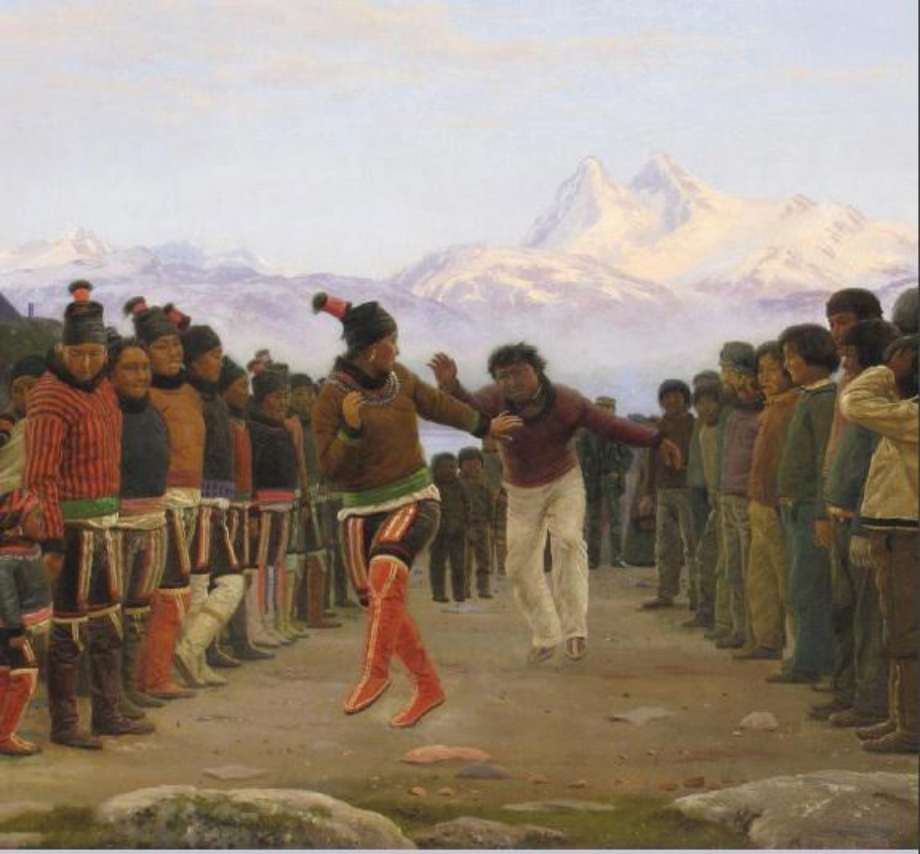


The World's Story

Iceland, Greenland, The Poles

VOLUME NINETEEN

EVA MARCH TAPPAN

The World's Story

A History of the World in Story, Song and Art

Volume 19
Iceland, Greenland, The Poles

Edited by Eva March Tappan

Libraries of Hope

The World's Story
A History of the World
In Story, Song and Art

Volume 19
Iceland, Greenland, The Poles

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Printed in the United States of America

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ICELAND

I

IN SAGA TIMES

HISTORICAL NOTE

ICELAND has been called the Island of Fire, and the name is most appropriate, for not only was the country formed by the action of fire, but it is to-day the home of volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, lava, ashes, scoriæ, and earthquakes, intermingled with glaciers, fields of snow, and ice-covered mountains.

Iceland was visited by the Celts in the eighth century, but the first permanent settlement was made in 874, by a Norwegian chieftain named Ingolf. Harald Fairhair was then on the throne of Norway, and his subjects were so indignant at his severity that colony after colony left the country and made homes for themselves on the Icelandic shores.

After about half a century, a sort of union was formed by the various settlements, and until 1261 the island was a republic. This was the Golden Age of Iceland, and the little country flourished commercially and intellectually. During this period Greenland was discovered and settled and the continent of America was visited. (See Volume XII, "The Great Voyage of Leif Erikson.") How much knowledge Columbus may have gained from the Icelandic records is still a question. About the year 1000, Christianity was introduced, chiefly at the point of the sword, by the energetic sovereign, King Olaf of Norway.

The national assembly, the Althing, met in the open air at Thingvalla; and here it continued to meet up to the year 1800, when it removed to Reykjavik.

HOW THE SAGAS CAME TO BE WRITTEN

BY SABINE BARING-GOULD

ICELAND never was, and it is not now, a much-peopled island. The farmhouses are for the most part far apart, and the farms are of very considerable extent, because, owing to the severity of the climate, very little pasturage is obtained over a wide extent of country for the sheep and cattle. The population lives round the coast, on the fiords or creeks of the sea, or on the rivers that flow into these fiords. The center of the island is occupied by a vast waste of ice-covered mountain, and desert black as ink strewn with volcanic ash and sand, or else with a region of erupted lava that is impassable, because in cooling it has exploded, and forms a country of bristling spikes and gulfs and sharp edges, very much like the wreck of a huge ginger-beer bottle factory.

What are now farmhouses were the halls and mansions of families of noble descent. Indeed, the original settlers in Iceland were the nobles of Norway who left their native land to avoid the tyranny of Harald Fairhair, who tried to crush their power so as to make himself a despotic king in the land.

These Norse nobles came in their boats to Iceland, bringing with them their wives, children, their thralls or slaves, and their cattle; and they settled all round the coast. The present Icelanders are descended from these first colonists.

Now, the history of Iceland for a few hundred years

consists of nothing but the history of the quarrels of these great families. Iceland was without any political organization, but it had an elected lawman or judge, and every year the heads of the families rode to Thingvalla, a plain in the southwest, where they brought their complaints, carried on their lawsuits, and had them settled by the judge. There was no army, no navy, no government in Iceland for a long time; also no foreign wars, and no internal revolutions.

These noble families settled in the valleys and upon the fiords thought a good deal of themselves, and they carefully preserved, at first orally, then in writing, the record of their pedigrees, and also the tradition of the famous deeds of their great men.

In summer there is no night; in winter, no day. In winter there is little or nothing to be done but sit over the fire, sing songs, and tell yarns. Now, in winter the Icelanders told the tales of the brave men of old in their families, and so the tradition was handed on from father to son, the same stories told every winter, till all the particulars became well known. At the same time there can be no doubt that little embellishments were added, some exaggerations were indulged in, and here and there the grand deed of some other man was grafted into the story of the family hero. About two hundred or two hundred and fifty years after the death of Grettir, his history was committed to writing, and then it became fixed — nothing further was added to it, and we have his story after having traveled down over two hundred years as a tradition. That was plenty of time for additions and emendations, and the hobgoblin and ghost stories that come into his life are some of these embellishments. But

the main facts of his life are true history. We are able to decide this by comparing his story with those of other families in the same part of the island, and to see whether they agree as to dates, and as to the circumstances narrated in them.

HOW THE EARLY ICELANDERS DRESSED

BY J. FULFORD VICARY

THE dress of the Northmen, from the paucity of material, was restricted within certain limits, but beyond this it varied as much as taste in dress does in the present day. The source from which information can be obtained is the sagas themselves, and, as the reference to dress therein is necessarily of a casual character, only a patchwork description can be afforded; but, like patches, it can be joined into a whole to form a picture, although of a varied character.

Next to the skin a *skyrta*, or *serkr*, — that is, a shirt, — was worn, and this was made of linen for the richer people, and coarse woolen for the poorer class. It was drawn on over the head, and the opening at the neck must not be too large, otherwise it might be the cause of divorce. It was fastened at the neck with a clasp or stud. The shirt-tails should not be seen, says the "Rongespeil," or the saga on manners, and gives an injunction: "Cut your shirt by a good bit shorter than your kirtle, as no respectable man wears flax or hemp."

Inside drawers or breeches of linen were used, and were generally slept in. When these were dispensed with, and only one pair of leg-coverings used, they were tied over the foot, and Gothic prisoners of war are so depicted in the Colonna Trajana in Rome. The cut of trousers varied; they were often wide in the leg, but it was considered that when narrow they afforded a

smarter appearance. Hose were thought a more stately dress. They were long stockings, over which short breeches were drawn. The hose were sometimes of cloth, skins, or leather, and, as they covered the foot, were like a long boot reaching to the thighs, and spurs were attached to the heels.

Shoes were generally worn, and were made high up the ankle or low on the foot according to the wearer's pleasure. They were sometimes ornamented with fringe or tassels. In King Olaf's time, it is mentioned in Bjorn Hitdælekæmpe's saga that it was the custom to wear straps, which were drawn from the shoe about the leg up to the knee, and that only men of the more distinguished class wore them.

The outer dress was a *kyrtill*, or frock, made like a shirt. It was drawn in at the waist with a *gjörd*, or belt, which was often of a costly character, embroidered with gold and precious stones. From it hung a knife and a purse. The frock was fastened with a clasp at the neck. Gloves were used, chiefly of deerskin, often embroidered with gold. Mittens were much worn; they were of woolen cloth, lined with down.

Over the kirtle a cape or short cloak was worn, and this article of dress varied greatly in cut and color. The cape most in vogue was called *skikkja*, and appears to have been without sleeves or armholes. It was fastened across the breast with clasps, or buckles, or was tied. This article of dress is frequently mentioned in the sagas as being selected for a present, and was then usually of scarlet cloth, with gold fringe or costly fur.

Hats were made of felt, and so wide in the brim that they covered the face, and these were white or gray.

Hats, however, were in use called Russian or Danish hats, but it is not clear what peculiar shape they possessed. Worsted or silk caps of the nightcap cut were common. They were also made of bear or sheep skin.

The *treyja*, or jacket, was introduced later; and this fashion came first from Germany, and found its way to the North.

Kufl was a sort of overcoat furnished with a hood and sleeves, and was worn by both men and women. *Hekla* resembled the *kufl*, and was often of costly stuff. It is not clear that it differed in cut from the cowl of the monks.

The *feldr* was an overcloak much in use. It was made very large, and lined for warmth, often both sides, with sheepskins. Sometimes it was lined with cloth of different colors. Its value was according to its size. Its usual length was six feet, and three feet broad. It was large enough to be drawn over the head when sitting, and to cover the body when lying down. The breadth is given as quoted, but as in the "Gragas" it is stated that it should be capable of being folded thirteen times across (the price varied with the number of folds), there is a contradiction. The *feldr* was a garment for severe weather.

The color of clothes was the natural color of the wool, or dyed blue or scarlet. The women of saga time were adepts as dyers. White woolen cloth was generally worn by the thralls. The dress of the vikings is described in the sagas of as bright colors as a salmon-fly for Norwegian rivers. Egil Skallagrimsson is described as riding to the Thing with a flock of men with bright shields. He wore a blue cloak, had a golden helmet, a shield inlaid

with gold, and a spear, the shaft of which was ornamented with gold beaten into it. He was girded with a costly sword. In the saga of Njal and his sons, Kare Sölmundsson is described as standing by the mast of his ship with a helmet of gold and a gold-inlaid spear. He wore a *kyrtill* of silk, and his hair was full and fair. Also in the same saga, when Njal's sons set out to slay Thraen for a blood-feud, Skarphedinn and his brothers are mentioned as well as Kare Sölmundsson. Skarphedinn went first, wearing a blue *kyrtill*, bearing a shield, and with his axe on his shoulder. Then came Helge, in a red *kyrtill*, with a helmet on his head, and a red shield on which a stag was painted. Kare Sölmundsson wore a silk jacket; his helmet and shield were gilt, and upon the latter was depicted a lion. Thraen was killed by a blow from Skarphedinn's axe, which cut down his skull to the teeth.

Another picture of Skarphedinn is when he attended the Althing. He wore a blue *kyrtill*, striped breeches, high-heeled black shoes, and a silver belt round his waist. He had the battle-axe in his hand with which he had slain Thraen, and a light shield. He wore a silk cap, and his hair hung down behind his ears.

Another bright coloring is that of Olaf Pa, or the Peacock, when he visited his grandfather Myrkjartan, King of Ireland. "Olaf was forward in his ship, and was thus clad: he had breast-armor, a gold-inlaid helmet on his head; he was girt with a sword, the hilt of which was ornamented with gold nails. In his hand he had a long spear, the shaft of which was carved. He carried a red shield, on which was a gilded lion. When the Irish saw this armor, they fled to a village."

Another sketch from the sagas is that of Bolle Bollesson on his return from Miklagard, or Constantinople, as related in the Laxdæler's saga. Bolle was such a dandy that he would not use any other clothes except scarlet and fur. His arms were inlaid with gold. He rode with twelve men dressed in scarlet, on gilded saddles. He was himself clothed in the dress of costly furs given him by the King of Miklagard. His sword Fodbider, or Footbiter, was by his side; its scabbard and hilt were decorated with gold. His helmet was of the same metal. He bore a red shield, on which was a knightly device; and in his hand he carried a dagger, as was the fashion in foreign lands.

Ornaments to fasten the dress were used by men, as clasps, studs, and buckles of silver, gold, or a mixture of both metals. Rings of silver or gold were in common use. There were finger-rings, neck-rings, and armlets. The patterns were rough, but never in bad taste, and those of Byzantine model were ingenious in pattern, and at the present day there is nothing better in gold ornaments either in taste or design. A gold armlet was the usual reward for a scald when he had sung a song in honor of a king or chief. Amulets were worn, and much faith in their virtues was entertained.

A change of fashion came with the twelfth century. Snorre Sturleson records that foreign customs and fashions were then introduced. Breeches with tucks in them were worn, and gold rings on the leg. Kirtles were used with clasps at the sides, and sleeves ten feet long, and so tight that they had to be drawn up to the shoulders and fastened. Shoes were used so high that they had to be tied to the leg. They were embroidered with

silk and gold. It is not improbable that preposterous fashions were then in vogue.

There is less evidence of the dress of women in the sagas than of men. The innermost garment was of linen or silk, and was called *serkr*. It was very little different from that of the men's *serkr*, except that it was wider at the breast. Women wore socks and shoes. Their kirtles were long and wide, and were furnished with long sleeves, although unmarried women often had no sleeves to their dresses. Belts were worn round the waist, often of gold or silver, and to them were attached a purse to hold rings and other small matters of value. The housemother's bunch of keys hung from her belt. The kirtle was sometimes called *nam-kyrtill*, from *nam*, a sort of stuff which was laced or bound by the belt tight to the waist. An overdress was used, called *blæja*, a sort of apron, which was used as such, as well as on state occasions. It was dyed or of a colored pattern, and decorated with fringe or edging. The kirtle was not so high as to hide the neck and breast, but for this another garment was used, called *smokkr*, a kind of neckerchief, or cravat. It was often the case that the neck was uncovered and ornamented with necklaces or chains. A sort of loose dress was used, called *sloedúr*, with a long skirt or train. The word is from *slóth*, or the mark made by dragging an article over snow or sand. Although used by women, it was also used by kings when they gave audience.

From the sagas it is clear that a bodice was worn above the kirtle. In the Laxdæler's saga, when Gudrun's third husband, Bolle, was killed in a blood-feud at a *sæter* hut, the pursuers met Gudrun after the deed outside the hut. She is described as dressed in a narrow

kirtle, with a tight-fitting bodice of figured stuff. She wore a large ornament on her head, and had about her a white cloth with blue stripes and fringe at the ends. Helge Hardbensson went to her, and, taking the cloth, wiped her husband's blood off his spear with it. This cloth appears to have been worn like a plaid. Haldor told Helge Hardbensson that such conduct was bad and cruel, but Gudrun only smiled. She had already determined on Helge Hardbensson's death, and he knew it. "Under the four corners of that cloak is my fate," said Helge. He was killed with the sword Fodbider, by Bolle, Gudrun's son, in the continuance of the blood-feud.

In Njal's saga, Halgerde, the Jezebel of this traditionary history, is often mentioned with regard to her dress. She was very tall and handsome, and, like other people, a nickname was given her, according to the fashion of saga time. She was called Halgerde Langbrok (Long Breeches). Her hair was abundant and fair, and so long that it covered her. She was fostered by a man called Thjóstolf, from the Hebrides. The evidence is conflicting whether he was a thrall or not. He had killed many men, and led to Halgerde's mind being merciless, as we shall see by her conduct. She was married by her father to her first husband against her will, her objection being solely that the match was a bad one. She consulted her foster-father, Thjóstolf. When the wedding was over, and the guests were riding home, one of them asked his son what he thought of the wedding.

"She [Halgerde] laughed at everything," was the answer.

"I do not like such laughter," said the father.

The first quarrel that took place between the newly married pair precipitated what had already been determined on. Thorvald, her husband, was murdered with an axe by Thjóstolf. When Glúm, her second husband, came to court her, she was dressed in a costly woven cape, underneath which she had a scarlet kirtle. She wore a silver belt, and her hair fell on each side of her head down her breast, and was fastened to the silver belt. Glúm's fate was similar to Thorvald's, with the consequence that Thjóstolf was slain by Hrut, Halgerde's uncle. When Gunnar, her third husband, paid his court to her, she was dressed in a red kirtle, with a rich border; her hair was abundant and fair, and fell to her lap. After her marriage she was the cause of the death of many men, and involved Gunnar, the gentleman of the saga, in a feud that led to his death, solely because she had quarreled with Njal's wife, Bergthora, at a feast, on a small question of precedence. She refused to give place to any one, and said she would not be shoved into a corner. To revenge this slight she sent a thrall to steal food, so as to put her husband in a difficulty. Theft was impossible to so noble and true a man. When Gunnar was attacked in his house, and his bowstring was cut by a spear, Halgerde refused to give him a lock of her hair to mend it, because he had once smacked her face. She told him it was indifferent to her how soon he was killed. After this deed of blood, Ranveig, Gunnar's mother, drove Halgerde away. "You have caused my son's death," she said, "and shall not remain here."

Of ornaments for women many specimens exist in museums. Finger-rings, armlets, neck-rings, diadems, clasps, buckles, brooches, bracelets, and ornaments that

hung from the head or breast. There were also beads of amber or metal.

It is clear from the foregoing that both men and women of saga time were fond of dress and show. A learned professor states that the Norman love of splendor was an inheritance from the old saga time.

PAYING VISITS IN SAGA TIME

BY J. FULFORD VICARY

THE houses of the Northmen in saga time were of one type. They were built of wood where it could be obtained. Logs of wood were roughly hewn and placed one over the other, and the interstices filled with moss. Outside, wood tar was used; inside, hangings of skin or coarse cloth. Occasionally, the inside of the house was lined with rough boards. The roof consisted of boards covered with birch bark, on which turf was placed. The same description of buildings existed in Sweden and in Courland, as it is so stated in Egil Skallagrimson's saga.

There were no chimneys, and an upper room or loft was comparatively unusual. The interior of the house consisted of one room open to the roof, and the smoke of the fire found its way through a hole, which could be shut with a framework, on which the caul of a calf was stretched. In the upper part of the walls of the houses holes were made, called *gluggár*. Sometimes these were in the lower part of the roof, and were called wind-eyes (*vindöie*); hence the word "window." These windows were closed with shutters or trapdoors. Under the *ljören*, or opening where the smoke left the house, was the fire, which was lit on the floor, or on a few stones placed for the purpose. In larger houses the fire was nearly as long as the hall. Trunks of trees were lit in such a manner that they burnt through their whole length. On the floor was the tub that held the *mjöd*, or

mead, and from which that liquid was served in horns to the guests. On formal occasions the floor was strewn with straw or rushes.

The hangings in large houses were often of costly material, embroidered or bordered with colored cloth.

The shape of the house was rectangular, the longer sides facing north and south; the ends, east and west. At the ends were the doors, one for the men, and the other for the women. When such a house was entered, the first things seen were the mead-tub and the long fire. On each side were benches, the whole length of the hall. The bench facing the south was the chief seat. On each of the two benches was a high seat, which was an armchair with a high back and pillars at the sides. These pillars were held in much reverence, and were generally carved with the image of a god, as of Thor. They were regarded as penates, and when the Northmen fled from Norway after the battle of Hafrffiord, they took the pillars of their high seats with them, and cast them into the sea, and colonized Iceland near the places where they drove ashore. The benches were furnished with cushions or pillows; and, when necessary, a lower row of benches was placed in front of the chief benches. They could be taken away when not required.

The chief man, whether he was a farmer, carl, or king, sat in the high seat facing the south, and opposite to him sat his principal guest, with his friends or servants. The host could thus speak to his guest across the long fire, or, what appeared of more frequent occurrence, drink his health. Each man's weapons were hung behind his back, except his sword, which was rarely out of his hand in saga time.

At meal-times tables were placed the length of the hall. These consisted of boards placed on trestles. They were so placed that the people who served could pass between them and the benches. In old times such a hall was not only a dining-hall, but a sleeping-place. Each man slept on the bench on which he sat, or if he, as more than occasionally happened, got tipsy, he slept in the straw on the floor.

The above description applies to the more simple class of dwellings in saga time. The larger houses consisted of a hall (*skáli*), which was often of considerable size. One is described in the appendix, or rather addition to the "Landnámbók" of Iceland, as two hundred and ten feet in length, and twenty-eight feet broad. At the entrance was a forehall called *forskáli*, and was so wide that several persons could walk abreast in it. The entrance to the hall was supplied with a door, which was fastened by an iron bar or a strong piece of wood. Besides the benches running the length of the hall, there was a cross-bench, on which the women sat; and outside the hall was a covered way, or passage, that was connected with doors to the hall. If the hall was designed for use both summer and winter for all classes of the household, it was called an *eldskáli*, — that is, a hall with a long fire; and in this case it was furnished with sleeping-places situated immediately behind the seats occupied during the day. Behind the cross-benches paneled rooms were made for the women, who were separated also by a cloth hanging called *tverpalle*. The bedding consisted of cover-lids of down, bolsters, linen sheets, and occasionally a sleeping-place was hung round with skins to keep out draughts. The skins used for this purpose were chiefly

fox-skins. If the hall was not supplemented with other buildings, cupboards, or the like, were contrived for keeping provisions; they were often constructed at the end of the two forehalls, at the entrances on each side of the hall.

Houses in saga time varied, as houses do now, after individual builders' tastes; and three instances are given in the Icelandic "Landnámbók" where houses were built over roads, so that every one who passed must go through the halls and partake of their owners' hospitality. Tables were placed, loaded with food, so that the travelers should not be kept waiting. This is a good example of old-fashioned Icelandic kindliness.

The hall, or *skáli*, was prepared to receive guests by being hung with hangings of skins or cloth. The benches were covered with cushions and pillows; the articles in use for the tables were cleaned and polished; the table-linen was in order; the floors strewn with rushes or straw; the fires lighted; and tubs full of mead, and all placed at the ends of the tables. The guests usually arranged their journey so as to arrive in the afternoon of the day the visit began. Men and women of the household were appointed to go out and meet the guests, and attend to a certain number of them subsequently. Some of the men took charge of the guest's horses and arms, as in saga time it was necessary to be well armed on a journey. The women were met in the hall by the women of their host's family, and their finery taken charge of and placed in a convenient place for use. This does not appear to be so very distant a custom.

The reception of the guests, and the boiling of meat and other good things on the long fire in the hall, made

the scene animated. This, however, calmed down as guest after guest arrived, and each was shown his or her appointed place — the men on the long benches, the women on the cross-bench. This was a difficult matter, as there was a strong feeling as to precedence, and an injudicious arrangement was highly resented. The house-father sat in the high seat in the middle of the long benches, on the side facing the south. If king or jarl were present, he gave up his high seat to him. The house-mother, if not engaged in serving her guests, occupied the seat in the middle of the cross-bench. If more guests were present than the long benches could accommodate, a row of seats was placed in front of them. These were called *forsæti*, and appear to have been boards on trestles or forms; chairs were also used. When all were seated, the house-father gave his blessing for peace. Water was carried round to the guests to wash their hands, and this duty was generally performed by the house-mother herself, as complimentary to her guests. The tables were placed, and the cooked meats put on them, and after eating had progressed, the women of the household, and men who could be trusted with that important duty, filled the horns and beakers of the guests. They were called *Skenjarar*, and had an overlooker, or chief, who directed this heavy labor. Drinking, however, did not begin in serious earnest until the tables were removed. Then the solemnity of the occasion asserted itself. Three healths were drunk to the gods, to Odin, Thor, and Bragi; and other healths followed, until the guests settled down to drink with a steady determination befitting people with the hardest heads in Europe.

A beaker or horn was half emptied by a man, who as a compliment sent it to a friend, who was honorably bound to empty it, and never failed in the duty. The repetition of this produced results. A pair of old friends sat near each other, and engaged in a friendly contest. They drank their beakers out at a pull, and exhibited the empty horns as an evidence of their prowess, until one of the pair could drink no more. This was a pleasant test of capacity. Men and women also drank in this way, and it is recorded that the latter were not always the weaker vessels.

The women of the household were specially instructed to induce the men to get drunk, as otherwise the evening would be dull. A man who did not get tipsy was tried, and sentenced to drink a horn of ale specially adapted for the execution of the sentence. This horn was called *vítishorn*, or the horn to be drunk out as a penalty.

As the evening passed, better ale and mead were introduced, and occasionally wine, and, if this was done at the right moment, it was a theme for praise.

The conduct of the guests when very drunk was not always of a refined character. As their arms had been taken from them, they were unable to use them, and were reduced to drunken fights with their fists and drinking-horns, which, when bound with silver or other metal, were no despicable weapons. The bones of the animals that had furnished the feast were also used. The men who were sober endeavored to still the tumult; but the women were more useful. They threw clothes over the contending drunkards and gave them more to drink, which, if it had not a sobering effect, had a quieting one.

It was a matter of honor for the house-father to see that his chief guests were put to bed in the quarters set apart for them, and that the others were comfortable on the rushes of the hall.

The next day, when the guests were assembled in the hall, the first duty of the house-father was to smooth over the squabbles that had occurred the night before. This was easy, as quarrels always happened at such gatherings, and experienced guests took it as a matter of course. Drinking then began again, on the excellent principle of taking a hair of the dog that bit you; but it was only towards night that the same scene was renewed, which was the case as long as the visit lasted.

HOW THE LAWS WERE MADE IN SAGA TIME

For the two weeks over which the Althing extended, Thingvalla presented a brilliant and varied scene. From all quarters ride the chiefs with their followers to the assembly, their bright weapons glancing in the sunshine: by the side of many a chief ride gayly dressed ladies, his wife and daughter, or kinswomen. In an instant the whole plain is alive with men and horses. Friends who have not met for years greet each other; some unharness their horses and lead them away to graze; some arrange and store their baggage; some are building new booths, and some repairing old ones or spreading the awnings over them. At once there rises a whole village of booths, with green turf walls covered by white awnings. Thursday is occupied in getting the booths into order and settling down generally. On Friday and Saturday the multitude crowds around the Lögberg (Hill of Laws) to hear the speaker recite the laws of the land, and on those days also the judges are appointed and the courts constituted. On Sunday the real work of the assembly begins, when the legislative council holds its first meeting. On Monday the courts begin to sit, and thenceforward the work goes on vigorously for the rest of the time of assembly, in a constant succession of councils, judgments, proclamations on the Hill of Laws, etc. The intervals of this serious business are filled up with various relaxations. Men visit each other in the booths, woo

the fair daughters of the chieftains, wrestle on Fangabrekka, or listen to the narratives of some good storyteller; for it was the custom that he who knew most tales and could tell them best recited his narratives aloud, while the people crowded around to listen.

II
STORIES FROM THE ICELANDIC SAGAS

HISTORICAL NOTE

THIS little island in the frozen North is famous for the brilliancy of its classic literature. This is partly due to the severity of the climate, which isolated the Icelanders in their villages for a great part of the year. Story-telling became their great resource during the gloomy, monotonous days of the winter; and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there was a grand outburst of literature. Especially valuable among the early books are the "Older Edda," the "Younger," or "Prose Edda," and the "Heimskringla." Had it not been for the Icelandic writers, little would have been known of the early history of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark.

As interesting as these three are the sagas, or hero-stories, some mythological or legendary, and others real biography, with perhaps no more exaggeration and glorification of their heroes than may be found in many later biographies. Properly speaking, the saga is the prose tale of the life of some hero. It is much like the epic, except that the latter is in verse. The saga must have a simple plot, events must be told in the order of their occurrence; and in the strict saga form, certain conventional phrases must be used in picturing even events that would arouse depth of feeling. These hero-stories were at first recited; but they gradually worked their way into a regular and more artistic form and into writing. The best sagas come from the western part of the country. Here they were deeply affected by the influence of the Irish settlers.

THE IRISH IN THULE

[Eighth century]

FROM THE SAGA OF OLAF TRYGGVASON

THUS says the holy priest Bede, in the chronicles which he wrote concerning the regions of the earth: that the island which is called Thule in the books lies so far in the north part of the world that there comes no day in the winter when the night is longest, and no night in summer, when the day is longest. Therefore think learned men that it is Ireland which is called Thule, for there are many places in that land where the sun sets not at night, when the day is longest, and in the same manner where the sun cannot be seen by day, when the night is longest. But the holy priest Bede died 735 years after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, more than a hundred and twenty years before Ireland was inhabited by the Northmen. But, before Iceland was colonized from Norway, men had been there whom the Northmen called Papas. They were Christians, for after them were found Irish books, bells, and crosiers, and many other things, from whence it could be seen that they were Christian men, and had come from the west over the sea. English books also show that, in that time, there was intercourse between the two countries.

GLUM AND HIS MAN INGOLF

[About 950]

FROM "VIGA-GLUM'S SAGA"

[GLUM was a real person, who lived in the middle of the tenth century. The story of his exploits is told in the saga of Viga-Glum, one of the earliest of the sagas. The following extract is full of allusions to the customs of early Iceland, the horse fights, the atoning for bloodshed by the payment of a fine, and the trick by which Ingolf gets the daughter of Thorkel for his wife.

The Editor.]

I

IT happened one summer at the Althing, that the northern men and those of the West-firths met one another on the wrestling-ground in a match according to their districts. The northerners had rather the worst of it, and their leader was Márr, the son of Glum. Now a certain man of the name of Ingolf, the son of Thorvald, came up, whose father lived at Rangavellir. Márr addressed him thus: "You are a strong-limbed fellow, and ought to be sturdy; do me the favor of going into the match and taking hold." His answer was, "I will do so for your sake"; and forthwith the man he grappled with went down, and thus it was with the second, and the third, so that the northerners were well pleased. Then said Márr, "If you want a good word on my part, I shall be ready to help you. What may be your plans?" "I have no plans," he answered, "but I had an inclination to go southward and get work." "Well," rejoined Márr,

"I should like you to go with me; I will get you a place." Ingolf had a good horse of his own, which he called by the name of "Snækoll," and he went northward to Thverà, after the Thing was over, and stayed there some time. Márr asked him one day what he intended to do. "There is an overlooker wanted here, who ought to be somewhat handy; for instance, here is this sledge to be finished, and if you can do that, you can do something worth having." "I should be too glad of such a place," said Ingolf, "but it has sometimes happened that my horses have caused trouble in the pastures of the cattle." "No one will talk about that here," answered Márr; so Ingolf set to work on the sledge. Glum came up, and looked at what he was doing. "That is a good piece of work," he observed. "What are your plans?" Ingolf answered, "I have no plans." Glum replied, "I want an overlooker; are you used to that sort of business?" "Not much, in such a place as this, but I should be glad to stay with you." "Why should it not be so?" said Glum; "for I see that you and Márr get on well together." When Márr came home, Ingolf told him what had passed. "I should like it much," he answered, "if it turns out well, and I will take care, if anything displeases my father, to tell you of it three times; but if you do not set it right, then I must stop." So Ingolf took to his business, and Glum was pleased with him.

One day Glum and Ingolf, his overlooker, went to a horse-fight; the latter rode a mare, but the horse ran along by their side. The sport was good; Kálf of Stock-ahlad was there, and he had an old working horse who beat all the others. He called out, "Why don't they bring into the ring that fine-jawed beast of the Thverà

people?" "They are no fair match," said Glum, "your cart-horse and that stallion." "Ah!" exclaimed Kálf, "the real reason why you will not fight him is because he has no spirit in him. It may be the old proverb is proved true, 'The cattle are like their master.'" "You know nothing about that," answered Glum, "and I will not refuse on Ingolf's part, but the fight must not go on longer than he chooses." "He will probably know well enough," said Kálf, "that little will be done against your wishes." The two horses were led out, and fought well, and all thought Ingolf's horse had the best of it; Glum then chose to separate them, and they rode home. Ingolf remained that year in his place, and Glum was well satisfied with him.

Not long after this there was a meeting in Diupadal, whither Glum and Ingolf,with his horse, came; Kálf also was there. This last man was a friend of the people of Espihole, and he demanded that they should now let the horses fight it out. Glum said it depended on Ingolf, but that he himself was against it; however, he did not like to back out of it, and the horses were led out accordingly. Kálf spurred his horse on, but Ingolf's horse had the best of it in every contest. Then Kálf struck Ingolf's horse over the ears with his staff in such a way as to make him giddy, but immediately afterwards he went at his adversary again. Glum came up, and fair fighting was restored, till in the end Kálf's horse bolted from the ring. Then there was a great shout, and at last Kálf smote Ingolf with his stick. People interfered, and Glum said, "Let us take no note of such a matter as this; this is the end of every horse-fight." Márr, on the other hand, said to Ingolf, "Depend upon it, my father does

not intend that any disgrace shall attach to you for this blow."

II

There was a man named Thorkel, who lived at Hamar. Ingolf went thither, and met this man's daughter, who was a handsome woman. Her father was well enough off, but he was not a person of much consideration in the country. Ingolf, however, attended properly to his duties as overlooker, but he did not work as a craftsman so much as he had done, and Márr spoke to him once about it, saying, "I see that my father is not pleased at your being often away from home." Ingolf gave a fair answer, but it came to the same thing again, and Márr warned him again a second and third time, but it was no use.

One evening it happened that he came home late, and when the men had had their supper, Glum said, "Now let us amuse ourselves, and let each of us say what or whom he most relies on, and I will have first choice. Well, I choose three things on which I most rely; the first is my purse, the second is my axe, and the third is my larder." Then one man after another made his choice, and Glum called out, "Whom do you choose, Ingolf?" His answer was, "Thorkel, of Hamar." Glum jumped up, held up the hilt of his sword, and going up to him said, "A pretty sort of patron you have chosen." All men saw that Glum was wroth. He went out, and Ingolf went with him, and then Glum said to him, "Go now to your patron and tell him you have killed Kálf." "Why," replied he, "how can I tell him this lie?" "You shall do as I please," answered Glum, so they both went together, and Glum turned into the barn, where he saw

a calf before him. "Cut its head off," he cried, "and then go southward across the river, and tell Thorkel that you look to him alone for protection, and show him your bloody sword as the token of the deed you have done." Ingolf did this; went to Thorkel, and told him as news how he had not forgotten the blow Kálf had given him, and how he had killed him. The answer was, "You are a fool, and you have killed a good man; get you gone as quick as you can. I do not choose that you should be slain on my premises." Then Ingolf came back again to meet Glum, who asked him, "Well, how did your patron turn out?" "Not over well," said he. "You will have trouble on your hands," remarked Glum, "if Kálf of Stockahlad should really be killed."

Now Glum himself had killed Kálf, at Stockahlad, whilst Ingolf was away, and had thus taken vengeance for him, and the following day Kálf's death was publicly known. Thorkel said at once that a fellow had come thither who had taken the death on himself, so that everybody thought it was really so. The winter passed on, and Glum sent Ingolf northward, to the house of Einar, the son of Konál, and gave him nine hundred ells of cloth. "You have had no wages," he said, "from me, but with your saving habits you may turn this to good account, and as regards this matter which is laid to your charge, I will take care of that. It shall not hurt you; I paid you off for your perverseness in this way, and when you come home, you may come and pay me a visit." Ingolf answered, "One thing I beg of you, do not let the woman be married to any one else." "This I promise you," said Glum. Ingolf's horses were left where they were. Einar, the son of Konál, got Ingolf conveyed

abroad, but Thorvald began a suit at the Hegranes Thing for the slaughter of Kálf, and it looked as if Ingolf would be found guilty. Glum was at the Thing, and some of Ingolf's kinsmen came to him, and asked him to look after the case, professing their readiness to contribute to pay the fine for him. Glum told them, "I will see to the suit without any fine being paid."

When the court went out to sit, and the defendant was called on for his defense, Glum stated that the suit was null and void, "for you have proceeded against the wrong man; I did the deed." Then he named his witnesses, who were to certify that the suit was void; "for though Ingolf did kill the 'calf' in the barn, I did not make any charge against him for that. Now I will offer an atonement more according to the worth of the man killed, than according to the pride of you men of Espihole." So he did, and the people left the Thing.

