true vagabond that he is, in order to erect his summer residence upon some site free from snow in the neighbourhood. In most cases he will tear off the

roof of his winter hut before leaving it, that the house may be thoroughly aired during his absence.

About twenty years ago, when still without

WINTER HUTS.

boats, they used to retreat with their summer tents into the fjords, in order to hunt seals where the ice takes longest to break up.

Their tent is made of sealskin from which the hairs have been removed. It widens at

the bottom in a kind of semicircular shape, ending above the upright front wall in a sharp short ridge. The inner skeleton, on which the whole is upheld, is made of narwhal horns and wooden laths. The door, which opens in front of the tent, is covered with a gut-skin curtain; and in the background there is, as in all houses, the raised platform covered with skins, which affords sleeping accommodation for the family.

These tents are used from the beginning of May till the middle of September, when the Esquimaux return to their huts, seldom, however, to settle down in their homes of the previous winter, for they hold that change is enjoyable. Both in the summer tent and in the winter hut the duty of attending to the lamp falls to the housewife. The blubber pieces have to be removed as they gradually melt away, and without constant attention the flame smokes terribly.

All the most important household work falls to the woman's lot, and is not always of the choicest kind, for the Esquimaux lack the sense

of cleanliness. The stone pot, the flat vessels, and drinking cup, and shelf on which the provisions are stored, are covered with a thick layer of blubber and clotted blood; and it may easily be imagined that all this is more than enough to rob the white man of his appetite. But after a long day's tramp across trackless snow-fields and in Arctic temperatures, when the elasticity of the muscles is relaxed, and the cells of the body seem to unite in one single cry for food and water, the sons of civilisation would never hesitate to share the rude dishes of the friendly Esquimaux, and to drink from their blubber-greased cups, if his own more dainty provisions ran short. The dishes which the Esquimau hostess can offer at various seasons to her family or guests are neither many nor elaborate. The flesh of walrus, seal, narwhal, bear, reindeer, and hare or auk, and at rare intervals salmon trout, mixed commonly with blood, forms the foundation of her cooking. Spices, salt, or any other condiments are unknown to her; and even blubber is chiefly used for illuminating purposes.

Although as a rule it is cooked, the meat is often eaten raw, especially when frozen. It is not considered a delicacy until it has become tainted and gives forth the pungent odour of old cheese. The liver of various animals is also eaten, as are the contents of the reindeer's stomach, which consist almost exclusively of vegetable matter, and form a rare delicacy. Dogs' flesh is occasionally eaten, but only under stress of circumstances, which must be very great indeed before a native will sacrifice any of his full-grown pack. At Cape York Settlement I have been treated to frozen puppy, which, hungry as I was, I found very palatable. The taste of this is exactly that of the ice-bear, which in its turn reminds one of melons.

For drinking the Esquimaux use nothing but water. When, at the commencement of our acquaintance, we offered them tea and coffee, they touched it with their lips and rejected it promptly. In the course of time, however, most of them began to appreciate these beverages, to which we occasionally treated them; and biscuits, too, they soon learned to like—a fact

one cannot wonder at when one remembers that in the strictest meaning of the word they are a breadless people. Naturally enough, they know nothing of spirits and tobacco, and we took good care not to initiate them. It was strange that they have never learnt the use of any stimulant, but in this matter they are still innocent, which no other race upon the globe appears to be.

The indoor meals are taken in a very rude and easy fashion. The housewife puts the cooked pieces of meat into a pot, from which the various members of the family—all of them more or less naked—will draw as much as they want, carrying it to their mouths with their left hands, and holding a sharp knife in their right, with which they slice off savoury mouthfuls close to their lips. Twice I tried to imitate this, but although I went to work so carefully that all the dark rascals were bursting with laughter, I had to consider myself very fortunate that I kept my nose intact.

Out in the open air, on sledge journeys or hunting excursions—when the meals usually

consist of frozen meat—the etiquette of the table is this: that each person cuts morsels to suit his fancy from a common block of food. The number of daily meals depends very much upon whether the day is spent at home—in the hut or tent—or in outdoor exercise. In the first case they will take four or five meals, so drawn out that they represent one continuous feast from morning to night. But on the march the meals are usually limited to a light cold breakfast and a hot and more substantial supper.

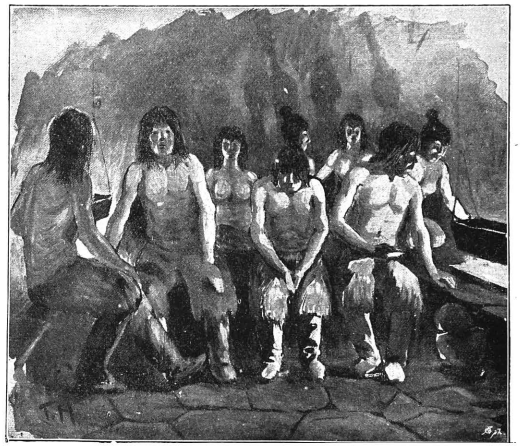
Marriages amongst the Innuits at Smith's Sound form a lifelong contract, as they do with us. The relations existing between husband and wife are generally excellent, even if at rare intervals a case of divorce occurs. As an instance, Agna, the mother of Kolotengua, some years ago obtained a divorce from Kaochu, Kolotengua's father, on the pretext that really Kaochu was so old that he did not suit her any longer. So soon after she attached herself to a jovial, middle-aged, fat, shiny widower, Kala, with whom she is living most happily at the present moment. As an excuse for this lady, in

many respects so worthy, it must be admitted that life had indeed dealt hardly with poor Kaochu, for although not strictly old, he walked with a pottering gait, his one leg bent with rheumatism, his face dry and full of dirty wrinkles, his nose and cheeks bluish from wind and weather, his eyes red-rimmed, and his hair—the hair—yes, well, let us stop at that. And yet this limping imp has a sense of humour, and the power to raise laughter on the lips of his neighbours. Neither has he suffered from any want. His friends look after that, particularly his faithful foster-daughter, who manages his house.

Polygamy is unknown among the Esquimaux at present, although they may have some inclinations in that direction, and possibly under more favourable conditions of life might not hesitate to introduce the system. Changing wives, however, is very common, especially on journeys. These changes may stand good for a long period, especially between mature couples, of which the two halves are suffering from mutual weariness of one another.

When a wife and husband meet again in the

course of a few weeks, they are usually so thoroughly cured of their dissatisfaction that the whole arrangement only lends additional proof



INTERIOR OF HUT. MEN IN THE FOREGROUND, WOMEN ON THE PLATFORM BEHIND.

to the correctness of that mutual selection made in days gone by.

Among the unmarried the strictest chastity is generally observed. The position of the married woman, in spite of the fact that she has on all

matters of serious difference to submit to the will of her husband, is scarcely less dignified than that of the man; while the burdens of life are divided evenly between them, just in the way which people at home think natural, the husband supporting the family by hunting, or at home mending his weapons and fishing gear, the wife cooking, looking after the children, preparing the skins, and making clothes and *kamiks* with active diligence. The relation between parents and children is affectionate. The children are generally very handsome while they are quite young, their good looks falling off as they grow older. On birth they receive their name from their parents—usually a single word, signifying some natural object. There is hardly ever any question of punishment, nor is such treatment wanted, for more genuinely well-behaved children one could not possibly find. They look touchingly sweet, these small folk, when they are playing in the open air some game corresponding with our "touch," or when sliding upon tiny toboggans made by their fond fathers. They never fight, and only quarrel in the mildest way;

abusive words are unknown: they are, in fact, like a company of dirty angels.

Grown-up people also amuse themselves with tobogganing, but otherwise it may be said that the Esquimaux do not generally care much for games or amusement. Life itself is their delight, though it may be of a severer kind than that of any other people.

When the men return from hunting, gossip and innocent chatter is their pastime in the evening, now and then interrupted by some strange, monotonous song, quaintly rendered either by a bachelor or an old maid, or by all the company in unison. Such songs are always accompanied by regular dull blows upon a drum, made of a bone ring upon which is stretched a skin.

Marriages are contracted at an early age: by the men so soon as they think themselves able to afford a wife—that is to say, at any age between sixteen and twenty—whilst the girls are considered marriageable at fourteen. As a rule affection is the foundation of every union. There is little enough temptation to marry for money or any worldly gain. The young couple enter

into the new condition of life without any sort of ceremony, though not until after a long engagement. The number of children in a family is commonly three or four, though sometimes five or six are born to the same parents.

A stranger arriving from a distant settlement neither says "good day," nor receives any greeting from the men or women he is visiting. A modest smile is all he has to offer as an introduction, which is as bashfully returned. One of the elders presently makes a subdued remark, or even asks a question, and by degrees conversation is set a-going. When the visitor is about to leave, the same formality is gone through. He bids no farewell, but quietly hitches up his dogs, and possibly departs to a place many miles away without addressing so much as a word to his host. Their intercourse always exhibits a spirit of independence astonishing to Europeans.

Before setting out upon a sledge journey an Esquimau takes good care to fill himself to the full with water, even if he is not at the moment thirsty. He knows well enough what

fearful thirst he may have to endure before he comes within sight of human habitations, a thirst made more unbearable by the dry Arctic air. I had an opportunity of convincing myself of the prudence of this precaution.

A chief reason which makes it possible for the Esquimaux at Smith's Sound to endure the long winter nights of four months, is their naturally social disposition. Young people generally occupy more of the time of darkness in visits to relatives and friends than they spend at home, and if they do stop at home for a short period it is rarely without having first secured some guests and companions. During the months of December and January the darkness is so continuous that all journeys must be planned for those hours when the moon is up, and the moon (which appears every four weeks) moves in the vault of heaven for seven days on end, throwing a most brilliant light upon the snow-white plains.

An extract from my diary for December 31st, 1893, will record my impressions during a sledge journey in the moonlight, a journey on which

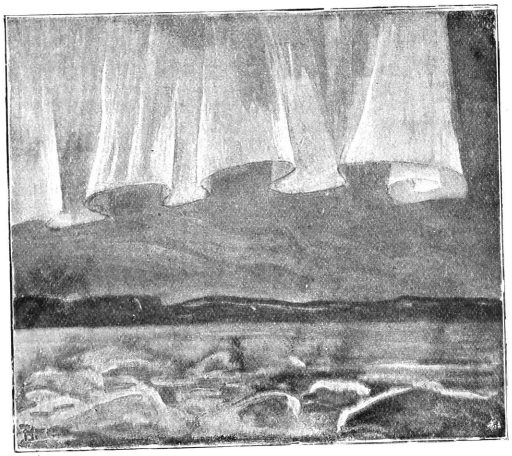
I was accompanied only by an old Esquimau chary of words. "Dressed in our warm skin coats and sitting silently upon the low sledge, we had ample opportunity to admire the wonderful scenery around us. One can scarcely imagine anything so entirely lacking in animation, so desolate, as the landscape before us. It was as though we were no longer moving on our own planet, but were suddenly transported to the surface of some mystic strange spot in the universe, so desolate, so distant and different from any human dwelling-place was that locality. We halted twice to arrange the dog-straps; the silence of death reigned over the country, and only now and then weird heavy sighs reached us from mountain recesses close by, as ice-blocks gathered upon rocky points and ledges, and the tide fell. The white broken plain around us, illumined in ghostly fashion by the pale silent moon, brought to our minds a church-yard in winter-time, numerous ice blocks bearing an uncanny likeness to snow-clad tombstones and large monuments. Along the precipitous coasts to the north, where the ice-plain touched

the land, was seen a band of shining silver, produced by the coating of ice cast upon the rocks at high tide. Far to the south, dark shadows of the distant coast extended; upon the mountain plateaux rose lofty domes of perennial snow and ice, far back inland, and beyond the white gently swelling surface of the sea. Above this fluttered the mysterious aurora, now flaming red, now glimmering with all the colours of the rainbow. The transparency of the atmosphere was remarkable. The rugged outlines of the mountains, their clefts and gaps made prominent by the dark shadows, could be seen distinctly at a distance of more than forty miles."

Again I wrote:—"What a change from this picture was the scene which met our eyes inside the walls of the little Esquimau hut! Men talking and eating, children crying, and weather-beaten women packed closely together, all more or less naked, and showing distinct marks of their unwashen state.

"The hut in which I live belongs to young Aunolka, he who lost his wife last year, but

is now married again to a widow with three children. An uncommon lack of cleanliness rules here, so that I feel far less comfort and pleasure than I have experienced in other



AURORA BOREALIS.

Esquimaux homes. Aunolka has, however, this excuse, that his hut lies on the direct route between our winter quarters and numerous Esquimaux settlements, so that, for the time being, it has to serve as a family hotel and

travellers' rest. It is not the first time that I have taken shelter beneath this roof. Upon the last occasion there were twenty-one people inside, and I had a small boy as a pillow. while four other children lay across me as a coverlet. Next morning I paid my host liberally, which was by no means necessary. The payment was an old worn-out tooth-brush, which all present put instantly to the test."

Happiness and joy beam from their broad sallow faces when the February sun begins to dress the clouds next the horizon in golden garments, after the oppressive darkness of winter; and when at last the sun itself rises in full glory above the southern horizon, their joy is unbounded. Then men and women, old and young, flock together upon the crags which form a background where the view is widest, there to greet the returning ruler of light with bright glances of gratitude and joyful shouts of welcome.

The Esquimaux at Smith's Sound have no exact measure of time. To note any particular hour of the day they fall back upon the position of the sun or of the stars. To describe a

certain season they employ references to important annual events, such as "the days of removing into tents," or "when the auks arrive from the south," or "the days when the sun leaves us."

One would be inclined to suppose that a people such as the Esquimaux, making such a hard struggle for existence, and seldom sure whether the morrow will be a day of want or no, would be serious—would look upon life as a term of suffering which for some reason or other they have to abide, and from which death only offers a relief. But how far is such a supposition from the real facts! To listen to their merry laughter, to understand something of their language, to appreciate their genuine and amusing jokes and their witty sayings, and on hunting excursions to hear their gleeful songs and bright jests, is to arrive at the conclusion that these people are, more than any other, satisfied with the conditions of their life.

And by looking into the matter we see that what at first appears extraordinary is not so strange. We must in the first place bear in

mind their perfect health. It would be difficult to find a healthier race, or one so uncontaminated by civilisation. A little rheumatism may attack those who are getting on in years, but this is the only ailment that is at all common. Snow-blindness, which so often troubles the men in springtime, when the reflection of the sun strikes up unbearably upon the naked eye, can scarcely be considered as a serious complaint. Last but not least must be borne in mind the fact that this small Esquimaux community is founded upon the principles of equality. It is a community where money is unknown, and love of one's neighbour is a fundamental rule. We have here, without going any further, an ample guarantee for the happiness and contentment of its members—a community where "liberty, equality, fraternity" is not merely a plausible cry, but a genuine reality. That this should be possible is due to the conditions under which these people live. The Esquimaux are good because they have no temptation to be bad. Suppose a hunter is more skilful than his fellows, and so has accumulated more game than his needs

require. Shall he bury it beneath the ground, and let it spoil? Or shall he try and sell it where there are no purchasers? No: willingly he will divide his spoil among those who are less skilled in the chase, whose arms are weaker, or whose cares have left less time for sport. But some one may say, "If superior skill has enabled them to fill their larders in a comparatively short time, will they not be inclined to indulge in a period of rest or pleasant dalliance, rather than continue their hunting for the advantage of others?" To this it may be answered that, so long as personal ambition holds the high place that it does now in their emotions, there is no danger of this, even if their natural good-nature is not taken into account; and it is in accord with this that when a hunter kills more game than he can bear away with him, he leaves the remainder protected by a heap of stones, that any who come by that way may help themselves. Apparently they form a single family, for whose common good every one exerts his utmost energy, and it becomes an impossibility that some should be in luxury whilst others

starve, for they share the joys of life as well as its sorrows.

This marked affection for their neighbours appears to be characteristic, and it is not surprising when we remember how closely related all the members of this little community must be. Well do I remember the touching anxiety displayed by the members of a community among whom I was staying, owing to the prolonged absence of a young hunter. How often have I witnessed the home-coming of the tired sportsman, loaded with savoury meat of the reindeer! To keep it for himself and the use of his family would be an unheard-of act. Company there must be, and all, young and old, must be bidden to the feast.

It is exceedingly rare to see two Esquimaux quarrel, and if this does occasionally happen, their anger is moderate. An Esquimau does not grow noisy, or use bad language; and grown men never quarrel at all. If they cannot agree, and one thinks himself injured by another, he simply leaves the place. They are, in fact, an essentially meek-spirited race, who dislike

discussions or disputes; and they often render services to those for whom they have a strong personal dislike.

According to the defective information which we could gather on the subject, the average duration of life among the Esquimaux is sixty years, when they fall away through general debility, and often die from inflammation of the lungs.

Their honesty is absolute, and theft is unknown, as they have all things in common; and for this reason they did not hesitate to help themselves, during their first intercourse with the Peary Expedition, to any trifles that pleased their eyes, and which they felt quite justified in appropriating. But when once they were told that we did not approve of this we were able to rely upon them implicitly; although they were sharp enough to see the injustice of our taking possession of their country without giving them any return, or asking their consent, and systematically clearing long stretches of valley and highland of the reindeer so valuable to them. They were rarely guilty of falsehood

towards us, though they would try at times to make fools of us white men, who considered ourselves such knowing fellows. Yet they show a natural repugnance to speaking the truth when that truth may be disagreeable to the listener, and under such circumstances they will try to evade it by all kinds of devices. On the whole their morals are at all events in full accord with the ideals of Christianity; but while we who are living under different conditions of life, daily tempting us to disregard ideal principles, must often content ourselves with owning their beauty and our incapacity to live up to them, the poor Innuits may more easily maintain their standard, since they are born under more simple and sounder conditions.

The good-humour of the Esquimaux is inexhaustible. Their exuberant mirth is especially apparent when a number of them are together at one time, as was often the case at the stations of the Peary Expedition. It would be useless to attempt to describe the scene which took place when, for instance, half a dozen male Innuits caught sight of a donkey for the

first time in their lives. Such scenes can only be appreciated by witnessing them. Their amazement was unlimited, though there was none of that childish joy that one would expect from these dark heathen, but on the contrary a shower of witty and brilliant remarks, now about its long ears, now about the plump round belly, now about its hairless tail, which, they held, would make a splendid whip handle when the frost set in. One of the acknowledged clowns of the tribe was that small sturdy benedict, Ekva. For hours he would sit in the midst of a small crowd, talking and jabbering, causing continuous merriment among his hearers. I can still call to mind how he once suddenly made his appearance in the course of a hunting trip in his *kajak*, dressed only in his bearskin trousers and an old starched white shirt. But below this outward show of mirth beat the tender heart of a father. During his visit he never forgot to put a part of every biscuit we gave him into a small and very dirty sealskin bag. It would bring happiness to his little two-year-old Annedor on his return home.

Among the Esquimaux at Smith's Sound there are no chiefs in authority over the others. Every one is his own master, and no one interferes with his neighbour's business ; but the elder man who once has had, or still possesses, more than ordinary skill, seems to exercise a certain unassuming authority over his comrades in a settlement. It may be safely said that liberty is the guiding principle among these happy citizens ; not that liberty which is bounded by the strict letter of the law, but liberty as complete as one could hope for in this world, the liberty of mutual confidence.

CHAPTER XII.

INTELLIGENCE AND ARTISTIC GIFTS, RELIGIOUS IDEAS, CUSTOMS, ETC.

THAT the Esquimaux at Smith's Sound, as well as their brethren farther south, are intelligent and gifted, we may conclude from their many ingenious weapons, and their hunting devices; for in late years, during their intercourse with the members of the two Peary expeditions, they have had special opportunities of manifesting these qualities. They would often astonish us by the ease and quickness with which they manœuvred our whale-boats after but a few hours' practice; and still more remarkable was the rare appreciation which they exhibited when listening to our verbal descriptions, or looking at the pictures brought with us from distant civilised lands.