Ingolf was abroad that winter, and could stand it no longer, but turned his cash into goods, and purchased valuable articles, and tapestry hangings of rare quality. Glum had given him a good cloak, and he exchanged that for a scarlet kirtle. The summer that he had sailed there came out to Iceland the man called Thiodolf, whose father lived at Æsustad. He visited Hamar, and fell in with Helga. One day Glum was riding up to Hole, and as he went down the hill at Saurbæ, Thiodolf met him. Glum said to him, "I do not like your visits to Hamar; I mean myself to provide for Helga's marriage, and if you do not give this up I shall challenge you to the 'Holmgang.'" He answered that he was not going to match himself with Glum, and so he left off going thither.

III

Then Ingolf came out to Iceland and went to Thverà, and asked Glum to take him in, which was granted. One day he said, "Now, Glum, I should like you to look over my merchandise." So he did, and it seemed to him that Ingolf had laid out his money well. Then Ingolf said, "You gave me the capital for this voyage, and I consider all the goods as belonging to you." "No," answered Glum, "what you have got is not enough for me to take anything from you." "Here," answered Ingolf, "are some hangings which I purchased for you — these you shall accept; and here is a kirtle." "I will accept your gifts," replied Glum.

Another time Glum asked him if he wished to remain at home with him, and Ingolf answered that his intention was not to part from him if he had the choice of staying. "My stud-horses I will give you," he said, and Glum replied, "The horses I will accept, and now to-day we will go and find Thorkel, at Hamar." Thorkel received Glum well, and the latter said, "You have wronged Ingolf, and now you must make it up to him by giving him your daughter in marriage — he is a proper man for this match. I will lay down some money for him, and I have proved him to be a worthy fellow. If you do not act thus, you will see that you have made a bad business of it." So Thorkel consented, and Ingolf got his wife and settled down as a householder and a good useful man.

HOW KJARTAN OF ICELAND BECAME A CHRISTIAN

[About 1000]

FROM THE LAXDÆLER'S SAGA

THERE were ten Icelanders together who went with Kjartan on this journey, and none would part with him for the sake of the love they bore him. So with this following Kjartan went to the ship, and Kálf Asgeirson greeted them warmly. Kjartan and Bolli took a great many goods with them abroad. They now got ready to start, and when the wind blew they sailed out along Burgfirth with a light and good breeze, and then out to sea. They had a good journey, and got to Norway to the northwards and fell in with men there and asked for tidings. They were told that change of lords over the land had befallen, in that Earl Haakon had fallen and King Olaf Tryggvason had come in, and all Norway had fallen under his power. King Olaf was ordering a change of faith in Norway, and the people took to it most unequally. Kjartan and his companions took their craft up to Nidaros. At that time many Icelanders had come to Norway who were men of high degree. There lay beside the landing-stage three ships, all owned by Icelanders. One of the ships belonged to Brand the Bounteous, son of Vermund Thorgrimson. And another ship belonged to Halfred the Trouble-Bard. The third ship belonged to two brothers, one

named Bjarni, and the other Thorhall; they were sons of Broad-river-Skeggi, out of Fleelithe in the east. All these men had wanted to go west to Iceland that summer, but the king had forbidden all these ships to sail because the Icelanders would not take the new faith that he was preaching. All the Icelanders greeted Kjartan warmly, but especially Brand, as they had known each other already before. The Icelanders now took counsel together and came to an agreement among themselves that they would refuse this faith that the king preached, and all the men previously named bound themselves together to do this. Kjartan and his companions brought their ship up to the landing-stage and unloaded it and disposed of their goods.

King Olaf was then in the town. He heard of the coming of the ship, and that men of great account were on board. It happened one fair-weather day in the autumn that the men went out of the town to swim in the river Nid. Kjartan and his friends saw this. Then Kjartan said to his companions that they should also go and disport themselves that day. They did so. There was one man who was by much the best at this sport. Kjartan asked Bolli if he felt willing to try swimming against the townsman. Bolli answered, "I don't think I am a match for him." "I cannot think where your courage can now have got to," said Kjartan, "so I shall go and try." Bolli replied, "That you may do if you like." Kjartan then plunges into the river and up to this man who was the best swimmer and drags him forthwith under and keeps him down for awhile, and then lets him go up again. And when they had been up for a long while, this man suddenly clutches

Kjartan and drags him under; and they keep down for such a time as Kjartan thought quite enough, when up they come a second time. Not a word had either to say to the other. The third time they went down together, and now they keep under for much the longest time, and Kjartan now misdoubted him how this play would end, and thought he had never before found himself in such a tight place; but at last they come up and strike out for the bank. Then said the townsman, "Who is this man?" Kjartan told him his name. The townsman said, "You are very deft at swimming. Are you as good at other deeds of prowess as at this?" Kjartan answered rather coldly, "It was said when I was in Iceland that the others kept pace with this one. But now this one is not worth much." The townsman replied, "It makes some odds with whom you have had to do. But why do you not ask me anything?" Kjartan replied, "I do not want to know your name." The townsman answered, "You are not only a stalwart man, but you bear yourself very proudly as well, but none the less you shall know my name, and with whom you have been having a swimming match. Here is Olaf the king, the son of Tryggvi." Kjartan answered nothing, but turned away forthwith without his cloak. He had on a kirtle of red scarlet. The king was then well-nigh dressed; he called to Kjartan and bade him not go away so soon. Kjartan turned back, but rather slowly. The king then took a very good cloak off his shoulders and gave it to Kjartan, saying he should not go back cloakless to his companions. Kjartan thanked the king for the gift, and went to his own men and showed them the cloak. His men were nowise pleased

at this, for they thought Kjartan had got too much into the king's power; but matters went on quietly.

The weather set in very hard that autumn, and there was a great deal of frost, the season being cold. The heathen men said it was not to be wondered at that the weather should be so bad; "it is all because of the new-fangled ways of the king and this new faith that the gods are angry." The Icelanders kept all together in the town during the winter, and Kjartan took mostly the lead among them. On the weather taking a turn for the better, many people came to the town at the summons of King Olaf. Many people had become Christians in Thrandhome, yet there were a great many more who withstood the king. One day the king had a meeting out at Eyrar, and preached the new faith to men — a long harangue and telling. The people of Thrandhome had a whole host of men, and in turn offered battle to the king. The king said they must know that he had greater things to cope with than fighting there with churls out of Thrandhome. Then the goodmen lost heart and gave the whole case into the king's power, and many people were baptized then and there. After that, the meeting came to an end.

That same evening the king sent men to the lodgings of the Icelanders and bade them get sure knowledge of what they were saying. They did so. They heard much noise within. Then Kjartan began to speak, and said to Bolli, "How far are you willing, kinsman, to take this new faith the king preaches?" "I certainly am not willing thereto," said Bolli, "for their faith seems to me to be most feeble." Kjartan said, "Did ye not think the king was holding out threats against those who

should be unwilling to submit to his will?" Bolli answered, "It certainly seemed to me that he spoke out very clearly that they would have to take exceedingly hard treatment at his hands." "I will be forced under no one's thumb," said Kjartan, "while I have power to stand up and wield my weapons. I think it most unmanly, too, to be taken like a lamb in a fold or a fox in a trap. I think that is a better thing to choose, if a man must die in any case, to do first some such deed as shall be held aloft for a long time afterwards." Bolli said, "What will you do?" "I will not hide it from you," Kjartan replied; "I will burn the king in his hall." "There is nothing cowardly in that," said Bolli; "but this is not likely to come to pass, as far as I can see. The king, I take it, is one of great good luck and his guardian spirit mighty, and, besides, he has a faithful guard watching both day and night." Kjartan said that what most men failed in was daring, however valiant they might otherwise be. Bolli said it was not so certain who would have to be taunted for want of courage in the end. But here many men joined in, saying that was but an idle talk.

Now when the king's spies had overheard this, they went away and told the king all that had been said. The next morning the king wished to hold a meeting, and summoned all the Icelanders to it; and when the meeting was opened, the king stood up and thanked men for coming, all those who were his friends and had taken the new faith. Then he called to him for a parley the Icelanders. The king asked them if they would be baptized, but they gave little reply to that. The king said they were making for themselves the choice that

would answer the worst. "But, by the way, who of you thought it the best thing to do to burn me in my hall?" Then Kjartan answered, "You no doubt think that he who did say it would not have the pluck to confess it; but here you can see him." "I can indeed see you," said the king, "man of no small counsels, but it is not fated for you to stand over my head, done to death by you; and you have done quite enough that you should be prevented making a vow to burn more kings in their houses; yet, for the reason of being taught better things than you know and because I do not know whether your heart was in your speech, and that you have bravely acknowledged it, I will not take your life. It may also be that you follow the faith the better the more outspoken you are against it; and I can also see this, that on the day you let yourself be baptized of your own free will, several ships' crews will on that day also take the faith. And I think it likely to happen that your relations and friends will give much heed to what you speak to them when you return to Iceland. And it is in my mind that you, Kjartan, will have a better faith when you return from Norway than you had when you came hither. Go now in peace and safety wheresoever you like from the meeting. For the time being you shall not be tormented into Christianity, for God says that He wills that nó one shall come to Him unwillingly." Good cheer was made at the king's speech, though mostly from the Christian men; but the heathen left it to Kjartan to answer as he liked. Kjartan said, "We thank you, king, that you grant safe peace unto us, and the way whereby you may most surely draw us to take the faith is, on the one hand, to forgive

us great offenses, and on the other to speak in this kindly manner on all matters, in spite of your this day having us and all our concerns in your power even as it pleases you. Now, as for myself, I shall receive the faith in Norway on that understanding alone that I shall give some little worship to Thor the next winter when I get back to Iceland." Then the king said and smiled, "It may be seen from the mien of Kjartan that he puts more trust in his own weapons and strength than in Thor and Odin." Then the meeting was broken up.

After a while many men egged the king on to force Kjartan and his followers to receive the faith, and thought it unwise to have so many heathen men near about him. The king answered wrathfully, and said he thought there were many Christians who were not nearly so well-behaved as was Kjartan or his company either, "and for such one would have long to wait." The king caused many profitable things to be done that winter; he had a church built and the market town greatly enlarged. This church was finished at Christmas. Then Kjartan said they should go so near the church that they might see the ceremonies of this faith the Christians followed; and many fell in, saying that would be right good pastime. Kjartan with his following and Bolli went to the church; in that train was also Halfred and many other Icelanders. The king preached the faith before the people, and spoke both long and tellingly, and the Christians made good cheer at his speech.

And when Kjartan and his company went back to their chambers, a great deal of talk arose as to how they had liked the looks of the king at this time, which

Christians accounted of as the next greatest festival. "For the king said, so that we might hear, that this night was born the Lord, in whom we are now to believe, if we do as the king bids us." Kjartan says: "So greatly was I taken with the looks of the king when I saw him for the first time, that I knew at once that he was a man of the highest excellence, and that feeling has kept steadfast ever since, when I have seen him at folk-meetings, and that but by much the best, however, I liked the looks of him to-day; and I cannot help thinking that the turn of our concerns hangs altogether on our believing Him to be the true God in whom the king bids us to believe, and the king cannot by any means be more eager in wishing that I take this faith than I am to let myself be baptized. The only thing that puts off my going straightway to see the king now is that the day is far spent, and the king, I take it, is now at table; but that day will be delayed, on which we, companions, will let ourselves be baptized." Bolli took to this kindly, and bade Kjartan alone look to their affairs.

The king had heard of this talk between Kjartan and his people before the tables were cleared away, for he had his spies in every chamber of the heathen. The king was very glad at this, and said, "In Kjartan has come true the saw: 'High tides best for happy signs.'" And the first thing the next morning early, when the king went to church, Kjartan met him in the street with a great company of men. Kjartan greeted the king with great cheerfulness, and said he had a pressing errand with him. The king took his greeting well, and said he had had a thoroughly clear news as to what his errand must be, "and that matter will be easily settled

by you." Kjartan begged they should not delay fetching the water, and said that a great deal would be needed. The king answered and smiled. "Yes, Kjartan," said he, "on this matter I do not think your eager-mindedness would part us, not even if you put the price higher still." After that, Kjartan and Bolli were baptized and all their crew, and a multitude of other men as well. This was on the second day of Yule before Holy Service. After that the king invited Kjartan to his Yule feast with Bolli his kinsman. It is the tale of most men that Kjartan on the day he laid aside his white baptismal robes became a liegeman of the king's, he and Bolli both. Halfred was not baptized that day, for he made it a point that the king himself should be his godfather, so the king put it off till the next day. Kjartan and Bolli stayed with Olaf the king the rest of the winter. The king held Kjartan before all other men for the sake of his race and manly prowess, and it is by all people said that Kjartan was so winsome that he had not a single enemy within the court. Every one said that there had never before come from Iceland such a man as Kjartan. Bolli was also one of the most stalwart of men, and was held in high esteem by all good men. The winter now passes away, and, as spring came on, men got ready for their journeys, each as he had a mind to.

THANGBRAND THE PRIEST

[About 1000]

BY HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

[THE "Heimskringla" tells the following story of the attempt of King Olaf to introduce Christianity into Iceland: —

"Now whenas Olaf Tryggvason had been king over Norway two winters, there was with him a Saxon priest named Thangbrand; masterful was he and murderous, but a good clerk and a doughty man. Now whenas he was so headstrong a man, the king would not have him with him; but sent him on this message, to wit, to fare out to Iceland and christen the land there. So a merchant-ship was gotten for him, and the tale telleth about his journey that he made the Eastfirths of Iceland, Swanfirth the southmost to wit, and the winter after abode with Hall of the Side.

"So Thangbrand preached christening in Iceland, and after his words Hall let himself be christened and all his household, and many other chieftains also; notwithstanding many more there were who gainsaid him.

"Thorvald the Guileful and Winterlid the Scald made a scurvy rhyme about Thangbrand, but he slew them both. Thangbrand abode three winters in Iceland, and was the bane (death) of three men or ever he departed thence."

The Editor.]

SHORT of stature, large of limb,
Burly face and russet beard,
All the women stared at him,
When in Iceland he appeared.
"Look!" they said,
With nodding head,
"There goes Thangbrand, Olaf's priest."

THANGBRAND THE PRIEST

All the prayers he knew by rote,
He could preach like Chrysostome,
From the Fathers he could quote,
He had even been at Rome.
A learned clerk,
A man of mark,
Was this Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

He was quarrelsome and loud,
And impatient of control,
Boisterous in the market crowd,
Boisterous at the wassail-bowl,
Everywhere
Would drink and swear,
Swaggering Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

In his house this malcontent
Could the king no longer bear,
So to Iceland he was sent
To convert the heathen there,
And away
One summer day
Sailed this Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

There in Iceland, o'er their books,
Pored the people day and night,
But he did not like their looks,
Nor the songs they used to write.
"All this rhyme
Is waste of time!"
Grumbled Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

To the alehouse, where he sat,
Came the Scalds and Saga-men;
Is it to be wondered at
That they quarreled now and then,
When o'er his beer
Began to leer
Drunken Thangbrand, Olaf's priest?

All the folk in Altafiord
Boasted of their island grand,
Saying in a single word,
"Iceland is the finest land
That the sun
Doth shine upon!"
Loud laughed Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

And he answered: "What 's the use
Of this bragging up and down,
When three women and one goose
Make a market in your town!"
Every Scald
Satires scrawled
On poor Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

Something worse they did than that;
And what vexed him most of all
Was a figure in shovel hat,
Drawn in charcoal on the wall;
With words that go
Sprawling below,
"This is Thangbrand, Olaf's priest."

THANGBRAND THE PRIEST

Hardly knowing what he did,
Then he smote them might and main,
Thorvald Veile and Veterlid
Lay there in the alehouse slain.
"To-day we are gold,
To-morrow mould!"
Muttered Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

Much in fear of axe and rope,
Back to Norway sailed he then.
'O King Olaf! little hope
Is there of these Iceland men!"
Meekly said,
With bending head,
Pious Thangbrand, Olaf's priest.

HOW GRETTIR THE OUTLAW SAVED THE FARMHOUSE

[Early eleventh century]

FROM THE SAGA OF GRETTIR THE STRONG, REWRITTEN BY SABINE BARING-GOULD

KING OLAF had decided that Grettir must leave Norway and return to Iceland. If he was not a guilty man, he was a most unfortunate one. Now, the Norse race, whether in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, or Iceland, believed in luck. They said that certain men were born to ill luck, and such men they avoided, because they feared lest the ill luck that clung to them might attach itself to, and involve those who came in contact with them.

It was not possible for Grettir to return that year to Iceland, for all the ships bound for his native land had sailed before winter set in, so King Olaf agreed to allow him to remain in the kingdom through the winter, but bound him to depart on the first opportunity next year.

Somewhat sad at heart with disappointment, and with the impression that perhaps Olaf the king was right, and that ill luck really did weigh on him, Grettir left the court, and went at Yule to the house of a bonder or yeoman called Einar, and remained with him a while. The farm was in a lonely place in a fiord opening back to the snowy mountains. Einar was a kindly man, hospitable, and he did his best to make Grettir's stay

with him pleasant. He had a daughter, a fair, beautiful girl, with blue eyes, and hair like amber silk, and her name was Gyrid. Perhaps the beautiful Gyrid was one attraction to Grettir, but if so he never spoke what was on his heart, because he knew it would be useless. He was an unlucky man; he had made himself a name, indeed, as one of great daring, but he had won for himself neither home, nor riches, nor favor.

Now, it fell out that at this time there were some savage ruffians in the country who were called Bearsarks. They were outlaws in most cases, and they lived in secret dens in the dense forests, whence they issued and swooped down on the farms, and there challenged the bonders to fight with them, or to give up to them whatever they needed. These ruffians wore bear-skins drawn over their bodies, and they thrust their heads through the jaws of the beasts, so that they presented a hideous and frightening appearance. Then they worked themselves into paroxysms of rage, when they were like madmen; they rolled their eyes, they roared and howled like wild beasts, and foam formed on their mouths and dropped on the ground. They were wont also, when these fits came on them, to bite the edges of their shields, and with their fangs they were known to have dinted the metal quite deep. Some folks even said they had bitten pieces out of solid shields. It was usually supposed that these Bearsarks were possessed by evil spirits, and it is probable that in many cases they were really mad, — mad through having given way to their violent passions, till they knew no law, and thought to carry everything before them by their violence. It was even at one time thought by the

superstitious that they could change their shapes, and run about at will in the forms of bears or wolves; but this idea grew out of the fact of their clothing themselves in bear or wolf skins, and drawing the skull of the beast over their heads as a rude helmet, and looking out through the open jaws that thus formed a visor.

One day, just after Yule, to the terror and dismay of Einar, one of the most redoubtable of these Bearsarks, a fellow called Snœkoll, came thundering up to his door on a huge black horse, followed by three or four others on foot, all clothed in skins; but Snœkoll, instead of wearing the bear's skin over his head, had on a helmet with great tusks of a boar protruding from it, and a boar's head drawn over the metal.

It is worth remark that the crests worn later by knights, and which we have still on our plate and on harness, are derived from similar adornments to helmets. Some warriors put wings of eagles on their head-pieces, others put the paws of bears or representations of lions. These were badges of their prowess, or marks whereby they might be known.

Snœkoll struck the door of the farmhouse with his spear, and roared to the owner to come forth. At once Einar and Grettir issued from the hall, and Einar in great trepidation asked the Bearsark what he wanted.

"What do I want?" shouted Snœkoll. "I want one of two things. Either that you give me up your beautiful daughter to be my wife, and with her fivescore bags of silver, or else that you fight me here. If you kill me, then luck is yours. If I kill you, then I shall carry off your daughter and all that you possess."

Einar turned to Grettir and asked him in a whisper

what he was to do. He himself was an old man whose fighting days were over, and he had no chance against this savage.

Grettir answered that he had better consult his honor and the happiness of Gyrid, and not give way to a bully. The Bearsark sat on his horse rolling his eyes from one to another. He had a great iron-rimmed shield before him.

Then he bellowed forth: "Come! I am not going to wait here whilst you consider matters. Make your selection of the two alternatives at once. What is that great lout at your side whispering? Does he want to play a little game of who is master along with me?"

"For my part," said Grettir, "the farmer and I are about in equal predicament; he is too old to fight, and I am unskilled in arms."

"I see! I see!" roared Snœkoll. "You are both trembling in your shoes. Wait till my fit is on me, and then you will shake indeed."

"Let us see how you look in your Bearsark fit," said Grettir.

Then Snœkoll waxed wroth, and worked himself up into one of the fits of madness. There can be no doubt that in some cases this was all bluster and sham. But in many cases these fellows really roused themselves into perfect frenzies of madness in which they did not know what they did.

Now Snœkoll began to bellow like a bull, and to roll his eyes, and he put the edge of the great shield in his mouth and bit at it, and blew foam from his lips that rolled down the face of the shield. Grettir fixed his eyes steadily on him, and put his hands into his pockets.

Snœkoll rocked himself on his horse, and his companions began also to bellow, and stir themselves up into madness. Grettir, with his eye fixed steadily on the ruffian, drew little by little nearer to him; but as he had no weapon, and held his hands confined, Snœkoll, if he did observe him, disregarded him. When Grettir stood close beside him and looked up at the red glaring eyes, the foaming lips of Snœkoll, and heard his howls and the crunching of his great teeth against the strong oak and iron of the shield, he suddenly laughed, lifted his foot, caught the bottom of the shield a sudden kick upwards, and the shield with the violence of the upward shock broke Snœkoll's jaw. Instantly the Bearsark stopped his bellowing, let fall the shield, and before he could draw his sword Grettir caught his helmet by the great boar tusks, gave them a twist, and rolled Snœkoll down off his horse on the ground, knelt on him, and with the ruffian's own sword dealt him his death-blow.

When the others saw the fall of their chief they ceased their antics, turned and ran away to hide in the woods.

The bonder, Einar, thanked Grettir for his assistance, and the lovely Gyrid gave him also her grateful acknowledgments and a sweet smile; but Grettir knew that a portionless, unlucky man like himself could not aspire to her hand, and feeling that he was daily becoming more attached to her, he deemed it right at once to leave, and he went away to a place called Tunsberg.

THE BURNING OF NJAL

[1014]

FROM THE SAGA OF BURNT NJAL

[THE great Icelandic saga of Burnt Njal tells the story of one of those bitter feuds with which the early history of Iceland is filled. Njal, the hero, is an honest lawyer who has incurred the hatred of certain powerful families. How they took vengeance upon him is told in the following extract.

The Editor.]

ONE day it happened that Rodny, Hauskuld's daughter, the mother of Hauskuld, Njal's son, came to the Springs. Her brother greeted her well, but she would not take his greeting, but yet bade him go out with her. Ingialld did so, and went out with her; and so they walked away from the farmyard both together. Then she clutched hold of him and they both sat down, and Rodny said, —

"Is it true that thou hast sworn an oath to fall on Njal and slay him and his sons?"

"True it is," said he.

"A very great dastard art thou," she says, "thou, whom Njal hath thrice saved from outlawry."

"Still it hath come to this," says Ingialld, "that my life lies on it if I do not this."

"Not so," says she, "thou shalt live all the same, and be called a better man, if thou betrayest not him to whom thou oughtest to behave best."

Then she took a linen hood out of her bag, it was clotted with blood all over, and torn and tattered, and

said, "This hood, Hauskuld, Njal's son, and thy sister's son, had on his head when they slew him; methinks, then, it is ill doing to stand by those from whom this mischief sprang."

"Well!" answers Ingialld, "so it shall be that I will not be against Njal, whatever follows after, but still I know that they will turn and throw trouble on me."

"Now mightest thou," said Rodny, "yield Njal and his sons great help, if thou tellest him all these plans."

"That I will not do," says Ingialld, "for then I am every man's dastard, if I tell what was trusted to me in good faith; but it is a manly deed to sunder myself from this quarrel when I know that there is a sure looking for vengeance; but tell Njal and his sons to beware of themselves all summer, for that will be good counsel, and to keep many men about them."

Then she fared to Bergthorsknoll, and told Njal all this talk; and Njal thanked her, and said she had done well, "for there would be more wickedness in his falling on me than of all men else."

She fared home, but she told this to his sons.

There was a carline at Bergthorsknoll, whose name was Sævuna. She was wise in many things, and foresighted; but she was then very old, and Njal's sons called her an old dotard, when she talked so much, but still some things which she said came to pass. It fell one day that she took a cudgel in her hand, and went up above the house to a stack of vetches. She beat the stack of vetches with her cudgel, and wished it might never thrive, "wretch that it was!"

Skarphedinn laughed at her, and asked why she was so angry with the vetch-stack.

"This stack of vetches," said the carline, "will be taken and lighted with fire when Njal my master is burnt, house and all, and Bergthora my foster-child. Take it away to the water, or burn it up as quick as you can."

"We will not do that," said Skarphedinn, "for something else will be got to light a fire with, if that were foredoomed, though this stack were not here."

The carline babbled the whole summer about the vetch-stack that it should be got indoors, but something always hindered it. . . .

[When Njal realized that the hour of fate had come and his enemies were upon him, he counseled that his men shut themselves up in the house. The attacks of the leader Flosi fail, and he then plans to set fire to the building.]

At last Flosi said, "We have already gotten great manscathe in our men; many are wounded, and he slain whom we would choose last of all. It is now clear that we shall never master them with weapons; many now there be who were not so forward in fight as they boasted, and yet they were those who goaded us on most. I say this most to Grani, Gunnar's son, and Gunnar, Lambi's son, who were the least willing to spare their foes. But still we shall have to take to some other plan for ourselves, and now there are but two choices left, and neither of them good. One is to turn away, and that is our death; the other, to set fire to the house, and burn them inside it; and this is a deed which we shall have to answer for heavily before God, since we are Christian men ourselves; but still we must take to that counsel."

Now they took fire, and made a great pile before the doors. Then Skarphedinn said, —

"What, lads! are ye lighting a fire, or are ye taking to cooking?"

"So it shall be," answered Grani, Gunnar's son; "and thou shalt not need to be better done."

"Thou repayest me," said Skarphedinn, "as one may look for from the man that thou art. I avenged thy father, and thou settest most store by that duty which is farthest from thee."

Then the women threw whey on the fire, and quenched it as fast as they lit it. Some, too, brought water.

Then Kol, Thorstein's son said to Flosi, —

"A plan comes into my mind; I have seen a loft over the hall among the crosstrees, and we will put the fire in there, and light it with the vetch-stack that stands just above the house."

Then they took the vetch-stack and set fire to it, and they who were inside were not aware of it till the whole hall was ablaze over their heads.

Then Flosi and his men made a great pile before each of the doors, and then the women folk who were inside began to weep and to wail.

Njal spoke to them and said, "Keep up your hearts, nor utter shrieks, for this is but a passing storm, and it will be long before ye have another such; and put your faith in God, and believe that he is so merciful that he will not let us burn both in this world and the next."

Such words of comfort had he for them all, and others still more strong.

Now the whole house began to blaze. Then Njal went to the door and said, —

"Is Flosi so near that he can hear my voice?"

Flosi said that he could hear it.

"Wilt thou," said Njal, "take an atonement from my sons, or allow any men to go out?"

"I will not," answers Flosi, "take any atonement from thy sons, and now our dealings shall come to an end once for all, and I will not stir from this spot till they are all dead; but I will allow the women and children and house-carles to go out."

Then Njal went into the house, and said to the folk, —

"Now all those must go out to whom leave is given, and so go thou out, Thorhalla, Asgrim's daughter, and all the people also with thee who may."

Then Thorhalla said, —

"This is another parting between me and Helgi than I thought of a while ago; but still I will egg on my father and brothers to avenge this manscathe which is wrought here."

"Go, and good go with thee," said Njal, "for thou art a brave woman."

After that she went out and much folk with her.

Then Astrid of Deepback said to Helgi, Njal's son, —

"Come thou out with me, and I will throw a woman's cloak over thee, and tire thy head with a kerchief."

He spoke against it at first, but at last he did so at the prayer of others.

So Astrid wrapped the kerchief round Helgi's head, but Thorhilda, Skarphedinn's wife, threw the cloak over him, and he went out between them, and then Thorgerda, Njal's daughter, and Helga her sister, and many other folk went out too.

But when Helgi went out, Flosi said, —

"That is a tall woman and broad across the shoulders that went yonder, take her and hold her."

But when Helgi heard that, he cast away the cloak. He had got his sword under his arm, and hewed at a man, and the blow fell on his shield and cut off the point of it, and the man's leg as well. Then Flosi came up and hewed at Helgi's neck, and took off his head at a stroke.

Then Flosi went to the door and called out to Njal, and said he would speak with him and Bergthora.

Now Najal does so, and Flosi said, —

"I will offer thee, Master Njal, leave to go out, for it is unworthy that thou shouldst burn indoors."

"I will not go out," said Njal, "for I am an old man, and little fitted to avenge my sons, but I will not live to shame."

Then Flosi said to Bergthora, —

"Come thou out, housewife, for I will for no sake burn thee indoors."

"I was given to Njal young," said Bergthora, "and I have promised him this, that we would both share the same fate."

After that they both went back into the house.

"What counsel shall we now take?" said Bergthora.

"We will go to our bed," says Njal, "and lay us down; I have long been eager for rest."

Then she said to the boy Thord, Kari's son, —

"Thee will I take out, and thou shalt not burn in here."

"Thou hast promised me this, grandmother," says the boy, "that we should never part so long as I wished to be with thee; but methinks it is much better to die with thee and Njal than to live after you."

Then she bore the boy to her bed, and Njal spoke to his steward and said, —

"Now shalt thou see where we lay us down, and how I lay us out, for I mean not to stir an inch hence, whether reek or burning smart me, and so thou wilt be able to guess where to look for our bones."

He said he would do so.

There had been an ox slaughtered and the hide lay there. Njal told the steward to spread the hide over them, and he did so.

So there they laid them down both of them in their bed, and put the boy between them. Then they signed themselves and the boy with the cross, and gave over their souls into God's hand, and that was the last word that men heard them utter.

HOW THE BOY SIGURD WON THE HORSE GREYFELL

BY WILLIAM MORRIS

[THE story of the Nibelungs takes different forms in different countries. In Germany, it is called the "Nibelungenlied," and its hero is Siegfried, who dwells near the Rhine. In the North, the hero is Sigurd, the greatest of the Volsungs; but the outline of the story is much the same.

The Editor.]

So is Sigurd now with Regin, and he learns him many things;
Yea, all save the craft of battle, that men learn the sons of kings;
The smithying sword and war-coat; the carving runes aright;
The tongues of many countries, and soft speech for men's delight;
The dealing with the harp-strings, and the winding ways of song.
So wise of heart waxed Sigurd, and of body wondrous strong:
And he chased the deer of the forest, and many a wood-wolf slew,
And many a bull of the mountains: and the desert dales he knew,
And the heaths that the wind sweeps over; and seaward would he fare,
Far out from the outer skerries, and alone the sea-wights dare.

SIGURD WINS THE HORSE GREYFELL

On a day he sat with Regin amidst the unfashioned gold,
And the silver gray from the furnace; and Regin spake and told
Sweet tales of the days that have been, and the kings of the bold and wise;
Till the lad's heart swelled with longing and lit his sunbright eyes.

Then Regin looked upon him: "Thou too shalt one day ride
As the Volsung kings went faring through the noble world and wide.
For this land is nought and narrow, and kings of the carles are these,
And their earls are acre-biders, and their hearts are dull with peace."

But Sigurd knit his brows, and in wrathful wise he said:
"Ill words of those thou speaketh that my youth have cherishèd,
And the friends that have made me merry, and the land that is fair and good."

Then Regin laughed and answered: "Nay, well I see by thy mood
That wide wilt thou ride in the world like thy kin of the earlier days:
And wilt thou be wroth with thy master that he longs for thy winning the praise?
And now if the sooth thou sayest, that these king-folk cherish thee well,

Then let them give thee a gift whereof the world shall tell:
Yea hearken to this my counsel, and crave for a battle-steed."
Yet wroth was the lad and answered: "I have many a horse to my need,
And all that the heart desireth, and what wouldst thou wish me more?"

Then Regin answered and said: "Thy kin of the kings of yore
Were the noblest men of men-folk; and their hearts would never rest
Whatso of good they had gotten, if their hands held not the best.
Now do thou after my counsel, and crave of thy fosterers here
That thou choose of the horses of Gripir which so thine heart holds dear."

He spake and his harp was with him, and he smote the strings full sweet,
And sang of the host of the Valkyrs, how they ride the battle to meet.
And the dew from the dear manes drippeth as they ride in the first of the sun,
And the tree-boughs open to meet it when the wind of the dawning is done:
And the deep dales drink its sweetness and spring into blossoming grass,
And the earth groweth fruitful of men, and bringeth their glory to pass.

SIGURD WINS THE HORSE GREYFELL

Then the wrath ran off from Sigurd, and he left the smithying stead
While the song yet rang in the doorway: and that eve to the kings he said:
"Will ye do so much for mine asking as to give me a horse to my will?
For belike the days shall come, that shall all my heart fulfill.
And teach me the deeds of a king?"

Then answered King Elf and spake:
"The stalls of the kings are before thee to set aside or to take,
And nought we begrudge thee the best."

Yet answered Sigurd again;
For his heart of the mountains aloft and the windy drift was fain:
"Fair seats for the knees of kings! but now do I ask for a gift
Such as all the world shall be praising, the best of the strong and the swift.
Ye shall give me a token for Gripir, and bid him to let me choose
From out of the noble stud-beasts that run in his meadow loose.
But if overmuch I have asked you, forget this prayer of mine,
And deem the word unspoken, and get ye to the wine."

Then smiled King Elf, and answered: "A long way wilt thou ride,

To where unpeace and troubles and the griefs of the soul abide,
Yea unto the death at the last: yet surely shalt thou win
The praise of many a people: so have thy way herein.
Forsooth no more may we hold thee than the hazel copse may hold
The sun of the early dawning, that turneth it all unto gold."

Then sweetly Sigurd thanked them; and through the night he lay
Mid dreams of many a matter till the dawn was on the way;
Then he shook the sleep from off him, and that dwelling of kings he left
And wended his way unto Gripir. On a crag from the mountain reft
Was the house of the old king builded; and a mighty house it was,
Though few were the sons of men that over its threshold would pass:
But the wild ernes cried about it, and the vultures toward it flew,
And the winds from the heart of the mountains searched every chamber through,
And about were meads wide-spreading; and many a beast thereon,
Yea some that are men-folk's terror, their sport and pasture won.
So into the hall went Sigurd; and amidst was Gripir set
In a chair of the sea-beast's tooth; and his sweeping beard nigh met

The floor that was green as the ocean, and his gown was
of mountain-gold,
And the kingly staff in his hand was knobbed with the
crystal cold.

Now the first of the twain spake Gripir: "Hail, king,
with the eyen bright!
Nought needest thou show the token, for I know of thy
life and thy light.
And no need to tell of thy message; it was wafted here
on the wind,
That thou wouldst be coming to-day a horse in my
meadow to find:
And strong must he be for the bearing of those deeds
of thine that shall be.
Now choose thou of all the way-wearers that are run-
ning loose in my lea,
And be glad as thine heart wilt have thee and the fate
that leadeth thee on,
And I bid thee again come hither when the sword of
worth is won,
And thy loins are girt for thy going on the road that
before thee lies;
For a glimmering over its darkness is come before mine
eyes."

Then again gat Sigurd outward, and adown the steep
he ran
And unto the horse-fed meadow: but lo, a gray-clad
man,
One-eyed and seeming-ancient, there met him by the
way:

And he spake: "Thou hastest, Sigurd; yet tarry till I say
A word that shall well bestead thee: for I know of these mountains well
And all the lea of Gripir, and the beasts that thereon dwell."

"Wouldst thou have red gold for thy tidings? art thou Gripir's horse-herd then?
Nay sure, for thy face is shining like the battle-eager men
My master Regin tells of: and I love thy cloud-gray gown
And thy visage gleams above it like a thing my dreams have known."

"Nay whiles have I heeded the horse-kind," then spake that elder of days,
"And sooth do the sages say, when the beasts of my breeding they praise.
There is one thereof in the meadow, and, wouldst thou cull him out,
Thou shalt follow an elder's counsel, who hath brought strange things about.
Who hath known thy father aforetime, and other kings of thy kin."

So Sigurd said, "I am ready! and what is the deed to win?"

He said: "We shall drive the horses adown to the water-side,
That cometh forth from the mountains, and note what next shall betide."