I consider Kolotengua to be one of the most gifted members of the tribe, at least of the

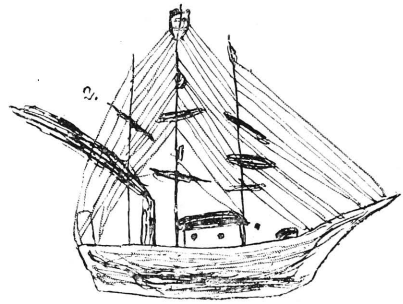
younger generation. He was about thirty-five years old, small of stature, but of stout build, with muscles of steel, and possessing uncommon physical strength. His eyes were small and lively, and he could see objects far beyond the usual range of vision. His long black hair, naturally wavy, formed a handsome frame about his bold face; otherwise he reminded me of the popular pictures of Indian chiefs. None in all the tribe could be prouder than Kolotengua; no one more independent and free, more faithful in friendship, more cool in moments of danger, or more skilful as a hunter. Tunvingua was his wife: a laughing child, with rosy cheeks and glittering white teeth. These two enjoyed a pastime which scarcely a member of the tribe understood enough to appreciate, or, at all events, never ventured to imitate,—they sketched. Now it would be the ships of the white men that they immortalised; now people, huts, or tents, *kajaks*, or hunters. I could provide them without difficulty with paper and pencil, as I had fortunately brought with me more than sufficient for my own wants. Many of these sketches

were most interesting; all of them, without exception, showing keen powers of observation. I may as well transfer a few examples of them to my sketchbook in facsimile, so that my readers may judge of their artistic merit for themselves.

The first picture, sketched by Kolotengua,

represents a hunting scene: two hunters, one Esquimau, with a bow and arrow, and the other Kablunak, with rifle, have arrived by sledge and dog over the ice, and have sighted two reindeer on a headland. They have gone close up, quitting the sledge and dog, and they are seen in the picture approaching their prey

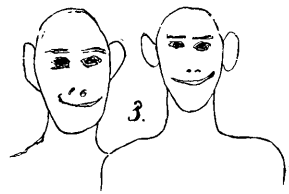
by different paths. Were it not that the Kablunak to the left is somewhat thinly dressed, and perceptibly drunk, the sketch would be quite instructive. The second picture represents the steam-sealer *Kite*. It was drawn from memory by Tunvingua, on one of the first occasions that



she ever held a pencil in her hand. The third sketch is also hers: it represents two white men! As the Kablunaks wear their hair short, she has unhesitatingly drawn these bald-headed, so that their ears play a very prominent part in the picture.

Kolotengua showed great admiration for the numerous inventions of the white man, for his

shrewdness and his endless knowledge, and was quick to imitate any useful scheme or fashion. He was the first Esquimau to introduce a pocket in his sealskin *natcha*, and soon afterwards many of the other young men followed suit.



Kolotengua had one friend whom he loved above all his companions: it was Kudla, his equal in age. I cannot think of a better name for these two than the word "jolly-boys." They were always ready, always busy and bright in some direction or other, and they carried with them an inexhaustible fund of good-humour.

Once I happened to be present when Kolotengua and Kudla came home from a reindeer chase, in July 1894. Commencing conversation with them, I noticed that Kolotengua's face, hands, and the exposed parts of his body were literally covered with mosquito bites, so that he looked as if he were pock-marked, while Kudla had escaped scot-free.

Seeing that I was about to remark on this strange fact, Kudla forestalled me, and explained, with an assumed air of superiority, and a face suddenly grown serious, that the mosquitoes had unfortunately been very hard upon the little Kolotengua when asleep; but him, he added, with a still graver face, pointing to himself, the mosquitoes did not dare to touch. And why not? Well, because even the mosquitoes refused the miserable liquid running in his veins! It is a simple illustration, but it shows that these fellows possessed satirical humour, and a ready wit.

Even brighter if possible than these two was the rollicking, sprightly Kashu. He might have been somewhat over thirty. His face was broad and round, and looked as if it had been cut in wood in a great hurry by a carpenter. When very happy he would laugh so that the corners of his mouth stretched upwards to the back of his head, at the same time closing both his eyes; when in danger of his life, however, never more than one was shut. Although a thief and a liar under certain pardonable circumstances,

he was nevertheless a thoroughly splendid man. A bolder and more energetic companion for one's travels it would be difficult to find, or

THREE "JOLLY-BOYS."

one with greater powers of physical endurance. Kashu erected his tent close to the winter quarters of the second Peary expedition; and regularly every morning, even after the frost

had set in, he might be seen taking a trip outside his tent without a thread upon his body, making his meteorological observations for the day. Whenever there was any fun going on among us white men Kashu must join in, nor was he ever absent when we were ski-running down the hills behind the house. Consequently he became by degrees a hardened and comparatively skilful runner, but he never attained elegance. He was of the broad-gauge type, and had the habit of making the most frightful grimaces directly he got up a little speed. When the pace became greater, he closed one eye—a sure sign that he considered himself in serious danger.

Among the old folk may be mentioned Arodoksua and Migibsunga, Kashu's parents. To show that the old man understands a little of hygiene, I must tell how, having long ago ceased to hunt, and consequently getting no more exercise in this way, he regularly takes a long walk across the ice every forenoon, pushing an empty sledge in front of him. He suffers now in his declining years from rheumatism.

His wife in the meantime seems younger than ever, and her tongue as a matter of course is busily at work from early morning till late at night. If strangers are present it is always her incomparable boy Kashu she depicts; her other son, the half-witted Anangana, she mentions more rarely. "Kashu,—ah, that's the boy!" But as she begins to tell you how handsome he is, there steals into your mind a recollection of that wooden face, that indiarubber mouth and those half-open eyes, and some self-control is needed to preserve your gravity.

In all the tribe there is no more worthy pair than Ingapaddu and Ituschaksui; they are the parents of Tunvingua, and have altogether six children, the greatest number that has been known in one family in the memory of the tribe. They are both remarkable people in the matter of duty, upright and honest, affectionate and sympathetic to the full. Ituschaksui particularly is a splendid specimen of a mother. I saw her once running across the ice to a couple of her youngsters, who were playing about a mile from the shore, merely to tell them that they

really must put on their mittens, as it had begun to blow so sharply.

Ituschaksui's father is old Kommonapek, one of those who in earlier days immigrated from the west across Smith's Sound. At that time Ituschaksui was quite a young girl, very different from the plump round matron who now answers to the name. She has two younger brothers, now married—Ascio and Panipka. The whole family is exceptionally gifted, especially the sickly Ascio, with his pale narrow face and thoughtful eyes, characteristic of his genius; for he is level-headed, with a power of apprehension quick as lightning. On account of his weakness, his young wife undertakes many of the duties that usually fall to the husband's share, and as a result of this she now has a somewhat masculine appearance. I can see her now, driving her sledge with extraordinary skill, and cracking her whip like a man.

Panipka is of a more retiring and philosophic nature: he prefers to have his tent or his winter house in a secluded place, where daily visitors are not to be expected, and where he

can enjoy a quiet but industrious life in the company of his wife and children. I have often had long talks with him, and he has always used the opportunity greedily to collect information about foreign parts. His confidence in the white man is very great, and he has a burning desire to see their country and towns, their railways, their horses and other animals—all those wonderful things which hitherto he has seen only in pictures. Whether he will ever have his desire fulfilled is more than doubtful, though his intellectual horizon is wider than that of many a person living in the heart of civilisation, and quite a volume of thought lies behind each simple and ingenuous question.

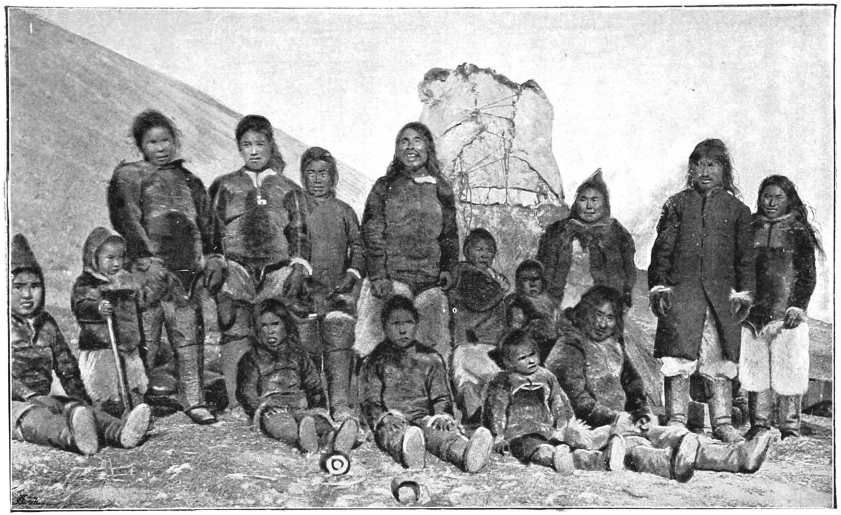
Among the Esquimau tribe at Smith's Sound there are four brothers (the fifth is dead), of whom three at least are of splendid physique. They are Miuk, Kayegvitto, and Otonia. The first as well as the last are two men so excellent and so straightforward that their biography is already given sufficiently in those two words. With Kayegvitto it is somewhat different. He is a kind and good-tempered fellow, but has

one comical fault—intolerable conceit. The fact that he is a few inches taller than all his comrades, and stronger than they are, has gradually puffed him up to such an extent, that he lives at the present moment under the firm conviction that he is the head of his tribe, and ought to be treated as its chief. This notion has probably come to him since the arrival of our expedition to the country. He noticed that one of us was regarded with considerable respect, and granted immediate obedience by all his companions; and it seems to have occurred to his simple mind that he was best fitted to play the same part among the Innuits. Such vanity is the more remarkable as conceit is an unknown characteristic among the Esquimaux, and his fellows take it at its true worth. "Kayegvitto, —well, he is mad, poor fellow!" they will say, with a gentle smile.

The man's vanity, however, once proved of considerable benefit to us. It was mid-winter during the second Peary expedition, and we had fallen short of food for our dogs. We knew that Kayegvitto possessed considerable stores

of meat at Nascha, a settlement to the south side of Whale Sound; so it was decided that I should go across and negotiate a deal, and return next day by moonlight. All the male inhabitants turned out to meet me, Kayegvitto, of course, well to the fore. For a moment, when he first saw it was a white man who came, he disappeared into his hut, to return immediately decked in an old threadbare coat that he had bartered during the previous winter from a member of the Expedition. In this he evidently thought he had assumed full dignity. Falling in with his mood, I advanced quickly towards him, and, grasping his hand, shook it cordially several times—a ceremony that is not practised among the Esquimaux, but the significance of which they have learned to understand. Kayegvitto was highly flattered. I explained my message to him. Mr. Peary, the big master from the distant countries, wanted meat for his starving dogs, and so I came to ask Kayegvitto, the big chief of the Innuits, to assist him. He had much meat; no one caught so much as he. He alone was chief among the Esquimaux.

This last sentence tickled Kayegvitto's fancy to such a pitch that he repeated it incessantly, and at last invited me to pass the night at his house—an offer which I, of course, accepted. It was not until the following morning that our real conference took place. Once or twice I called this large, strong-limbed man "chief" among his fellows; and the words had hardly left my mouth before he commenced with an indescribable superiority to command the loiterers around to set to work at once to load my sledge with meat. For his own part he rendered intermittent assistance, condescending now and then to give a final kingly kick to some of the heavier pieces. The Esquimaux, who of their own free will for the moment played the part of Kayegvitto's humble servants, were excessively amused by the whole comedy, and, pitying the poor fellow's folly, were good-natured enough to play out their parts to the end. Kayegvitto received a suitable present, which he had apparently not expected; and I left the "great chief" standing in the moonlight, still arrayed in his thin coat although the temperature was nearly forty degrees Fahr. below zero.



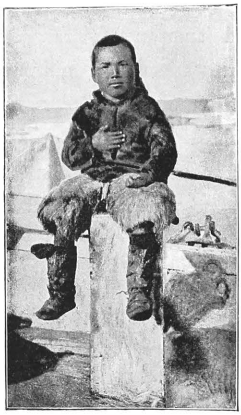
GROUP OF SMITH'S SOUND ESQUIMAUX. TENT IN BACKGROUND.

Living among the tribe was a little orphan lad, Kadluktu. He was a handsome boy and very smart, and we naturally took so much interest in him during our visit to the settlement that he lived for a long time in our hut, sleeping under Matt's bunk, and sumptuously fed on remains from our meals. Matt took quite a fatherly interest in this young five-year-old. First he washed his whole body thoroughly, and then he engaged a couple of women to clean his clothes, a friendly office for which it was high time. Afterwards they cut his hair as close as that of a seal, and Kadluktu emerged from their hands changed and civilised. The poor little fellow had no fixed home, but lived now with one family and now with another, and always on the best and happiest terms.

Then there was Kaoni, an extraordinary simpleton, with four children and a rather bulky wife. I have a suspicion that this man was a bit henpecked, and the tribe invariably amused themselves at his expense: he was so pitifully awkward in everything that he undertook, and such a stammerer, that his queer personality

naturally plays a chief part in all the funny stories whispered in the community.

On our last expedition we took with us an Edison phonograph, to which the Esquimaux were frequently invited to listen. The unprejudiced state of their minds when they were first introduced to this extraordinary invention is noteworthy. Inexplicable as the apparatus must have appeared, they did not connect it with anything supernatural, but laughed and made fun over the voices which seemed to come from nowhere, as if this latest scientific wonder were a toy with which they had played all their lives. And yet how natural would it have been for them to take these voices as emanating from the spirit world, which plays so prominent a part in their religious conceptions!



KADLUKTU CIVILISED.

Their quick intelligence seemed to have instantly rejected this solution of the marvel, and they classed the phonograph with many other wonders of which the white man possessed the secret, and as a purely natural product of human ingenuity and labour.

Most of the Esquimaux can count with ease up to twenty, and this in spite of the fact that in the ordinary course of events they never have occasion to make use of so high a number. When any quantity exceeds four or five they express it by a comprehensive "many," or some similar word. Yet during the long winter evenings, when they sit in their huts carving pretty ornaments in ivory, they will occasionally start counting as a pastime, and the brightest will count up even so far as thirty and forty. Ordinarily they use their fingers to count upon: 1, *atasuk*; 2, *magluk*; 3, *pingarsut*; 4, *sissami*; 5, *tedlumet*. If they have to go on to six they call this the first finger of the second hand, or *igluane-atasuk* (generally abbreviated to *igluane*); seven is the second finger of the other hand, *igluane-magluk*, and so on. When

ten is reached, and all the fingers are exhausted, most of them contrive to start over again; but now, as their fingers are exhausted, they take count of their toes: thus thirteen is called three toes on the one foot; seventeen, two toes on the second, and so on. Has he to go beyond twenty, which he calls the end of a whole man, the Esquimaux says for twenty-one, one of the second man (*innuit-aipach-sjani atasuk*).

Their inventive powers and mechanical gifts are wonderful. These qualities come to the fore when the Innuit sets to work to repair his rifle, or any other instrument he may barter from the white man, for which work the tools at his disposal are of course quite inadequate. Perhaps, for instance, the spring of the gun-lock breaks: months may pass before the owner of the gun or any of his neighbours hit upon a remedy; but one fine day the Esquimau will appear upon the scene with his gun upon his shoulder in as good working order as ever. Probably the old lock has not been removed; possibly the spring is no longer of steel, but

made of a long piece of ivory lashed at one end to the gun-stock. The old hammer is allowed to remain, and is cocked by the insertion of a small wooden piece under the elastic ivory, which on the sudden removal of the wedge drops with considerable force against the priming, and the thunder of a report follows.

East of Cape York are some large meteorites, which Lieutenant Peary examined in the spring of 1894. To some extent natives had made use of this supply of iron for arrow and harpoon points, when the English Arctic explorer Sir John Ross discovered them at the beginning of the century. It is difficult to understand, however, how it was converted into weapons without the use of heat, a resource of which they knew nothing when we arrived among them.

One of the many ingenious devices of the Esquimaux is the peculiar plan they adopt to protect the dogs' paws from the hard ice-crust, which in spring-time forms on the surface of the snow. They provide them with tiny socks of *ugsuk*-skin, which they tie round the

bottom joint of the leg, and so save the dogs from sore feet.

When it is borne in mind that the Esquimaux have never enjoyed the sight of a living tree, it is the more extraordinary that they should be able to distinguish between hard and soft wood, that they should know white from red pine, and oak from ash. How their simple hearts would rejoice at the sight of one of those grand rustling oaks, or dark green pines, of which the parts of their sledges are made!

The musical temperament is common amongst the Esquimaux, but is still undeveloped; in fact, it exists at such a low point that they cannot understand our simplest melodies. Certainly there are exceptions. Ituschaksui, for instance, learnt to sing several of our popular songs, among others, "Tara-ra-boom-de-ay," which the rest, who joined in the chorus, rendered in the most gratingly false tones that could possibly be conceived. And yet these same people, knowing their national songs by heart, would sing them in chorus with perfect harmony.

The bump of locality is strongly developed in

the Esquimaux, and they have a certain standing as astronomers, even if they had not succeeded in distinguishing fixed stars from planets when we first met them. Nor must it be forgotten that the starry heavens in those regions can only be observed during less than half the year. Jack and his Team is, according to their tradition, a herd of reindeer; the Pleiades, a team of dogs in pursuit of a bear; the stars of Cassiopeia form the feet of a large stone lamp; the three bright suns in the belt of Orion are steps cut by an Esquimau in a steep snow-ravine to reach the top; Castor and Pollux in the Twins are the side stones to the entrance of an *iglu*; Arcturus and Aldebaran are hunters; whilst the planet Jupiter is the mother of the sun. The sun is a young girl, the moon her lover, pursuing her around the vault of heaven. The effect of the moon on the tide has long been a familiar fact to them.

The religious ideas of the Innuits are not highly developed, but at a very interesting stage; for in this little community we can at the present time find traces of the religious belief

of our forefathers, such as, in its main features, it must have been thousands of years ago. In fact, we are here standing face to face with a people just emerging from the stone age—an aboriginal tribe, bearing the impress of a past time. What invaluable material for inquirers into the development and history of the human race! The religions of the civilised world to-day have assumed fixed and definite forms, and may most of them be summed up in a few short articles of belief. It is different, however, with the faith of the Esquimaux and their religious ideas. These are undefined and often personal. Such doctrines as they hold, if we attempted to analyse them, would undoubtedly contain articles of belief, but it is doubtful whether they could be summed up at all. One is not surprised at this. In large communities the individual may reasonably rely upon the truth of doctrines accepted by the millions surrounding him; but when, as is the case with the Esquimaux, public opinion in its most imposing aspect does not represent more than a couple of hundred persons, it seems quite natural that the individual should

form his own ideas, apart from any established doctrine. This has been confirmed in the course of conversations which I have held with the natives upon religious topics. "Do the Innuits believe that there is a life after death?" was one of the first questions that I put to Kolotengua, having at last gained his confidence on a subject which these children of nature are usually disinclined to discuss with a stranger. "Yes," was his reply; "when an Innuit dies his shadow goes to a land below us, where there is good hunting, and much sunshine. And yet some say that the soul departs for a land high up in the air, and nobody is sure which is correct. The Innuits are few, but of you white men there are so many, and you know all things. Tell us now about this." What I answered does not belong to this narrative. I fear it was not in the spirit of Hans Egede, the missionary, though I went so far as to promise him an eternal life far happier than the earthly, and better consolation one could not give to a man afraid of the thought that he must die.

When the cultured man in more thoughtful

moments suffers under a multitude of troubles, when his mind is sick and sorrowful, and there come over him feelings of desolation and unhappiness, he turns with prayer to an almighty and merciful God, and thus finds the relief and sweet consolation he so sorely needs. So, too, the Esquimaux have their spiritual consolations. Powerful, but invisible spirits occupy in their minds the place of God; and they believe that these may be so influenced by the Angekoks, or conjurors, as to be made to assist them in the difficulties of daily life, to cure disease, to ensure good luck on their hunting expeditions, and so forth. Men, as well as women, may become Angekoks, and yet all are not equally fitted for this mission. Adroitness, cunning, and some histrionic talent, are all needed to secure the amount of respect which is essential to the position. Uninitiated girls or boys who feel themselves particularly attracted by the mystic works of the Angekoks, become pupils of the existing seers. Their apprenticeship extends over several years, and admittance into the fold is attended with many secret ceremonies.