SIGURD WINS THE HORSE GREYFELL

Then the twain sped on together, and they drave the horses on
Till they came to a rushing river, a water wide and wan;
And the white mews hovered o'er it; but none might hear their cry
For the rush and the rattle of waters, as the downlong flood swept by.
So the whole herd took the river and strove the stream to stem,
And many a brave steed was there; but the flood o'er-mastered them:
And some, it swept them downward, and some won back to bank,
Some, caught by the net of the eddies, in the swirling hubbub sank;
But one of all swam over, and they saw his mane of gray
Toss over the flowery meadows, a bright thing far away:
Wide then he wheeled about them, then took the stream again
And with the waves' white horses mingled his cloudy mane.

Then spake the elder of days: "Hearken now, Sigurd, and hear;
Time was when I gave thy father a gift thou shalt yet deem dear,
And this horse is a gift of my giving: — heed nought where thou mayst ride:
For I have seen thy fathers in a shining house abide,

And on earth they thought of its threshold, and the gifts I had to give;
Nor prayed for a little longer, and a little longer to live."

Then forth he strode to the mountains, and fain was Sigurd now
To ask him many a matter: but dim did his bright shape grow,
As a man from the litten doorway fades into the dusk of night;
And the sun in the high-noon shone, and the world was exceeding bright.

So Sigurd turned to the river and stood by the wave-wet strand,
And the gray horse swims to his feet and lightly leaps a-land,
And the youngling looks upon him, and deems none beside him good.
And indeed, as tells the story, he was come of Sleipnir's blood,
The tireless horse of Odin: cloud-gray he was of hue,
And it seemed as Sigurd backed him that Sigmund's son he knew,
So glad he went beneath him. Then the youngling's song arose
As he brushed through the noon-tide blossoms of Gripir's mighty close,
Then he singeth the song of Greyfell, the horse that Odin gave,
Who swam through the sweeping river, and back through the toppling wave.

III
ICELAND AND ITS PEOPLE

HISTORICAL NOTE

DURING the thirteenth century there was civil war, which broke down the power of the chiefs, and the island then fell under Norwegian rule. When Norway came into the hands of Denmark, in 1380, Iceland also became subject to Denmark; and so it has remained. In the early part of the fifteenth century severe volcanic eruptions destroyed many lives, and before the Icelanders had recovered from this disaster, two thirds of them were swept away by a visit of the Black Death, a terrible plague that devastated all Europe. What little prosperity remained was broken by severe navigation laws imposed by Denmark, by which a monopoly of the trade with the island was farmed out to the highest bidder. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, the laws were somewhat improved, but even then nothing but coal and timber could be brought to the island by others than Danes. During the Napoleonic Wars, Iceland was captured by the English, but in 1815 was given back to Denmark. Since 1854, trade has been free, but is chiefly in the hands of Denmark and England.

For many years the Icelanders had striven to obtain home rule. In 1874, on the occasion of the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Iceland, partial freedom in the conduct of their affairs was given them, and in 1903 a new constitution was granted, according to which the Althing or Parliament is responsible to the Danish king, but through a minister, a native Icelander, who divides the year between Reykjavik and Denmark.

Throughout the centuries the Icelanders have retained their old love for literature, and nowhere else in the world are there in proportion to the number of people, so many poets, or so many books printed and sold, as in this barren island. A scattered population of 76,000 supports twelve printing-presses, producing about one hundred books annually, besides fourteen newspapers and eight periodicals.

THE FIRE MOUNTAINS OF ICELAND

[1783]

BY LORD DUFFERIN

In appearance Hekla differs very little from the innumerable other volcanic hills with which the island is studded. Its cone consists of a pyramid of stone and scoriæ, rising to the height of about five thousand feet, and welded together by bands of molten matter which have issued from its sides. From A.D. 1004 to 1766 there have been twenty-three eruptions, occurring at intervals which have varied in duration from six to seventy-six years. The one of 1766 was remarkably violent. It commenced on the 5th of April by the appearance of a huge pillar of black sand, mounting slowly into the heavens, accompanied by subterranean thunders, and all the other symptoms which precede volcanic disturbances. Then a coronet of flame encircled the crater, masses of red rock, pumice, and magnetic stones were flung out with tremendous violence to an incredible distance, and in such continuous multitudes as to resemble a swarm of bees clustering over the mountain. One boulder of pumice, six feet in circumference, was pitched twenty miles away; another of magnetic iron fell at a distance of fifteen. The surface of the earth was covered for a circuit of one hundred and fifty miles with a layer of sand four inches deep; the air was so darkened by it that at a place one hundred and forty miles off, white paper, held up at a little distance, could not be distinguished from

black. The fishermen could not put out to sea on account of the darkness, and the inhabitants of the Orkney Islands were frightened out of their senses by showers of what they thought must be black snow. On the 9th of April, the lava began to overflow, and ran for five miles in a southwesterly direction, whilst, some days later, — in order that no element might be wanting to mingle in this devil's charivari, — a vast column of water, like Robin Hood's second arrow, split up through the cinder pillar to the height of several hundred feet; the horror of the spectacle being further enhanced by an accompaniment of subterranean cannonading and dire reports, heard at a distance of fifty miles.

Striking as all this must have been, it sinks into comparative tameness and insignificance beside the infinitely more terrible phenomena which attended the eruption of another volcano, called Skapta Jokul.

Of all countries in Europe, Iceland is the one which has been the most minutely mapped, not even excepting the ordnance survey of Ireland. The Danish Government seem to have had a hobby about it, and the result has been a chart so beautifully executed, that every little crevice, each mountain torrent, each flood of lava, is laid down with an accuracy perfectly astonishing. One huge blank, however, in the southwest corner of this map of Iceland, mars the integrity of its almost microscopic delineations. To every other part of the island the engineer has succeeded in penetrating; one vast space alone of about four hundred square miles has defied his investigation. Over the area occupied by the Skapta Jokul, amidst its mountain-cradled fields of snow and icy ridges, no human foot has ever wandered. Yet it is from

the bosom of this desert district that has descended the most frightful visitation ever known to have desolated the island.

This event occurred in the year 1783. The preceding winter and spring had been unusually mild. Toward the end of May, a light bluish fog began to float along the confines of the untrodden tracts of Skapta, accompanied in the beginning of June by a great trembling of the earth. On the 8th of that month, immense pillars of smoke collected over the hill country towards the north, and coming down against the wind in a southerly direction, enveloped the whole district of Sida in darkness. A whirlwind of ashes then swept over the face of the country, and on the 10th, innumerable firespouts were seen leaping and flaring amid the icy hollows of the mountain, while the river Skapta, one of the largest in the island, having first rolled down to the plain a vast volume of fetid waters mixed with sand, suddenly disappeared.

Two days afterwards a stream of lava, issuing from sources to which no one has ever been able to penetrate, came sliding down the bed of the dried-up river, and in a little time, — though the channel was six hundred feet deep and two hundred broad, — the glowing deluge overflowed its banks, crossed the low country of Medalland, ripping the turf up before it like a tablecloth, and poured into a great lake, whose affrighted waters flew hissing and screaming into the air at the approach of the fiery intruder. Within a few more days the basin of the lake itself was completely filled, and having separated into two streams, the unexhausted torrent again recommenced its march; in one direction overflowing some

ancient lava fields, — in the other, reëntering the channel of the Skapta, and leaping down the lofty cataract of Stapafoss. But this was not all: while one lava flood had chosen the Skapta for its bed, another, descending in a different direction, was working like ruin within and on either side the banks of the Hverfisfliot, rushing into the plain, by all accounts with even greater fury and velocity. Whether the two issued from the same crater it is impossible to say, as the sources of both were far away within the heart of the unapproachable desert, and even the extent of the lava flow can only be measured from the spot where it entered the inhabited districts. The stream which flowed down Skapta is calculated to be about fifty miles in length by twelve or fifteen at its greatest breadth; that which rolled down the Hverfisfliot, at forty miles in length by seven in breadth. Where it was imprisoned, between the high banks of Skapta, the lava is five or six hundred feet thick; but as soon as it spread out into the plain, its depth never exceeded one hundred feet. The eruption of sand, ashes, pumice, and lava continued till the end of August, when the Plutonic drama concluded with a violent earthquake.

For a whole year a canopy of cinder-laden cloud hung over the island. Sand and ashes irretrievably overwhelmed thousands of acres of fertile pasturage. The Faroe Islands, the Shetlands, and the Orkneys were deluged with volcanic dust, which perceptibly contaminated even the pure skies of England and Holland. Mephitic vapors tainted the atmosphere of the entire islands; even the grass, which no cinder rain had stifled, completely withered up; the fish perished in the poisoned sea. A murrain broke out among the cattle,

and a disease resembling scurvy attacked the inhabitants themselves. Stephenson has calculated that 9000 men, 28,000 horses, 11,000 cattle, 190,000 sheep, died from the effects of this one eruption. The most moderate calculation puts the number of human deaths at upwards of 1300; and of cattle, etc., at about 156,000.

CLIMBING MOUNT HEKLA

[1854]

BY PLINY MILES

HEIGHO for Hekla! Thursday, July 29, was a lofty one in my calendar. The sun had many hours the start of us, getting up as he does here at two o'clock in the morning. An early hour, though, found us in our saddles. The morning was magnificently bright, the mountain being visible, clear to the curling wreath on the summit. Little patches of snow, here and there near the top, made a break in the broad, black streams of lava that covered every part of the mountain. We provided ourselves with every requisite for a long day's journey. My knapsack was well stored with good things — solids and fluids; and then I had my old Scotch companion, the tartan plaid, to keep the cold away; and each of us had a fine staff — what the Swiss travelers call an Alpenstock, but ours were Heklastocks, Iceland staffs — some six feet long, and armed with a strong, sharp, iron pike. My traveling guide, the farmer of Nœfrholt, and the reader's most humble servant, made up the party — not quite a princely retinue, but enough. Yes, and there was our dog, Nero. The top of the mountain was distant about seven miles, of which we could ride nearly four. Away we galloped through some fine green meadows, till we came to a mountain gorge on our right, down which in numerous cascades poured a small river. Several ducks and water-hens flew away as we approached

their mountain home. Passing through this gorge, we came into a circular meadow entirely shut in by mountains, like an immense amphitheater, and this was the last bit of productive land on our way towards the summit of Hekla. A hut was erected here, as a temporary residence for the farmer while gathering his hay. High, precipitous hills of red lava overhung our path on the right, but the ascent for some distance was gradual. For near a mile, we galloped our horses over a gently ascending plain of fine volcanic sand. High up the mountain side were several sheep, but scarce a blade of grass could be seen where they stood. Perhaps they went up to enjoy the prospect of the green meadows far in the distance. We soon found our mountain climbing was not going to be play. Our ponies found it so too. Our route was intercepted by a broad and high stream of lava that extended six or seven miles from the summit of the mountain. We turned to the right in a southerly direction, and for four or five hundred yards found it about as steep as our ponies could climb. We took a zigzag course to relieve the animals, and after half an hour's climbing, found ourselves on a level table-land, nearly half a mile across. We were now about a thousand feet above the lower region, where we left the farmhouse; and here we were obliged to leave our horses. The Icelanders have an ingenious way of fastening their animals so they will not stray away. They fasten all their horses in a circle, tying the head of one to the tail of another, and bringing the head of the first round to the tail of the last. If they choose to travel, they can; but like John on his rocking-horse, they may gallop all day in one interminable circle, and not get far.

Near where we left the horses, extending away to our right, was a large stream of lava, — one that came from the eruption of 1845; and though seven years had elapsed, it was not yet cool, and smoke was rising from it in many places. The "streams of lava" that run from the craters of volcanoes, and which here in Iceland are seen on the plains as well as on the mountains, are usually from twenty to forty feet deep, from a hundred yards to half a mile in breadth, and from one to ten miles long. They are vast ridges of rough, black rocks, of a most forbidding aspect, the largest masses weighing from one to three or four tons. When it flows from the mountain, it is a stream of molten mineral, and its progress generally rather slow, but dependent on the steepness of the mountain and the size and force of the stream. Melted lava often does not move more than from fifty to one hundred yards in a day, but in some cases it may run several miles. It soon begins to explode and break up, by the expansion and escape of the air within it, and by the force of the steam created by moisture on the surface of the ground beneath. While the lava is breaking up, for several days, it keeps up a terrible roaring. Then this rough mass, as black as charcoal, lies unchanged in appearance for centuries. After a long time, it begins to turn a little brown, and on its surface appears in minute particles one of the lowest order of mosses. . . .

At the height of about four thousand feet, we first struck the snow. This was the first snow I had trod since arriving in Iceland; and, as if the whole order of nature must be reversed here, this snow was black. This was not exactly the natural color, but a complexion it had assumed from being so near the mouth of the volcano.

Sand, ashes, dust, and smoke had coated and begrimed it so thoroughlythat the whole surface was like fine charcoal. A long valley was filled with it. As near as I could judge, it was from five to fifty feet deep. We passed over several snow-banks that were many hundred yards in breadth, some of which had not lost their white color. From the level country in the distance, these snow-banks looked like mere patches, but here we found some of them nearly a quarter of a mile across. We ascended the mountain from the west, but now we were north of the summit, and where most of the snow lay. Clouds now gathered round us, and we had to grope our way in the fog for some time. The ascent grew more precipitous, and the climbing was exceedingly toilsome. The earth and lava now appeared of a red color. We seemed to be approaching the region of fire. Sulphurous fumes saluted our nostrils, the weather cleared a little, and, suddenly, before us yawned a deep crater. What a horrible chasm! Indeed, it seemed like hell itself. Fire and brimstone literally. Dark, curling smoke, yellow sulphur, and red cinders, appearing on every side of it. The crater was funnel-shaped, about one hundred and fifty feet deep, and about the same distance across at the top. This was one of four craters where the fire burst out in 1845. After the eruption, they had caved in, and remained as we now saw them. In a row above this one, extending towards the top of the mountain, were three other craters, all similar in appearance.

Our progress now was one of great danger. At our left was the north side of the mountain; and for a long distance it was a perpendicular wall, dropping off more than a thousand feet below us. A large stone thrown over,

never sent back an echo. The craters were on our right, and between these and the precipice on our left we threaded a narrow ridge of sand, not wider than a common foot-path. A more awful scene or a more dangerous place I hope never to be in. Had it not been for my long staff, I never could have proceeded. The dangers and terrors of the scene were greatly increased by the clouds and cold wind that came up on our left, and the smoke and sulphurous stench that rose from the craters on our right. One moment in danger of falling over the perpendicular side of the mountain on the one hand, and the next of being swallowed up in the burning crater on the other. Our path was exceedingly steep, and for nearly a quarter of a mile we pursued it with slow and cautious steps. Old Nero saw the danger, and set up a dismal howl. A few moments after, he slipped, and came near falling into the fiery pit. In five minutes, an animal or a man would have been baked to a cinder. Pursuing our way by the four craters, our path widened, and half an hour more brought us to the top of the mountain.

Our purpose was accomplished; we stood on the summit of Mount Hekla, and a toilsome journey it had been for us. I threw myself on the ground, and took a look at the scene before me. The top of the mountain was not a peak, but broad and nearly flat, with here and there a little irregularity of surface. It was about a quarter of a mile across in one direction — from west to east — and some fifty rods the other way. In several places were deep snow-banks, but as yet we saw no crater on the summit.

It was now two o'clock, it having taken us about eight hours to make the ascent. Though we saw no crater, we

had very direct evidence that we were in close proximity to volcanic fires. Little eminences of lava stood up around us, from which smoke issued; and the ground under our feet felt warm. On removing the earth to the depth of two or three inches, it felt hot; and on digging down anywhere to the depth of six inches, smoke would burst out. Six inches deeper, and no doubt a man might light a cigar. I went close to a bank of snow — to have something to cool my punch — spread out my tartan plaid on a warm piece of lava, opened my knapsack, sat down and dined. That was the loftiest dinner I had ever partaken. Nero lay at my feet, the guides were conversing at a little distance, the lava around me was warm; and after a little time the weather cleared up, and left a blue sky and clear atmosphere, with a full opportunity to survey the wondrous panorama of nature that lay spread out below and around us.

WAITING FOR THE GREAT GEYSER TO SPOUT

[1874]

BY BAYARD TAYLOR

[THE presence of so many celebrities was due to the fact that the author's visit was made at the time of the great celebration of Iceland's millennium.

The Editor.]

I SLEPT soundly the night after our arrival at the Geysers, but some members of our party were excited and restless. Toward morning, there were several mysterious underground thumps, which sent them posting to the Great Geyser's brim; but only denser steam and a heavier overflow of water followed. The scene in the morning was curious. We took our toilet articles, and went, half-dressed, to the hollow between the Geyser and the spring, where the surplus overthrow is shallow and lukewarm. It was already occupied; a royal chamberlain was scooping up water in his hands, an admiral was dipping his tooth-brush into the stream, a Copenhagen professor was laboriously shaving himself by the aid of a looking-glass stuck in a crack of the crater, and the king, neat and fresh as if at home, stood on the bank and amused himself with the sight. The quality of the water is exquisite; it is like down and velvet to the skin, soap becomes a finer substance in it, and the refreshment given to the hands and face seems to permeate the whole body.

If one could only have a complete bath! A day's labor would make a pool sufficient therefor, yet the idea has never occurred to a single soul, native or foreign!

I did not dare to venture a quarter of a mile away from the Geyser, during the whole day. We all fell into a condition of nervous expectancy which could not be escaped, comical as were some of its features. There was a pile of turf — perhaps a cart-load — beside the Strokr, which lay just below our tent, and we were told that the caldron would be compelled to spout for the king, as soon as he had finished his breakfast; so we sat down contented to the second plover-stew which Mr. Gladstone and Dr. Hayes had provided for us. The farmer from whom we had procured fuel sent us several bottles of delicious cream, and a large salmon for dinner.

The Strokr is a pit about five feet in diameter, and eight feet deep to the ordinary level of the water, which is always in a furious, boiling state. Professor Steenstrup assured me that it is not connected with the Great Geyser, as the analysis of the water shows a difference; but the people are equally convinced that it is, and that to provoke its activity diminishes the chances of the former spouting. However this may be, the royal command was given. The pile of turf was pitched into the hole, and all gathered around, at a safe distance, waiting to see what would follow.

For ten minutes we noticed nothing except a diminution of steam: then the water gushed up to the level of the soil, in a state of violent agitation; subsided, rose again, spouted the full breadth of the hole to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, sank back, and finally, after another moment of quiet, shot a hundred feet into the air.

The boiled turf, reduced to the consistency of gravel, filled the jet, and darkened its central shaft, but I did not find that it diminished the beauty of the phenomenon. Jet after jet followed, sending long plume-like tufts from the summit and sides of the main column, around which the snowy drifts of steam whirled and eddied with a grace so swift that the eye could scarcely seize it. At such moments the base was hidden, and the form of the fountain was like a bunch of the pampas grass in blossom — a cluster of feathery panicles of spray.

The performance lasted nearly ten minutes, and was resumed again two or three times after it seemed to have ceased. Two or three of the last spoutings were the highest, and some estimated them at fully one hundred and twenty feet. Finally, the indignant caldron threw out the last of its unclean emetic, and sank to its normal level. The king, who had turned aside to salute our company, was in the act of expressing to me his admiration of the scene, when the Little Geyser gave sudden signs of action. There was a rush of the whole party; His Majesty turned and ran like a boy, jumping over the gullies and stones with an agility which must have bewildered the heavy officials, who were compelled to follow as they best could. It was a false alarm. The Little Geyser let off a few sharp discharges of steam, as if merely to test the pressure, and then, as if satisfied, resumed its indolent, smoky habit.

The cone of the Great Geyser is not more than twenty feet high, and appears to have been gradually formed by the deposit of the siliceous particles which the water holds in solution. The top is like a shallow wash-bowl thirty

feet in diameter, full to the brim, and slowly overflowing on the eastern side. In the center of this bowl there is a well, indicated by the intense blue-green of the water, and apparently eight or ten feet in diameter. It has been sounded, and bottom — or, at least, a change of direction — reached at the depth of eighty-five feet. At the edge, where the water is shallow, one can dip his fingers in quickly without being scalded. Small particles placed in the overflow are completely encrusted with transparent silex in a day or two. Professor Steenstrup informed me that the water has important healing properties. The steam has an odor of sulphureted hydrogen, but the taste thereof is so soon lost that where the stream becomes cold, we used it for drinking and making coffee.

I shall never forget that calm, sublime day at the Geysers. After reading many descriptions, I was never less prepared for the reality of the scene. Instead of a dreary, narrow volcanic valley, here was a landscape bounded on the west by mountains, but to the north, east, and south, only to be spanned by a radius of fifty miles. Near us, a quiet, grass-roofed farmstead; toward the sea, meadows and gleams of rivers; in front, the broad green plain, its inclosing hills and Hekla rising lonely above them; northward, a church and neighboring byres, a smooth grassy ridge beyond, the snow-streaked pyramid of the Bláfjall (Blue Mountain), and far in the distance the luminous, icy peaks of the Arna Jökull. From our tent the noise of the boiling waters could not be heard; the steam ascended quickly, soon dissipated in the light wind, and the expression of the scene before me, as I watched it for hours, lying on the soft turf of the hillside, was one of perfect peace and repose.

At half-past one o'clock, there came a dull thud, felt rather than heard; then another, and another, and we all rushed towards the Great Geyser. Before any one reached it, however, the noises ceased; the water rose a foot or so, giving out dense volumes of steam, but in five minutes it became quiet as before. The king and his attendant officials strayed up the hill, and there the former devoted some time to carving the subjoined rune upon one of the rocks: —



IX

There were various small parties of the native population at the Geysers during the day; but fewer than might have been expected, even taking into account the sparse settlement in this part of Iceland. They were coarse, solidly built figures, the bodies much larger than the legs, the hair thick and blond, and the faces broad, weather-beaten, and apparently expressionless. I saw half a dozen — four men and two women — stand vacantly grinning at the king as he passed them, and even when he politely saluted them, the men hesitated, in awkward shyness, before they even touched their hats. Another, to whom he was speaking in a kindly manner, with his hand upon the man's shoulder, suddenly remembered that some mark of respect was necessary, and snatched off his hat with as much haste as if there had been a hornet inside of it.

Among the people were several sick persons, who had made long journeys in the hope of finding a physician in

the king's suite. Disappointed in this, they turned to Dr. Hayes and our jovial Reykjavik friend, Dr. Hjaltalin. The first case was a man suffering from Bright's disease, for which, unfortunately, we had no medicines. But the medicine-chest, when it was opened, attracted our visitors with a singular power. Men and women crowded around, gazing with eager interest and (as it seemed to me) longing upon the bottles of pills and potions. I offered a quinine pill to a woman, and she instantly took and chewed it, without ever asking a question. To confirm a faith so profound, I felt obliged to take two of the pills myself.

Soon afterwards there came a married couple, the mother carrying a baby which, as it needed but a glance to see, was almost dying of croup. They had carried the poor child on horseback for five hours, in the hope of finding relief. There was no time to be lost; hot baths and poultices were ordered at the byre near at hand, and in the mean time an opiate was administered. The gasping and writhing of the child was too much for those strong Icelandic men. The mother stood calm and firm, holding it; but Zoega ran away in one direction and Eyvindur in another, crying like children, and the farmers turned aside their heads to hide their tears.

At the byre nothing could exceed the kindness of the farmer's family, — in fact, of all who could help. The king's purveyor furnished white bread for a poultice; a hot bath was made ready, and the father stuffed the child's clothes into his bosom to keep them warm for it. All night the people watched with it, and the next morning everybody looked happy, on hearing that its condition had somewhat improved.

The next case was a boy with hip disease, for whom little could be done, though the doctor constructed a temporary support for his foot. The people invariably asked how much they should pay, and gratefully shook hands when payment was declined. I made an effort to talk with a group of farmers, finding them ready enough, only a little embarrassed at the start; but when I asked: "Do you know Sæmund's Edda?" there was an instant flash and flame in their faces, and all shyness vanished. The Njal and Völsunga Sagas, Snorre Sturleson, with a score of obscurer sagas of which I had never heard, were eagerly mentioned and discussed. It was remarkable to see their full knowledge of Icelandic literature, and their vital interest in it.

"Do you know who first discovered America?" I asked.

"Yes, yes!" they all cried, in a body; "it was Leif, the son of Erik the Red."

"When was it?"

"About the year 1000. And there was Thorfinn Karlsefne, who went afterward, and Thorwald. They called the country Vinland."

"We know it," said I. "I am a Vinlander."

They silently stretched out their hands and shook mine. An instinct of the true nature of the people arose in me. Within an hour I had seen what tenderness, goodness, knowledge, and desire for knowledge are concealed under their rude, apathetic exteriors. To meet them was like being suddenly pushed back to the thirteenth century; for all the rich, complex, later-developed life of the race has not touched them. More than ever I regretted my ignorance of the language, without

knowing which no stranger can possibly understand their character.

At half-past four there came a repetition of Geyser thumps, louder and more rapid than the first time, and at eight o'clock a third manifestation. We fondly hoped that these were signs of increased activity, which would soon bring about an outburst. Our excitement increased to such an extent that, although watches had been set for the king's sake, Messrs. Halstead, Hayes, and Gladstone volunteered to keep independent watch for us. The two former passed half the night sitting on the edge of the Geyser basin. They were once scared away by a thump which threatened to split the rocky shell under their feet, but nothing followed except a violent overflow of water. I heard the noises twice during the night, and waited vainly for a call; the twilight was so bright that the spectacle would have been visible at any hour — had it come.

HOW ICELANDIC CHILDREN GET THEIR SURNAMES

BY MRS. DISNEY LEITH

You will have noticed that an Icelander's surname always end in "son." That is very like our English names, but in the case of the Icelander the name is what is called a patronymic — the name of his father — and may change with every generation. Thus, suppose a man is christened Jón (John), and he calls his son Páll (Paul); the son would be called Páll Jonsson. But if Páll grew up and had a son, he might very likely wish to name him after his father; thus the child would be Jón Pálsson. Sometimes the son bears his father's Christian name, and then he would be Jónsson. I know a man called Magnus Magnusson, and he told me his ancestors had been Magnus Magnussons for many, many generations. You would think it would be very puzzling to trace their pedigrees, but they do not find it so. Many families can trace their line back quite to the saga times.

But what about the girls? They are called Pálsdóttir (Paul's daughter), Jónsdóttir, as the case may be. Whenever you ask the name of a man or woman, you are given the Christian name only; if you want to know more, you must say, "Hvers son?" (Whose son?) or "Hvers dóttir?" Sometimes when girls go abroad to live, they add the "son" to their father's name, and use it for a surname, as "daughter" would seem strange. A married woman in Iceland is usually given her

patronymic as well as her husband's name; for instance, "Frú (Mrs.) Margrét Thordardóttir Sigurdsson," is the daughter of Thord and wife of Sigurdsson. There are one or two old family surnames in Iceland, but they are quite the exception.

They have pretty little abbreviations to their names; a girl whose name is Sigrid will be called Sigga; Gunna is used for Guthrun; with men Toggi stands for Thorgrim, Siggi for Sigurd, Brynki for Brynjulf, and Manki (which sounds very like "Monkey") for Magnus.

They use all the old historic and heroic names still; and it is funny to see on the shop-doors names which you have hitherto associated only with the chieftains and great men of the sagas now borne by your boot-maker and watchmaker.

GREENLAND

I

STORIES FROM THE HISTORY OF GREENLAND

HISTORICAL NOTE

THE history of Greenland begins in 985, when Eric the Red made a voyage along its coast, and with all the wisdom of an experienced colonizer, gave to the country the attractive name of Greenland. Settlements were made, Christianity was introduced, and Greenland had even a bishop of her own. Those were the palmy days of the island; and then it was, in the year 1000, that Leif Ericson made his famous voyage to the south, where he is supposed to have landed on what are now the shores of the United States.

In 1260, Greenland became a territory of Norway, and thus came into the union of the Scandinavian countries at the end of the fourteenth century. Not long after this union, Greenland seems to have vanished from the memory of mankind, and for more than two hundred years nothing was known of the colonists. In the heart of one man, however, a Norwegian clergyman named Hans Egede, there was a deep longing to learn what had become of the lost people. He could not bring himself to believe that they had all perished, and ever before him was the picture of the descendants of these pioneers icebound in some corner of the coast, and shut away from all Christian teachings. After most earnest pleading, he aroused some interest in the forsaken people, and in 1721 he set sail for Greenland to search for them and become their pastor. The colonists had disappeared, but to the native Greenlanders he became so true a friend and so worthy a teacher that he well deserved his title, the "apostle to Greenland." In 1733, the Moravians also sent out missionaries. The inhabited portion of the land, from Egede Fiord on the east to Tessuisak on the west, is under the control of the Danish Government. What is known of northern Greenland has come to us entirely from the visits of Arctic explorers, two of whom, Nansen and Peary, have crossed the ice-cap which covers the interior of the country.

HOW ERIC THE RED CAME TO GREENLAND

[983]

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

ERIC was a high-handed son of a jarl (earl) of Jadar, in Norway, who, opposing the encroachments of the king upon his feudal rights, in common with his class, was forced to flee the country. Escaping with his son, he established himself in Iceland, which was then being peopled by such refugees from tyranny and wrong, and a society was being formed which, for love of liberty and the actual possession of republican freedom, has never been excelled. These Icelanders were then, and they continued to be for centuries afterwards, the most intellectual and refined people of the north of Europe; and this is not surprising when it is remembered that the best blood of Norway and Denmark went to swell its population. In fact, Iceland gave literature and laws to the whole of Scandinavia. The child was wiser than the parent. Her writers first put in shape the Norse mythology; and many of the most distinguished families of Norway and Denmark are now proud to trace their origin back to the old freedom-loving jarls and sea-kings who founded a nation upon a rock which had been forced up by terrestrial fires into an atmosphere so cold and forbidding that the snows gathered upon its lofty summits, while volcanic heat wrestled in the bowels of its mountains.

Eric received his surname of Red, or Rothe, from the color of his hair; and his corresponding disposition doubled the significance of the name when it was made to signify "he of the red hand," as well as of the red head. The truth is, he was, according to all accounts, much addicted to the then popular pastime of cutting people's throats; and for his last offense of this description he was banished from Iceland for a space of three years. The immediate offense was for killing a churlish knave who would not return a borrowed door-post, which was always a sacred object, and was preserved with pious care by the Scandinavians. Perhaps if the borrowed article had been a book instead of a door-post, as in the case of fighting St. Colomba, the decree might have been different.

Being banished, where should Eric go? He could not return to Norway, and there was no place where he could set the sole of his foot with any safety. So he bethought him of the legendary land of Gunnibiorn, for, according to the Iceland Landnama, or Doomsday-book of Aré the Wise, that was the name of the man who had visited the land to the west of Iceland. This land Eric would go in search of, and risk his life and everything upon the hazard.

He set sail from Bredifiord, in Iceland, some time during the summer of the year 983, in a small half-decked ship, and in three days he sighted land. Not altogether liking the looks of it, he coasted southward until he came to a turning-place, or *Hvarf*, now called Cape Farewell. Thence he made his way northward to the present site of Julianashaab, where he passed the three years of his forced exile. He liked the country well, as much as he

had disliked it before when he saw it from the other side. Upon the meadowlands beside the fiord immense herds of reindeer were browsing on the luxuriant grass; sparrows chirruped among the branches of the little trees. He thought the place would do to settle in, and named it Greenland.

But to be precise, as it is always well to be, I quote from an old Norse saga of the before-mentioned Aré the Wise, — a saga written in Iceland about the year 1100, the original of which was in existence up to 1651, and a copy of which is still preserved in Copenhagen. Thus runs the tale: —

"The land which is called Greenland was discovered and settled from Iceland. Eric the Red was the man from Bredifiord who passed thither from hence (Iceland) and took possession of that portion of the country now called *Ericsfiord*. But the name he gave the whole country was *Greenland*. 'For,' quoth he, 'if the land have a good name, it will cause many to come hither.' He first colonized the land fourteen or fifteen winters before Christianity was introduced into Iceland, as was told by Thorkil Gelluson in Greenland, by one who had himself accompanied Eric thither."

This Thorkil Gelluson was uncle to Aré the Wise, and the historian was pretty likely, therefore, to be accurate in his information.

Upon returning to Iceland, Eric was graciously received; and what with the fine name he had given to his new country, and the fine promises he held out, he had no trouble in obtaining all he asked for — that is, twenty-five ships loaded with adventurous people, and all the appliances for building up a colony. Thus pro-

vided, he set sail in the year 985; but only fourteen of these ships ever reached their destination. Some of the remaining eleven were lost at sea; others were wrecked upon the eastern coast of Greenland; others put back to Iceland in distress.

Eric was resolved to found a nation for himself, and these fourteen cargoes of people gave him a sufficient nucleus. He went far up his fiord and began a settlement. A house was also built nearer to the sea — probably a lookout house; for Eric expected other ships, and he, like a prudent man that he was, would set a watch for them. The ruins of this house may still be seen, and are not five minutes' walk from the pastor's house at Julianashaab.

According to his expectations, other ships arrived, bringing cattle, sheep, and horses; likewise his wife, and sons and daughters. The settlement grew and prospered. Norwegians, Danes, Icelanders, people from the Hebrides, from the British Isles, from Ireland, and even from the south of Europe, came there in ships to trade. Emigrants poured in, new towns were built, new farms were cleared, and ambitious and adventurous men searched up and down the coast for other fields whereon to display their enterprise. How far north the most adventurous went we cannot certainly know; but Ranf places one of their expeditions in latitude 75°, a point to which the stoutest ships of modern times cannot now go without encountering serious risk. And all this was ventured, eight hundred years ago, in half-decked ships and open boats. It is positively known that one of their expeditions reached as far as Upernavik, latitude 72° 50′, a stone having been discovered near there, in 1824, by

Sir Edward Parry, bearing the following inscription in Runic characters: —

"ERLING SIGHVATSON AND BIORN THORDARSON AND EINDRID ODDSON ON SATURDAY BEFORE ASCENSION WEEK RAISED THESE MARKS AND CLEARED GROUND. 1135."

Think of "clearing ground" in Greenland up in latitude 72° 50′! What kind of ground would now be found to clear? Naked wastes alone; and the desert sands are not more unproductive. But, as intimated already, the climate has certainly changed during the seven hundred years since this event happened; in evidence of which, it is not unimportant to observe that, in the old chronicles of the voyages of those ancient Northmen, there is very little mention made of ice as a disturbing element in navigation. And this brings us back to where we started — to the growth of glaciers in the Greenland fiords. From these glaciers come the icebergs, and a fiord which receives a glacier is not habitable.

There was no glacier in Ericsfiord when Eric went there, and there are none now, but it is surrounded by them. The mountains are of such peculiar formation that they keep back the frozen flood from Ericsfiord itself; and thus it was that this spot of earth was and still is fit for human life — an oasis in a desert, a patch of green in a wilderness of ice.

HOW THE GREENLANDERS GOT A BISHOP

[1126]

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

THE introduction of Christianity into Greenland was accomplished by Leif, son of Red Eric; and it was the same man who discovered America, — two grand achievements which rank Leif Ericson as one of the heroes of history. With respect to the former event, an old Icelandic saga thus briefly records the fact: —

"When fourteen winters were passed from the time that Eric the Red set forth to Greenland, his son Leif sailed from thence to Norway, and came thither in the autumn that King Olaf Tryggvason arrived in the North from Helfaland. Leif brought up his ship at Nidaros (Drontheim), and went straightway to the king. Olaf declared unto him the true faith, as was his custom unto all heathens who came before him; and it was not hard for the king to persuade Leif thereto, and he was baptized, and with him all his crew."

Nor was it hard for King Olaf to "persuade" his subjects generally "thereto." His Christianity was very new and rather muscular, and under the persuasive influence of the sword this royal missionary made more proselytes than ever were made before in the same space of time by all the monks and missionaries put together.

When Leif came back to Greenland with a new religion and a priest to boot, his father Eric was much incensed, and declared the act pregnant with mischief; but after a

while he was prevailed upon to acknowledge the new religion, and at the same time to give his wife Thjodhilda, who had proved a more ready subject for conversion, leave to build a church. Thus runs the saga: —

"Leif straightway began to declare the universal faith throughout the land; and he laid before the people the message of King Olaf, and detailed unto them how much grandeur and great nobleness there was attached to the new belief. Eric was slow to determine to leave his ancient faith, but Thjodhilda, his wife, was quickly persuaded thereto, and she built a kirk, which was called 'Thjodhilda's Kirk.' And from the time she received the faith she separated from her husband, which did sorely grieve him."

And this appears to have been the last, and (as the sequel shows) was the most potent argument for his conversion. To get his wife back, he turned Christian, and ordered the pagan rites to be discontinued, and the pagan images of Thor and Odin, and the rest of them, to be broken up and burned.

Whether this first Greenland church of Thjodhilda's was built at Brattahlid, or Gardar, or Krakortok, cannot now be positively said; but we might, perhaps, find some reason to conclude it was the latter, from the fact that an old man named Grima, as the saga states, who lived then at Brattahlid, made complaint, "I get but seldom to the church to hear the words of learned clerks, for it is a very long journey thereto."

This much, however, we do know, that the church — wherever it was situated — was begun in the year 1002, and was known far and wide by the name of its pious lady-founder. Several churches and three monasteries

were built afterwards. One of these latter was near a boiling spring, the waters from which being carried through the building in pipes, gave a pleasant warmth to the good monks who occupied it, and they needed no other heat the year round.

The Christian population of Greenland became, in course of time, so numerous that it was necessary for the Bishop of Iceland to come over there frequently to administer the duties of that part of his see; for the diocese of Gardar, as it was called, was from the first attached to the See of Iceland.

A hundred years thus passed away, and both in spiritual and temporal matters the Northmen in Greenland were getting along finely. Their intercourse with Europe was regular, and their export trade, especially in beef, was considerable. Indeed, Greenland beef was for a long time highly prized in Norway, and there was no greater luxury to "set before the king." The people were almost wholly independent of the Icelandic government. Under a system of their own devising, which appears to have perfectly satisfied their necessities, they lived quite unmolested by the outside world, and, undisturbed by wars and rumors of wars, the descendants of Eric the Red were as happy as any people need wish to be.

They lacked only one thing to complete their scheme of perfect independence: they needed a bishop of their own, which would cut them loose from Iceland altogether; and, in truth, the Icelanders were such a liberty-loving people that they were in no wise inclined to dispute their claims. But a bishop they could not have without the sanction of the powers that ruled in Norway; for the Pope would not appoint so high an officer

for any of the regions directly or indirectly subject to the control of Norway except upon the nomination of the king, after consultation with his spiritual advisers.

Numerous petitions were accordingly sent over to the king, in order to secure his good offices. For a time these efforts were attended with but partial success, since a temporary bishop only was vouchsafed them in the person of Eric (not the Red), who went to Greenland in the year 1120, and, without remaining long, went home, having, however, visited Vinland in the interval — this Vinland being the America which Columbus thought to be a part of Asia some four centuries later.

Finding they did not get a bishop of their own according to their deserts (as they estimated them) they grew indignant, and one of their chief men, named Sokke, declared that they must and would have one. Their personal honor and the national pride demanded it; and, indeed, the Christian faith itself was not in safety otherwise. Accordingly, under the advice of Sokke, a large present of walrus ivory and valuable furs was voted to the King of Norway; and Einar, son of Sokke, was commissioned to carry the petition and the present.

The result proved that the inhabitants of Greenland were wise in their day and generation; for whether through the earnestness of their appeals or the value of their gifts, or through the persuasiveness of the ambassador, or through all combined, they obtained, in the year 1126, Bishop Arnold, who forthwith founded his Episcopal See at Gardar, and there erected a cathedral, which was built in the form of a cross.

Arnold seems to have been a most excellent and pious leader of these struggling Christians. Zealous as the

famous monk of Iona, without the impulsiveness of that great apostle of Scotland, he bound his charge together in the bonds of Christian love, and gave unity and happiness to a prosperous people. He died in the year 1152, and thenceforth, until 1409, the See of Gardar, which he had founded, was regularly maintained. According to Baron Halberg, in his history of Denmark, seventeen successive bishops administered the ordinances of the Church in Greenland, the list terminating with Andreas, who was consecrated in 1406. The see and Andreas expired together; and the last account we have of either was made in 1409, when it is recorded that he officiated at a marriage, from the issue of which men now living are proud to trace their ancestry. This was his last official act, so far as we have record.

THE SEARCH FOR THE LOST COLONIES OF GREENLAND

[1579–1671]

BY DR. HENRY RINK

[AFTER 1409, the Greenland colonies seem to have been for many years utterly neglected if not entirely forgotten. Some people have supposed that pirates or the Eskimos (called Skraellings) or the Black Death had swept away the inhabitants. Others believed that the Danish navigation laws caused the decay of the settlements. Whatever may have been the cause, the colonies disappeared, and no remains of them were found until 1721, the time of Hans Egede.

The Editor.]

IN 1579 and 1581, the first expeditions were dispatched from Denmark for the rediscovery of Greenland, and the resumption of the trade with the inhabitants. It seems to have been a firm belief that people of Norse descent still lived there; but so totally had the knowledge of the colony been neglected that these expeditions only tried to reach the east coast opposite to Iceland. They did not even, like Eric the Red, sail southwards to learn whether the coast might be inhabited there. The pack-ice bordering the east coast proved impenetrable, the result of their attempts consequently was a total failure, and the rediscovery of the sailing route to the deserted settlements became the achievement of a foreign nation, and the accidental result of explorations undertaken with a very different object in view.

It was John Davis who in the year 1585, in search of the Northwest Passage around America, discovered the strait named after him, and, following the west coast of Greenland, succeeded in landing there in about 64° N. lat., where he entered a fiord and bartered with the natives. It is a well-known fact that in this and the following voyages he penetrated into Baffin's Bay to upwards the latitude of our present northmost settlement, surveying the coasts on both sides. These discoveries in Denmark revived the thought of the long-neglected and given-up settlement, and even led to the opposite extreme in giving rise to the most sanguine expectations with regard to its significance and riches. In 1605, Christian IV of Denmark sent out three ships under the command of two Englishmen and one Dane, named Lindenow, who were accompanied by one James Hall, who, having been in Greenland before, was appointed pilot or sailing-master. Shortly after they had sighted Greenland, the commanders fell out, and the ships separated. Lindenow succeeded in getting through the ice, and, finding a harbor somewhere about 62° or 63° N. lat. Here they met with a great number of natives, and began to barter with them for furs and narwhal-horns. The natives proved to be very thievish, snatching away everything they could lay hold on, and the Europeans, *per contra*, availed themselves of the favorable state of the market by giving a single nail, it is told, for wares worth from two to three Danish dollars.

Having carried on the traffic for a sufficiently long time, they secured two of the native merchants themselves, their skin-canoes into the bargain, and threw them into the ship's hold along with the other articles

going for show to Denmark. The two poor wretches fell into a state of fury, so that the crew were obliged to have them tied to the mast, and with gun-shots to frighten away their countrymen who were coming out to their rescue. Meanwhile, the other ships had gone much farther north, and landed somewhere south of 67° N. lat. They likewise met with many natives, and commenced bartering with them for skin, whalebone, narwhal-horns, and walrus-tusks. The commanders of these ships could as little resist the temptation of carrying home some specimens of the human inhabitants, in order to exhibit them on their arrival in Europe. After having "killed a good many of them," says the old record, "they succeeded in capturing four alive, though not without running great risks." The prisoners were so savage and unmanageable that the sailors were obliged to shoot one of them to reduce the others to order. On the voyage, however, they grew quite merry, and the captain trained one of them to jump about at a given sign from him when he nodded at them, and to go aloft with the sailors.

When these three ships had returned safely to Copenhagen in the same year, they attracted general attention, but of all the wares and curiosities they had carried home with them, nothing created such excitement as some specimens of silver ore which the voyagers pretended to have discovered at one of the northwest fiords. The king, in the hope of acquiring a lucrative colony, levied a special Greenland tax throughout his dominions, and in the next year he equipped no less than five ships for an expedition, chiefly with the aim of mining silver ore. The stolen Greenlanders were appointed interpreters to the explorers. The accounts of this enterprise are

not very detailed, but it has been reported that they reached the supposed silver mine, found it all right, shipped full cargo of ore, and bartered with the natives, of whom they stole five, whereas, in retaliation for other offenses, one of the ships' crew who had been put on shore as a punishment for some crime, was torn to pieces by the Greenlanders. In October, the same year, the expedition returned, but, as it appears, resulting in utter disappointment. The purchases of Greenland articles had only been few, probably on account of the stores having been exhausted in the preceding year. No further mention is made of any silver mine, and it is supposed that it proved to be only the invention of a swindler, and that those who had been duped quietly put aside the mineral cargo after having ascertained it to be devoid of any metallic contents. The human specimens were exhibited, and their limbs measured and examined for the purpose of describing this new race. Later on, one of them died of home-sickness. Another made a desperate attempt at getting back to Greenland in his kayak, in which he perished. The third of the poor wretches died from being overworked, and compelled to go fishing in winter as well as in summer. The last one tried to make his escape, but was overtaken, and died of grief and vexation.

The result of these explorations had been particularly disappointing as regards the rediscovery of the ancient colonies. Desolate and barren rocks had been found instead of farms and green pastures, and the strange people of whom a few individuals had been brought home and minutely examined, bore no resemblance at all to the reputed settlers. It has taken centuries to discover

the real cause of this disappointment, which undoubtedly must be ascribed to an overrating of what Eric the Red considered an "inhabitable country." The want of success on the part of the explorers first led to the resumption of the old idea that the abandoned settlements had been situated to the east of Cape Farewell. Thither the king accordingly, in the following year, 1607, dispatched an expedition, which, however, soon returned after several perilous and disastrous efforts to penetrate the belt of pack-ice encumbering the whole of the coast. With the failure of this expedition the Government temporarily gave up all further attempts, whereas some private expeditions, English as well as Danish, visited Greenland in the same century, until the Government again, in 1670 and 1671, sent out two ships, probably to the east coast, with what result is, however, unknown. These other voyages, in the mean time, gave rise to several commercial undertakings, fishing being tried in the new branch of the Atlantic discovered by John Davis. They were carried on by English, French, and Dutch vessels, and the whale fishery especially acquired a long-continued importance in Davis Strait after the whale had become scarce in the Spitzbergen seas. But only the Dutch seem to have carried on any traffic with the inhabitants of the Greenland coast in connection with the whale fishery. This commerce already flourished in the earliest part of the eighteenth century; the whalers on sailing up and down the strait occasionally dropped in here and there, anchoring up in the bays, and awaiting the arrival of the natives, who used to bring out the products of their country for sale. Many cairns erected by them, and also many names of places and several

traditions, indicate that the Dutch have thoroughly searched the coast from Cape Farewell up to 73° N. lat., but there are no signs left that any settlements or temporary fishing establishments have ever existed, or been attempted or intended by them, nor have their explorations in any way added to the general store of geographical knowledge.

THE APOSTLE TO GREENLAND

[1721–1736]

BY JACOB A. RIIS

[THE Norwegian clergyman, Hans Egede, could not give up the thought that descendants of the lost colonists of Greenland were still living, shut away from mankind and from the Gospel. At length his earnest entreaties prevailed; the King of Denmark appointed him missionary to the Greenlanders, and promised him a small salary. In May, 1721, he set sail on the ship Haabet (the Hope) for the unknown shores of the land of ice.

The Editor.]

EARLY in June they sighted land, but the way to it was barred by impassable ice. A whole month they sailed to and fro, trying vainly for a passage. At last they found an opening and slipped through, only to find themselves shut in, with towering icebergs closing around them. As they looked fearfully out over the rail, their convoy signaled that she had struck, and the captain of Haabet cried out that all was lost. In the tumult of terror that succeeded, Egede alone remained calm. Praying for succor where there seemed to be none, he remembered the one hundred and seventh Psalm: "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." And the morning dawned clear, the ice was moving and their prison widening. On July 3 Haabet cleared the last ice-reef and the shore lay open before them.

The Eskimos came out in their kayaks, and the bold-

est climbed aboard the ship. In one boat sat an old man who refused the invitation. He paddled about the vessel, mumbling darkly in a strange tongue. He was an Angekok, one of the native medicine men of whom presently Egede was to know much more. As he stood upon the deck and looked at these strangers for whose salvation he had risked all, his heart fell. They were not the stalwart Northmen he had looked for, and their jargon had no homelike sound. But a great wave of pity swept over him, and the prayer that rose to his lips was for strength to be their friend and their guide to the light.

Not at once did the way open for the coveted friendship with the Eskimos. While they thought the strangers came only to trade they were hospitable enough, but when they saw them build, clearly intent on staying, they made signs that they had better go. They pointed to the sun, that sank lower toward the horizon every day, and shivered as if from extreme cold, and they showed their visitors the icebergs and the snow, making them understand that it would cover the house by and by. When it all availed nothing and the winter came on, they retired into their huts and cut the acquaintance of the white men. They were afraid that they had come to take revenge for the harm done their people in the olden time. There was nothing for it, then, but that Egede must go to them; and this he did.

They seized their spears when they saw him coming, but he made signs that he was their friend. When he had nothing else to give them, he let them cut the buttons from his coat. Throughout the fifteen years he spent in Greenland, Egede never wore furs, as did the natives. The black robe he thought more seemly for a clergyman,

to his great discomfort. He tells in his diary and in his letters that often when he returned from his winter travels it could stand alone when he took it off, being frozen stiff. After a while he got upon neighborly terms with the Eskimos; but, if anything, the discomfort was greater. They housed him at night in their huts, where the filth and the stench were unendurable. They showed their special regard by first licking off the piece of seal they put before him, and if he rejected it, they were hurt. Their housekeeping, of which he got an inside view, was embarrassing in its simplicity. The dish-washing was done by the dogs licking the kettle clean. Often, after a night or two in a hut that held half a dozen families, he was compelled to change his clothes to the skin in an open boat or out on the snow. But the alternative was to sleep in a cold that sometimes froze his pillow to the bed and the tea-cup to the table in his own home. Above all, he must learn their language.

It proved a difficult task, for the Eskimo tongue was both very simple and very complex. In all the things pertaining to their daily life, it was exceedingly complex. For instance, to catch one kind of fish was expressed by one word, to catch another kind in quite different terms. They had one word for catching a young seal, another for catching an old one. When it came to matters of moral and spiritual import, the language was poor to desperation. Egede's instruction began when he caught the word "Kine?" (what is it?) and from that time on he learned every day; but the pronunciation was as varied as the workaday vocabulary, and it was an unending task.

It proceeded with many interruptions from the Ange-

koks, who tried more than once to bewitch him, but finally gave it up, convinced that he was a great medicine-man himself, and therefore invulnerable. But before that they tried to foment a regular mutiny, the colony being by that time well under way, and Egede had to arrest and punish the leader. The natives naturally clung to them, and when Egede had mastered their language and tried to make clear that the Angekoks deceived them when they said they went to the other world for advice, they demurred. "Did you ever see them go?" he asked. "Well, have you seen this God of yours of whom you speak so much?" was their reply. When Egede spoke of spiritual gifts, they asked for good health and blubber — "Our Angekoks give us that." Hell-fire was much in theological evidence in those days, but among the Eskimos it was a failure as a deterrent. They listened to the account of it eagerly and liked the prospect. When at length they became convinced that Egede knew more than their Angekoks, they came to him with the request that he would abolish winter. Very likely they thought that one who had such knowledge of the hot place ought to have influence enough with the keeper of it to obtain this favor.

It was not an easy task, from any point of view, to which he had put his hands. As that first winter wore away there were gloomy days and nights, and they were not brightened when, with the return of the sun, no ship arrived from Denmark. The Dutch traders came, and opened their eyes wide when they found Egede and his household safe and even on friendly terms with the Eskimos. Pelesse — the natives called the missionary that, as the nearest they could come to the Danish *präst*

(priest) — Pelesse was not there after blubber, they told the Dutchmen, but to teach them about heaven and of "Him up there," who had made them and wanted them home with him again. So he had not worked altogether in vain. But the brief summer passed, and still no relief ship. The crew of Haabet clamored to go home, and Egede had at last to give a reluctant promise that if no ship came in two weeks, he would break up. His wife alone refused to take a hand in packing. The ship was coming, she insisted, and at the last moment it did come. A boat coming in after dark brought the first word of it. The people ashore heard voices speaking Danish, and flew to Egede, who had gone to bed, with the news. The ship brought good cheer. The Government was well disposed. Trading and preaching were to go on together, as planned. Joyfully then they built a bigger and a better house, and called their colony Godthaab — Good Hope.

The work was now fairly under way. Of the energy and the hardships it entailed, even we in our day that has heard so much of Arctic exploration can have but a faint conception. Shut in on the coast of eternal ice and silence — silence, save when in summer the Arctic rivers were alive, and crash after crash announced that the glaciers coming down from the inland mountains were "casting their calves," the great icebergs, upon the ocean — the colonists counted the days from the one when that year's ship was lost to sight till the returning spring brought the next one, their only communication with their far-off home. In summer the days were sometimes burning hot, but the nights always bitterly cold. In winter, says Egede, hot water spilled on the table froze as it ran, and

the meat they cooked was often frozen at the bone when set on the table. Summer and winter Egede was on his travels between Sundays, sometimes in the trader's boat, more often the only white man, with one or two Eskimo companions, seeking out the people. When night surprised him with no native hut in sight, he pulled the boat on some desert shore, and, commending his soul to God, slept under it. Once he and his son found an empty hut, and slept there in the darkness. Not until day came again did they know that they had made their bed on the frozen bodies of dead men who had once been the occupants of the house, and had died they never knew how. Peril was everywhere. Again and again his little craft was wrecked. Once the house blew down over their heads in one of the dreadful winter storms that ravage those high latitudes. Often he had to sit on the rail of his boat and let his numbed feet hang into the sea to restore feeling in them. On land he sometimes waded waist-deep in snow, climbed mountains, and slid down into valleys, having but the haziest notion of where he would land. At home his brave wife sat alone, praying for his safety and listening to every sound that might herald his return. Tremble and doubt they did, Egede owns, but neither ever flinched. Their work was before them, and neither thought of turning back. . . .

The natives loved him. There came a day that brought this message from the North: "Say to the speaker to come to us to live, for the other strangers who come here can only talk to us of blubber, blubber, blubber, and we also would hear of the great Creator." Egede went as far as he could, but was compelled by ice and storms to turn back after weeks of incredible hard-

ships. The disappointment was the more severe to him because he had never quite given up his hope of finding remnants of the ancient Norse settlements. The fact that the records spoke of a West Bygd (settlement) and an East Bygd had misled many into believing that the desolate east coast had once been colonized. Not until our own day was this shown to be an error, when Danish explorers searched that coast for a hundred miles and found no other trace of civilization than a beer-bottle left behind by the explorer Nordenskjold.

Egede's hope had been that Greenland might be once more colonized by Christian people. When the Danish Government, after some years, sent up a handful of soldiers, with a major who took the title of governor, to give the settlement official character as a trading station, they sent with them twenty unofficial "Christians," ten men out of the penitentiary and as many lewd and drunken women from the treadmill, who were married by lot before setting sail, to give the thing a half-way decent look. They were good enough for the Eskimos, they seem to have thought at Copenhagen. There followed a terrible winter, during which mutiny and murder were threatened. "It is a pity," writes the missionary, "that while we sleep secure among the heathen savages, among so-called Christian people our lives are not safe." As a matter of fact, they were not, for the soldiers joined in the mutiny against Egede as the cause of their having to live in such a place, and had not sickness and death smitten the malcontents, neither he nor the governor would have come safe through the winter. On the Eskimos this view of the supposed fruits of Christian teaching made its own impression. After seeing a woman

scourged on shipboard for misbehavior, they came innocently enough to Egede and suggested that some of their best Angekoks be sent down to Denmark to teach the people to be sober and decent.

There came a breathing-spell after ten years of labor in what had often enough seemed to him the spiritual as well as physical ice-barrens of the North, when Egede surveyed a prosperous mission, with trade established, a hundred and fifty children christened and schooled, and many of their elders asking to be baptized. In the midst of his rejoicing the summer's ship brought word from Denmark that the king was dead, and orders from his successor to abandon the station. Egede might stay with provisions for one year, if there was enough left over after fitting out the ship; but after that he would receive no further help. When the Eskimos heard the news, they brought their little children to the mission. "These will not let you go," they said; and he stayed. His wife, whom hardship and privation and the lonely waiting for her husband in the long winter nights had at last broken down, refused to leave him, though she sadly needed the care of a physician. A few of the sailors were persuaded to stay another year. "So now," he wrote in his diary when, on July 31, 1731, he had seen the ship sail away with all his hopes, "I am left alone with my wife and three children, ten sailors and eight Eskimos, girls and boys who have been with us from the start. God let me live to see the blessed day that brings good news once more from home." His prayer was heard. The next summer brought word that the mission was to be continued, partly because Egede had strained every nerve to send home much blubber and many skins. But

it was as a glimpse of the sun from behind dark clouds. His greatest trials trod hard upon the good news.

To rouse interest in the mission Egede had sent home young Eskimos from time to time. Three of these died of smallpox in Denmark. The fourth came home and brought the contagion, all unknown, to his people. It was the summer fishing season, when the natives travel much and far, and wherever he went, they flocked about him to hear of the "Great Lord's land," where the houses were so tall that one could not shoot an arrow over them, and to ask a multitude of questions: Was the king very big? Had he caught many whales? Was he strong and a great Angekok? And much more of the same kind. In a week the disease broke out among the children at the mission, and soon word came from islands and fiords where the Eskimos were fishing, of death and misery unspeakable. It was virgin soil for the plague, and it was terribly virulent, striking down young and old in every tent and hut. More than two thousand of the natives, one fourth of the whole population, died that summer. Of two hundred families near the mission, only thirty were left alive. A cry of terror and anguish rose throughout the settlements. No one knew what to do. In vain did Egede implore them to keep their sick apart. In fever delirium they ran out in the ice-fields or threw themselves into the sea. A wild panic seized the survivors, and they fled to the farthest tribes, carrying the seeds of death with them wherever they went. Whole villages perished and their dead lay unburied. Utter desolation settled like a pall over the unhappy land.

Through it all a single ray of hope shone. The faith that Egede had preached all those years, and the life he

had lived with them, bore their fruit. They had struck deeper than he thought. They crowded to him, all that could, as their one friend. Dying mothers held their suckling babes up to him and died content. In a deserted island camp a half-grown girl was found alone with three little children. Their father was dead. When he knew that for him and the baby there was no help, he went to a cave and covering himself and the child with skins, lay down to die. His parting words to his daughter were: "Before you have eaten the two seals and the fish I have laid away for you, Pelesse will come, no doubt, and take you home. For he loves you and will take care of you." At the mission every nook and cranny was filled with the sick and dying. Egede and his wife nursed them day and night. Childlike, when death approached, they tried to put on their best clothes, or even to have new ones made, that they might please God by coming into his presence looking nice. When Egede had closed their eyes, he carried the dead in his arms to the vestibule, where in the morning the men who dug the graves found them. At the sight of his suffering the scoffers were dumb. What his preaching had not done to win them over, his sorrows did. They were at last one.

That dreadful year left Egede a broken man. In his dark moments he reproached himself with having brought only misery to those he had come to help and serve. One thorn which one would think he might have been spared, rankled deep in it all. Some missionaries of a dissenting sect — Egede was Lutheran — had come with the smallpox ship to set up an establishment of their own. At their head was a man full of misdirected zeal and quite devoid of common sense, who engaged

Egede in a wordy dispute about justification by faith, and condemned him and his work unsparingly. He had grave doubts whether he was in truth a "converted man." It came to an end when they themselves fell ill, and Egede and his wife had the last word, after their own fashion. They nursed the warlike brethren through their illness with loving ministrations, and gave them back to life, let us hope, wiser and better men.

At Christmas, 1735, Egede's faithful wife, Gertrude, closed her eyes. She had gone out with him from home and kin to a hard and heathen land, and she had been his loyal helpmeet in all his trials. Now it was all over. That winter scurvy laid him upon a bed of pain, and, lying there, his heart turned to the old home. His son had come from Copenhagen to help, happily yet while his mother lived. To him he would give over the work. In Denmark he could do more for it than in Greenland, now he was alone. On July 29, 1736, he preached for the last time to his people and baptized a little Eskimo to whom they gave his name, Hans. The following week he sailed for home, carrying as all his earthly wealth his beloved dead and his motherless children.

The Eskimos gathered on the shore and wept as the ship bore their friend away. They never saw him again. He lived in Denmark eighteen years, training young men to teach the Eskimos. They gave him the title of bishop, but so little to live on that he was forced in his last days to move from Copenhagen to a country town, to make both ends meet. His grave was forgotten by the generation that came after him. No one knows now where it is; but in ice-girt Greenland, where the northern lights on wintry nights flash to the natives their message

from the souls that have gone home, his memory will live when that of the North Pole Seeker whom the world applauds is long forgotten. Hans Egede was their great man, their hero. He was more: he was their friend.

A MODEL PARLIAMENT

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

Now these Greenlanders, or Eskimos, are not prone to be governed; yet the Danish rule is satisfactory to them, and they submit to it without a murmur, and none the less readily that they have a voice in their own affairs. Each little town or hunting-station is at liberty to send up a representative to sit in the Parliament of Julianashaab. The number of representatives is twelve. The names of the most important towns besides the capital are Nenortalik, Fredericksdal, Lichtenau (these two latter are missions of the Moravian Brethren), Igalliko, and Kraksimeut.

The Parliament-house is not an imposing edifice. I should say its dimensions are about sixteen by twenty feet. It is one story high, is built of boards, lined on the inside, and painted blue, and on the outside is plastered over with pitch. It has no lobby for the accommodation of people who come to the capital with axes for the public grindstone, nor committee-rooms for the better confusion of the public business.

In the center of the one room there stands a long table of plain pine boards, and along either side there is one long bench of the same material; and on each bench sit six Parliamentarians, dressed in sealskin pantaloons and boots, and Guernsey frocks, with broad suspenders across their shoulders. The faces of these Parliamentarians are all of a very dusky hue, the color of their hair is

very black, and it does not seem to have any greater familiarity with combs and brushes than their faces with soap and towels. However, they are an amiable-looking party — at least they grin and show their fine white teeth when I enter, and are altogether, perhaps, quite clean enough for ordinary Parliamentary work. Every man of them has a pencil in his hand and a piece of paper on the table before him, and each one is as busy taking notes thereon as some of our own honorable members are said to be in taking "notes" of another description.

But I must not neglect to mention one article of the Parliamentary costume, for it shines out so conspicuously that it *must* be noticed — I mean the official cap (always worn when the house is in session), which is supplied to each member by royal bounty. This cap is of the brightest kind of scarlet cloth, with a broad gilt band around it; the royal emblems are emblazoned in front, and above these there is a golden polar bear, with a crown on his head, standing uncomfortably on his hind legs, to typify Greenland. There is a thirteenth cap at the head of the table, and this thirteenth cap covers the head of the genial Mr. Anthon, pastor of Julianashaab, and president of the Julianashaab Parliament, *ex officio*.

The aggregate amount of dignity possessed by this Parliament was quite wonderful, and was, in truth, as overwhelming as the fishy odor with which it was impregnated. But neither the fishy odor nor the dignity appeared to interfere with the transaction of business; on the contrary, they seemed to be working away like beavers, and, indeed, they disposed of matters with such an amazing degree of promptness, that I fell instantly to

wondering whether dignity would not be a good thing to introduce into Parliaments, Congresses, Assemblies, and such like things generally; and as to the fishy atmosphere, I have no doubt that it was quite as wholesome as the atmosphere of some of our own legislative halls, where lobbyists are so thick about the doors and avenues that all the purity which ever does go in is soon done for. Of the kind of business brought before this dignified tribunal, I will give a few samples.

The first was a petition for relief. The petitioner himself stood there in person, looking the very picture of forlorn destitution. He stated that he had lost his canoe (kayak), and he produced evidence enough to show without any swearing, false or otherwise, that it had been crushed and lost in the ice. The man, who had hardly clothes on his back to cover his nakedness, showed further that he had a wife and family, who had no friends to assist them, and were entirely dependent upon himself for support. I thought it a doubtful support at best, and so appeared to think the Parliament, since they voted an order for a small stipend of food and clothing, as per schedule, to be drawn from the public storehouse, and paid for out of the Parliamentary funds. The man was sent to work in the Government blubber-house, at twenty-two skillings (eleven cents) a day.

The next case was similar in character, only the petitioner was a well-known young hunter, who had lost his kayak by a fearful accident, which had nearly cost him his life as well as boat, and from the effects of which he had barely now recovered. All that I could comprehend was that some of his ribs had been stove in. The case being proven, the question before Parliament was

whether they should grant him relief, which was unanimously voted in the affirmative. How much? was the next question. After thirteen pencils had ciphered for a minute or so, they made it out fourteen dollars (seven American) for material for the kayak, four dollars for harpoon, spear, etc., and six to pay debts contracted at the Government storehouse for necessary comforts during his sickness.

A third case was that of an old man who received one dollar to buy a spear with; another was from a man who had a family of girls and no oomiak. He received twenty-four dollars, one half of which he was to refund within two years. One hunter got a rifle on the same terms. A sick woman obtained some flannel for a shirt; some orphan children, an order for bread; a widow, the means to bury her dead husband.

These, and a number more of similar character, were soon disposed of. Some of the cases were represented by proxy, the applicant residing at Nenortalik or other distant outpost, whence to come would be difficult; others presented their petitions in person. Some appeals were thrown out in part, or altogether; but these were very few, for public opinion is strong in Greenland, and a lofty sense of pride prevents begging, except in the last extremity. In the case, however, of the kayak and the oomiak, there was presented a prospect of future public advantage; for, in encouraging these people by providing them with boats, the public revenues are increased by their adding to the public industry. Thus do we see that as village "Hampdens" and "mute, inglorious Miltons" may sometimes lie in the village churchyard, so savage legislators and lawgivers may be Solons and Adam

Smiths all in one, and they not know anything about it, and the world be none the wiser.

And thus we see these Greenland Parliaments serve an excellent purpose. They take care of the poor; they render assistance to the unfortunate; they provide certain means of punishing the indolent and guilty; they reward the industrious; and when they have finished with their business, they adjourn, and go home to do their talking; and what more do you want with a Parliament? Nobody, certainly, would desire them to vote away millions of acres of the public lands; for, although they might very well do so without injury to anybody, there are no dangerous corporations to be benefited thereby, and no public interests to be sacrificed by such procedure, and therefore no motive.

II

STORIES OF LIFE IN GREENLAND

HISTORICAL NOTE

SAVE for the island-continent Australia, Greenland is the largest island in the world. Three fifths of the land is covered with ice, which is perhaps three thousand feet or more in thickness. On the lowlands of the east and west which border on the sea, the snow is not permanent, as in the interior; and here the inhabitants, some twelve thousand in number, make their homes. In the west, there is a valuable mine of cryolite; but aside from working this, the chief industries are fishing and hunting. The winter is bitterly cold, but the long days of summer bring enough of sunshine and warmth to produce not only moss and grass and flowering plants, but also trailing shrubs and even trees five or six feet in height. To the southern shores the kindly ocean currents bring quite an amount of driftwood, which is of the greatest value to the natives.

GREENLAND CUSTOMS OF TWO CENTURIES AGO

BY HANS EGEDE

GOING WHALING

WHEN they go whale-catching, they put on their best gear or apparel, as if they were going to a wedding feast, fancying that if they did not come cleanly and neatly dressed, the whale, who cannot bear slovenly and dirty habits, would shun them and fly from them. This is the manner of their expedition: about fifty persons, men and women, set out together in one of the large boats called kone boats; the women carry along with them their sewing tackles, consisting of needles and thread, to sew and mend their husbands' spring coats, or jackets, if they should be torn or pierced through, as also to mend the boat, in case it should receive any damage; the men go in search of the whale, and when they have found him they strike him with their harpoons, to which are fastened lines or straps, two or three fathoms long, made of sealskin, at the end of which they tie a bag of a whole sealskin, filled with air like a bladder; in order that the whale, when he finds himself wounded, and runs away with the harpoon, may the sooner be tired, the air hindering him from keeping long under water. When he grows tired and loses strength, they attack him again with their spears and lances till he is killed, and then they put on their spring coats, made of dressed sealskin,

all of one piece, with boots, gloves, and caps, sewed and laced so tight together that no water can penetrate them. In this garb they jump into the sea, and begin to slice the fat of him all round the body, even under the water; for in these coats they cannot sink, as they are always full of air, so that they can, like the seal, stand upright in the sea; nay, they are sometimes so daring that they will get upon the whale's back while there is yet life in him, to make an end of him and cut away his fat.

THE HOUSES OF THE GREENLANDERS

As to their houses or dwelling places, they have one for the winter season and another for the summer. Their winter habitation is a low hut built with stone and turf, two or three yards high, with a flat roof. In this hut the windows are on one side, made of the bowels of seals dressed and sewed together, or of the maws of halibut, and are white and transparent. On the other side their beds are placed, which consist of shelves or benches made up of deal boards raised half a yard from the ground; their bedding is made of seal and reindeer skins.

Several families live together in one of these houses or huts; each family occupying a room by itself, separated from the rest by a wooden post, by which also the roof is supported; before which there is a hearth or fireplace, in which is placed a great lamp in the form of a half moon seated on a trivet; over this are hung their kettles of brass, copper, or marble, in which they boil their victuals: under the roof, just above the lamp, they have a sort of rack or shelf, to put their wet clothes upon to dry. The fore door or entry of the house is very low, so that they must stoop, and must creep in upon all fours to get

in at it; which is so contrived to keep the cold air out as much as possible. The inside of the houses is covered or lined with old skins, which before have served for the covering of their boats. Some of these houses are so large that they can harbor seven or eight families.

Upon the benches or shelves where their beds are placed, is the ordinary seat of the women, attending their work of sewing and making up the clothing. The men with their sons occupy the foremost parts of the benches, turning their back to the women: on the opposite side, under the windows, the men belonging to the family, or strangers, take their seats upon the benches there placed.

I cannot forbear taking notice that, although in one of these houses there be ten or twenty train lamps, one does not perceive the steam or smoke thereof to fill these small cottages: the reason, I imagine, is, the care they take in trimming those lamps, viz., they take dry moss, rubbed very small, which they lay on one side of the lamp, which, being lighted, burns softly and does not cause any smoke, if they do not lay it on too thick or in lumps. This fire gives such a heat that it not only serves to boil their victuals, but also heats the room to that degree that it is as hot as a bathhouse. But for those who are not used to this way of firing, the smell is very disagreeable, as well by the number of burning lamps, all fed with train oil, as on account of divers sorts of raw meat, fishes, and fat, which they heap up in their habitations.

These winter habitations they begin to dwell in immediately after Michaelmas, and leave them again at the approach of the spring, which commonly is at the latter

end of March; and then for the summer season lodge in tents, which are their summer habitations. These tents are made of rafts or long poles, set in a circular form, bending at the top, and resembling a sugar loaf, and covered with a double cover, of which the innermost is of seal or reindeer skins with the hairy side inward (if they be rich), and the outermost also of the same sort of skins, without hair, dressed with fat, that the rain may not pierce them. In these tents they have their beds, and lamps to dress their meat with; also a curtain made of the guts or bowels of seals sewed together, through which they receive the daylight instead of windows. Every master of a family has got such a tent, and a great woman's boat, to transport their tents and luggage from place to place, where their business calls them.

GAMES OF THE GREENLAND BOYS

The boys and lads have also their pastimes and plays, when they meet in the evening. They take a small piece of wood, with a hole in it at one end, to which they tie a little pointed stick with a thread of string, and throwing the piece with the hole in it up into the air, they strive to catch it upon the pointed stick, through the hole. He that does it twenty times successively and without failing gains the match or party; and he that misses gets a black stroke on his forehead for every time he misses. Another boy's play is a game of chance, like cards or dice; they have a piece of wood pointed at one end, with a pin or peg in the midst, upon which it turns; when the boys are seated around, and every one laid down what they play for, one of them turns the pointed piece of wood with his finger, that it wheels about like a mari-

ner's compass; and when it has done, he that the point aims at wins all that was laid down. Ball playing is their most common diversion, which they play two different ways. They divide themselves into two parties; the first party throws the ball to each other; while those of the second party endeavor to get it from them, and so by turns. The second manner is like our playing at football. They mark out two barriers, at three or four hundred paces distant one from the other; then being divided into two parties, as before, they meet at the starting-place, which is at the midway between the two barriers; and the ball being thrown upon the ground, they strive who first shall get at it, and kick it with the foot, each party towards their barrier. He that is the most nimble-footed and dextrous at it, kicking the ball before him and getting first to the barrier, has won the match.

Thus (they will tell you) the deceased play at football in heaven, with the head of a moose, when it lightens, or the northlight (aurora borealis) appears, which they fancy to be the souls of the deceased.