The most important of the spirits acknowledged by the Esquimaux is Tornahuksuak, the Giant Shadow. Disaster is his to inflict, as well as benefit to bestow; and he is believed by the North Greenlanders to exist solely on the land, having, according to the reports of the Angekoks, the figure of a man of supernatural size. Should an avalanche of stones, or some similar natural disturbance break alarmingly upon the calm of a summer day, several of the Innuits will exclaim simultaneously, in voices anxious and subdued, "Tornahuksuak! Tornahuksuak! he is wandering among the mountains." The Spirit of the Sea, who, according to tradition, is characterised by his long black tentacles, is known as Kokvoia; and there are besides many other spirits and mystic beings of an inferior class. In fact, there exists quite a wealth of superstition, about which the Esquimaux are so vague that I have despaired of collecting the myths and classifying them—a task made more impossible by the fact that so many of them are innocent products of the fertile imagination of individuals. How many Angekoks there are

among the two hundred and fifty Innuits at Smith's Sound it would be difficult to say; for much difference of opinion exists among the tribe as to who are to be called conjurors and who are not. It seemed to me that whoever can produce a little feeling and mysticism in their incantations, dabble in the profession whenever an opportunity is offered.

It is one thing, however, for one to call himself an Angekok, and another to be acknowledged as entitled to this distinction. Of those who can inspire their fellow-creatures with a feeling of veneration and respect there cannot be more than half a dozen in the tribe, of whom two are women. The youngest of the four male Angekoks, and the most distinguished, is Kayapaddu. He is about thirty-five years old, smiling and fat, with a jovial face, and only needs to put on the blue smoked spectacles that were presented to him by Mr. Peary to have the exact look of a good old-fashioned minister. During one of his spiritualistic *séances* the light of the oil lamps was subdued until one could hardly see one's

next-door neighbour, and Kayapaddu, drum in one hand and drumstick in the other, would

ONE OF THE FAIR SEX AND CHILD.

move forward, singing and beating upon his instrument; commencing his song in a low monotonous voice, he would gradually rise to a higher and higher pitch. Right and left his

body would sway in a growing paroxysm, and his long hair fluttering wildly in the air intensified the strange expression of his face, until he seemed to be suffering from all the plagues of Egypt. As time passed the perspiration would begin to pour from his forehead, he would press his hand to his head, now yelling, now moaning, now bursting into demoniacal laughter, while he invoked the spirits to arrive, the strange aerial beings who should bear his message to mightier powers. There were frequent changes in his voice: now it was his own, now that of the spirits. He became more and more noisy, gradually working his audience into such a state of nervous exaltation that they trembled with emotion, and some, chiefly the elders, began to excel him in the wildness of their cries. If it was to cast out some disease, or to save the life of some poor dying creature, he would continue these religious exercises hour after hour, rarely giving in until his patient was either dead as a stone, or showing unmistakable signs of improvement. In the former case it was of course said that recovery would have been

impossible under any circumstances—that some hostile spirit had already made the soul of the sick one captive ; in the latter the conjuror's reputation was increased to an extraordinary degree. That the audience at these religious functions believed spirits to be actually present, and communing with the Angekoks, is certain ; and for my part, I dare not doubt that the holy men themselves are in earnest, remembering the saying that he may tell a lie who believes in it himself.

That faith in amulets, and in objects with the power to protect their possessors against danger or injury, so universal throughout the world, we find also among the Smith's Sound Esquimaux. Usually these charms are bracelets of black, hairless sealskin, sometimes necklaces, sometimes ivory figures representing men or animals, sometimes little scraps of clothing that belonged to some deceased person. These relics are consecrated by muttering incantations over them—songs in unintelligible words ; and as a rule the elders decide what objects young people should collect for this sacred purpose.

When an Esquimau dies the survivors of the family have many customs to observe, to propitiate the spirits who are always ready to take offence. The dead man's name must not be mentioned; for some time after his decease they must give themselves over to lamentations, and those who have touched the departed or come into contact with his belongings have for a considerable period to observe certain rules of diet and dress. The corpse, before it is removed, is arrayed in full travelling costume, and is usually hauled out through the little opening by means of a harpoon line. And then, at a carefully chosen spot, generally some way removed both from the houses of the settlement and the beach, it is entombed in a cairn of loose stones. Occasionally the body is doubled up, the knees beneath the chin, and rolled in a skin to lessen the space required for interment. A house which death has visited is deserted after the body has been removed, and if it is ever again made use of it is, at all events, not until after the lapse of a considerable time. All those possessions of the dead, which it is

probable he will require on his long journey to the land of the souls, are deposited near the grave: the Esquimaux believe that the "souls" only of these articles will be utilised by the departed. And so, while the soul of man floats to the distant sunlight of heavenly hunting-fields, his dead clay sleeps on in the long rest of nature, which the icy breath of the north wind whispering between the stones during the protracted night of winter cannot disturb.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRAVEL TO MELVILLE BAY.

A DESCRIPTION of the sledge journey already referred to, to the coast of Melville Bay will bring these pages to a fit conclusion. I undertook the journey in the spring of 1894, with no companions besides some Innuits; and as the reader has by now some acquaintance with the country and its people, I think he will follow the events with more interest than would otherwise have been possible.

During the early days of April I made the necessary preparations for my journey, which for many reasons were not extensive. For my meat supply I was compelled to rely entirely on any game we might secure, and so it was of the utmost importance to me to ensure the companionship of a skilled native hunter, and who better than our friend Kolotengua?

My equipment consisted chiefly of a theodolite,

a thermometer, a watch, a compass, a telescope, charts, and tables. For provisions the usual supplies of pea-meal, tea, sugar, biscuits, and pork. Then there were two rifles with fifty cartridges, a small stone lamp which depended upon a supply of seal blubber, some reindeer skins, an axe, and a few extra skin-stockings and *kamiks*. By borrowing and bartering I got together a team of eight dogs; the sledge, which was made by Kolotengua and myself just before starting, was modelled after the fashion of those of the natives, with ivory shoeing beneath its runners. Everything was ready for our start by the morning of April 6th; and although the weather was somewhat doubtful, the sky being overcast and the air, meteorologically speaking, boding ill (thermometer at zero), we made a start in the course of the forenoon. Between the dark perpendicular mountain walls of the fjord the fog hung heavy and leaden-grey, though farther inland a sharp north-east wind was sweeping down from the naked hills and across the ice. By turns we sat on the sledge or ran behind, holding fast to the steering arms. We went at

a swinging trot across the crust-covered ice, the weather in the meanwhile clearing. The sun does not rise high so early in the spring, and we could scarcely appreciate any warmth from that source, but the length of time he remained above the horizon saved us from any cause of complaint; and indeed we needed a long day, for the distance that lay between us and the nearest Esquimau settlement on our road was sixty miles, and we quite meant to reach it before night, since our supper depended upon the hospitality of the natives.

It was near midnight when we arrived at the south-east point of Herbert Island, where our friends had settled. The place was called Oloschyni, and consisted of five snow-clad huts, of which only two were inhabited. Here we ran against Akpallia, just back from several weeks' bear-hunting south of Cape York. Before turning in for the night we feasted on bear-beef, boiled pork, and biscuits—the beef, by the way, was in a frozen condition. Throughout the night the kind old women were busy at work making me a new pair of sealskin *kamiks*, since they

would not hear of my starting on a long journey with the old boots I had on, out of which the toes threatened to escape. In return for this kindness I presented them with a fork of which only two prongs remained, and thirty-five matches.

The next morning there was a heavy fog; and since we had to steer our way across the opening of Whale Sound towards some of the huts on the south side, I thought we ought to await fair weather, as no guidance by compass could be taken from the chart, which here, as everywhere, was incomplete, and we might have to grope about for a long time on the south side of the Sound, should we chance to strike a wrong trail. But Kolotengua only smiled gently, and seemed to imply it was rather rough on him to make this suggestion that he should not know the roads of his own country even in a fog; and as my confidence in this child of nature was unlimited, we immediately set out for Netchilumi, the nearest inhabited spot. For hours we travelled through that fog, scarcely seeing the snow beneath our feet; but for all that Kolo-

tengua succeeded in making a bee-line for our goal. Some would probably say that he was directed in the right course by animal instinct, but this would be an insult to our good Esquimau friend. No; the human brain appears to be on the whole very similar, whether it is in the skull of the North Greenland Esquimau or in the angular cranium of an African pigmy, and the man could only have done what he did by means of practical observations. The fact is that the wind chops and changes very little on these coasts, and when the breeze has any strength at all it makes the fine loose snow whirl about like dust. In this way all the little snowflakes are moved around according to the invariable laws of nature, in their wanderings shaping themselves into different forms and figures, with such uniformity that long parallel ribs are usually heaped up on the surface of the snow. By taking care that the angle between these ridges and the desired line of march is continually the same, it is perfectly easy to steer one's course, and this was the method pursued in the present case by Kolotengua. On our journey across the inland

ice, Mr. Peary and I had also learnt to make use of this method in foggy weather; but in that far-off land of storm the indications are much more distinct. The surface there often resembles an ocean in a state of wild disturbance that has suddenly lost life and congealed into a cold and solid mass of ice.

In the afternoon we arrived at Netchilumi, where we were heartily received by the inhabitants of the place, and given lodgings with the senior hunter, Terrikotti. This man had quite a distinguished appearance. He was as stately as a man in ragged bearskin trousers and striking features possibly could be. We spent a very comfortable evening with him indeed. His good wife, without being asked, fried pork, and made tea for us, Kolotengua in the meantime singing weird songs, his rugged features lit up with the flickering light of an oil lamp.

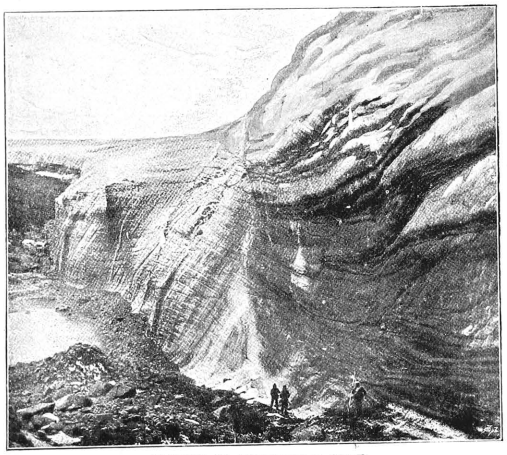
Meanwhile the master of the house and his friends were listening to an improvised lesson in geography, with the assistance of a Polar chart and an inflated bladder, which I hit upon

to explain the globular shape of the world. But when it gradually became clear that by this theory the inhabitants of the two opposite hemispheres walked about with feet pointing towards one another, the lesson was on the point of coming to an abrupt termination, since no one apparently was able to enter such wild fields of imagination. In vain the attraction of the earth was demonstrated by means of falling objects, and I was in despair, when suddenly a light seemed to dawn upon a young half-grown boy. He began to talk rapidly, expostulating and gesticulating with his fellow-countrymen, until there was not one present who did not accept the new theory.