When their acquaintance from abroad come to see them, they spend whole days and nights in singing and dancing; and as they love to pass for men of courage and valor, they will try forces together, in wrestling, struggling, and playing hook and crook, which is to grapple with the arms and fingers made crooked, and intangled like hooks. Whoever can pull the other from his place, thinks himself a man of worth and valor. The women's, or rather, the maidens' plays, consist in dancing around, holding one another by the hand, forming a circle, and singing of songs.

HOW TO BUILD A "WOMAN'S BOAT"

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

[A "WOMAN'S BOAT," or *oomiak*, is rowed by women. A man will sometimes take the steering oar, but he would feel humiliated at rowing in a craft requiring so little skill. The *kayak* is a man's boat.

The Editor.]

YOU will first obtain five round sticks of wood thirty-six feet long, more or less, according to the length you desire to make the boat. These must be as light as possible, and not over two inches in diameter. Since the country produces no wood, you will of course have to go to the governor for the materials, which he keeps in his storehouses, replenishing the stock each year by shipments from Denmark. But since you will not find a stick thirty-six feet long, you will have to procure several, which you lash together until you have obtained the requisite length. Having done this, you place three of them on the ground parallel with each other, the outer ones being six feet apart. Then across them, at the middle, you lash, with firm thongs of raw seal-hide, a piece of inch plank three inches wide and six feet long. Then you bring the ends of the three long sticks together, lashing them firmly. Next you lash other pieces of board across at intervals of two feet. Of course these are of different lengths. Thus you have obtained the bottom of your oomiak. This done, you proceed to erect the skeleton, fastening the stem and stern posts firmly with lashings;

also the ribs. The ribs in their place, you secure along the inside of them, at about sixteen inches above the floor, a strip of plank. On this you place the thwarts, the middle one being six feet long, the others shorter, as you approach either end. Ten thwarts is the proper number. This completes the skeleton, all but the placing of the rails or gunwales, which are the two remaining thirty-six-foot sticks. These being fastened with thongs to the ribs, and to the stem and stern posts, your skeleton is finished, and it is exceedingly light, strong, and elastic. But now, instead of covering this novel sort of boat-skeleton with planking, you stretch over it a coat of seal-hide (it can scarcely be called leather). It has been, however, tanned and dried, and afterwards thoroughly saturated with oil, until it is as impervious to water as a plate of iron. A number of skins are necessarily required, and these the women will sew together for you so firmly with sinew thread that not a drop of water can find its way through the seams. This skin coat, being cut and fashioned to fit the skeleton as neatly as a slipper to the foot, is drawn on and firmly tied. It is very soft when you draw it on, but when it dries it is as tight and hard as a drum-head; and when the skin becomes a little old, the light will come through it as through parchment. When afloat in the oomiak, you can always discover how much water you are drawing by looking through the side of it. This is not a pleasant operation, however, for a nervous person, since one can hardly resist the impression that he is in a very treacherous sort of craft.

This light and elastic boat is propelled with short oars having broad blades, which are tied to the gunwale, instead of being thrust out through rowlocks. These

oars are shod with bone, to protect them from the ice. A single mast is erected in the bow, upon which is run up a square sail when the wind is fair. If the owner of the boat is rich enough, he gets the material for his sail from the governor; but if not, he makes it out of sealskins.

I have observed that he gets the wood from the governor's stores: not all of it, however, for the obliging sea brings him an occasional tree that has floated with the ocean current from the forests of Siberia; or a plank, perhaps, that has fallen overboard from a passing vessel; or a spar or other portion of a wreck. Thus, before the Danes came here, did the Eskímos obtain all the wood they used. From this source they also procured their iron, in the shape of spikes, nails, bands, and bars, attached to these waifs of the sea. Thus do the ocean currents, which carry heat and cold to the uttermost parts of the earth, scatter also blessings to mankind.

THE ESKIMOS AND THEIR WAYS

FROM THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

EVERYBODY knows what manner of creature an Eskimo is: the "strange infidele, the like of whom was never seen, read, nor heard tell of," as stout Martin Frobisher describes him. From morning to night under my window in Jakobshavn Kirke — in nearly 70° north latitude — there stands a group of the queer little folks; fur-clad from head to foot; good-naturedly grinning at our small witticisms in very bad Greenlandish, until the dirt cracks into huge asterisks on their brown, globose, good-humored cheeks. All the children have their hair in their eyes, and their hands in the pockets of their ragged, mangy-looking skin breeches. It is summer time, and their toes protrude through their sealskin boots, without fear of frost-bite. No sooner do they devour their rather more than modicum of the blubbery seal which their father has killed in his skin kayak, than they hurry over the bleak, lichen-covered rocks with flowers and ferns, and creeping things, on the chance of a skilling or a biscuit from the "Nalegak Tuluit" (the big Englishman) and they will scramble amid the snow and slush, with merry shouts, for the smallest coin thrown out to them. "Kuyanke! Kuyanke!" (Thank you! thank you!) the fortunate one shouts, the last syllable echoing from behind the rocks, for young Greenland is off to Herr Mörch's, the trader, to buy lump-sugar. Then there are the women, some of them good-looking enough when clean and

tidy; as for the old ones, they are so hideous that I do not at all wonder at some of old Frobisher's sailors pulling the boots off one of them, to see if her foot was not cloven, after the fashion ascribed to the Evil One! There is now very little pure Eskimo blood in Danish Greenland; fair hair and blue eyes are just about as common as black hair and black eyes. Everybody, however, dresses *à la Eskimoiske* — man, woman, and child, blonde, or brunette. The woman's dress is not at all inelegant, and is much more suited to the climate than would be European garments. In the winter all is fur, but in summer time a little lighter and more varied raiment is ventured on. The round-hooded jacket is made of checked calico, tartan silk, or even blue velvet, fur-lined; made rather short, to show the white chemise beneath. It would, no doubt, be warmer to have it a little larger, but then fashion sways as much in Greenland as in Europe; and the Arctic belles would rather shiver and catch cold than disobey its dictates. Then the trousers are of sealskin, striped with eider-ducks' necks, or ornamented with little strips of the curious skin-embroidery so much affected among these people. The boots are the grandest of all the articles of wardrobe, and are made of dyed sealskin leather. Some of them have regular "tops" like a pair of hunting-boots, and between the foot of the boot and the top is a piece of white calico — often embroidered, so that the general effect of red and green boots and calico embroidery, when collected in a mass on some rocky point, as you sail in a Greenland fiord, is sufficiently striking, A white nun-like scarf is sedately folded round the neck and over the breast; and the hair is twisted into a top-knot doubled upon itself,

and tied with a piece of colored ribbon. Now this constant pulling up of the hair to the top of the crown is apt to result in a circlet of baldness. To conceal this defect the Greenland coquette, from eight to eighty, folds a handkerchief, generally of black silk, round her head, finishing off with a fancy knot in front. This knot is pinned on, and, like the ladies' chignons in Europe, is a hollow sham, lined with all sorts of rubbish, such as old rags, and clippings of sealskins. The color of the ribbon with which the knot is tied denotes the condition of life of the wearer. When unmarried it is pink, when married blue; if a widow in service, it is green with gold; if a widow at home, black. The description of seal used for dress is also of importance; the smooth mottled *Kassigiak* (*Phoca vitulina*) being most highly valued for this purpose. When a Greenland Pyramus would grow in favor with his Thisbe, instead of *bijouterie*, he presents her with what she values rather more (albeit she is not insensible to the charms of trinkets), a dappled sealskin to make her a pair of — trousers. Some of the young fellows are stalwart, handsome fellows, and the admixture of Danish blood shows itself in the features, the nose especially — that organ in the regular Eskimo being merely a flattened tubercle, meandering on either side of his cheeks in an expanse of nostril. . . .

Let us look in on what the English voyagers jocularly call the "Lieutenant-Governor." His duties are really more those of a country shopkeeper's assistant than anything else. "Herr Assistant" he is called in the settlement; in the books of the Government he is styled a "Volunteer"; though why he should be so called, it is hard to say, as he receives pay, though certainly that is

small enough. He is at present in *the* shop of the settlement, very busy, but yet with leisure enough to smoke the biggest of big pipes. "Merchanting," he assures us, "is strong work." He has absolutely toiled three hours to-day. He has just sold three skillings-worth of soft soap to an old woman, and six skillings-worth of coffee to a small boy, and is now putting up some eiderdown for Herr Pastor, the new missionary who has just arrived with the Hvalfisk. Every officer and missionary coming out for the first time is entitled to forty-eight pounds of uncleaned eider-down at 6d. per pound, and two bear-skins for a sleeping-bag, at the country-trade price of five rigsdaler. Troops of little boys and women drop in and out, for the shop is only open so many hours a day, and there is no opposition. If you are not pleased with your purchase, you will be (always most politely) told to go to the next shop, which is in Reykjavik in Iceland, or possibly Moose Factory in Hudson's Straits. "Kavit," or coffee, notwithstanding its high price, seems to be the article chiefly in demand. Whatever else may be wanted, *kavit* must be had, and to procure this a woman will allow her children to go about like half-skinned seals; and her husband to want the most common necessaries. No spirits being allowed to be sold, the natives take coffee instead, and to such an extent that it has been not inaptly styled "the curse of Greenland." For a family to consume one and a half pounds *per diem*, is no uncommon extravagance; and the polite little trader turns to his books, and shows me that some families, when in luck (the father having killed a white whale or many seals), will use as much as five pounds of coffee daily. Half of this is wasted in the preparation. The green

beans are roasted in a pot, or on a flat stone, until they are charred black; they are then *smashed* up with a stone in an old leather mitten without fingers, until they are roughly bruised, when they are thrown by the handful into water and boiled for some time. The result is a liquid, black enough in all conscience, with half beans floating about in it, and very bitter; but it is *strong*, and that is the main thing. A bit of candied sugar is taken into the mouth, and the coffee is sipped, the sugar meantime dissolving, and imparting a certain degree of sweetness to the bitter liquid.

This is drinking coffee *à la Gronlandice;* but practice is required to accomplish it satisfactorily, for the sugar *will* slip down without the coffee, and the coffee without receiving its proper saccharine addition. Herr Assistant asks a hulking-looking Greenlander standing at the door with his hands in his pockets, why he is not out seal-hunting (for independently of his regard for the welfare of the natives, Herr Colonibestyrer is directly interested in the produce of the hunt). He gives a growl and replies, "I have had no *kavit* to-day;" and then, as if correcting himself: "Besides, there is a hole in my kayak, and my boy is not well, and — ;" but the real truth was "no *kavit*." Just as I am talking to him, a little boy who is working for me begs a few skillings on account, as he is out of *kavit*, and finds it impossible to get along without his accustomed beverage. Then arrive two brothers from a distant settlement with blubber and skins, which net nearly £2. What do they buy? Some bread, some butter, some tobacco, a little powder and shot; the rest all goes in *coffee* and sugar. The butter is of course quite in their way: my friend the schoolmaster

of Christianshaab is rather fond of fenks (or the refuse of the blubber) and butter, — a rather greasy dish. However, the traditional blubber-eating of the natives is, so far as Danish Greenland is concerned, rather mythical. Blubber is too precious for winter light and heat to be rashly expended as food, and accordingly we find that they use it but rarely, and only as we would use fat to lean meat. The shop itself is about as dirty a little shop as could be imagined, containing everything which could possibly be required for use either among the Danes or Eskimo, all heaped up in confusion. . . .

They [the Greenlanders] are a very humorous people, fond of little rough jokes, and most communicative and pleasant with those whom they like and trust; but they are very little to be depended on, and are curiously vacillating and fickle. However, if they once decide not to go anywhere with a person whom they despise or dislike, no bribe will tempt them to change their determination; though on the other hand, even if you are a favorite, it is not altogether certain that they will really go with you until you are fairly outside of the place. The only way to secure them is to advance a little of their pay beforehand. They are never known to break a contract of this nature. But then they must have their own way, and to pass a trading-post without sleeping and drinking *kavit* would be an innovation unheard of in Greenland. On all sides you would be told that it was impossible. They are fond of ridiculing the Europeans; indeed, this forms their principal amusement in the winter. Any little peculiarity in person, manner, or conduct will be instantly noted within a day of your arrival. The result is that no European in the country is known

by anything but some sobriquet, sometimes not over-complimentary. One of the governors who has a remarkably prominent nose is called "Kringalik," the nose; another "Tulgak," the raven, from his dark complexion; a third, pitted with the smallpox, is known as "Cheese-rind"; Vahl, the naturalist, was known by a word which signifies the "diligent catcher," the name being applied in derision of his entomological and botanical researches, and not in admiration of his ability to catch seals, of which, indeed, he caught none. One of our party being a little stout man was called at one place "Apalearsoak," the little auk or rotje; and at another settlement he used to be known as "the peddler," Herr A—— being a collector of all sorts of Eskimo curiosities; while another foreigner, who did not impress the people much with his wisdom, is remembered as "Pitlokiak" — the weak-minded man, or fool. The present writer was first called "Usuk," the bearded seal, and finally settled down, as being the tallest man of the party, into "Nerkersoak" — great muscle — (*nerké*, flesh; *soak*, great). They are very fond of a name, which by a slight twist of the tongue can be converted into a *double entendre*, as many Eskimo words can be, several only differing slightly in the sound, though with an entirely different meaning. Of course, you are the last man to know of your own name. Among themselves they are not a whit better. Ask a native his name, and he will hesitate to tell you. If it is very good, his modesty will keep him from mentioning it; but if it is the contrary, his shame will equally act as a barrier to your acquiring the desired information.

In reality very vain and great braggarts, they are

affectedly modest when speaking of themselves or their property. "Would you lend me," they would say, "your fine large kayak, as my miserable thing has got a hole in it?" In every district or two the Government appoints a parson, and all the natives are nominally Christians, and are baptized, married, and buried after the Lutheran fashion. The priest comes round when he has time, and marries them in batches, a certain dispensation being allowed in the mean time, and a refusal to complete his engagement being perfectly unknown on the side of the male lover. The Lutheran missionaries are supported by the Government, and come out for a term of years, Greenland falling to the lot generally of the least brilliant of the theological licentiates of Copenhagen University. The Moravians — the celebrated *Unitas Fratrum* of Herrnhut in Germany — also have missions in South Greenland, but they are not allowed to stretch farther north than 65°, and it is only recently that they were allowed to baptize and marry. They are a self-denying set of men and women, but much too austere for the Greenlanders' temporal welfare. Round a Moravian settlement the natives are generally a miserable, ragged set of wretches; attendance at church three times a day allowing of little time to attend to seal-catching. The Danes, though they bring out stores to them, yet do not like them; the proverbial professional hatred not being starved even out of Greenland, and, moreover, the Herrnhutians are — Germans! There is not now a real healthy Pagan in Danish Greenland — Hans Hendreich's Smith Sound wife, so celebrated in Dr. Hayes's narrative, being the last; but Shanghu's pretty daughter whose love-episode poor Kane has told us all about,

is now settled down at Proven, a regularly christened woman. Occasionally a wandering savage or two comes round Cape Farewell from the east coast, from unknown lands. Only a few years ago some came to Pamiadluk, declaring that it was two years since they had left their homes in the far north, somewhere near the Pole doubtless. Such windfalls are, however, soon pounced upon by the nearest parson, and baptized *nolens volens*, under the name of Peder, or Jens, or Hans, and a most gushing description of his conversion instantly dispatched by the next ship to the *Danske Missionair Tiddsskrift!* The last *real* Pagan, however, was an old fellow who lived up at Upernavik, in 70° north latitude. When asked to be a Christian, he would slap his broad chest, and shout in a voice as if from a drum, "Why should I be baptized — I can provide for *my* family — *I* don't hang on the whites like the baptized Greenlanders;" and so a Pagan lived and died this representative man. Every Sunday there is service in the little wooden church, the men sitting on one side, and the women on the other. The priest is a sight for gods and men — clad in his sealskin trousers and boots, with a dogskin jacket, the collar of which peeps up above his high Lutheran ruff. Service is in Eskimo, as are also the sweetly sung hymns. An Eskimo plays the organ very well indeed, while the congregation intone out some such hymn as the following: —

"Scerbsarmeta tanko okautiagut
Sorapok innardlungalloarmerput," etc.

On a summer morning, when it is in session, there issues through the cracks in the church door an unmistakable odor of ancient seal. The church wall seems to be a regular place for hanging up all sorts of implements

of the chase. For instance, there is a musket or two hanging in the corner, some paddles, harpoons, and seal-lines, all on the outside. It seems as if some of old Pliny's Hyperborei had hung up their arms on the walls of the Temple of Neptune, in gratitude for their escape from shipwreck.

THE FAREWELL OF THE GREENLANDERS

FROM THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

THE time comes when we must leave, and all is packing up and good-bye with "Herren Englander." Every day little deputations arrive to ask us to drink coffee before some hospitable threshold, or to take some little farewell dinner. One of these kindly acts of hyperborean (though by no means frigid) hospitality seems worthy of being recorded in these notes as being one of the last of the many acts of good will and warm-heartedness received from a people whom I can scarcely hope ever to see again. Samuel was one of the most respectable of the mixed race of Greenlanders about our neighborhood; a skillful hunter, artificer, and maker of many curiosities, for which he had found a customer in me. He insisted that I should — Danish fashion — take *kavit* with him. As I saw that the invitation was intended as a special mark of favor, and that the refusal would be a mortal affront, I complied most gracefully, though I had drunk so much black coffee that day as to give me little hope of sleeping at night. His house was the ordinary turf mansion situated in a little valley and entered by the usual tunnel. The interior was in no way much different from the others, except that it boasted a greater variety of knicknacks — a Dutch clock, a cupboard, and several glaring prints of the Emperor of the French, his empress, and a fierce red-faced gentleman, whom I had some difficulty in dis-

covering to be intended for "Albert Edward, Prinds af Wales og Hertug af Cornwall." I was here introduced to Samuel's wife and daughter — the latter with the softest brown eyes and auburn hair I ever saw — both of whom were busily manufacturing articles of household attire on the "brecks," or general platform, which occupies one side of the house, and serves the purposes of bed, table, and chair. The house is very warm, and I am begged to take off my coat, following in this fashion the rest of the family, most of whom are in a state of semi-nudity. There are many other folks there, but they are of the commonalty, and beneath the Tuluit's attention. I, however, notice them patronizingly, and they grin from ear to ear by way of reply. While the rather lengthy operation of preparing the coffee goes on, the family produce their penates to entertain me, while the women examine the texture of my coat and scarlet shirt most knowingly. Samuel shows me his tools, and how he uses them; his spears, and harpoons, and *allunaks*, and the workbox he made for his wife (which does him much credit), and some patterns for slippers, painted in colors by his little boy, who was once one of my particular henchmen, but is now dead. He himself has just recovered from a long sickness, and is very pale. He plays a tune on the fiddle, and the younger members of his family, who have been out gathering blueberries, dance most joyfully to it. He has likewise an accordion; he apologizes for its being a little out of tune, but he had had to open it to show the children where the sound came from! And then the wife (who has been a handsome blue-eyed woman in her day, for they are, of course, all of a mixed breed), with a woman's curiosity, questions me in broken

Danish and English and Eskimo, all about my condition in life: if I am married, and how many children, and so on, and so on; and all the gossips are delighted. They, to my astonishment, inquire if I do not come from Scotland, and on my expressing astonishment at their knowledge of geography, Samuel produces an ancient map, and points out the land of my nativity. All this is done leisurely as the *kavit* boils, and as I sip it in the cleanest of cups, they pour in the soft unction of hyperborean flattery, and assure me with an air which means even more than the words would seem to express, "Efflete eyunelak Tuluit" (You are the good Englishman). "All the Innuit (Eskimo) will miss you when you are gone, and the little boys will have no one to throw skillings to them now. All of us will have sick hearts when you go away." To all of which an ancient dame on the farther side of the "brecks," whom I had hitherto thought only a bundle of sealskins, echoes in a voice as if it came out of a mattress, "Yes, especially the *Neviarsuik* (girls)!" and the house echoes with laughter, as the joke is apparently thought a good one. I grin like the rest as it is explained to me; though Samuel's daughter blushes crimson, for she is apparently the butt of it. Be it known, however, that the daughter of Samuel bears a highly proper reputation in Aetlumia, and is, I am told in a stage whisper (at which she again blushes), to be the spouse of Peder Zaccharias Brug, when that young gentleman has finished his new kayak, and Pastor Neilson has time to unite them in the bonds of wedlock. After we have finished our coffee, we have blueberries and a glass of schnapps, which last is produced with the air of smuggled whiskey; and when we consider how dearly they all

like this beverage, the extent of the favor may be imagined. When all is over, and the autumn sun is getting low, I am escorted to the door by the whole family, with many good-byes and hopes to see me again next year, and take my departure homeward. We have a long way yet to go before we meet the stout ship which is to take us to Denmark. We have to share, some snowy nights, the hospitality of an Eskimo hut — but savory and very warm — and to pass miserable days and nights enow in dreary Akajaroah.

Snow is falling fast as we leave Greenland behind. All have some little regrets at leaving it. One thinks of the eider-ducks and the reindeer, another of the glorious glaciers and icebergs, like silver castles floating in the summer sunlight, on an emerald sea. Everybody joins in one regret that the free-and-easy life — so novel and so wild — is at an end; that behind lies life in its wildest aspect — before us in its most civilized, but also most artificial form.

WHAT IS AN ICEBERG?

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

OBSERVE the little bit of ice that clinks in your tumbler at dinner-time. Observe it closely, and you will perceive how very small a part of it floats above the surface of the water. That part is about one tenth, but it floats in fresh water. Change it to sea-water, and the part above would be one eighth. Now this little bit of ice is an iceberg in miniature—an iceberg in every essential feature except that it did not in all human probability come from Greenland. In form, in general transparency, in the play of light upon it, in its prismatic character, in the shape of its projecting tongues which lie beneath the surface of the waves, in the delicate mist which plays around it in the warm air, it is the very image, on a small scale, of those great monoliths of the Arctic frost which come sailing down Baffin's Bay with the Polar Current in all their stately grandeur and magnificence.

It is difficult for the imagination to conceive of the great magnitude of some of these Greenland icebergs; and yet, they are but comparatively trifling pieces, torn by the sea from glaciers. The iceberg is indeed as the paring of a finger-nail to the whole body, when compared to the quantity of ice in the reservoir from which it came. Magnify the bit of ice in your tumbler until it becomes to your imagination half a mile in diameter each way, and you have a mass that is far from uncommon. Add to this a mile, two miles, of length, and you have what

may be sometimes seen. I have sailed alongside of an iceberg two miles and a quarter before coming to the end of it. Yet this is not greater, in proportion to the entire Greenland accumulation, than the little bit of ice in your tumbler is to the immense stores which the ice monopolists have in their storehouses when they stand ready to avow, and do avow, that the stock is nearly exhausted, and that they propose to double their charges on you just when the hottest weather oppresses the city.

The name iceberg signifies ice-mountain, and mountainous it truly is in size. Lift it out of the water, and it becomes a mountain five hundred, a thousand, two thousand, or three thousand feet high. In dimensions it is as if the city of New York were turned adrift in the Atlantic, or the Central Park were cut out and launched in the same place. And an iceberg of the dimensions of Central Park is far from unusual. In general outline of surface the resemblance is often equally good. It is undulating like the park, and craggy, and is crossed by ravines and dotted with lakes — the waters of which are formed from the melting snows of the late winter, which have fallen upon it, and also of the ice itself, after the snows have disappeared before the rays of the summer's sun. In such a lake I have even once bathed, although, I am glad to say, but once, and that was in "the days of other years," when the youthful impulse was strong to *say*, "I have done it!" a disease which I believe to be amenable to that treatment popularly known as "sad experience." Skating on an iceberg lake is more satisfactory and sensible, though it is just as well to give an iceberg as wide a berth as possible, and have as little to do with it as you can at all times, for it is liable to go to

pieces (though this rarely happens in winter) when you are least expecting it. I have often climbed them, however, and with different motives; sometimes to aid in watering the ship (for the lakes upon them are of the best and purest water); sometimes to obtain a distant view; at other times for the mere purpose of curiosity and adventure. Ordinarily, a slope may be found by which the ascent can be made without difficulty, but sometimes spikes in the heels and a boat hook in the hand become necessary. Frequently, however, the sides are quite vertical all around, and it cannot be scaled at all. On one occasion, I measured an iceberg that presented on one of its sides a vertical wall that rose three hundred and fifteen feet above the level of the sea. Another one that I saw in the upper part of Baffin's Bay, and measured carefully, I will describe minutely. The sea was quite smooth, and the day calm, so that I enjoyed a most excellent opportunity, such an one as I never had before, and probably shall never have again.

This iceberg was not only remarkable for its size, but for its great variety of feature. I rowed all the way around it, and measured it as carefully as possible. One of its sides was nearly straight and regular, having the appearance of being recently broken from the glacier. When facing the sun, it glistened marvelously. This side was six thousand five hundred feet long—about a mile and a quarter. At one end it was two hundred and forty feet high, rising squarely from the sea. At the center the height was less, being only one hundred and sixty feet; at the other end it was one hundred and ninety.

These measurements were made with as much accuracy as was attainable under the circumstances, and are

quite reliable within small limits. The log-line and chronometer — the one to measure distance, the other to note time — were of necessity the means of obtaining the length. For the height I dropped the "chip" at the base of the berg, and then, rowing out a hundred fathoms, I had a tolerably good base-line for obtaining the altitude — a pocket-sextant giving me the necessary angles. Say that I made a mistake of twenty-five feet, it is yet near enough for all practical purposes. It was big enough in all conscience, any way.

In measuring my lengths I was not so liable to error, and in the same manner as before I found one end of the berg to be eighteen hundred feet across. Here it terminated in a rounded bluff that was one hundred and twenty feet high.

Turning at the base of this rounded bluff, I came upon a side wholly different from the one I had before measured. It had evidently been for a long time the front of the glacier — perhaps for a period of fifteen or twenty years, or even more. It was everywhere irregular. In places it was cliff-like, as was the other, but for the most part it was worn into all sorts of irregular shapes. This had been done partly by the washings of the sea, partly by the sun, and partly by the streams of water which poured from the glacier while this iceberg was a part of it. There were bays in the side of it large enough to float a frigate. The Panther might have gone in and turned around upon her heel without fear of striking.

In another place there was a considerable bay, with two ice islands in it that were very peculiar. To this bay they were as Governor's Island and Ellis's Island to the bay of New York, and they had as firm a foundation,

but the bottom upon which they rested was ice. They were mere hummocks, and the water on the berg was quite shoal. Yet we went in at least a hundred yards before we reached the shore of it, all the while being really *on* the iceberg, for the ice projected away out beneath us; and as I looked over the side of the boat down through the clear bright water, which we were shoaling constantly, I thought I had never seen a more perfectly graduated tint than that from the deep water when we first came over the ice to the margin of the bay. It was as if we sailed through liquid emerald.

I "landed" upon the shore of this bay and climbed the iceberg. It was not an easy climb, even with the aid of steel spikes in my heels and a boat hook in my hand. In places the ascent was very steep; and had I lost my footing, I should have slid down at a fearful pace into the sea.

Upon reaching the surface I found it to be rolling, and much broken. There were two conspicuous hills upon it, one of which was two hundred and ninety, the other two hundred and seventy feet above the sea level. At least, this was the record of my barometer. Between these hills and among others less conspicuous, I discovered a lake a quarter of a mile long. Its course was winding like the lake of Central Park, which it resembled in size. I followed along its shore until I found the outlet, and there, through a narrow gorge, the overflow of the lake was rushing over a crystal bed in a rapid torrent, until coming at length to the side of the berg the pure cold stream leaped wildly down into the ocean, roaring like a youthful Niagara, and breaking into spray. On every side there were indeed streams, most of them quite

small, so that the whole iceberg was shedding water on every side, and the constant sound of innumerable cascades charmed the ear with their ceaseless roar.

From the lake I wandered among the icy hills until I grew bewildered, and I found my way back to the place of ascent not without embarrassment. The cause of this was partially explained — the iceberg was revolving; and as I steered my course back by the sun, I naturally mistook the direction until I had discovered what was wrong, when I began to look for the two hills first mentioned, by which I recovered my bearings, and was soon on the right track again. Upon climbing these ice-hills, I obtained a grand view. The whole sea was studded with icebergs — hundreds of them there must have been — of every conceivable shape, from the great wall-sided mass that looked like a floating huge castle to the colossal effigy of some winged monster floating upon the sea.

Although on an iceberg, I was not without life to keep me company. A flock of kittiwake gulls flew about my head, and, perching upon a hill, set up their noisy chatter; and one old burgomaster gull, who had caught a fish, came there to swallow it in peace. But, to his evident surprise and sad disgust, he was suddenly pounced upon by a predatory jager, who had seemingly been hovering round for just such a chance; and, with an angry scream, the burgomaster, who had started off when he saw his enemy, gave up his prize, which the jager quickly caught in mid-air.

It was altogether a strange sensation, afloat at so great an elevation on an ice mountain in the sea. Yet my footstool was firm and solid as the eternal hills.

Had time and circumstances permitted, I should gladly have carried up my camp-fixtures and remained there for a day or so watching the grand panorama of the hills and sea, while the sun, like a golden wheel in the blue sky, rolled around me, changing from hour to hour the aspect of every object within the range of vision — now silvering an iceberg, now coloring it, while it floated sometimes in a sea of blue, and again of green; now blazing with red the rugged cliffs of the fiord; now throwing them in shadow, as if they were the gloomy walls encompassing the abyss of Dante's Giants; now gilding the distant mountains, now robing them in purple; now silvering the far-off *mer de glace*, then melting it into a sea of rubies, or blending it with the blue sky; for such scenes I have often witnessed in the Arctic seas, though not from the summit of an iceberg.

But this camp on the iceberg was not possible; so, when I had found my way, I descended from my lofty elevation to the boat, and then, pulling on around the berg, completed my survey of it.

The scenery was much varied as we passed along. At one time we were beneath a dismantled tower; at another time, a ruined spire; then a deep cleft of blue or a dark cavern of green, in which the slow-moving billows were caught and confined, until, as if tired of their imprisonment, their hollow voices came gurgling out like the loud breathing of some mighty monster of the deep exhausted with his efforts to move the mountain from his path.

The side along which we were now passing proved to be six thousand feet in length. The end beyond was thirty-five hundred. Thus, in making the complete cir-

cuit of the iceberg, we had pulled almost three and a half miles.

The altitude of the berg I averaged at one hundred and eighty feet above the sea level, which would give a total average depth of fourteen hundred and forty feet, or more than a quarter of a mile. Multiply these figures, and we obtain a total cubical contents of 23,850,000,000 feet. Convert this into tons, and all the carrying capacity of all the ships in the world are as nothing to it. Freight them all with ice cut from it, and an impression would hardly be made upon it. It is only by such figuring that we can form anything like an adequate idea of the enormous magnitude of this huge vagrant of the Arctic seas. Its beauties are not defined so readily. Solid and mighty, it is yet a subtle object. The light plays through it, as through the opal. Flashes of every color come from it. Here we see the emerald, there chalcedony; and again transparent quartz or sapphire, the topaz or the ruby, as the sun's rays dart through its sharp angles, or the tintings of the clouds are reflected from its sides.

More than this I cannot say of the floating ice-mountain. Words fail utterly in the description of such a mighty work of nature — fail us as completely as do the pigments of the painter. Who could paint or who describe the leap of Niagara, or the roar that rises from the great abyss? At best, the effort of the artist gives but a vague idea of the truth. The iceberg — in its birth, growth, and immensity; on the varying phases which it presents at different times; the subtle quality of the light and color which play around it — is utterly beyond the reach of art. And who could paint, or who describe

its age? Nothing but actual observation will even so much as suggest the long period occupied in its formation. Close inspection will reveal an infinite number of lines of stratification, which, like the multiplied rings of the old forest oak, mark the years of its increase, and tell of the untold ages during which it was growing in the parent glacier; but there is nothing in it or about it to fix the period when the hardened snow-flakes which compose it were first dropped upon the Greenland hills; nothing to show its steady growth through the recurring cycles of time.

ESCAPING FROM A GLACIER

BY DR. ISAAC I. HAYES

DURING the absence of the captain and myself from the vessel, the artists had not been idle. They had landed near the glacier, and with brush and camera had begun their work. The day was warm, the mercury rising to 68° in the shade, and the sun, coming around to the south, blazed upon the cold, icy wall. This must have produced some difference of temperature between the ice touched by the solar rays and that of the interior, which was in all probability several degrees below the freezing-point, for towards noon there was an incessant crackling along the entire front of ice. Small pieces were split off with explosive violence, and, falling to the sea, produced a fine effect as the spray and water spurted from the spot where they struck. Scarcely an instant passed without a disturbance occurring of this kind. It was like a fusillade of artillery. Now and then a mass of considerable size would break loose, producing an impression both upon the eye and ear that was very startling.

By one o'clock everybody had come on board to dinner, and for a while we all stood on deck watching the spectacle and noting the changes that took place with interest. It was observed, among other curious phenomena, that when the ice broke off the fractured surface was deep blue; and that if any ice, as sometimes happened, came up from beneath the water, it bore the same

color; but after a short exposure to the sun, the surface changed, and became almost pure white, with the satin glitter before described. Our situation for a view could not have been better chosen, and it is not likely that such an opportunity was ever enjoyed before by explorers, since it is not probable that a vessel ever rode before at her anchor so near a glacier.

After dinner the work was to be resumed. The photographers hastened ashore, hoping to catch an instantaneous view of some tumbling fragment, which if they could have done would certainly have exceeded in interest any other view they had secured. The question of moving our anchorage was deferred to the captain, who decided to go over to the other side when the artists had been put ashore with their tools. Steam was indeed already up.

The boat had reached the shore for this purpose, and had shoved off for the ship, leaving the artists on the beach; and the order had been given by the captain to "up anchor," when loud reports were heard one after another in quick succession. A number of large pieces had broken off, and their fall disturbed the sea to such an extent that the vessel began to roll quite perceptibly, and waves broke with considerable force upon the shore. Then, without a moment's warning, there was a report louder than any we had yet heard. It was evident that some unusual event was about to happen, and a feeling of alarm was generally experienced.

Casting my eyes in the direction from which the sound proceeded, the cause of it was at once explained. The very center or extreme point of the glacier was in a state of apparent disintegration. Here the ice was peculiarly

picturesque, and we had never ceased to admire it, and sketch and photograph it. A perfect forest of gothic spires, more or less symmetrical, gave it the appearance of a vast cathedral, fashioned by the hands of man. The origin of these spires will be readily understood to be in consequence, first, of the formation of crevasses far up on the glacier; and, secondly, by the spaces between them widening, and sharpening and rounding off by the action of the sun as the glacier steadily approaches the sea. At the base of these spires there were several pointed arches, some of them almost perfect in form, which still further strengthened the illusion that they might be of human and not of natural creation. At the extreme point there was one spire that stood out quite detached, almost from the water's edge to its summit. This could not have been much less than two hundred feet high. I had passed very near this while crossing over in the boat, and the front of it appeared to extend vertically down to the bottom. In the clear green water (for the muddy water of the southern side did not reach over so far) I could trace it a long way into the sea. I had little idea then how treacherous an object it was, or I would not have ventured so near, for I was not more than a boat's length from it.

The last and loudest report, as above mentioned, came from this wonderful spire, which was sinking down. It seemed, indeed, as if the foundations of the earth were giving way, and that the spire was descending into the yawning depths below. The effect was magnificent. It did not topple over and fall headlong, but went down bodily, and in doing so crumbled into numberless pieces. The process was not instantaneous, but lasted for the

space of at least a quarter of a minute. It broke up as if it were composed of scales, the fastenings of which had given way, layer after layer, until the very core was reached, and there was nothing left of it. But we could not witness this process of disintegration in detail after the first few moments, for the whole glacier almost to its summit became enveloped in spray — a semi-transparent cloud through which the crumbling of the ice could be faintly seen. Shouts of admiration and astonishment burst from the ship's company. The greatest danger would scarcely have been sufficient to withdraw the eye from the fascinating spectacle. But when the summit of the spire began to sink away amidst the great white mass of foam and mist, into which it finally disappeared, the enthusiasm was unbounded.

By this time, however, other portions of the glacier were undergoing a similar transformation, influenced, no doubt, by the shock which had been communicated by this first disruption. Other spires, less perfect in their form, disappeared in the same manner, and great scales peeling from the glacier in various places fell into the sea with a prolonged crash, and followed by a loud hissing and crackling sound. Then, in the general confusion, all particular reports were swallowed up in one universal roar, which woke the echoes of the hills and spread consternation to the people on the Panther's deck.