The fog was denser than ever when we went outside the following morning, and a strong southerly wind having sprung up, we remained weather-bound for a whole day. Meanwhile we made some investigations of the locality, collected some minerals, and set four women to work making us new trousers from a handy supply of young bearskins. This addition to our wardrobe converted us into

North Greenland dandies of the very first water.

When we again set out the sun was shining brightly and the cold was intense. Much to



GLACIER IN INGLEFIELD GULF.

our delight we were informed by our host that he would accompany us as far as Cape York, a distance of a hundred and fifty miles. During the previous autumn his son had left his *kajak* at that place, and he wished to bring it home

before the ice broke up. Terrikotti took his wife with him, and they both looked upon the journey in the light of a pleasure trip. He had seven fast and powerful dogs, unusually well trained, so that at a call from their master they would turn to the right or left, stop or quicken their speed, search for seals, or run with their noses to the ground on the look-out for bear-tracks or other indications of game. The journey was made livelier and more interesting by this addition to our company; for now that the natives were in the majority they threw off a great deal of their reserve. They followed their ancient customs, travelled in their own way, and unconsciously threw light on their religious views, looking upon the white man as one of themselves.

In the course of the day we passed a tongue of land stretching between Whale Sound and Booth Inlet, terminating in Cape Parry, which at the time was surrounded by open water, and was of course inaccessible to any one travelling by sledge. We had to turn inland, therefore, and in this way reached the height of about a thousand feet

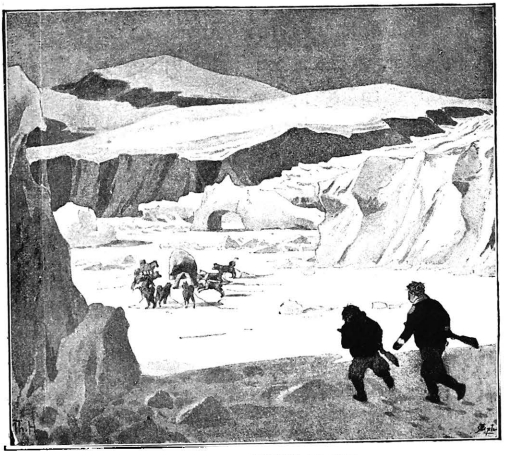
above sea level. Here the weather looked very different from that of the lower regions, and we could barely fight our way through dense drifting snow and fog, and against a biting wind which literally pricked our faces. But this did not last long, for as soon as we had passed the highest point of the snow-dome, with which the tabula-shaped promontory was covered, we met with a fair wind, and rushed at terrific speed down a narrow deep valley, through which we reached the sunlit glaciers and icebergs.

Far beyond these icebergs and iridescent snowfields the sea lay extended, dark blue, and wonderfully beautiful, glittering and glowing where the sun's rays were reflected on the rippling swell. Somewhat depressing was the sight of it to one who was moving about with a great home-sickness at heart. The memory of the distant "ocean-encircled fatherland" came upon me with overwhelming force, creating a dreamy and melancholy mood. When I stopped and gazed wistfully at that blue water, my native companions asked with some astonishment what I was looking for, and I found it hard to explain

to them the thoughts that occupied my mind. Yet these sentimental people intuitively grasped the meaning of my words, and the old man exclaimed again and again, in a low voice, "*Ayonia!*" ("How pitiful," "how sad!")

Having descended from our overland crossing, we continued along the flat coast of Booth Inlet, passing on the way Fitzclarence Rock, a small coast island about one thousand feet in height, with gigantic sections of the mountain broken away by the wet and frost of a thousand years. These are heaped up in such quantity and with such regularity around the whole island that it lifts itself above the flat ice-fields as an immense dark cone. Just south of this we had to turn inland, the ice having been broken up by the violent equinoctial gales, and drifted far into the partly-open Baffin's Bay. Fortunately the country was comparatively flat here, so we were able to continue our journey without hindrance, in spite of the sharp stones that occasionally protruded far enough through the ice-crust to tear the polished ivory shoeings from the sledge.

Shortly after midday we lighted on some fresh reindeer tracks, and, as we had no meat for either ourselves or the hungry dogs, a deer or two would prove most acceptable. The



SNOW-HUT ON THORN ISLAND.

natives were wild with excitement to get off, so I supplied each with a rifle and employed myself in the meantime by investigating some quartz crags in search of minerals. Terrikotti's wife remained behind to look after the dogs,

which of course could not be left alone, for if once these trained wolves got away with the sledges through those narrow mountain passes our entire outfit would have been scattered in a moment to the winds. In about ten minutes I heard a report close by, and soon caught sight of the little squat figure of Kolotengua * on the top of a low ridge; he was gesticulating wildly for us to bring up the sledges. In a moment we were by his side, and there sure enough was a reindeer hind lying dead. A meal followed, which was partaken of by four human beings and fifteen dogs without distinction of rank, except that the human beings knew enough to appropriate all the choicest morsels. In the end only a small steak was left, which was slung upon the sledge along with the reindeer's paunch, which was too much of a delicacy to be left behind. We did not make much further progress that day, and after having been continually

* Kolotengua was upwards of 5 ft. 3 in.; otherwise the average height of the Smith's Sound Esquimaux is, with regard to the man, 5 ft. 1¾ in., and with regard to the woman 4 ft. 8¾ in.

on the move for thirteen hours, halted about seven o'clock in the evening, still on the north side of Whalstenholm Sound, where we constructed our little snow-huts in a suitable drift.

Terrikotti's wife attended to the cooking; and every now and then, to find out whether the water was hot enough, she thrust her flat hand into the vessel, a method of registering temperature to which I could at first hardly reconcile myself, but by philosophising a little over the matter I came to the conclusion that after all this was no worse than taking up in the hand a piece of meat which another was to eat. I therefore fell into her ways without demur.

The weather continuing bright, we were off at 7.30 the following morning. Our road now lay across Whalstenholm Sound. We had intended to pass to the west of Saunders Island, which lies about midway in the Sound; but on arriving there we were checked by open water, and had to shift round to the other side. Before doing so we took the precaution to test the young translucent ice which lay beneath the perpendicular mountain side, but it was of no

avail, for the ice was undoubtedly too weak to bear us; and I was not sorry when this decision was finally arrived at, since my previous experiences on young ice were anything but pleasant.

Passing to the east of the island, we came upon a fresh track of three bears—a male, a female, and a cub. We followed them for a long time, taking all sorts of twists and turns across the monotonous stretch of ice, until at last the sun's orb touched the snow-white horizon in the north-west, slowly burying itself behind distant icebergs. In vain the natives swept the plain with my telescope—an instrument they greatly admired—and finally we abandoned the pursuit and resumed our former course.

A little later we passed Cape Athol, where the ice was practically bare of snow, so that we could increase our speed. After sixteen hours' continuous travel we halted at midnight at a place called Igludukugni. Throughout the day the dogs had kept up a sharp run, and, including the ground we covered when in pursuit of the bears, we must have travelled more than sixty miles. Though we had expected to find natives

at our new halting-place, all that met our eyes in the gloom of that midnight hour was a long deserted and half-demolished snow-hut, which grinned at us mockingly, with its big black holes formed in the soot-lined wall. The repairs of this hut were immediately taken in hand by Kolotengua and myself, while the old man and his wife started digging in the snow crust beneath a large rock close by, as, according to all rules, they were sure to find some blubber there for the use of any travellers who might pass that way. They dug long and deep; and, sure enough, there lay the blubber in considerable quantities. The man hacked part of it into small pieces to feed the dogs, the goodwife meanwhile preparing some of it for our lamps, making the morsels soft and supple by chewing them a little between her teeth, before she arranged them on the lamp dish.

In a short time we were once more comfortably lodged in a cosy hut, merrily chatting over the day's adventures. We had been near tasting roasted fox that evening, for just before reaching our night's quarters we had an exciting and

very amusing chase after a couple of Arctic Reynards, which escaped us by the skin of their teeth. The whole performance reminded one very much of a fashionable fox-hunt in England —the very last thing one would expect to be reminded of in Polar regions; but really the only difference was that instead of horseback we followed the chase by sledge. When the nights are light the small Polar foxes often take long journeys over the silent sea of ice, on the look-out for what may remain from the meals of bears; and it was two such speculators that we fell in with. When our dogs caught sight of the two dots which represented two blue foxes, we barely managed to fling ourselves upon the sledges in time to take part in the sport. Away went the foxes ahead, and away went the dog teams after them; but the sledges retarded the dogs so greatly that one of the foxes was immediately lost to sight, while the other kept straight ahead, only slightly increasing his lead. Can this be permitted by my sporting friends, who have been watching the issue with such excitement? Quick as

thought Kolotengua seizes his knife, bends forward, and with a single cut severs the traces of our swiftest dog. At the same moment our competitor on the second sledge follows suit, and like two arrows the dogs fly forward, gaining on the fox at every stride. It is our dog, however, who holds the lead, and our competitor, not content with this, immediately releases another long-bodied, green-striped fellow on their tracks. With shouts and cries we cheer on the dogs, and a laughing, jabbering, screaming dispute is carried on as to the chances of the chase. It was our dog who kept the lead; but the terrified little fox, running for dear life, escaped at last to the top of a large iceberg, where he was safe from dogs and rifles.