This consternation increased with every moment; for the roar of the falling and crumbling ice was drowned in a peal, compared to which the loudest thunder of the heavens would be but a feeble sound. It seemed as if the foundations of the earth, which had given way to admit

the sinking ice, were now rent asunder, and the world seemed to tremble. From the commencement of the crumbling to this moment the increase of sound was steady and uninterrupted. It was like the wind, which, moaning through the trees before a storm, elevates its voice with its multiplying strength, and lays the forest low in the crash of the tempest.

The whole glacier about the place where these disturbances were occurring was enveloped in a cloud, which rose up over the glacier as one sees the mist rising from the abyss below Niagara, and, receiving the rays of the sun, hold a rainbow fluttering above the vortex.

While the fearful sound was pealing forth, I saw a blue mass rising through the cloud, at first slowly, then with a bound; and now, from out the foam and mist, a wave of vast proportions rolled away in a widening semicircle. I could watch the glacier no more. The instinct of self-preservation drove me to seize the first firm object I could lay my hands upon, and grasp it with all my strength. The wave came down upon us with the speed of the wind. The swell occasioned by an earthquake can alone compare with it in magnitude. It rolled beneath the Panther, lifted her upon its crest, and swept her towards the rocks. An instant more and I was flat upon the deck, borne down by the stroke of falling water. The wave had broken on the abrupt shore, and after touching the rocks with its crest a hundred feet above our heads, had curled backward, and, striking the ship with terrific force, had deluged the decks. A second wave followed before the shock of the first had fairly ceased, and broke over us in like manner. Another and another came after in quick succession; but each was smaller

than the one preceding it. The Panther was driven within two fathoms of the shore, but she did not strike. Thank Heaven, our anchor held, or our ship would have been knocked to pieces, or landed high and dry with the first great wave that rolled under us.

When it became evident that we were safe, our thoughts naturally flew to our comrades on the shore. To our great joy, they too were safe; but they had not had time to clamber up the steep acclivity before the first wave had buried them. Flinging themselves flat upon the ground when they discovered that escape was hopeless, and clinging to each other and to the rocks, they prevented themselves from being carried off or seriously hurt. One had been lifted from his feet and hurled with much force against a rock, but, excepting a few bruises, he was not injured, and with much fervor thanked Heaven that it was no worse. He had, indeed, abundant cause. Had the party not been favored by the rocks, which were of such formation that they could readily spring up from ledge to ledge, they must all have perished. The wave, before it reached them, had expended much of its force. If they had been upon the beach and received the full force of the blow, they would inevitably have been killed outright or drowned in the undertow. Their implements — bottles, plates, everything — were either gone, or were a perfect wreck. Fortunately, their cameras were upon the hillside, and beyond the reach of the wave, where they had used them in the morning. The boat, also, was safe; she had been hauled out some distance from the shore, and by putting her head to the waves she rode in security.

The agitation of the sea continued for half an hour

after the first wave broke upon us. This was partly a prolongation of the first disturbance, but proceeded mainly from the original cause still operating. The iceberg had been born amidst the great confusion, and as it was the rolling up of the vast mass which sent that first wave away in a widening semicircle, so it was the rocking to and fro of the monster that continued the agitation of the sea; for this new-born child of the Arctic frosts seemed loath to come to rest in its watery cradle. And what an azure gem it was! glittering while it moved there in the bright sunshine like a mammoth *lapis lazuli* set in a sea of chased silver, for the waters all around were but one mass of foam.

I measured this iceberg afterwards and found its height above the surface of the water to be one hundred and forty feet, which, supposing the same proportions to continue all the way down, would give a total depth of eleven hundred and twenty feet, since the proportion of ice below to that above is as seven to one. Its circumference was almost a mile. No wonder that its birth was attended with such fearful consequences.

The part which had been the top of the glacier had become the bottom of the iceberg. The fragment, when it broke off, had performed an entire half-revolution. Hence it was that no part of it was white. But as the day wore on, the delicate hue which it first showed vanished, and before the berg finally disappeared down the fiord it wore the usual opaque white which distinguishes its older brothers who have drifted in Baffin's Bay for perhaps a score of years.

As may well be supposed, we did not wait for another iceberg to catch us in such a defenseless situation. Our

jolly captain was now quite content to own that he held glaciers in profound respect, and lost no time, therefore, in picking up his anchor. Then, as soon as our bruised and thoroughly drenched artists were brought aboard, the Panther wheeled upon her heel and steamed over to the opposite side, where, at a more respectful distance, anchorage was found which promised safety if the glacier should take upon itself once more to perform such fantastic freaks as the one of which we had like to have been victims; and we had no mind now for another such dangerous encounter.

THE SEARCH FOR THE POLES

I

ADVENTURES IN THE FROZEN NORTH

HISTORICAL NOTE

LORD DUFFERIN thus describes the intense cold of the North: "No description can give an adequate idea of the intense rigor of the six months' winter in this part of the world. Stones crack with the noise of thunder; in a crowded hut the breath of its occupants will fall in flakes of snow; wine and spirits turn to ice; the snow burns like caustic; if iron touches the flesh, it brings the skin away with it; the soles of your stockings may be burnt off your feet before you feel the slightest warmth from the fire; linen taken out of boiling water instantly stiffens to the consistency of a wooden board; and heated stones will not prevent the sheets of the bed from freezing. If these are the effects of the climate within an air-tight, fire-warmed, crowded hut, — what must they be among the dark, storm-lashed mountain peaks outside!"

In Arctic exploration there is danger of freezing, of starvation, of death by a score of different accidents, and yet there is a "lure of the North" so strong and so fascinating that those who have once felt it are rarely satisfied without making a second trial of its beauties and its perils.

SPITZBERGEN, THE ISLAND THAT BELONGS TO NO ONE

BY LORD DUFFERIN

[In the Icelandic sagas it is written that in 1194 land was discovered a four days' sail to the northeast of Iceland. This land was undoubtedly Spitzbergen.

The Editor.]

It was at one o'clock in the morning of the 6th of August, 1856, that after having been eleven days at sea, we came to an anchor in the silent haven of English Bay, Spitzbergen.

And now, how shall I give you an idea of the wonderful panorama in the midst of which we found ourselves? I think, perhaps, its most striking feature was the stillness — and deadness — and impassability of this new world; ice, and rock, and water surrounded us; not a sound of any kind interrupted the silence; the sea did not break upon the shore; no bird or any living thing was visible; the midnight sun — by this time muffled in a transparent mist — shed an awful, mysterious luster on glacier and mountain; no atom of vegetation gave token of the earth's vitality; an universal numbness and dumbness seemed to pervade the solitude. I suppose in scarcely any other part of the world is this appearance of deadness so strikingly exhibited. On the stillest summer day in England, there is always perceptible an undertone of life thrilling through the atmosphere; and though no breeze should stir a single leaf, yet — in default of

motion — there is always a sense of growth; but here not so much as a blade of grass was to be seen, on the sides of the bald excoriated hills. Primeval rocks — and eternal ice — constitute the landscape.

The anchorage where we had brought up is the best to be found, with the exception perhaps of Magdalena Bay, along the whole west coast of Spitzbergen; indeed, it is almost the only one where you are not liable to have the ice set in upon you at a moment's notice. Ice Sound, Bell Sound, Horn Sound — the other harbors along the west coast — are all liable to be beset by drift-ice during the course of a single night, even though no vestige of it may have been in sight four-and-twenty hours before; and many a good ship has been inextricably imprisoned in the very harbor to which she had fled for refuge. This bay is completely landlocked, being protected on its open side by Prince Charles's Foreland, a long island lying parallel with the mainland. Down towards either horn run two ranges of schistose rocks about fifteen hundred feet high, their sides almost precipitous, and the topmost ridge as sharp as a knife, and jagged as a saw; the intervening space is entirely filled up by an enormous glacier, which — descending with one continuous incline from the head of a valley on the right, and sweeping like a torrent round the roots of an isolated clump of hills in the center — rolls at last into the sea. The length of the glacial river from the spot where it apparently first originated, could not have been less than thirty or thirty-five miles, or its greatest breadth less than nine or ten; but so completely did it fill up the higher end of the valley that it was as much as you could do to distinguish the farther mountains peeping up above its sur-

face. The height of the precipice where it fell into the sea, I should judge to have been about one hundred and twenty feet.

On the left, a still more extraordinary sight presented itself. A kind of baby glacier actually hung half suspended halfway on the hillside, like a tear in the act of rolling down the furrowed cheek of the mountain.

I have tried to convey to you a notion of the falling impetus impressed on the surface of the Jan Mayen ice rivers; but in this case, so unaccountable did it seem that the overhanging mass of ice should not continue to thunder down upon its course, that one's natural impulse was to shrink from crossing the path along which a breath — a sound — might precipitate the suspended avalanche into the valley. . . . Nothing is more dangerous than to approach these cliffs of ice. Every now and then, huge masses detach themselves from the face of the crystal steep, and topple over into the water; and woe be to the unfortunate ship which might happen to be passing below. Scoresby himself actually witnessed a mass of ice, the size of a cathedral, thunder down into the sea from a height of four hundred feet; frequently during our stay at Spitzbergen we ourselves observed specimens of these ice avalanches; and scarcely an hour passed without the solemn silence of the bay being disturbed by the thunderous boom resulting from similar catastrophes occurring in adjacent valleys.

As soon as we had thoroughly taken in the strange features of the scene around us, we all turned in for a night's rest. I was dog tired, as much with anxiety as want of sleep; for in continuing to push on to the northward in spite of the ice, I naturally could not help feeling

that if any accident occurred, the responsibility would rest with me; and although I do not believe that we were at any time in any real danger, yet from our inexperience in the peculiarities of Arctic navigation, I think the coolest judgment would have been liable to occasional misgivings as to what might arise from possible contingencies. Now, however, all was right; the result had justified our anticipations; we had reached the so-longed-for goal; and as I stowed myself snugly away in the hollow of my cot, I could not help heartily congratulating myself that — for that night at all events — there was no danger of the ship knocking a hole in her bottom against some hummock which the look-out had been too sleepy to observe; and that Wilson could not come in the next morning and announce "Ice all round, a-all ro-ound!" In a quarter of an hour afterwards, all was still on board the Foam; and the lonely little ship lay floating on the glassy bosom of the sea, apparently as inanimate as the landscape. . . . Immediately after breakfast we pulled to the shore, carrying in the gig with us the photographic apparatus, tents, guns, ammunition, and the goat. Poor old thing! she had suffered dreadfully from seasickness, and I thought a run ashore might do her good. On the left-hand side of the bay, between the foot of the mountain and the sea, there ran a low, flat belt of black moss, about half a mile broad; and as this appeared the only point in the neighborhood likely to offer any attraction to reindeer, it was on this side that I determined to land. My chief reason for having run into English Bay, rather than Magdalena Bay, was, because we had been told at Hammerfest that it was the more likely place of the two for deer; and as we were sadly in want of fresh meat, this

advantage quite decided us in our choice. As soon, therefore, as we had superintended the erection of the tent and set Wilson hard at work cleaning the glasses for the photographs, we slung our rifles on our backs, and set off in search of deer. But in vain did I peer through my telescope across the dingy flat in front; not a vestige of a horn was to be seen, although in several places we came upon impressions of their track. At last our confidence in the reports of their great plenty became considerably diminished. Still the walk was very refreshing after our confinement on board; and although the thermometer was below freezing, the cold only made the exercise more pleasant. A little to the northward I observed — lying on the seashore — innumerable logs of driftwood. This wood is floated all the way from America by the Gulf Stream, and as I walked from one huge bole to another, I could not help wondering in what primeval forest each had grown, what chance had originally cast them on the waters, and piloted them to this desert shore.

Mingled with this fringe of unhewn timber that lined the beach — lay (waifs and strays of a more sinister kind), pieces of broken spars, an oar, a boat's flagstaff, and a few shattered fragments of some long-lost vessel's planking. Here and there, too, we would come upon skulls of walrus, ribs and shoulder-blades of bears, brought possibly by the ice in winter. Turning again from the sea, we resumed our search for deer; but two or three hours more very stiff walking produced no better luck. Suddenly a cry from Fitz, who had wandered a little to the right, brought us helter-skelter to the spot where he was standing. But it was not a stag

he had called us to come and look upon. Half embedded in the black moss at his feet, there lay a gray deal coffin falling almost to pieces with age; the lid was gone — blown off probably by the wind — and within were stretched the bleaching bones of a human skeleton. A rude cross at the head of the grave still stood partially upright, and a half-obliterated Dutch inscription preserved a record of the dead man's name and age.

. . . . . VANDER SCHELLING . . . .
COMMAN . . . . JACOB MOOR .
OB 2 JUNE 1758 ÆT 44.

It was evidently some poor whaler of the last century, to whom his companions had given the only burial possible in this frost-hardened earth, which even the summer sun has no force to penetrate beyond a couple of inches, and which will not afford to man the shallowest grave. A bleak resting-place for that hundred years' slumber, I thought, as I gazed on the dead mariner's remains! . . .

On another part of the coast we found two other corpses yet more scantily sepulchered, without so much as a cross to mark their resting-place. Even in the palmy days of the whale-fisheries, it was the practice of the Dutch and English sailors to leave the wooden coffins in which they had placed their comrades' remains, exposed upon the shore; and I have been told by an eye-witness, that in Magdalena Bay there were to be seen even to this day, the bodies of men who died upwards of two hundred and fifty years ago, in such complete preservation that when you pour hot water on the icy covering which encases them, you can actually see the unchanged

features of the dead, through the transparent incrustation.

As soon as Fitz had gathered a few of the little flowering mosses that grew inside the coffin, we proceeded on our way, leaving poor Jacob Moor — like his great namesake — alone in his glory.

Turning to the right, we scrambled up the spur of one of the mountains on the eastern side of the plain, and thence dived down among the lateral valleys that run up between them. Although by this means we opened up quite a new system of hills, and basins, and gullies, the general scenery did not change its characteristics. All vegetation — if the black moss deserves such a name — ceases when you ascend twenty feet above the level of the sea, and the sides of the mountains become nothing but steep slopes of schist, split and crumbled into an even surface by the frost. Every step we took unfolded a fresh succession of these jagged spikes and break-neck acclivities, in an unending variety of quaint configuration. Mountain climbing has never been a hobby of mine, so I was not tempted to play the part of Excelsior on any of these hillsides; but for those who love such exercise a fairer, or a more dangerous opportunity of distinguishing themselves could not be imagined.

The supercargo or owner of the very first Dutch ship that ever came to Spitzbergen broke his neck in attempting to climb a hill in Prince Charles's Foreland. Barentz very nearly lost several of his men under similar circumstances, and when Scoresby succeeded in making the ascent of another hill near Horn Sound, it was owing to his having taken the precaution of marking each

upward step in chalk that he was ever able to get down again. . . .

During the whole period of our stay in Spitzbergen, we had enjoyed unclouded sunshine. The nights were even brighter than the days, and afforded Fitz an opportunity of taking some photographic views by the light of a *midnight* sun. The cold was never very intense, though the thermometer remained below freezing; but about four o'clock every evening, the salt-water bay in which the schooner lay was veneered over with a pellicle of ice one eighth of an inch in thickness, and so elastic that even when the sea beneath was considerably agitated, its surface remained unbroken — the smooth round waves taking the appearance of billows of oil. If such is the effect produced by the slightest modification of the sun's power, in the month of August, — you can imagine what must be the result of his total disappearance beneath the horizon. The winter is, in fact, unendurable. Even in the height of summer, the moisture inherent in the atmosphere is often frozen into innumerable particles, so minute as to assume the appearance of an impalpable mist. Occasionally persons have wintered on the island, but unless the greatest precautions have been taken for their preservation, the consequences have been almost invariably fatal.

About the same period as when the party of Dutch sailors were left at Jan Mayen, a similar experiment was tried at Spitzbergen. At the former place it was scurvy rather than cold which destroyed the poor wretches left there to fight it out with winter; at Spitzbergen, as well as could be gathered from their journal, it appeared that they had perished from the intolerable

severity of the climate, — and the contorted attitudes in which their bodies were found lying, too plainly indicated the amount of agony they had suffered.

[Summer excursions to Spitzbergen by steamer are now arranged for the accommodation of tourists.

The Editor.]

FIFTEEN HUNDRED MILES ON FLOATING ICE

[1871–1872]

BY HANS HENDRIK[1]

[HANS HENDRIK, the author of the following narrative, was a native Greenlander. He became a member of four Arctic expeditions; under Kane, Hayes, Hall, and Nares respectively. It was during the expedition under Hall that the events occurred which are here narrated. Before the Polaris had been at sea five months, Captain Hall died. Soon the ship was caught in the ice and so terribly shattered by a storm that all expected her to go to the bottom at the next split. The only thing to do was to put as much of the stores as possible on the ice-floe, in the hope that it would hold together until its occupants could be rescued. When nineteen persons were on the ice, a sudden split came, and they were separated from the ship. Then occurred the marvelous voyage of fifteen hundred miles which is so graphically described by the Greenlander.

Contrary to the expectation of all, the men on the Polaris managed to keep her afloat and finally to bring her near the shore. During the winter they succeeded in making two boats with timber from the vessel. When summer had come, they sailed away in these toward the south, and were rescued by a whaler.

The Editor.]

AFTER two days we stuck in the pack, and were brought down with it towards the south. While thus we were blocked, my comrade and I caught seals every day, and

[1] Translated from the Eskimo by Dr. Henry Rink.

then began collecting a store of unskinned seals. At the same time while the ship rested immovable, they put up a tent on the ice, and filled it with bread. When we were off Kap Allikisat, a gale sprang up from the south. It was a pitch-dark night, when the ice began moving northward, and the floes were jammed and pushed over each other. At last our ship began to crack terribly from their pressure. I thought she would be crushed.

On perceiving this we brought our wives and children down upon the ice, and hurried to fetch all our little luggage, and remove the whole to a short distance from the ship. Then the ice broke up close to the vessel, and her cables broke; but in the awful darkness we could only just hear the voices on board, and when the craft was going adrift we believed she was on the point of sinking. Here we were left, ten men, our wives and children, and the Tuluks [English or Americans], making nineteen in all, and having two boats, no boat remaining with the ship. When the others drifted from us, we thought they had gone to the bottom, while we ourselves were in the most miserable state of sadness and tears.

But especially I pitied my poor little wife and her children in the terrible snowstorm. I began thinking: "Have I searched for this myself [brought this upon myself] by traveling to the north? But, no! we have a merciful Providence to watch over us." At length our children fell asleep, while we covered them with oxhides in the frightful snowdrift. At dawn our Commander Tarsta [?] said he would make for the land with the men, as soon as their meal was done. When they had cooked and got their breakfasts, they set off towards

an island called Pikiulek, but before they could reach the shore they were stopped by new ice.

About this time we sighted the ship, which was approaching us, to our great joy. They steamed on, and I believed they would have observed us, but suddenly they turned, a heavy squall from the north coming on at the same time.

When our Tuluk companions were going to make for the land, they asked us to follow them, but my comrade and I preferred to stay behind, knowing that they could not get to shore. The cook also kept us company, saying that he found it pitiful to abandon us. Those who tried to land returned after a while, not having succeeded. The north wind blew furiously, and the heavy seas threw us towards the Westland. Suddenly the ice on which we dwelt parted, and we were separated from the tent which contained our store of bread. When the ice touched the Westland it stopped, and packed together all around us. Here we made a snow-hut. My comrade went out sledging, and how lucky! — he caught sight of the tent. Directly we started, dragging a boat to fetch some bread. At the tent we filled the boat with bread, and drew it over the ice to our camping-place. When we left our wives and children, I was afraid a bear would devour them, now I was consoled to see them unhurt, and after our arrival we had a good meal. Since we left the ship, this was the first time we ate sufficiently.

The following day we deliberated whether we should remove to the floe where stood the tent, as it was very large and might serve us for an island during the winter. We resolved to proceed, and first brought thither one of the boats, loaded with bread and luggage, whereupon

we filled the other in the same way. My wife and daughter loaded the sledge with our little properties and pulled it, my wife carrying the baby in her hood. Our son was seven years of age, our youngest daughter four, and these poor things walked over the rough ice, my wife and daughter pulling the sledge, and I assisting those who dragged the boat — a sad sight. When they were going to be left behind, I told my wife I should return to her. When we had brought the boat to our new camping-place, I went back, followed by one of the sailors, and, finding my little daughter Sophie Elisabeth very tired, we placed her on the sledge, and more men came to help us. When we had finished our removal, we turned the boat over, I and my family going to sleep under it, while the Tuluks were lodged in the tent, and the Westlanders made a snow-hut for themselves.

The next day we built a snow-hut in the middle of the ice-floe. Fancy! this was to be our settlement for the whole winter. One day we rested; then my comrade and I went out sledging towards the land. On approaching it, we fell in with new ice; I remained to look for breathing-holes, while my comrade proceeded towards the shore. I found some holes, and heard the sound of breathing; but as the ice was covered with snow, I could not get at the seals [which were scared by the noise]. My comrade had been on shore, and told me he had seen footprints of hares and foxes.

When we returned, we made up our minds to remove to the land the following day. We also drove in another direction, but without discovering anything. Next morning we tried to go shorewards, but our island, the ice-floe, began moving. It drifted seawards, conse-

quently we turned back, and now we continued to be carried off incessantly in a southern direction throughout the winter. After some time we caught sight of land, but by-and-by lost it again. Every day my dear comrade, the Westlander John, and I went out hunting. In this way once he succeeded in getting a seal. What a joy when we had a meal of flesh, and our lamps became supplied with blubber! Afterwards I again got a seal, a small one; I killed it at one shot. Wonderful, indeed, that we were so blessed with seals for our support, and that we so continued the whole winter.

Once, when we were out shooting, I fell through, having both legs under water. My comrade asked: "Art thou wet?" I answered: "No, I did not get wet." When we had tried shooting we returned, but quite near to our encampment a strong northern gale suddenly overtook us, and made both of us lose our way. The snow drifted terribly. As I was tired with walking, I stopped. Looking up towards the sky, I perceived many stars. Thereupon I proceeded, but came to a broad crack; and on going back, I fell in with the open sea. Now I thought my last day was come. I considered the miserable position of my dear wife and children, on a piece of ice in mid-ocean. Then I pronounced my prayer: —

> " Jesu, lead me by the hand,
> While I am here below;
> Forsake me not.
> If Thou dost not abide with me, I shall fall;
> But near to Thee I am safe."

When I had finished these words I ascended a heap of ice-blocks, and discovered a star rising a little above the

surface of the ice. But it was my comrade, who had lighted a torch, and pointed it all round from the highest part of the uneven ice. I went down in the direction of what I saw; but on my road I again fell in with a fissure, turned, and went on, but again discovered something like a light. I moved forward, examining it, but was again stopped by the break. While here, some people were heard approaching; and when they came close they shouted: "Art thou Hans?" I answered: "Yes." Whereupon they said: "We had nearly fired at thee, believing it was a bear." I answered: "Never more I had reason to be thankful to anybody than to you, as I was quite unable to make out whither I had to go." When we came home I found my wife and children had been most sorrowful, but I thanked the merciful Providence on high.

While we drifted in this way throughout the winter, my comrade and I frequently got a seal. Our lamps were never out for want of oil. When sometimes our supply was almost consumed, one of us used to catch. Just before Christmas, each of us took a seal. Christmas! During Yule we finished all the provisions we had, except the bread; but we were consoled by knowing that daylight was near.

When the sun reappeared, we fell in with a great many black guillemots. Of course we also availed ourselves of them, as we were well off for guns — I had four myself, namely, three rifles and one double-barreled fowling-piece. And we had plenty of shot. These articles I and my comrade John had taken care to provide ourselves with when we left the ship. At first we only threw them down upon ice, then we brought them some distance

from the ship. We could, therefore, afford to shoot guillemots.

Although the sun again shone, no land could be seen, and it was truly appalling to think that our Tuluk companions and our wives and children would probably starve. However, we were taken care of by Providence, and the whole winter were supplied with seals. While still we lived on our island of ice, we fell in with bladder-nose and saddle-back seals, and they gave us a good supply of food.

As we advanced far south, we had a heavy swell, and, in a pitch-dark night, the floe, our refuge, split in two. At length the whole of it was broken up all around our snow-huts. When we rose in the morning, and I went outside, the sea had gone down, and the ice upon which stood our house had dwindled down to a little round piece. Wonderful! There must be an All-merciful Father.

Some days after, when we had gone to sleep, we heard a gun fired. I went out and saw that a bear had been hit and had fallen. My comrade exclaimed: "We have got a big bear; how cheerful, we shall now have bear's flesh!"

When we came still farther south the ice appeared more dispersed, and at last we made up our minds to go in search of land, although none at all was in sight. At the same time, we again met the heavy swell. We started in the boat, which was heavily laden. For some days we pushed on pretty well. When the seas came rolling they looked as if they were going to swallow us up, for which reason, at intervals, we landed on ice-floes. At length we made out land.

Again we rested upon a piece of ice. During the night a heavy sea came on; we slept with our children in the boat, while the others used the tent. As the sea rose still higher, it began washing over our place of sojourn. They were obliged to remove the tent, placing it upon the top of an ice-hillock, whereupon all of us had to keep hold of the boat. The children were placed in it, the women assisted us. When the sea began to move the boat, we all kept hold of the gunwales; the breakers looked as if they would engulf us. We exerted ourselves to the utmost each time when the sea began lifting us, whereas when it retired we pushed the boat to remove it to windward, because there was a danger of our being washed down into the sea to leeward. We did not stop until we had brought the skiff close to the edge of the ice. But now the sea reached the tent which was placed on the hillock. To be sure, it was awful! Whenever the waves washed over us, we were in water up to the waist, while at the same time we clung to the gunwale, and all the while one heard nothing but exclamations: "Now use all your strength."

Towards morning the sea had abated, and when it grew light we discovered that some smaller floes were less exposed to the swell. I spoke with my comrade about removing to one of these, and our Commander Tarsta agreed. We put the boat into the water, loaded it, and went to a smaller ice-floe, which we found much better as it was not washed over.

As the sea grew calmer, we pushed on. Seals were plentiful; we had no want of meat; and we used to take our rest on the floes. One night it happened that the ice which served us for our camping-place parted be-

tween the boat on which I slept and the tent. I jumped out to the other side, while that piece on which the boat was placed moved off quickly with Mister Maje, who was seated in the boat, and we were separated from it by the water. Our Master asked the sailors to make a boat [raft] out of a piece of ice, and try to reach it, but they refused. We never had felt so distressed as at this moment, when he had lost our boat. At last I said to my comrade: "However, we must try to get at it." Each of us then formed an *umiardluk* [literally, a bad boat] out of a piece of ice, and in this way we passed to the other fragment. As now we were three men, we could manage to put the boat into the water. But when, on doing so, it sank forward, Mister Maje fell into the sea. My comrade jumped into the boat at the same moment, and pulled him up; I, being unable to follow, remained standing on the ice. When they had taken me along with them, we proceeded towards the others; but meanwhile the ice had screwed together, and we stood still. We three men alone then hauled up the boat. At this time night fell, and our companion who had been in the sea, and now was lying in the boat, was like to freeze to death. I said to my comrade that if he remained so, he would really die; if he could walk about, it would be better. I had witnessed such a case before. When I had spoken thus, we asked him to rise, saying, that if he remained, he would perish. The first time he rose, he tumbled down; but, after having walked for a long time, he recovered. At daybreak we discovered our friends close by, and the ice joined together. When first they had examined the road, they came to us and assisted us to drag the boat over to them.

When we had started from this place, we were soon stopped by the pack, and no live thing was to be seen. We began to be in need of provisions. We had no seal-flesh left, and the next day our small stock of bread was to be shared out. In the night I had just fallen asleep, as I was to have my turn of the watch, when I was wakened by hearing people speaking about a bear. Rising up, I saw a bear walking towards us. I said to the others that they must lie down near the boat, imitating seals, while my comrade and I went towards the bear, who alternately sank and reappeared behind the ice-hillocks. We waited until he came close up to us, whereupon my comrade gave him a shot, and I finished him off. Thereupon the others joined us to drag him to the boat. How wonderfully did Providence bring us through the winter, and give us supplies! At length we were off the remotest part of the Westland, whither the ice had brought us since last year: we left the ship in the far north. We were now near the country of the Tuluks without having suffered any real misfortune. Before we had finished the last of our bear's-flesh the field opened, and we began catching seals, and sighted land, and when we proceeded towards it we fell in with a ship.

Once in the afternoon, while still making for the land, we discovered a vessel steaming northwards. We tried to follow it; but night fell, and we stopped at the ice. At the same time there rose a dense mist. During the night we showed two lights near the boat, making them pretty large, that people on board might observe us. After midnight I went to sleep, when the others had risen. Towards morning I was awakened by hearing

them talking about "ship"; and when I got up I saw it emerging from the fog. I directly set off in my kayak; and when I came to them, they questioned me: "Who are ye?" I answered: "Nord Polen mut Polaris Bebeles" [peoples]. Then furthermore they asked: "How do ye do?" I answered: "Captain Ull diet" [Captain Hall died]; whereupon they said: "Where's the ship?" I answered: "Last year we left it." On hearing this they said to me: "Just follow a little alongside the ship; we will soon stop her."

When we had come up to my companions, they lay to, to take them on board. I was the first who set foot on deck, then followed the others; and when all had come on board it was as if we were ashore. The master of the ship and the crew altogether were exceedingly kind to us, and pitied us, who had spent the whole winter, with our little children, on a piece of ice. They gave us tobacco and pipes, and, before all, a good meal. Their master, from mere kindness, was like a kinsman to us.

HOW TO BUILD A SNOW-HUT

BY ROALD AMUNDSEN

In order to obtain a correct idea as to how a hut should be built in the most approved style, we will pay a visit to the master-builder, Atikleura. He is standing just below the summit of the ridge beckoning to Nalungia to intimate that he has found a suitable spot and that she is to bring him his snow-shovel. A glance at the site he has selected shows that Atikleura is a practical man as well as a man of taste. The position is well sheltered to the north, east, and west, and the crest of the ridge at the back will prove a barrier to the biting north wind. Towards the south the prospect is open and will have the full benefit of the sunshine. Close by there is a small lake or pond which will supply the most delicious drinking water for the family. The country hereabouts consists mainly of spacious plains and beautiful lakes. Meanwhile Nalungia has arrived with the snow-shovel. This is made of a wooden board which Atikleura has obtained by barter from tribes dwelling farther south, as there is no wood in Nechilli, nor does the smallest piece of driftwood ever find its way to these latitudes. The shovel is made in a very workmanlike manner, and excellently suited for its purpose as long as the snow is loose. For hard snow, of course, our iron spades would be preferable. It is strengthened at the lower end with reindeer bone. Now, the first thing Atikleura does, is to

shovel away the upper loose layer of snow, in the circumference within which he had planned to erect his hut. He does so with a true eye, as the large number of huts he has built in his lifetime has given him good practice. Then he draws out the knife which has hitherto been suspended by a loop on the bone peg at the back of his "anorak." It is quite a monster knife, enough to frighten any one who had not seen it before. The blade is as large as that of an ordinary good-sized butcher's knife, and is made of iron, which has also come from the south; the handle is about a foot long, and is of wood or bone. Taking the handle with both hands he commenced to cut out his ice-blocks for building the hut. These are cut out to a size about eighteen inches wide, twenty-four inches long, and four inches thick. If cut out in this way, the building site itself will yield sufficient material for the whole construction.

It is a pleasure to see how a good builder cuts each block so that it just fits where he sets it. Atikleura is a veritable prodigy at this work. Not one of his blocks ever breaks in pieces, although he appears to cut them out without any particular care. Just a cut here and there, then a kick, and the thin neat block stands separated from the mass of snow. All the blocks from Atikleura's hand are so exactly equal in size that they look as if they had been accurately measured. The hut is built up in spirals in the form of a haycock or beehive, so that one layer of blocks rests on the previous one and extends a little farther inward. In joining the blocks the sides must be fitted to each other so that the walls are perfectly tight. The builder's skill can be gauged by the tightness of the hut: but even with Atikleura's skill

it is impossible to avoid some few small chinks here and there. It is Nalungia's task to fill up these chinks. For this purpose she works the shoveled-up, loose snow until it is as fine as grated sugar, for it is only when it is in this state that it can be used for making the joints tight. It is thrown up against the blocks as soon as they are placed in position, and fills in every little hole and crevice. The walls of the hut rise quickly. As the blocks are cut out, the ground is cleared downwards; and as they are set into their places, they serve to increase the height of the walls of the cleared site. Atikleura looks as if he had been standing on his head in a flour-tub; he is covered with snow all over; his clothes, hair, and beard are white as chalk. His long gloves prevent the snow from getting into the sleeves of the "anorak."

Building the roof of such a snow-hut is a very complicated affair to the uninitiated. Many a snow-block did I get on my head when I essayed this work. The snow-blocks have to be set back gradually inward, and when the work is nearing completion, the last blocks would appear to be literally suspended in the air, without any base or support. The last block (or keystone) which closes the roof in the center, is quite small, and in most cases triangular. To fix it in its position from the outside, it must first be juggled out through the hole which it is eventually to fill. This looks impossible, but the Eskimo achieves the impossible. With one hand he raises his block to the outside, through the hole at the top, and while holding it he cuts it into the shape of a wedge with the knife he holds in the other; and when he lowers it into the hole, it fits it as if it had been moulded for the purpose.

Nalungia, aided by Errera, has perseveringly plastered over the outside of the hut with fine snow, so that it simply looks like a snow-heap. The outlines of the blocks are now quite concealed under the snow. But the hut is perfectly tight, as the fine snow works itself in wherever there is the slightest hole or crevice. The master-builder himself is not yet visible; he is still busy in the interior of the hut, where he is now completely built in. At last his long-bladed knife protrudes from the wall of snow, and with a rapid movement he cuts a hole just large enough for him to creep through. I am surprised to see how high up the wall he cuts the hole, as in all the huts I have hitherto seen, this entrance hole was quite down to the floor. Now Nalungia creeps in through the aperture, and I follow her to see what she is going to do in the way of further internal arrangements. I am at once enlightened as to why the aperture is made so high up; Atikleura has cut it on a level with the sleeping-berth, to expedite the work of "moving in." He has constructed the sleeping-berth as follows: He has first divided the hut by a row of snow-blocks into two compartments, of which the inner one is twice as large as the outer. He throws all the loose, refuse snow lying in the hut, into the inner compartment, until it reaches the level of the row of blocks, and there you have the "bedstead" quite ready. At the opposite end of the hut is another small erection, made of two blocks set on edge, and a third laid across them, like a table slab.

Now commences the moving in, through the aperture above the sleeping-berth. Large quantities of skins are thrown in and slung topsy-turvy upon the sleeping-

place. Next comes all the furniture — a drying grid, water bucket, cooking pot, blubber lamp, provisions, blubber, meat and fish; and lastly the women's personal belongings — which I dare not specify more fully. Now it looks as if all were over and Mrs. Nalungia casts an inquiring look at me, as much as to say: "Are you going to creep out?" I have no idea what is about to happen, but my curiosity prompts me to remain, thinking that anything much worse than I had seen before was hardly likely to occur; but I certainly was a little taken aback when the hole over the sleeping-berth was suddenly blocked up again from outside and I was alone, with one lady, in a closed-up hut. However, as Nalungia did not seem to mind it in the least, why should I trouble? Disregarding me, she set to work with a will. The heavy blubber lamp was first raised upon the little snow-table near the wall opposite the sleeping-berth. This lamp is made of a kind of stone they obtain from the Utkohikchyallik Eskimo; it is carved in the form of a crescent, and is heavy and clumsy. It is placed upon three pieces of bone inserted in the snow-slab, so that the inner edge of the crescent is turned towards the interior of the hut, while the outer edge is towards the wall. The blubber bag is now brought out and a piece of frozen blubber taken from it; this is beaten with a specially made club of musk-ox bone until it is quite soft. Now she produces, from one of her repositories, a little tuft of moss, which she carefully soaks with seal-oil — ugh, I remember with horror those mysterious "light pastilles" — and then she sets to work to get a light by rubbing pieces of wood together. The "pastille" soon sends out the most dazzling rays; the crushed

blubber is put into the lamp, and a wick of moss is laid along the whole of the straight inner edge; this is sprinkled with seal-oil and ignited by means of the burning tuft of moss. The whole wick is now blazing, and a brilliant flame lights up the roomy hut. I ask myself what in the world she wants with this brilliant flame, as she has now finished arranging the hut, and I am almost on the point of upbraiding her for this waste of precious oil, but I refrain, as I remember that an Eskimo never does anything without good reason. In fact it soon becomes apparent that here, too, my judgment is premature. Gradually an oppressive heat spreads from the mighty flame, and now I understand that her object is to cause the newly built hut to settle well down at the joints. As the result of the heat thus produced, the snow blocks gradually close up till they may be said to form one single continuous wall.