Next morning the weather was still clearing, and the sun about noon became so warm that here and there a solitary seal would pop up through his tiny breathing-hole to bask in the delicious warmth. It was midnight before we arrived at Cape York. We had been on the road for fifteen-and-a-half hours, and had

covered fifty miles. As we came to a halt in front of the stone huts of the settlement the thermometer registered twenty-three degrees below zero, and, half-starving as we were, the cold seemed doubly severe. We were received with the usual frank hospitality, and after a hasty meal fell asleep, from which we were not aroused until late in the following forenoon. We halted for three days at the settlement, partly to give the dogs a rest, and partly to await a change of weather. Time was very heavy on our hands during these days of waiting, for North Greenland huts become rather narrow after awhile to "the child of better days," when he is caged up in them for any length of time. When we were not asleep conversation was our one resource, and many were the questions mutually asked and answered, not only about the customs, legends, and traditions of the natives, but also about the distant southern countries from which I hailed. I believe that the Esquimaux of Cape York got a particularly good idea of my own old rocky land, with its whispering forests and green hills, and different

climate. Again and again I had to tell them about Norway.

In the evenings there were interesting musical soirées, given in some hut, where the whole population gathered for the occasion. The gut-string drum was, of course, in full operation; hysterical witches and old mystery men gave in turn their monotonous songs and incantations.

At last, early on the morning of April 15th, we continued our journey eastward in clear weather; and it was with a sigh of relief that we lost sight of the settlement, the small Polar parasites having been uncommonly busy during the nights. Our course now lay in the direction of Melville Bay Island, where I hoped to obtain a good view of the unknown inland regions, should the state of the ice make it impossible for us to reach them. Kolotengua and I were once more by ourselves, the old couple who had accompanied us thus far having stayed behind at Cape York.

In the forenoon we passed Bushman Island, situated about twelve miles east of the settlement. Even before we had reached it I became

aware that the coast lying just to the north was not part of the mainland, but, on the contrary, belonged to two rather large hitherto unknown islands, the firstfruits of the comparatively rich geographical harvest which the following day's journey was to bring me in. In the course of the afternoon, as we gradually moved farther eastward, we saw several large glaciers the existence of which I had always suspected along the north-east coast of Melville Bay. In fact, vast active glaciers lined the coast from Cape York as far as the eye could reach eastward.

We halted at six o'clock that afternoon, having covered more than forty miles, and erected the usual snow-huts for the night. Our position was directly south of Cape Melville, and little more than eight miles from the shore. The ice which we crossed on this first march from Cape York was very smooth, and quite different from what I had anticipated. With the exception of an ice-belt about one mile wide, the surface of which was a chaos of irregular and angular ice-blocks heaped in majestic disorder

to a height of from six to eight feet, the whole of the road was level and smooth. This was no doubt largely due to Kolotengua's remarkable skill as an ice navigator, for ever on either side there seemed a rugged and impenetrable wilderness, whilst the passage immediately in front was clear.

After a night's rest we started at eight o'clock, in calm but somewhat misty weather. At noon land could be seen, though indistinctly, to the north-west, but by the afternoon everything was hidden again by a dense fog. We stopped again at five o'clock in the afternoon, having made thirty miles; at the time it was snowing heavily. The ice we had crossed during this stage had been generally smooth, but we had been checked by that sand-like snow which so consistently inconvenienced us during our travels in these regions. Next morning the ground was covered by a few inches of freshly-fallen snow, but as fog still continued, no land could be sighted. About twelve o'clock, when everything looked utterly hopeless and discouraging, the mist suddenly lifted like a gigantic curtain,

opening up a magnificent panorama to our view. Tall, dark coast mountains, immense glaciers, and lofty bluish snow-peaks, all charmingly lit up by the radiance of the midday sun, lay extended in wild disorder over the white plain. This was our first glimpse of the hitherto unknown coast.

Continuing the east-south-easterly course which we had taken from the morning, at about 6 p.m. we reached a small solitary island, where we decided to stop for a day or two to make observations. This island, which had previously been sighted by English whalers, had in the centre a cone-shaped rock some three to four hundred feet high, offering a splendid point from which to take a series of bearings of the glaciers and promontories of the coast; so we put up for the night in our usual snow hut, built at the bottom of a long mountain cleft on the south side of the island. Next morning the weather was eminently suitable for our survey, for the air was transparent, bringing the most distant mountains within close range. The island was found to be in 75° 41′ 44″ N. lat., and the

variation of the compass was 88½° W. I also sketched the outline of the entire coast, embracing several new and important islands.

While I was thus occupied on shore, my native friend was out seal hunting; both we and the dogs were badly in want of meat, and we were, besides, without any blubber for our lamp. Within an hour he succeeded in killing a fair-sized seal. From my point of vantage I watched him through my telescope as he, flat on his stomach, was crawling, or rather dragging himself, towards the sleeping seal. To my eyes it looked as if he were close enough to touch it with his hand, but still I heard no report from his rifle. At last a small cloud of smoke rose into the air, and at the same instant Kolotengua had secured his prey with his knife, and for a couple of days at least we were relieved from all household anxiety.

Of the coast-line extending about a hundred and thirty miles, bounded to the north-west by Cape Melville and to the south-east by Red Head, which I could overlook from the peak of the small mountain terrace at Thorn Island, more

than ninety miles were composed of larger or smaller glacier frontages. These glaciers may, without exception, be looked upon as some of the more active ice-streams. Their broken and utterly irregular appearance, together with the immense numbers of bergs which spread along the coast, lead incontestably to this conclusion. When to the glaciers visible from Thorn Island are added those I found between Cape Melville and Cape York, and also the colossal ice-stream, the north side of which could only faintly be seen southwards of Red Head, and which probably reached down towards the regions of Devil's Thumb, there must have been altogether a succession of glaciers extending over a hundred and fifty miles, making a valuable outlet for the ice masses of the interior country, and of the highest importance in the natural economy of the locality.

The glaciers of Melville Bay are the largest and most complex of their kind as yet observed on the Greenland coast. Most of them are found very close to each other. With regard to some of the larger ice-streams, as for example

King Oscar's, Peary's, and Rink's glaciers, the intervening land which divides their boundaries is comparatively so insignificant that they might be described as constituting two immense glaciers. With respect to the geological character of the coast formation, which occasionally projects through the covering-glaciers either as dominating promontories or solitary peaks, nothing of unusual interest could be discovered. Volcanic rocks of dark colour, contrasting strongly with the white snow-dome, were of frequent occurrence. The perpendicular mountain sides nearest the free ice had generally a height of some two thousand feet, the land rising in the background to a much higher altitude, so that the uppermost snow-peak at Cape Walker had approximately a height of three thousand feet, whilst a lofty, shining dome situated about twelve miles from the coast of the north-west of the bay, and christened by me Haffner Mountain, rose to about five thousand feet above sea level. At Cape Melville there was a comparatively long stretch of lowlands; but of what nature I could not possibly determine from where I stood.

Having made my observations, I erected a small cairn, and deposited there a tin box containing a brief notice of our visit. Just before retiring for the night we were surprised by the sight of the first snow-sparrow, which afforded us a topic of conversation during supper, when we repeatedly assured each other of the rapid approach of summer. Finding the next morning that a complete change had taken place in the weather, and that a strong south-east gale was blowing, filling the air with fine drifting snow, we were compelled to remain through the day caged in our hut. A short extract from my diary of that evening may be interesting :—

"In the course of the day Kolotengua has told me many remarkable things of the Innuits when sledge-travelling; and his narratives have strengthened my belief that no obstacles exist that could hinder an Esquimau from making a journey on which he had set his heart. It therefore seems highly improbable, as certain Arctic authors have opined, that the Esquimaux at Smith's Sound have been cut off from intercourse with their more southerly brethren by the

glaciers which have been formed comparatively recently in Melville Bay. As to the route by which the Esquimaux originally journeyed from Smith's Sound to the southerly parts of Greenland, it is my opinion that some of them must have travelled across the north of the country, and southwards down the east coast ; and others, possibly the greater number, have gone southward across Melville Bay, continuing along the west coast. It is also my definite opinion that the Esquimaux race is of Mongolian, and therefore Asiatic origin. Behring Straits must, therefore, have been the road by which they primarily arrived. There are others, however, who are inclined to the belief that they came to Greenland and the American Polar regions across the North Pole itself, having worked their way from the New Siberian Islands over numerous conjectured groups of islands farther off."

We now shaped our course towards the north-east corner of Melville Bay, an unknown district where I hoped to find much of interest, and also to get some sport. We set out at 8 a.m., steering for the perpendicular mountain ridge

which, according to the faint indication of the chart, must be Cape Murdoch. As we approached, however, we discovered that this mountain ridge did not form any projection in the coast-line, but on the contrary stood back, forming a solitary *nunatak* in the mass of the immense glacier, whose tall and perpendicular ice-frontage absolutely blocked our way. We halted at 1.30 at a small island lying at the foot of this ice-wall, where we determined to establish our quarters for a day and a night. While Kolotengua was busy building a snow-hut, I climbed several hundred feet, in order to take our bearings; and presently my companion joined me, thinking it would be interesting to get a good view of this deserted corner of the coast, which no merry caravans of Esquimaux had ever reached; but even to that easily-contented native the place had no attractions. He shook his head, exclaiming in a tone full of conviction, "Pryungit-oksua nuna manni" ("the country about here will not do").

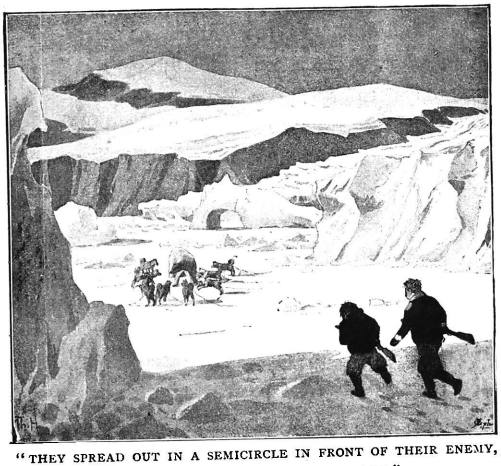
We constructed a little cairn when my observations were finished, and returned to the

hut. A few yards away, in the shadow of an iceberg, the snow was riddled with several deep holes, where a bear no doubt had been digging for seals. We saw traces of this same bear on the top of the island, which we ourselves had reached with the utmost difficulty. According to Kolotengua, it must have been the search for grass or moss which tempted him there, for bears enjoy a certain proportion of vegetable food. While at supper we were disturbed by the subdued barking of the dogs outside. On investigation it proved to be a false alarm, but on turning back towards the hut we discovered that one of us in his haste had pulled down half the house, so we had plenty to do in repairing our building, and in extricating the remains of our meal from beneath the ruins.