While this is going on, Nalungia makes good use of her time, and gets the sleeping-berth into proper order. The waterproof kayak skins are laid next to the snow; these have been taken from the kayaks in the autumn, and will keep the moisture of the snow away from the reindeer skins neatly arranged over them, and the sleeping-berth looks quite cozy. Again she turns her attention to the lamp and trims the wick (this has to be done frequently); the saucepan is then filled with snow and suspended over the flame by two cords, secured to two bones fastened into the wall. The family may want refreshment after this job. The drying grid, made of reindeer bone, strung over with a network of sinew thread, is now fixed up over the saucepan, but not too near the fire. The skins will not bear too much heat.

Finally, the "anauta," a small, round, thick wooden stick with a handle, used for beating the snow off the clothes, is, by way of a finishing touch, driven into the wall. Everything is now ready. And none too soon; for at this moment Atikleura is calling from outside asking if he may come in. Nalungia casts a last critical look round the walls, and tells him to wait a little. He goes off muttering something. Nalungia looks as though she meant to pay him out for his courtesy by keeping him waiting a little longer, and it is quite another half hour before she calls him in. Then an opening is made through the wall, right down to the floor, large enough for a man to creep through, and Atikleura's head appears through it. A moment later he is inside the hut; he takes off his soaking wet gloves, then throws them towards his wife, who turns them inside out and hangs them on the drying grid; then she takes his coat, shakes it and well beats it with the "anauta," for it is important to remove every little grain of snow to prevent its melting and wetting the coat, which is then rolled up and thrown on the bed. The outer trousers are then treated in the same way and placed with the coat next the "anorak." Atikleura stands there in his under garb. This does not sound exactly *comme il faut*, according to our ideas, but it calls for no comment among the Eskimo. He now walks up to the sleeping-place and sits down, not, as we might do, on the edge, but well back so that he can rest his legs. Now the footgear must be removed, and this is not a very simple matter, as an Eskimo's footgear consists of five different articles. Outermost are the low reindeer-skin shoes, made with the hairy side inwards. For a man of Atikleura's high

descent these are half-soled with sealskin. On the bottom of the sole there are some perceptible ridges which, on closer inspection, prove to be strips of skin sewed on to prevent the foot from slipping. Next come the "kamiks," which at this time of year are exclusively of reindeer skin. There are two pairs of these. The outer are made of the hide from the reindeer's leg, which is short-haired and very strong. They are made with the hairy side inwards, and reach up to the knee, where they are laced up with a thong. Underneath these is another pair, exactly of the same length and appearance, but with the hairy side outwards. These are made out of the hide of a one-year-old reindeer, taken from the abdomen, as the skin there is very fine and soft. Between these two pairs of "kamiks" the Eskimo wears a pair of short reindeer-skin socks, with the hairy side outward; and, lastly, another pair of socks next to the skin, with the hairy side inwards, so that altogether the feet have five different coverings. When I first saw this I thought that, after all, we were rather more hardy than the Eskimo, as we only used three articles of footgear; but on my first sleighing tour I realized that it was not simply for protection against cold that the Eskimo used all these articles, but, to a great extent, to protect the feet against the hard snow and ice on which they are always walking. With my triple footgear I became so footsore that I could scarcely walk. Like the gloves, all the footgear must be put on the grid to dry. The inconvenience of skin clothing is that, unless kept well aired, it is very apt to absorb and retain any moisture. The Nechilli Eskimo did not know of sedge-grass; they put loose reindeer hair into their boots and take it out

at night; this was better than nothing, but not nearly so good as our grass.

When Atikleura has removed his wet footgear, he puts on a pair of dry "kamiks" and a pair of low seal-skin shoes ("kamileitkun") corresponding to our slippers. In winter these are used inside the hut only; but during the transition period between winter and spring, they are worn outside. As far as the care of the outer man is concerned, Atikleura is now ready, and is therefore at liberty to think of the needs of the inner man. And these are not trivial, after the trying day's work. A fine salmon is served up, and all the members of the family partake freely. Frozen though it is, it seems to be highly relished, and very shortly there is nothing left but the clean-stripped skeleton. The saucepan, now full of fresh, clean water, — a few hundreds of reindeer hairs, of course, are not looked upon as impurities, — is emptied, and refilled with snow and suspended again over the fire. Water is the only drink the Nechilli Eskimo know; no "half-and-half" of any kind is to be had there. They now announce that there is no more room in their stomachs for either salmon or water, and the meal is finished. It is time to turn in. Nalungia prepares the bed for the night, arranging the beautiful soft skins; Atikleura closes up the entrance securely with a block of snow, slips in under the large family bed-rug, and there disrobes. Unlike the Greenland Eskimo, these people, of either sex, never disrobe in the presence of strangers, except in the greatest emergency. The guest of the family is assigned a place at one side of the hut — little Anni and Errera have turned in long ago — and the berth nearest the fireplace is reserved for

Nalungia. She extinguishes the light and arranges her toilet in the dark. The large skin bed-rugs are their only covering at night. Vigorous snoring soon announces that they are asleep.



THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE

BY SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS

(*English painter*, 1829–1896)

"It might be done, and England should do it."

THE search for the Northwest Passage arose from the wish to find a short way to China; and with this search the names of many celebrated navigators are connected. Among these are John Davis, William Baffin, John Ross, William E. Parry, Sir John Franklin, and many others. In 1854, Sir Robert McClure sailed partly through the Passage, but was obliged to abandon his ship in Mercy Bay and join another expedition by a long sledge journey. The first complete voyage through the Northwest Passage was made by Roald Amundsen in 1902–06.

In the accompanying picture, a weather-beaten sea-captain sits in a great armchair, listening to the stories of search for the Northwest Passage read to him by his daughter. Through the open window is a view of the sea. On the table behind him is his glass of grog and a telescope. Leaning against the table legs are the log-books of former voyages. One of the pictures on the wall represents Admiral Nelson; the other, a ship in an ice-floe. At the right is a table whereon are flowers and the gloves of the young girl, but almost concealed by the national flag and a map of the polar regions. The captain's hands are clenched in the eagerness of his longing, and on one of them his daughter has laid her hand as if to detain him from the quest. The model for the sea-captain was Trelawny, the friend of Byron and Shelley.

PAYING A CALL IN THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE

[1906]

BY ROALD AMUNDSEN

To some, perhaps, it may occur that we could very well have done this survey under canvas, and that it was unnecessary to stop and retard our voyage on that account. This may be so, but it must not be forgotten that our position was not quite an ordinary one. Bearing in mind our running aground at Matty Island, we had quite decided not to risk a recurrence of that experience if we could possibly avoid it. We would rather sacrifice a few hours than jeopardize our vessel in these very hazardous waters, with a ragged stone bottom and shallow water under her keel, an unsafe compass, and a small crew. We were, so to speak, standing on the threshold of our goal, attempted unsuccessfully by so many before us, and, taking this into consideration, it was an easy task to restrain our impatience to get along as speedily as possible and out of our difficulties.

At the first sign of daybreak we were at it again. We were compelled to keep southwards to avoid the shoals between the mainland and Douglas Island. The water was now getting deeper. Finding eventually that we had got far enough to the south, we turned off to the west, shaping our course towards the point where we expected to find an opening. It was an exciting time.

Fortunately the deep water continued,—we found nowhere less than seven fathoms,—we neared the mainland without trouble, and found the passage all right. At 3 P.M. we passed Liston and Sutton Islands, and stood off into Dolphin and Union Strait. My relief at having thus got clear of the last difficult hole in the Northwest Passage was indescribable. I cannot deny that I had felt very nervous during the last few days. The thought that here in these troublesome waters we were running the risk of spoiling the whole of our so far successful enterprise was anything but pleasant, but it was always present to my mind. The whole responsibility for crew and vessel rested on me, and I could not get rid of the possibility of returning home with the task unperformed. The thought was anything but cheering. My hours of rest and sleep were principally spent, during this time, in brooding over such thoughts, and they were not very conducive to sleep. All our precautions and everybody's attention notwithstanding, any moment might have some surprise in store for us. I could not eat. At every meal-time I felt a devouring hunger, but I was unable to swallow my food. When finally we got out of our scrapes and I regained my usual calm, I had a most rapacious hunger to satisfy, and I would rather not mention what I managed to dispose of.

We could now discontinue the laborious watches of eighteen hours a-day, and revert to the normal arrangement of six-hour watches. Barring a few small interruptions in the shape of fog and contrary wind, we made fair progress westwards. We did not sight Clerk Island at all, although the weather was clear, and it should

have been well within the range of vision. Its existence would, therefore, seem somewhat doubtful. We encountered small lots of ice now and then which reminded us that we were in the Arctic regions and must be prepared for eventualities.

On August 26, at 4 P.M., we sighted a high land to windward. The air was very misty, and as, according to our reckoning, we should be abreast of Cape Parry, I thought this was what we saw. During the early morning the air became clearer, and I knew then that this land was not Cape Parry on the mainland of America, but Nelson Head on Baring Island. The error was not quite insignificant, to be sure. But my misgivings on this head were appeased when told later by American whalers of the ludicrous mistakes they often made in these waters. There is probably a lot of iron in the mountains here, and the compass therefore becomes utterly distracted. Then there are strong currents, and the united influence of these factors may confuse the most conscientious navigator even more than it did when we mistook Nelson Head for Cape Parry. We were, of course, wholly unacquainted with the condition of things. When we had found our bearings, we continued our voyage at full speed, having a fair wind as well as the current right behind us.

At 8 A.M. my watch was finished, and I turned in. When I had been asleep some time, I became conscious of a rushing to and fro on deck. Clearly there was something the matter, and I felt a bit annoyed that they should go on like that for the matter of a bear or a seal. It must be something of that kind, surely. But then Lieutenant Hansen came rushing down into the cabin

and called out the ever memorable words: "Vessel in sight, sir!" He bolted again immediately, and I was alone.

The Northwest Passage had been accomplished — my dream from childhood. This very moment it was fulfilled. I had a peculiar sensation in my throat; I was somewhat overworked and tired, and I suppose it was weakness on my part, but I could feel tears coming to my eyes. "Vessel in sight!" The words were magical. My home and those dear to me there at once appeared to me as if stretching out their hands — "Vessel in sight!"

I dressed myself in no time. When ready, I stopped a moment before Nansen's portrait on the wall. It seemed as if the picture had come to life, as if he winked at me, nodding, "Just what I thought, my boy!" I nodded back, smiling and happy, and went on deck.

It was a wonderfully fine day. The breeze had veered round somewhat to the east, and with the wind abaft and all sails set, we made excellent headway. It seemed as if the Gjöa understood that the hardest part of the struggle was over, she seemed so wonderfully light in her movements. Nelson Head was a long way off to the north. The flat-topped promontory looked grand in the morning sunshine, melting in the white snow, and throwing dark-blue shadows into the parallel fissures of the mountain side. A heavy, bright swell rocked the vessel pleasantly, and the air was mild and soft. All this was observed in a moment. But it did not arrest our attention for long. The only objects between sky and sea that possessed any interest for us then were the two mastheads on the horizon. All hands had come on

deck, and all glasses were leveled at the approaching vessel. All faces were wreathed in smiles. Not much was said; one of the telescopes was lowered — "I wonder —!" And it was raised again. Another one lowered the telescope, and also remarked: "I wonder!" On the appearance of the unknown vessel we hoisted our Norwegian flag. It glided slowly up under the gaff, every eye watching it. Many pleasant words were whispered to the flag; it seemed as if everybody wanted to caress it. It had become a bit worn and ragged, but it bore its wounds with honor.

"I wonder what he'll think when he sees it?"

"He'll think it is a venerable old flag."

"Perhaps he's an American."

"I should n't be surprised if he were an Englishman."

"Yes, he will see by the flag what we are!"

"Oh, yes — he will see we are boys from good old Norway!"

The vessels were approaching each other very rapidly.

"There! up goes the American flag," sang out the watchman. He had the long telescope, which had been placed on deck. This proved to be correct, and we could now all see the Stars and Stripes under the vessel's gaff. They had seen and recognized our flag by now, that was certain. Dense steam was issuing from the vessel's side; evidently they had a motor, the same as we had, and were advancing rapidly.

It was time now to tidy ourselves a little in preparation for the first meeting. Four of us were to go on board the ship, the other three had to remain on the Gjöa and look after our vessel. Our best clothes were hurriedly got out. We dressed ourselves according to

our individual taste. Some preferred Eskimo costumes, and others our Norwegian russet. One found that seal-skin boots looked best for the occasion, others preferred ordinary sea-boots. We also cleared up on deck as well as we could. The American could certainly scan our deck in every detail, from his crow's nest, through his telescope, and we wanted to make as decent an impression as possible. We were now so near each other that the whole ship was visible from our deck. It was a small, two-masted schooner, painted black; she had a powerful motor, and the foam at her bows was spurting high. She also carried sail. We got the boats clear, hove to, and lowered the dory, the most seaworthy of them. It was certainly not much to look at, and the commander had no easy stern-sheets, with a flag, to sit on. But the boat was in the style of the vessel to which it belonged, and we were not on a pleasure trip. The American had stopped his engine, and was waiting for us. With two men at the oars we were soon alongside of him. A line was thrown down to us; I caught it, and was again linked with civilization. It did not, however, make its appearance in any great glory.

The Charles Hanson, of San Francisco, did not seem to be rigged out in a very luxurious manner. A ladder, by the by, was superfluous, as the ship was deep in the water. We took hold of the chain-wales and crawled on board. Our first impression was most peculiar. Every available space on deck was occupied to such an extent that it was nearly impossible to get along. Eskimo women in red dresses, and Negroes in the most variegated costumes were mingling together, just as in a land of fable.

An elderly man with a white beard advanced towards me on the quarter-deck. He was newly shaven, and nicely dressed, evidently the master of the ship. "Are you Captain Amundsen?" was his first remark. I was quite surprised to hear that we were known so far away, and answered in the affirmative, owning that I was the man. "Is this the first vessel you have met?" the old man asked. And when I admitted it was so, his countenance brightened up. We shook hands long and heartily. "I am exceedingly pleased to be the first one to welcome you on getting through the Northwest Passage." We were then most courteously invited down below to his cabin. There was not much room, though slightly more than on board our own vessel, the Gjöa.

Captain James McKenna, the master of the Charles Hanson, was a man of medium height, corpulent, and between fifty and sixty years of age. That he was an old Arctic trader was evident from his looks. The deep wrinkles and copper-colored face told plainly of cold and murky weather. His personality was jovial and agreeable. He asked if we wanted anything, in which case he was ready to help us to the best of his ability. The only thing we missed so far was news from home. But unfortunately he had none. That is to say he had some old newspapers, but — "Old! Yes, to you! To us they are certainly absolutely fresh!" He brought out a bundle, and by a wonderful coincidence my eye first alighted upon a headline which made me stare. "War between Norway and Sweden." I swallowed the article in hot haste, but it gave only a moderate amount of information. Captain McKenna had left home long

ago and could give no more particulars. We sought further information all over the ship, but no one knew any more about it. This uncertainty was more unsettling than our previous ignorance, but it could not be helped; we had to put aside our anxiety and wait.

After a very good dinner Lieutenant Hansen and I began culling as much information as possible regarding the navigation ahead of us. McKenna was the senior of the American whalers and knew the North American coast better than any one else. What we prized particularly was the set of American charts for the continuation of our voyage. They were of a more recent date than ours, and contained many new items. With marginal notes and indications of courses by the old, experienced captain, they were a real treasure to us. They were somewhat worn and tattered, and we therefore packed them up most carefully. Then about the condition of the ice. Did he think we could continue in a westerly direction without hindrance? He told us that when inward bound he had been hampered by ice near Herschel Island, but that at the present late period of the season we were hardly likely to meet any obstacles of consequence. We should in any case reach Herschel Island quite easily. He was certain of this, and as he was himself going to winter on that island, it might happen that we should meet again. Before going into winter quarters he intended making a trip as far as Banks's Land to look for whales; so far he had been unlucky and got none. His motor was very powerful, and he would probably catch us up on his return voyage to Herschel Island. In addition he gave us every possible information about the waters ahead of us. It was

pleasant to hear that the bottom along the whole coast westwards was even, so that we could navigate safely by the lead. We had not been spoilt by safe navigation, so we looked upon the remainder of our voyage as a mere pleasure trip.

The breeze kept up well, and as I considered I could not afford to lose more of it, we said good-bye to our amiable host after a visit of two hours' duration. When leaving, he made us a present of a bag of potatoes and another of onions. As it was a long time since we tasted such luxuries, we gratefully accepted the gifts.

We were awaited on board with eager expectation. For the present, we agreed to look with great distrust on the reported war between the two united kingdoms. The potatoes and onions became the center of joy, most of us being fond of these vegetables. We then dipped our flag, set all sail, and continued our voyage. McKenna proceeded eastwards to try his luck.

II
THE NORTH POLE

HISTORICAL NOTE

THE first Arctic explorer of whom history makes mention was one Pytheas, a Greek, who about 325 B.C. sailed as far as northern Norway. Another early explorer was Ottar, or Othere, a Norwegian sea-captain, who told King Alfred of England of a voyage into the White Sea about 870.

Nearly four centuries ago, a deep interest was felt in the Far North. For one thing, it was hoped that good fishing-grounds might be found. Another reason was that several nations were eager to find either a Northwest Passage or a Northeast Passage to Asia. After better ways of reaching Asia than by a polar route had been discovered, the interest continued, and one nation after another took up the search. In 1818, a reward of $100,000 was offered by England for making the Northwest Passage, and $25,000 for reaching the Pole. It is said that since 1800, 578 expeditions have been sent into the North, and our knowledge of the Arctic regions has steadily increased. In 1875, Nordenskjöld managed to slip through the Northeast Passage, the Northwest Passage was made in 1906 by Roald Amundsen, and in 1909 the long-sought Pole was reached by Admiral Peary.

THE FATE OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

[1849]

BY ELIZABETH DOTEN

[SIR JOHN FRANKLIN went from England to the North four times on voyages of exploration and discovery. From his last voyage, in 1845, he never returned. Between 1847 and 1857, thirty-nine relief expeditions were sent from England and America in the hope of finding the lost leader. It was finally learned that he had died in 1849.

The Editor.]

AWAY! away! cried the stout Sir John,
While the blossoms are on the trees,
For the summer is short, and the time speeds on
As we sail for the Northern seas.
Ho! gallant Crozier, and brave Fitz James!
We will startle the world, I trow,
When we find a way through the Northern seas
That never was found till now!
A good stout ship is the Erebus,
As ever unfurled a sail.
And the Terror will match as brave a one
As ever outrode a gale!
So they bade farewell to their pleasant homes,
To the little hills and valleys green,
With three hearty cheers for their native isle,
And three for the English Queen.
They sped them away, beyond cape and bay,
Where the night and day are one,

Where the hissing light in the heavens grew bright
And flamed like a midnight sun.
There was naught below, save the fields of snow,
That stretch to the icy pole;
And the Eskimo, in his strange canoe,
Was the only living soul!
Along the coast, like a giant host,
The glittering icebergs frowned,
Or they met on the main, like a battle plain,
And crashed with a fearful sound;
The seal and the bear, with a curious stare,
Looked down from the frozen heights,
And the stars in the skies, with their great wild eyes,
Peered out from the Northern Lights.
The gallant Crozier and brave Fitz James,
And even the stout Sir John,
Felt a doubt like a chill thro' their warm hearts thrill,
As they urged the good ships on.
They sped them away, beyond cape and bay,
Where even the tear-drops freeze.
But no way was found, by a strait or sound,
To sail through the Northern seas;
They sped them away beyond cape and bay,
And they sought, but they sought in vain,
For no way was found thro' the ice around,
To return to their homes again.
Then the wild waves rose and the waters froze,
Till they closed like a prison wall;
And the icebergs stood in the sullen flood
Like their jailers, grim and tall.
O God! O God! it was hard to die
In that prison house of ice!

THE FATE OF SIR JOHN FRANKLIN

For what was fame, or a mighty name,
  When life was the fearful price?
The gallant Crozier and brave Fitz James,
  And even the stout Sir John,
Had a secret dread, and their hopes all fled,
  As the weeks and the months passed on;
Then the Ice King came, with his eyes of flame,
  And looked on that fated crew;
His chilling breath was cold as death,
  And it pierced their warm hearts thro';
A heavy sleep that was dark and deep
  Came over their weary eyes,
And they dreamed strange dreams
Of the hills and streams
  And the blue of their native skies;
The Christmas chimes
Of the good old times,
  Were heard in each dying ear,
And the dancing feet, and the voices sweet
  Of their wives and their children dear;
But it faded away — away — away,
  Like a sound on a distant shore,
And deeper and deeper grew the sleep,
  Till they slept to wake no more.
O, the sailor's wife and the sailor's child,
  They will weep and watch and pray,
And the Lady Jane, she will hope in vain
  As the long years pass away.
The gallant Crozier and brave Fitz James
  And the good Sir John have found
An open way to a quiet bay,
  And a port where we all are bound;

THE SEARCH FOR THE POLES

Let the waters roar on the ice-bound shore
That circles the frozen pole,
But there is no sleep, and no grave so deep
That can hold a human soul.

A BALLOON SEARCH FOR THE NORTH POLE

[1897]

BY G. FIRTH SCOTT

THE expedition of Herr Andrée [is] perhaps the most novel of all Arctic expeditions, inasmuch as it was undertaken by balloon. The idea which actuated Herr Andrée in his enterprise was to utilize the current of air which, in July, almost invariably blows over Dane's Island to the north. Being an experienced balloonist, he realized that, could he once rise into that current in a balloon, he would be carried right across the Polar region in a few days. From the balloon car he would be able to observe the character of the region below him, and set at rest the question whether perpetual ice, open water, or land, occupied the extreme northerly spot of the world's surface.

With two companions, Dr. Strindberg and Herr Fraenkel, and a specially prepared balloon, an attempt was made to get away in July, 1896, but was unsuccessful, and the start was postponed for a year. In July, 1897, the members of the expedition were again ready, and on July 11 they were cut loose and floated away out of sight to the north. Since then no authentic news has been heard of them.

They went away prepared to face a long detention in the frozen world. In the car of the balloon they carried weapons, ammunition, and material wherewith to build

a shelter, should the ba loon collapse and leave them on the ice. An aluminum boat was also carried, so that the party could escape by sea if necessary. Several carrier pigeons were taken, and were to be liberated at intervals on the passage; but although one pigeon is said to have been shot in the Far North, it is doubtful whether it was one of the Andrée birds.

The balloon, when it went out of sight, was traveling at a speed which would have carried it over the Pole in a few days, and probably have enabled it to descend in Siberia in about a week. For the first fortnight after it had started, therefore, interest all over the world was keenly excited for further news. But the fortnight passed without any reliable intelligence being received, and a month followed, and so on until a year had gone by. Then relief and search parties were talked about, and the Swedish Geographical Society sent one out to look for the missing balloonists in Siberia. It did not meet with Andrée, nor did it obtain any reliable information respecting him. News was certainly published in every civilized country to the effect that some outlying tribes had come upon a huge bag, having a mass of cordage attached to it, together with the remains of some human bodies. The Russian, Swedish, and Norwegian Governments immediately sent forward auxiliary search parties, but their only success was to trace the origin of the report, and find that a Siberian trader had, in a moment of mischievous humor, hoaxed a too confiding telegraph agent.

Later, on September 12, 1899, a Swedish sloop, the Martha, reached Hammerfest with the information that a buoy, branded with the name of the Andrée

expedition, had been found to the northeast of King Charles Islands. The buoy had lost the screw plug from the top, and had been so damaged by coming in contact with some hard substance that the interior cylinder was too dented to permit of an examination being made of the inside.

Andrée was well supplied with these buoys, and at any time one may be discovered containing a record of his doings from the moment he disappeared with his balloon sailing towards the north. It is not likely; it is scarcely probable that any sign will ever be discovered of the balloon or its occupants. For years the frozen North held all traces of the Franklin expedition from the eyes of the searchers who were able to conduct their operations along the route they knew Franklin had followed. No search party can knowingly follow the route Andrée and his companions took. Their fate will probably be forever a mystery, for so many things might have happened that no one theory can claim for itself more probability than another. All that is certain is that the party went out of sight drifting towards the north. They carried their lives in their hands, and knew that they did so. Had they succeeded, they would have achieved a mighty triumph; they failed, and in doing so set their names as indelibly on the scroll of Fame as any hero who has laid down his life in the contest with the measureless mystery of the Pole.

THE ATTACK OF THE ICE

[1893]

BY FRIDTJOF NANSEN

[FRIDTJOF NANSEN, of Christiania, Norway, was trained as a zoölogist, and expected to become one, but a trip to the waters of East Greenland in search of specimens aroused in him an intense interest in the Far North. A few years later he made the first journey across Greenland, and spent a winter among the natives of that country. He had a theory that a ship setting out from above Siberia would drift across the Pole, and in 1893 he set out in the Fram (Forward) to test its truth. For six months he drifted as he had hoped. Then he and one companion left the vessel and with dog-sledges pushed on northward. He came within two hundred and seventy-two miles of the Pole, a point one hundred and eighty-four miles nearer than had been reached before. The following article pictures one of his experiences while the Fram was drifting.

The Editor.]

FRIDAY, January 4th. The ice kept quiet during the night, but all day, with some intervals, it has been crackling and settling, and this evening there have been several fits of pressure from 9 o'clock onward. For a time it came on, sometimes rather lightly, at regular intervals; sometimes with a rush and a regular roar; then it subsided somewhat, and then it roared anew. Meanwhile the pressure-ridge towers higher and higher and bears right down upon us slowly, while the pressure comes on at intervals only, and more quickly when the

onset continues for a time. One can actually see it creeping nearer and nearer; and now, at 1 o'clock at night, it is not many feet — scarcely five — away from the edge of the snowdrift on the port side near the gangway, and thence to the vessel is scarcely more than ten feet, so that it will not be long now before it is upon us. Meanwhile the ice continues to split, and the solid mass in which we are embedded grows less and less, both to port and starboard. Several fissures extend right up to the Fram. As the ice sinks down under the weight of the ridge on the port side and the Fram lists more that way, more water rushes up over the new ice which has frozen on the water that rose yesterday. This is like dying by inches. Slowly but surely the baleful ridge advances, and it looks as if it means going right over the rail; but if the Fram will only oblige us by getting free of the ice, she will, I am confident, extricate herself yet, even though matters look rather awkward at present. We shall probably have a hard time of it, however, before she can break loose, if she does not do so at once. I have been out and had a look at the ridge, and seen how surely it is advancing! I have looked at the fissures in the ice and noted how they are forming and expanding round the vessel; I have listened to the ice crackling and crunching underfoot, and I do not feel much disposed to turn into my berth before I see the Fram quite released. As I sit here now I hear the ice making a fresh assault, and roaring and packing outside, and I can tell that the ridge is coming nearer. This is an ice-pressure with a vengeance, and it seems as if it would never cease. I do not think there is anything more that we can do now. All is in readiness for leaving the vessel, if need be.

To-day the clothing, etc., was taken out and placed ready for removal in separate bags for each man.

It is very strange; there is certainly a possibility that all our plans may be crossed by unforeseen events, although it is not very probable that this will happen. As yet I feel no anxiety in that direction, only I should like to know whether we are really to take everything on to the ice or not. However, it is past 1 o'clock, and I think the most sensible thing to do would be to turn in and sleep. The watch has orders to call me when the hummock reaches the Fram. It is lucky it is moonlight now, so that we are able to see something of all this abomination.

The day before yesterday we saw the moon for the first time just above the horizon. Yesterday it was shining a little, and now we have it both day and night. A most favorable state of things. But it is nearly 2 o'clock, and I must go to sleep now. The pressure of the ice, I can hear, is stronger again.

Saturday, January 5th. To-night everybody sleeps fully dressed, and with the most indispensable necessaries either by his side or secured to his body, ready to jump on the ice at the first warning. All other requisites, such as provisions, clothing, sleeping-bags, etc., etc., have been brought out on the ice. We have been at work at this all day, and have got everything into perfect order, and are now quite ready to leave if necessary, which, however, I do not believe will be the case, though the ice-pressure has been as bad as it could be.

I slept soundly, woke up only once, and listened to the crunching and jamming and grinding till I fell asleep again. I was called at 5.30 in the morning by Sverdrup, who told me that the hummock had now reached the

Fram, and was bearing down on us violently, reaching as high as the rail. I was not left in doubt very long, as hardly had I opened my eyes when I heard a thundering and crashing outside in the ice, as if Doomsday had come. I jumped up. There was nothing left for it but to call all hands, to put all remaining provisions on the ice, and then put all our furs and other equipment on deck, so that they could be thrown overboard at a moment's notice if necessary. Thus the day passed, but the ice kept quiet. Last of all, the petroleum launch, which was hanging in the davits on the port side, was lowered, and was dragged towards the great hummock. At about 8 o'clock in the evening, when we thought the ice-pressure had subsided, it started thundering and crashing again worse than ever. I hurried up. Masses of snow and ice rushed on us, high above the rail amidships and over the tent. Peter, who also came up, seized a spade and rushed forward outside the awning as far as the forepart of the half-deck, and stood in the midst of the ice, digging away, and I followed to see how matters stood. I saw more than I cared to see; it was hopeless to fight that enemy with a spade. I called out to Peter to come back, and said, "We had better see to getting everything out on to the ice." Hardly had I spoken when it pressed on again with renewed strength, and thundered and crashed, and, as Peter said, and laughed till he shook again, "nearly sent both me and the spade to the deuce." I rushed back to the maindeck; on the way I met Mogstad, who hurried up, spade in hand, and sent him back. Running forward under the tent towards the ladder, I saw that the tent-roof was bent down under the weight of the masses of ice, which were

rushing over it and crashing in over the rail and bulwarks to such an extent that I expected every moment to see the ice force its way through and block up the passage. When I got below, I called all hands on deck; but told them when going up not to go out through the door on the port side, but through the chart-room and out on the starboard side. In the first place, all the bags were to be brought up from the saloon, and then we were to take those lying on deck. I was afraid that if the door on the port side was not kept closed the ice might, if it suddenly burst through the bulwarks and tent, rush over the deck and in through the door, fill the passage and rush down the ladder, and thus imprison us like mice in a trap. True, the passage up from the engine-room had been cleared for this emergency, but this was a very narrow hole to get through with heavy bags, and no one could tell how long this hole would keep open when the ice once attacked us in earnest. I ran up again to set free the dogs, which were shut up in "Castle Garden" — an inclosure on the deck along the port bulwark. They whined and howled most dolefully under the tent as the snow masses threatened at any moment to crush it and bury them alive. I cut away the fastening with a knife, pulled the door open, and out rushed most of them by the starboard gangway at full speed.

Meantime the hands started bringing up the bags. It was quite unnecessary to ask them to hurry up — the ice did that, thundering against the ship's sides in a way that seemed irresistible. It was a fearful hurly-burly in the darkness; for, to cap all, the mate had, in the hurry, let the lanterns go out. I had to go down again to get something on my feet; my Finland shoes

were hanging up to dry in the galley. When I got there the ice was at its worst, and the half-deck beams were creaking overhead, so that I really thought they were all coming down.

The saloon and the berths were soon cleared of bags, and the deck as well, and we started taking them along the ice. The ice roared and crashed against the ship's side, so that we could hardly hear ourselves speak; but all went quickly and well, and before long everything was in safety.

While we were dragging the bags along, the pressure and jamming of the ice at last stopped, and all was quiet again as before.

But what a sight! The Fram's port side was quite buried under the snow; all that could be seen was the top of the tent projecting. Had the petroleum launch been hanging in the davits, as it was a few hours previously, it would hardly have escaped destruction. The davits were quite buried in ice and snow. It is curious that both fire and water have been powerless against that boat; and it has now come out unscathed from the ice, and lies there bottom upward on the floe. She has had a stormy existence and continual mishaps; I wonder what is next in store for her?

It was, I must admit, a most exciting scene when it was at its worst, and we thought it was imperative to get the bags up from the saloon with all possible speed. Sverdrup now tells me that he was just about to have a bath, and was as naked as when he was born, when he heard me call all hands on deck. As this had not happened before, he understood there was something serious the matter, and he jumped into his clothes anyhow.

Amundsen, apparently, also realized that something was amiss. He says he was the first who came up with his bag. He had not understood, or had forgotten, in the confusion, the order about going out through the starboard door; he groped his way out on the port side and fell in the dark over the edge of the half-deck. "Well, that did not matter," he said; "he was quite used to that kind of thing;" but having pulled himself together after the fall, and as he was lying there on his back, he dared not move, for it seemed to him as if tent and all were coming down on him, and it thundered and crashed against the gunwale and the hull as if the last hour had come. It finally dawned on him why he ought to have gone out on the starboard and not on the port side.

All that could possibly be thought to be of any use was taken out. The mate was seen dragging along a big bag of clothes with a heavy bundle of cups fastened outside it. Later he was stalking about with all sorts of things, such as mittens, knives, cups, etc., fastened to his clothes and dangling about him, so that the rattling noise could be heard afar off. He is himself to the last.

In the evening the men all started eating their stock of cakes, sweetmeats, and such-like, smoked tobacco, and enjoyed themselves in the most animated fashion. They evidently thought it was uncertain when they should next have such a time on board the Fram, and therefore they thought it was best to avail themselves of the opportunity. We are now living in marching order on an empty ship.

By way of precaution we have now burst open again the passage on the starboard side which was used as a

library and had therefore been closed, and all doors are now kept always open, so that we can be sure of getting out, even if anything should give way. We do not want the ice-pressure to close the doors against us by jamming the doorposts together. But she certainly is a strong ship. It is a mighty ridge that we have in our port side, and the masses of ice are tremendous. The ship is listing more than ever, nearly 7°; but since the last pressure she has righted herself a little again, so that she must surely have broken away from the ice and begun to rise, and all danger is doubtless over. So, after all, it has been a case of "Much ado about nothing."



ADMIRAL PEARY IN HIS NORTH-POLE COSTUME

ROBERT E. PEARY was born at Cresson Springs, Pennsylvania, in 1856. He became a civil engineer in the navy in 1881, and later was engineer-in-chief of the Nicaragua Ship Canal surveys. In 1886, he made a reconnoissance of the Greenland inland ice-cap east of Disco Bay. His thoughts turned toward the North, and now, with the instincts of the born explorer and the skill of a trained mind, he gave his spare time to the problem of preparations for Arctic research. No detail of the subject was too small for his closest attention and his most careful thought. In 1891–92, he made a brilliant record for explorations in Greenland. He discovered and named Melville Island and Heilprin Land, and solved in the affirmative the long-debated question whether Greenland was an island. Voyage followed voyage. He investigated the "Arctic Highlanders"; discovered the half-mythical "Iron Mountain," and found it to be three enormous meteorites, which he brought to New York; he rounded the northern extremity of Greenland Archipelago; and at length reached, in 1906, 87° 6′ north latitude, which was then "farthest north."

All this was by way of preparation for his greatest achievement, the discovery of the North Pole, which he himself has described so vividly in the following article. He tells of his success quietly and simply, and, as has been well said, his account "will live as a piece of strong, vivid, and dramatic writing of fine literary quality and of permanent historic interest."

THE DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH POLE[1]

[1909]

BY ADMIRAL ROBERT E. PEARY

[THE discovery of the North Pole is much more than a mere matter of sentiment and goes far beyond the solving of a tantalizing academic problem. Its scientific results are of the utmost importance. Chief among them is the knowledge which it has given us of the American polar basin and the "continental shelf." Scientists have discovered that neither continents nor islands rise abruptly from the depths of the ocean; there is around them a somewhat level submarine platform where the water is comparatively shallow. This platform has received the name of the "continental shelf." How far it extended beyond the northernmost land in the American Arctic, no one could say. A "shelf" of great extent would indicate, according to the scientists, the probable existence of a group of islands or possibly a continent far within the Arctic Circle. Deep water, on the other hand, would mean an unbroken Polar Sea.

This important question was decisively settled by Peary. Fifty miles north of Cape Columbia he took a sounding that revealed a depth of 660 feet. At about forty miles farther north the depth had increased to 1950 feet. Within five miles of the Pole all his wire, 9000 feet, was sent down in a vain attempt to reach the bottom. The northern apex of the earth, therefore, is now known to be an ocean of vast depth.