At seven o'clock we continued our journey in calm misty weather. We had scarcely been two hours on the road when, coming round a great tongue of land, we fell in with a large ice-bear not more than eight hundred yards in front of us. The dogs immediately got up

steam. We swept across the snow, and were close upon him, when Kolotengua cut the traces, and in a moment the dogs had brought the beast to bay. During the brief interval whilst I and my companion were reaching the field of battle, I had a good opportunity of watching the splendid tactics of the dogs. So soon as they had overtaken the bear they spread out in a semicircle in front of their enemy, snapping at his long, coarse hair, and showing such skill in their manœuvres that I had no doubt they clearly understood the issue of the battle—breakfast or no breakfast. Each time the bear lifted a large paw to crush one of his assailants, the dog would save himself by a quick jump, those on the other side making the most of the interruption to forward their own attack. A couple of well-directed shots from our Winchester rifles soon brought the battle to a close, and within an hour our sledge was packed with a handsome bear-skin, as well as a large quantity of meat. The dogs, too, had a much appreciated reward in the shape of a substantial meal, which they, poor beasts, very badly wanted.

Our course now lay towards an island about ten miles south-west of our previous day's camping-place. We arrived there just about



"THEY SPREAD OUT IN A SEMICIRCLE IN FRONT OF THEIR ENEMY, SNAPPING AT HIS LONG, COARSE HAIR."

noon, and halted to take an observation, the weather having cleared. In the afternoon we continued our course, finally resting for the night at 5.30 p.m., after an interesting but very fatiguing day. We had advanced a shorter

distance than usual—about twenty-six miles—for the road was heavy with soft deep snow.

After a few more days' march, in which we were very fortunate as to weather and road, we found ourselves safely back at Cape York Settlement. Here we resolved to remain for two days to rest our dogs. The next day being bright and summery, all dwellers in the settlement, large and small, spent their time basking in the sunshine, on a small open space below the houses, where the ground was closely strewn with bones and other refuse. The air was certainly not very hot, but on the lee-side of the snow-screen erected to keep off the mountain draught, and with the sun shining down upon our rosy faces, well-dressed as we were in bearskin, we were able to rejoice in the return of spring. In the centre of this lively group was a large piece of walrus-meat, which had certainly "an ancient and a fishlike smell." Close by was an axe, which was requisitioned whenever one of the party required a fresh helping. The meat was hard-frozen, and consequently difficult to cut up. Beside the

meat was placed a lump of crystal-clear ice, from which the assembly derived their supply of water, for which purpose a small hollow had been cut in the block. At the bottom was placed a stone about the size of a man's fist, and on this stone was gaily burning a piece of blubber and moss. By degrees, as the ice melted on the inner side of the excavation, the water gathered at the bottom in a tiny transparent basin, from which it was sucked up by one thirsty mortal after another through reindeer bone from which the marrow had been removed. A festive mood pervaded the company, and if no speeches were delivered or toasts proposed, there was an air of liveliness in the conversation and a determination to be merry shown by young and old alike, which confirmed me in the idea which I had already formed about the contented nature of these people in their peculiar station of life.

The next day the natives got up a sham bear-fight for our amusement. Two boys carried off a bear-skin to a neighbouring iceberg. One of them returned in a few minutes, and after a short

interval the other appeared from his hiding-place, wrapped in the large skin, and looking at a distance by no means unlike a real bear, on whose skin of golden lustre the sun danced with every movement of the clumsy form. The alarm is given by one of the older men, and with considerable talent the make-believe hunters allow themselves to be thrown into a state of intense excitement. At the same moment the dogs also discover the enemy, half a dozen sledges are made ready, and in an incredibly short time all the assailants are advancing towards the bear, who wisely reveals his real nature several seconds before the enraged dogs get within reach.

Early in the morning my friend and I had to say good-bye to the place and its hospitable people. At the last moment, however, we were surprised by the news that all the families present had determined to accompany us on the road. An irresistible desire to travel had suddenly seized these free and independent people, and why not satisfy the longing immediately? The resolution had been taken in a moment, and

in half an hour the whole settlement was on the move, carrying with them all their stores of skins, harpoons, lamps, babies, blubber, and meat.

The number of sledges, including our own, amounted to nine, drawn by fifty-three powerful dogs. The whole caravan presented a variegated and picturesque group, in striking contrast to its white quiet setting. We were not, however, to enjoy this native escort for long, and during that day and the following they gradually dropped away along the coast to their skin-tents, in which they would live now that the spring had come in succession to the dreary days of winter.

The first evening after our departure from Cape York we halted at the head of a small bay, where we passed the night and the greater part of the next day, which was cold and stormy. We took up our quarters in some abandoned huts, which we made habitable by means of two ski staves and some seal-skins. Towards evening the weather improved, and as the sun was to remain for that night the first time

above the horizon, we determined to change night into day, and to resume our journey at once. As the road was good we moved along quickly, arriving at the west end of Saunders Island at 4 a.m. Here we slept in a remarkable grotto, forming a gigantic hall in the mountain wall, the floor of which was scarcely one foot above sea-level at high-water. On the road we had passed the Akpan Settlement, on the south-west side of the same island, which was at the time deserted. I mention the place because there, as well as on the continent directly south of it, remains are to be found of some stone huts, which at the present time are covered by the sea at high water. In both places, therefore, the natives have been compelled to erect new dwellings for themselves in the rear of their old habitations, whose sites had been claimed by the ocean. Similar proofs of the sinking of the country along these coasts had been noticed a little farther to the south by the famous American explorer, Dr. Kane.

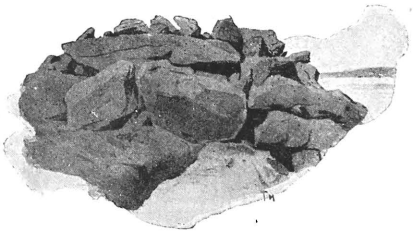
On the evening of the 29th we left Saunders

Island in bright weather. We determined to take the overland route to Whale Sound, to avoid the journey round Cape Parry. On the road we succeeded in killing a hare, which in its white coat made an excellent target for our rifles, as it sat perched upon a dark heap of stones. I need not say what a relief it was to taste this fresh meat, for in those days we were often living from hand to mouth, and our provision bag had long been more empty than was strictly pleasant.

We now resolved to attempt to reach the south side of Whale Sound before halting again; and we finally arrived there after a fatiguing journey of twenty hours. For the last time we lighted the oil lamp, cooked what remained of our hare, and enjoyed a good long sleep beneath the half-ruined roof of an uninhabited hut.

Thirteen miles now separated us from the winter quarters of the Expedition, a distance which we covered with ease on the following day, May 13th. Thus our little expedition came to a close; and if its geographical results were not of any far-reaching importance, it may,

however, possibly serve to show future explorers the road to one of the most favourable places upon the surface of the earth for a careful study of the giant glaciers, the laws of their movements, and the many other phenomena which attach to them.



AN ESQUIMAU GRAVE.

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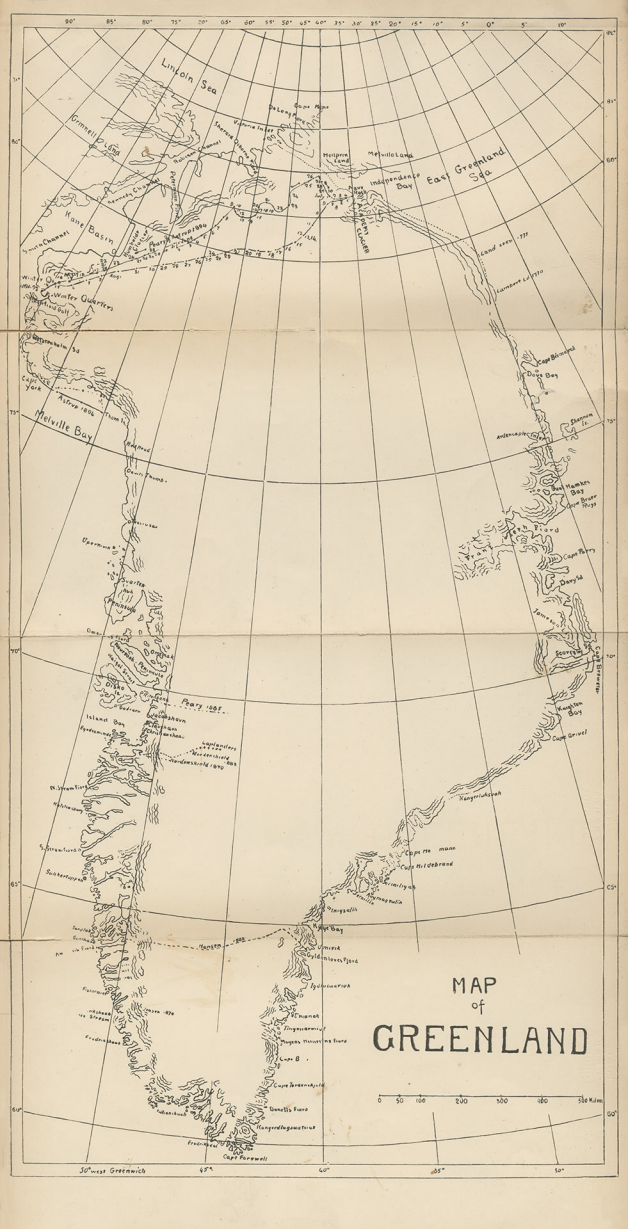
MAP
of
GREENLAND
Lincoln Sea
Kennell Land
Hans Basin
Melville Bay
Independence Bay
East Greenland Sea
Melville Land
Cape Bismarck
Cape Farewell
Frederikshaab
Godthaab
Sukkertoppen
Holsteinborg
Egedesminde
Jakobshavn
Ivigtut
Julianehaab
Cape Desolation
Cape Farewell
Cape Mitchell
Cape Gerard
Scoresby Sund
Cape Brewster
Cape Hamilton
Cape Dalton
Cape Bismarck
Cape Farewell
0 50 100 200 300 400 500 Miles
30° west Greenwich
65°
60°
55°
50°