Besides collecting much valuable data of which geographical students have long been in need, Peary brought Arctic travel to a science, introducing methods that have been of profound value to all recent explorers. He carried

[1] From Peary's dispatch to the New York *Times*, September 8, 1909.

Arctic sledging to its present proficiency, perfected every detail of equipment, and devised the most efficient machine that has ever invaded the mysterious polar regions. Much scientific work in the Far North remains to be done, and all future explorers must lie under great obligations to this man who has led the way; who has shown how to plan and organize and equip, how to provide for every contingency, and how to make the delays, difficulties, and disappointments all contribute to a final success.

The Editor.]

I TURNED to the problem before me. This was what I had worked for during twenty-two years, for which I had lived the simple life, for which I had conserved all my energy on the upward trip, for which I had trained myself as for a race, crushing down every worry about non-success.

Now, in spite of my years, I felt in trim — fit for the demands of the coming days and eager to be on the trail. As for my party, my equipment, and my supplies, I was in shape beyond my most sanguine dreams of earlier years. My party might be regarded as an ideal which had now come to realization — as loyal and responsive to my will as the fingers of my right hand.

Four of them carried the technique of dogs, sledges, ice, and cold as their heritage. Two of them, Henson and Ootah, were my companions to my "farthest north" three years before. Two others, Egingwah and Sigloo, were in Clark's division, which had such a narrow escape at that time, and now were willing to go anywhere in my immediate party, but were not willing to risk themselves again in any supporting party.

The fifth was a young man who had never served before in my expeditions, but who was, if possible, even

more willing and eager than the others for the princely gifts — a boat, a rifle, a shotgun, ammunition, knives, etc. — which I had promised to each of them who reached the Pole with me; for he knew that these riches would enable him to wrest from a stubborn father the girl whose image filled his hot young heart.

All had blind confidence so long as I was with them, and gave no thought for the morrow, sure that whatever happened I should somehow get them back to land. I recognized that all the impetus of the party centered in me, and that whatever pace I set it would make good. If I played out, it would stop like a car with a punctured tire. I had no fault to find with these conditions.

My dogs were the very best, the pick of one hundred and thirty-three with which we had left Columbia. Almost all were powerful males, hard as nails, in good flesh, but without a superfluous ounce, without a suspicion of fat anywhere; and, what was better yet, they were all in good spirits.

My sledges, now that the repairs were completed, were in good condition. My supplies were ample for forty days, and, with the reserve represented by the dogs themselves, could be made to last fifty.

Pacing back and forth in the lee of the pressure ridge where our igloos were built, while my men got their loads ready for the next marches, I settled on my programe. I decided that I should strain every nerve to make five marches of twenty-five miles each, crowding these marches in such a way as to bring us to the end of the fifth long enough before noon to permit the immediate taking of an observation for latitude.

Weather and open water permitting, I believed I

could do this. If my proposed distances were cut down by any chance, I had two means in reserve for making up the deficit:—

First, to make the last march a forced one, stopping to make tea and rest the dogs, but not to sleep.

Second, at the end of the fifth march to make a forced march with a light sledge, a double team of dogs, and one or two of the party, leaving the rest in camp.

Underlying all these calculations was a recognition of the ever-present possibility of open leads and impassable water, and the knowledge that a twenty-four hours' gale would knock all my plans into a cocked hat, and even put us in imminent peril.

At a little after midnight of April 1, after a few hours of sound sleep, I hit the trail, leaving the others to break up camp and follow.

As I climbed the pressure ridge back of our igloos I took up another hole in my belt, the third since I started. Every man and dog of us was lean and flat-bellied as a board, and as hard.

It was a fine morning. The wind of the last two days had subsided, and the going was the best and most equable of any I had had yet. The floes were large and old, hard and clear, and were surrounded by pressure ridges, some of which were almost stupendous. The biggest of them, however, were easily negotiated, either through some gap or up some huge drifts.

I set a good pace for about ten hours. Twenty-five miles took us well beyond the eighty-eighth parallel. While we were building our igloos, a long lead formed to the east and southeast of us at a distance of a few miles. A few hours' sleep and we were on the trail again. The

weather was fine and the going like that of the previous day, except at the beginning, when pickaxes were required. This, and a brief stop at another lead, cut down our distance. But we had made twenty miles in ten hours, and were halfway to the eighty-ninth parallel.

The ice was grinding audibly in every direction, but no motion was visible. Evidently it was settling back into equilibrium, and probably sagging northward with its release from the wind pressure.

Again a few hours' sleep, and we hit the trail before midnight. The weather and going were even better than before. The surface, except as interrupted by infrequent ridges, was as level as the glacial fringe from Hekla to Columbia, and harder.

We marched something over ten hours, the dogs being often on the trot, and made twenty miles. Near the end of the march we rushed across a lead one hundred yards wide, which buckled under our sledges and finally broke as the last sledge left it.

We stopped in sight of the eighty-ninth parallel, in a temperature of 40° below. Again a scant sleep, and we were on our way once more and across the eighty-ninth parallel.

This march duplicated the previous one as to weather and going. The last few hours it was on young ice; occasionally the dogs were galloping, and we made twenty-five miles or more. The air, the sky, and the bitter wind burning the face till it crackled, reminded me of the great interior ice cap of Greenland. Even the natives complained of the bitter air. It was as keen as frozen steel.

A little longer sleep than the previous ones had to

be taken here, as we were all in need of it. Then on again.

Up to this time, with each successive march, my fear of an impassable lead had increased. At every inequality of the ice I found myself hurrying breathlessly forward, fearing that it marked a lead; and when I arrived at the summit, I would catch my breath with relief — only to find myself hurrying on in the same way at the next one.

But on this march, by some strange shift of feeling, this fear fell from me completely. The weather was thick, but it gave me no uneasiness as before turning in I had taken an observation which indicated our position as 89.25.

A dense, lifeless pall hung overhead. The horizon was black and the ice beneath was a ghastly, chalky white, with no relief — a striking contrast to the glimmering, sunlit ice-fields over which we had been traveling for the previous four days.

The going was even better, and there was scarcely any snow on the hard, granular, last summer's surface of the old floes, dotted with the sapphire ice of the previous summer's lakes.

A rise in temperature to 15° below zero reduced the friction of the sledges, and gave the dogs the appearance of having caught the spirits of the party. The more sprightly ones, as they went along with tightly curled tails, frequently tossed their heads, with short, sharp barks and yelps.

In twelve hours we made thirty miles. There was no sign of a lead in this march.

I had now made my five marches, and was in time for

a hasty noon observation through a temporary break in the clouds, which indicated our position as 89.57. I quote an entry from my journal some hours later: —

"The Pole at last! The prize of three centuries, my dream and goal for twenty years, mine at last! I cannot bring myself to realize it.

"It all seems so simple and commonplace. As Bartlett said when turning back, when speaking of his being in these exclusive regions, which no mortal had ever penetrated before: —

"'It is just like every day!'"

The thirty hours at the Pole were spent in taking observations; in going some ten miles beyond our camp and some eight miles to the right of it; in taking photographs, planting my flags, depositing my records, studying the horizon with my telescope for possible land, and searching for a practicable place to make a sounding.

Ten hours after our arrival the clouds cleared before a light breeze from our left, and from that time until our departure in the afternoon of April 7 the weather was cloudless and flawless. The minimum temperature during the thirty hours was 33° below zero, the maximum 11° below.

We had reached the goal, but the return was still before us. It was essential that we reach the land before the next spring tides, and we must strain every nerve to do this.

I had a brief talk with my men. From now on it was to be "big travel, little sleep, and a hustle every minute." We would try, I told them, to double march on the return — that is, to start and cover one of our northward marches, make tea and eat our luncheon in the

igloos, then cover another march, eat and sleep a few hours, and repeat this daily.

As a matter of fact, we nearly did this, covering regularly on our homeward journey five outward marches in three return marches. Just as long as we could hold the trail, we could double our speed; and we need waste no time in building new igloos.

Every day that we gained on the return lessened the chances of a gale destroying the trail. Just above the eighty-seventh parallel was a region some fifty miles wide which caused me considerable uneasiness. Twelve hours of strong easterly, westerly, or southerly wind would make this region an open sea.

In the afternoon of the 7th we started on our return, having double fed the dogs, repaired the sledges for the last time, and discarded all our spare clothing to lighten the loads.

Five miles from the Pole a narrow crack filled with recent ice, through which we were able to work a hole with a pickaxe, enabled me to make a sounding. All my wire, fifteen hundred fathoms, was sent down, but there was no bottom. In pulling up, the wire parted a few fathoms from the surface, and lead and wire went to the bottom.

Three marches brought us back to the igloos where the Captain turned back. The last march was in the wild sweep of a northerly gale, with drifting snow, and the ice rocking under us as we dashed over it.

South of where Marvin had turned back, we came to where his party had built several igloos while delayed by open leads. Still farther south we found where the Captain had been held up by an open lead and obliged

to camp. Fortunately, the movement of these leads was simply open and shut, and there had been no lateral motion to fault the trail seriously.

While the Captain, Marvin, and, as I found out later, Borup, had been delayed by open leads, we seemed to bear a potent charm, and at no single lead were we delayed more than a couple of hours. Sometimes the ice was fast and firm enough to carry us across; sometimes a short détour, sometimes a brief halt for the lead to close, sometimes an improvised ferry on an ice-cake, enabled us to keep the trail without difficulty down to the tenth outward march.

There the trail disappeared completely, and the entire region was unrecognizable. Where on the outward journey had been narrow cracks, there were now broad leads, one of them over five miles in width, caught over with young ice.

Here again fortune favored us, and no pronounced movement of the ice having taken place since the Captain passed, we had his trail to follow. We picked up the old trail again north of the seventh igloos, followed it beyond the fifth, and at the big lead lost it finally.

From here we followed the Captain's trail, and on April 23 our sledges passed up the vertical edge of the glacier fringe, a little west of Cape Columbia. When the last sledge came up, I thought my Eskimos had gone crazy. They yelled and called and danced themselves helpless. As Ootah sat down on his sledge, he remarked in Eskimo: —

"The devil is asleep or having trouble with his wife, or we never should have come back so easily."

A few hours later we arrived at Crane City under the

bluffs of Cape Columbia, and after putting four pounds of pemmican into each of the faithful dogs to keep them quiet, we had at last our chance to sleep.

Never shall I forget that sleep at Cape Columbia. It was sleep, sleep, then turn over and sleep again, with never a thought of the morrow, or of impassable black leads. Cold water to a parched throat is nothing compared with sleep to a fatigue-numbed brain and body.

Two days we spent here in sleeping and drying our clothes. Then for the ship. Our dogs, like ourselves, had not been hungry when we arrived, but simply lifeless with fatigue. They were different animals now, and the better ones among them stepped out with tightly curled tails and uplifted heads, and their iron legs treading the snow with piston-like regularity.

We reached Hekla in one march and the Roosevelt in another. When we got to the Roosevelt, I was staggered by the news of the fatal mishap to Marvin. He had been either less cautious or less fortunate than the rest of us, and his death emphasized the risk to which we had all been subjected, for there was not one of us but had been in the leads at some time during the journey.

The "big lead," cheated of its prey three years before, had at last gained its human victim.

The rest can be quickly told. McMillan and Borup had started for the Greenland coast to deposit caches for me. As soon as I arrived, an Eskimo courier from me overtook them with instructions that the caches were no longer needed, and that they were to concentrate their energies on tidal observations and soundings, at Cape Morris K. Jesup and north from there.

These instructions were carried out, and after their

return in the latter part of May, McMillan made some further tidal observations at other points. The supplies remaining at the various caches were brought in, and on July 18 the Roosevelt left her winter quarters and was driven out into the channel pack off Cape Union.

She fought her way south in the center of the channel and passed Cape Sabine on August 8, or thirty-nine days earlier than in 1908, and thirty-two days earlier than the British expedition in 1876.

We picked up Whitney and my party and the stores at Etah. We killed seventy-odd walrus for my Eskimos, whom I landed at their homes. We met the Jeanie off Saunders Island and took over her coal, and cleared from Cape York on August 26, one month earlier than in 1906.

On September 5 we arrived at Indian Harbor, whence the message, "Stars and Stripes nailed to North Pole," was sent vibrating southward through the crisp Labrador air.

The culmination of long experience, a thorough knowledge of the conditions of the problem (gained in the last expedition), together with a new type of sledge which reduced the work of both dogs and driver, and a new type of camp cooker which added to the comfort and increased the hours of sleep of the members of the party, combined to make the present expedition an agreeable improvement upon the last in respect to the rapidity and effectiveness of its work, and the lessened discomfort and strain upon the members of the party.

[Peary here speaks in praise of the members of the party and of the special work of each.]

As for my faithful Eskimos, I have left them with ample supplies of dark, rich walrus meat and blubber

for their winter, with coffee, sugar, biscuits, guns, rifles, ammunition, knives, hatchets, traps, etc., and for the splendid four who stood beside me at the Pole, a boat and tent each to requite them for their energy and the hardship and toil they underwent to help their friend Peary to the North Pole.

But all of this — the dearly bought years of experience, the magnificent strength of the Roosevelt, the splendid energy and enthusiasm of my party, the loyal faithfulness of my Eskimos — would have gone for naught but for the sinews of war furnished so loyally by the members and friends of the Peary Arctic Club.[1]

And it is no detraction from the living to say that to no single individual has the final result been more signally due than to my friend, the late Morris K. Jesup, the first president of the club.

Their assistance has enabled me to tell the last of the great earth stories, the story the world has been waiting to hear for three hundred years, — the story of the discovery of the North Pole.

[1] The Peary Arctic Club is the organization which made Peary's attainment of the Pole possible. Its president is General Thomas H. Hubbard; vice-president, Zenas Crane; secretary and treasurer, Herbert L. Bridgman.

III
THE SOUTH POLE

HISTORICAL NOTE

FAR less interest was felt in the South Pole than in the North. As early as 1600 it was known that at 64° South there was a rocky coast, but no one seemed to care particularly about any further knowledge of it, and during more than two hundred years, few expeditions sailed to the Antarctic regions. In the nineteenth century the British Government sent out Sir James C. Ross with the Erebus and the Terror, vessels whose names were given to two of the Antarctic volcanoes. Toward the end of the century, people began to be more desirous of knowledge of the extreme South, and expeditions were sent out by England, Germany, Sweden, Australia, Norway, Japan, and other countries, besides those sent by private individuals. The prize, however, of being first at the South Pole was won by Roald Amundsen. He set sail in Nansen's vessel, the Fram, which had already done such good service in the North; and at the end of 1911 the Norwegian flag floated at the South Pole, as that of the United States had already floated at the North.

IN ANTARCTIC WINTER QUARTERS

[1908–1909]

BY SIR ERNEST H. SHACKLETON

[THE British Antarctic Expedition, led by Sir Ernest H. Shackleton, pushed on to within one hundred and eleven statute miles of the South Pole. This expedition had well profited by the experiences of its predecessors. It was provided with Manchurian ponies, an automobile specially built for journeying over the ice, an acetylene gas-plant, a printing press, a supply of books, and a store of food carefully planned to provide a thoroughly healthful nourishment in a small bulk. Indeed, so far as previous arrangements could make it, this journey was, compared with the earlier expeditions, a truly luxurious pilgrimage.

The Editor.]

THE inside of the hut was not long in being fully furnished, and a great change it was from the bare shell of our first days of occupancy. The first thing done was to peg out a space for each individual, and we saw that the best plan would be to have the space allotted in sections, allowing two persons to share one cubicle. This space for two men amounted to six feet six inches in length and seven feet in depth from the wall of the hut towards the center. There were seven of these cubicles, and a space for the leader of the expedition; thus providing for the fifteen who made up the shore-party. One of the most important parts of the interior construction was the dark-room for the photographers. We were very short of wood, so cases of bottled fruit, which

had to be kept inside the hut to prevent them freezing, were utilized for building the walls. The dark-room was constructed in the left-hand corner of the hut as one entered, and the fruit cases were turned with their lids facing out, so that the contents could be removed without demolishing the walls of the building. These cases, as they were emptied, were turned into lockers, where we stowed our spare gear, and so obtained more room in the little cubicles. The interior of the dark-room was fitted up by Mawson and the Professor. The sides and roof were lined with the felt left over after the hut was completed. Mawson made the fittings complete in every detail, with shelves, tanks, etc., and the result was as good as any one could desire in the circumstances.

On the other side of the doorway, opposite the dark-room, was my room, six feet long, seven feet deep, built of boards and roofed, the roof being seven feet above the floor. I lined the walls inside with canvas, and the bed-place was constructed of fruit boxes, which, when emptied, served, like those outside, for lockers. My room contained the bulk of our library, the chronometers, the chronometer watches, barograph, and the electric-recording thermometer; there was ample room for a table, and the whole made a most comfortable cabin. On the roof we stowed those of our scientific instruments which were not in use, such as theodolites, spare thermometers, dip circles, etc. The gradual accumulation of weight produced a distinct sag in the roof, which sometimes seemed to threaten collapse as I sat inside, but no notice was taken, and nothing happened. On the roof of the dark-room we stowed all our photographic gear and our few cases of wine, which were

only drawn upon on special occasions, such as Midwinter Day. The acetylene gas-plant was set up on a platform between my room and the dark-room. We had tried to work it from the porch, but the temperature was so low there that the water froze and the gas would not come, so we shifted it inside the hut, and had no further trouble. Four burners, including a portable standard light in my room, gave ample illumination. The simplicity and portability of the apparatus and the high efficiency of the light represented the height of luxury under polar conditions, and did much to render our sojourn more tolerable than would have been possible in earlier days. The particular form that we used was supplied by Mr. Morrison, who had been chief engineer on the Morning on her voyage to the relief of the Discovery. The only objectionable feature, due to having the generating-plant in our living-room, was the unpleasant smell given off when the carbide tanks were being recharged; but we soon got used to this, though the daily charging always drew down strong remarks on the unlucky head of Day, who had the acetylene plant especially under his charge. He did not have a hitch with it all the time. Flexible steel tubes were carried from the tank, and after being wound round the beams of the roof, served to suspend the lights at the required position.

A long ridge of wire rope was stretched from one end of the hut to the other on each side, seven feet out from the wall; then at intervals of six feet another wire was brought out from the wall of the hut, and made fast to the fore and aft wire. These lines marked the boundaries of the cubicles, and sheets of duck sewn together hung

from them, making a good division. Blankets were served out to hang in the front of the cubicle, in case the inhabitants wanted at any time to "sport their oak." As each of the cubicles had distinctive features in the furnishing and general design, especially as regards beds, it is worth while to describe them fully. This is not so trivial a matter as it may appear to some readers, for during the winter months the inside of the hut was the whole inhabited world to us. The wall of Adams's and Marshall's cubicle, which was next to my room, was fitted with shelves made out of Venesta cases, and there was so much neatness and order about this apartment that it was known by the address, "No. 1 Park Lane." In front of the shelves hung little gauze curtains, tied up with blue ribbon, and the literary tastes of the occupants could be seen at a glance from the bookshelves. In Adams's quarter the period of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic era filled most of his bookshelves, though a complete edition of Dickens came in a good second. Marshall's shelves were stocked with bottles of medicine, medical works, and some general literature. The dividing curtain of duck was adorned by Marston with life-sized colored drawings of Napoleon and Joan of Arc. Adams and Marshall did Sandow exercises daily, and their example was followed by other men later on, when the darkness and bad weather made open-air work difficult. The beds of this particular cubicle were the most comfortable in the hut, but took a little longer to rig up at night than most of the others. This disadvantage was more than compensated for by the free space gained during the day, and by permission of the owners it was used as consulting-room, dispensary,

and operating theater. The beds consisted of bamboos lashed together for extra strength, to which strips of canvas were attached, so that each bed looked like a stretcher. The wall end rested on stout cleats screwed on to the side of the hut, the other ends on chairs, and, so supported, the occupants slept soundly and comfortably.

The next cubicle on the same side was occupied by Marston and Day, and as the former was the artist and the latter the general handy man of the expedition, one naturally found an ambitious scheme of decoration. The shelves were provided with beading, and the Venesta boxes were stained brown. This idea was copied from No. 1 Park Lane, where they had stained all their walls with Condy's Fluid. Marston's and Day's cubicle was known as "The Gables," presumably from the gabled appearance of the shelves. Solid wooden beds, made out of old packing cases and upholstered with wood shavings covered with blankets, made very comfortable couches, one of which could be pushed during meal times out of the way of the chairs. The artist's curtain was painted to represent a fireplace and mantelpiece in civilization; a cheerful fire burned in the grate, and a bunch of flowers stood on the mantelpiece. The dividing curtain between it and No. 1 Park Lane, on the other side of the cubicle, did not require to be decorated, for the color of Joan of Arc, and also portions of Napoleon, had oozed through the canvas. In "The Gables" was set up the lithographic press, which was used for producing pictures for the book which was printed at our winter quarters.

The next cubicle on the same side belonged to Army-

tage and Brocklehurst. Here everything in the way of shelves and fittings was very primitive. I lived in Brocklehurst's portion of the cubicle for two months, as he was laid up in my room, and before I left it I constructed a bed of empty petrol cases. The smell from these for the first couple of nights after rigging them up was decidedly unpleasant, but it disappeared after a while. Next to Brocklehurst's and Armytage's quarters came the pantry. The division between the cubicle and the pantry consisted of a tier of cases, making a substantial wall between the food and the heads of the sleepers. The pantry, bakery, and storeroom, all combined, measured six feet by three,— not very capacious, certainly, but sufficient to work in. The far end of the hut constituted the other wall of the pantry, and was lined with shelves up to the slope of the roof. These shelves were continued along the wall behind the stove, which stood about four feet out from the end of the house, and an erection of wooden battens and burlap or sacking concealed the biological laboratory. The space taken up by this important department was four feet by four, but lack of ground area was made up for by the shelves, which contained dozens of bottles soon to be filled with Murray's biological captures.

Beyond the stove, facing the pantry, was Mackay's and Roberts's cubicle, the main feature of which was a ponderous shelf, on which rested mostly socks and other light articles, the only thing of weight being our gramophone and records. The bunks were somewhat feeble imitations of those belonging to No. 1 Park Lane, and the troubles that the owners went through before finally getting them into working order afforded the

rest of the community a good deal of amusement. I can see before me now the triumphant face of Mackay, as he called all hands round to see his design. The inhabitants of No. 1 Park Lane pointed out that the bamboo was not a rigid piece of wood, and that when Mackay's weight came on it the middle would bend and the ends would jump off the supports unless secured. Mackay undressed before a critical audience, and he got into his bag and expatiated on the comfort and luxury he was experiencing, so different from the hard boards he had been lying on for months. Roberts was anxious to try his couch, which was constructed on the same principle, and the audience were turning away when suddenly a crash was heard, followed by a strong expletive. Mackay's bed was half on the ground, one end of it resting at a most uncomfortable angle. Laughter and pointed remarks as to his capacity for making a bed were nothing to him; he tried three times that night to fix it up, but at last had to give it up for a bad job. In due time he arranged fastenings, and after that he slept in comfort.

Between this cubicle and the next there was no division, neither party troubling about the matter. The result was that four men were constantly at war regarding alleged encroachments on their ground. Priestley, who was long-suffering, and who occupied the cubicle with Murray, said he did not mind a chair or a volume of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" being occasionally deposited on him while he was asleep, but that he thought it was a little too strong to drop wet boots, newly arrived from the stables, on top of his belongings. Priestley and Murray had no floor-space at all in their

cubicle, as their beds were built of empty dog-biscuit boxes. A division of boxes separated the two sleeping-places, and the whole cubicle was garnished on Priestley's side with bits of rock, ice-axes, hammers, and chisels, and on Murray's with biological specimens.

Next came one of the first cubicles that had been built. Joyce and Wild occupied the "Rogues' Retreat," a painting of two very tough characters drinking beer out of pint mugs, with the inscription "*The Rogues' Retreat*" painted underneath, adorning the entrance to the den. The couches in this house were the first to be built, and those of the opposite dwelling, "The Gables," were copied from their design. The first bed had been built in Wild's storeroom, for secrecy's sake; it was to burst upon the view of every one, and to create mingled feelings of admiration and envy,—admiration for the splendid design, envy of the unparalleled luxury provided by it. However, in building it, the designer forgot the size of the doorway he had to take it through, and it had ignominiously to be sawn in half before it could be passed out of the storeroom into the hut. The printing press and type case for the polar paper occupied one corner of this cubicle.

The next and last compartment was the dwelling-place of the Professor and Mawson. It would be difficult to do justice to the picturesque confusion of this compartment; one hardly likes to call it untidy, for the things that covered the bunks by daytime could be placed nowhere else conveniently. A miscellaneous assortment of cameras, spectroscopes, thermometers, microscopes, electrometers, and the like lay in profusion on the blankets. Mawson's bed consisted of his two

boxes, in which he had stowed his scientific apparatus on the way down, and the Professor's bed was made out of kerosene cases. Everything in the way of tin cans or plug-topped, with straw wrappers belonging to the fruit bottles was collected by these two scientific men. Mawson, as a rule, put his possessions in his storeroom outside, but the Professor, not having any retreat like that, made a pile of glittering tins and colored wrappers at one end of his bunk, and the heap looked like the nest of the Australian bower bird. The straw and the tins were generally cleared away when the Professor and Priestley went in for a day's packing of geological specimens; the straw wrappers were utilized for wrapping round the rocks, and the tins were filled with paper wrapped round the more delicate geological specimens. The name given, though not by the owners, to this cubicle was "The Pawn Shop," for not only was there always a heterogeneous mass of things on the bunks, but the wall of the dark-room and the wall of the hut at this spot could not be seen for the multitude of cases ranged as shelves and filled with a varied assortment of notebooks and instruments.

In order to give as much free space as possible in the center of the hut, we had the table so arranged that it could be hoisted up over our heads after meals were over. This gave ample room for the various carpentering and engineering efforts that were constantly going on. Murray built the table out of the lids of packing-cases, and though often scrubbed, the stenciling on the cases never came out. We had no table-cloth, but this was an advantage, for a well-scrubbed table had a cleaner appearance than would be obtained with such

washing as could be done in an Antarctic laundry. The legs of the table were detachable, being after the fashion of trestles, and the whole affair, when meals were over, was slung by a rope at each end about eight feet from the floor. At first we used to put the boxes containing knives, forks, plates and bowls on top of the table before hauling it up, but after three had fallen on the unfortunate head of the person trying to get them down, we were content to keep them on the floor.

I had been very anxious as regards the stove, the most important part of the hut equipment, when I heard that after the blizzard that kept me on board the Nimrod, the temperature of the hut was below zero, and that socks put to dry in the baking-ovens came out as damp as ever the following morning. My anxiety was dispelled after the stove had been taken to pieces again, for it was found that eight important pieces of its structure had not been put in. As soon as this omission was rectified, the stove acted splendidly, and the makers deserve our thanks for the particular apparatus they picked out as suitable for us. The stove was put to a severe test, for it was kept going day and night for over nine months without once being out for more than ten minutes, when occasion required it to be cleaned. It supplied us with sufficient heat to keep the temperature of the hut sixty to seventy degrees above the outside air. Enough bread could be baked to satisfy our whole hungry party of fifteen every day; three hot meals a day were also cooked, and water melted from ice at a temperature of perhaps twenty degrees below zero in sufficient quantities to afford as much as we required for ourselves and to water the ponies twice a day; and all this work was

done on a consumption not exceeding five hundredweight of coal per week. After testing the stove by running it on an accurately measured amount of coal for a month, we were reassured about our coal-supply being sufficient to carry us through the winter right on to sledging time.

As the winter came on and the light grew faint outside, the hut became more and more like a workshop, and it seems strange to me now, looking back to those distant days, to remember the amount of trouble and care that was taken to furnish and beautify what was only to be a temporary home. One of our many kind friends had sent us a number of pictures, which were divided between the various cubicles, and these brightened up the place wonderfully. During our first severe blizzard, the hut shook and trembled so that every moment we expected the whole thing to carry away, and there is not the slightest shadow of a doubt that if we had been located in the open, the hut and everything in it would have been torn up and blown away. Even with our sheltered position I had to lash the chronometers to the shelf in my room, for they were apt to be shaken off when the walls trembled in the gale. When the storm was over we put a stout wire cable over the hut, burying the ends in the ground and freezing them in, so as to afford additional security in case heavier weather was in store for us in the future.

NORWAY AT THE SOUTH POLE[1]

[1911]

BY ROALD AMUNDSEN

On the 1st of December we left this broken glacier, with holes and crevices without number, with its height of 9100 feet. Before us, looking in the mist and snowdrift like a frozen sea, appeared a light, sloping ice plateau filled with small hummocks.

The walk over this frozen sea was not pleasant. The ground under us was quite hollow, and it sounded as though we were walking on the bottoms of empty barrels. As it was, a man fell through, then a couple of dogs. We could not use our skis on this polished ice. Sledges had the best of it.

The place got the name the "Devil's Dancing-Room." This part of our march was the most unpleasant. On December 6 we got our greatest height, according to the hypsometer and aneroid, 10,750 feet, at 87 degrees 40 minutes south.

On December 8 we came out of the bad weather. Once again the sun smiled down upon us. Once again we could get an observation. Dead reckoning and observation were exactly alike — 88 degrees, 16 minutes, 16 seconds south.

Before us lay an absolutely plain plateau, only here

[1] From *The South Pole*, by Captain Roald Amundsen. Copyright, (U.S.A.), 1913, by Lee Keedick, New York. Reproduced by permission.

and there marked with a tiny sastrugi [a wind furrow in the snow].

In the afternoon we passed 88 degrees, 23 minutes (Shackleton's farthest south was 88 degrees, 25 minutes). We camped and established our last depot, Depot No. 10. From 88 degrees, 25 minutes, the plateau began to slope down very gently and smoothly toward the other side.

On the 9th of December we reached 88 degrees, 39 minutes; on December 10, 88 degrees, 56 minutes; December 11, 89 degrees, 15 minutes; December 12, 89 degrees, 30 minutes; December 13, 89 degrees, 45 minutes.

Up to this time the observations and dead reckoning agreed remarkably well, and we made out that we ought to be at the Pole on December 14 in the afternoon.

That day was a beautiful one — a light breeze from southeast, the temperature minus 23 Celsius (9.4 degrees below zero Fahrenheit), and the ground and sledging were perfect. The day went along as usual, and at 3 P.M. we made a halt.

According to our reckoning we had reached our destination. All of us gathered around the colors — a beautiful silk flag — all hands taking hold of it and planting it.

The vast plateau on which the Pole is standing got the name of the "King Haakon VII Plateau." It is a vast plain, alike in all directions; mile after mile during the night we circled around the camp.

In the fine weather we spent the following day taking a series of observations from 6 A.M. to 7 P.M. The result gave us 89 degrees 55 minutes.

In order to observe the Pole as close as possible, we traveled, as near south as possible, the remaining 9 kilometers.

On December 16 there we camped. It was an excellent opportunity. There was a brilliant sun. Four of us took observations every hour of the day's twenty-four hours. The exact result will be the matter of a professional private report.

This much is certain — that we observed the Pole as close as it is in human power to do it with the instruments we had — a sextant and an artificial horizon.



AT THE SOUTH POLE

THE Norwegian explorer, Roald Amundsen, was educated for a physician, but gave up medicine for the sea. His record as a discoverer includes the determination of the position of the magnetic pole, the achievement of the Northwest Passage, and the discovery of the South Pole. On his latest voyage, he planned to go to the North Pole, but while lying in Funchal Harbor, suddenly proposed to his men that they go to the South Pole instead. They agreed with enthusiasm. The following is his own account of the planting of his country's flag in the frozen South: —

"We proceeded to the greatest and most solemn act of the whole journey — the planting of our flag. Pride and affection shone in the five pairs of eyes that gazed upon the flag, as it unfurled itself with a sharp crack, and waved over the Pole. I had determined that the act of planting it — the historic event — should be equally divided among us all. It was not for one man to do this; it was for *all* who had staked their lives in the struggle, and held together through thick and thin. This was the only way in which I could show my gratitude to my comrades in this desolate spot. I could see that they understood and accepted it in the spirit in which it was offered. Five weather-beaten, frost-bitten fists they were that grasped the pole, raised the waving flag in the air, and planted it as the first at the geographical South Pole. 'Thus we plant thee, beloved flag, at the South Pole, and give to the plain on which it lies the name of King Haakon VII's Plateau.' That moment will certainly be remembered by all of us who stood there."

In this picture the Norwegian flag is shown planted at the Pole, while beside it stands Oscar Wisting, a member of Amundsen's party, with his team of dogs harnessed to a loaded sled.

THE RIVALS IN THE ANTARCTIC

[1911]

FROM HARPER'S WEEKLY

ROALD AMUNDSEN planted the Norwegian flag at the South Pole on December 14 last [1911], at three o'clock in the afternoon, upon a vast plateau stretching away in every direction without a break in the monotony of its flat surface. The temperature was 9.4 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit). In considering this comparatively high temperature, we must remember that the date was only a week before midsummer.

Captain Amundsen knows nothing of the whereabouts of Captain Scott, the commander of the rival expedition. England has not abandoned the hope that her flag was planted first at "the Pole," — for the exact location of this geographical point cannot, of course, be determined absolutely by means of a sextant and artificial horizon, such as Amundsen carried, and there would be room for two flags to wave, so far apart as to be invisible each from the other, yet each approximating to the site of the Pole. However, the appearances are that Captain Amundsen has won the race.

The lowest temperature recorded was 76° below zero, on the Fahrenheit scale. Only two blizzards were encountered in place of the violent hurricanes which had been expected. A new range of mountains was found.

Ever since the news arrived, a year ago, that Scott

and Amundsen had met at the edge of the great ice-barrier which surrounds the southern polar regions, the world had been awaiting news of the expeditions. The conquest of the North Pole had stimulated the interest of the world, and the successful outcome of this attempt to reach the southernmost point of the globe was believed to be inevitable.

Never before had representatives of so many nations striven against one another for such a prize. Five expeditions were in the field: an English, a Norwegian, an Australian, a German, and a Japanese. But of these five only the English and the Norwegian were believed to have any chance of success. The Australians, under the command of Dr. Mawson, sailed with a small ship, the Aurora, in November, 1910. The German expedition, headed by Lieutenant William Filchner, left Buenos Ayres on board the Deutschland on October 5, 1911. The Japanese, commanded by Lieutenant Shirase, sailed on November 20 last, from Sydney, and although poorly equipped are believed to have pressed on toward their destination.

At the outset only the expedition of Captain Scott was thought to have a chance of attaining the South Pole. Amundsen's plans originally were to attempt to reach the North Pole, and he had sailed with that purpose. But one hot night, while the Fram — Nansen's old ship, which they had adopted — was lying in Funchal Harbor, Madeira, Amundsen proposed that they should alter their quest and sail toward the extreme opposite end of the world. The crew accepted his proposition with enthusiasm, and Scott found that he had a formidable rival — one, moreover, who had six months'

advantage of him and seemed likely to anticipate him in planting his nation's flag at the South Pole.

But Amundsen's expedition was much less suitably equipped than his chief rival's. His main reliance was upon the hundred Eskimo dogs that he took to draw the sledges. His crew of nineteen men, moreover, had for the most part participated in journeys over the Arctic ice-packs. On February 4 of last year, Scott found Amundsen in the Bay of Whales, at the edge of the Antarctic ice-barrier, about seven hundred miles from the Pole; since then, until his arrival at Hobart, no news of him was received.

The expedition of Captain Scott was far better equipped than that of his rival. The British Government contributed the sum of $100,000, and an equal amount was raised by public subscription. It was Scott's intention to profit by the experiences of Lieutenant Shackleton, who had come to within ninety-seven miles of the Pole a year or so before, and to follow the same course that his predecessor had taken. On June 1, 1910, he sailed from London in the Terra Nova, a Dundee whaler, twenty-eight years old, but refitted and remodeled, with sixty men and a supply of stores sufficient for three years. Much of Sir Ernest Shackleton's equipment had been copied and some had been improved. Despite the failure of Shackleton to profit by his motor sleigh, Scott took with him two such sledges, upon which he was placing much reliance. One of these was lost in the landing at McMurdo Sound in January, 1911, according to the news brought back at that time. He still had the other, however, a motor with driving-wheels composed of hickory and steel and

sledge-runners for the front. Like Shackleton, he took Manchurian ponies, believing they could be depended upon better than dogs. Dogs, however, were to be used as well. The motor sled, when subjected to severe tests in Norway, had proved itself capable of covering from two to three and a half miles an hour. It was to be the main feature of the transportation plans of the Scott expedition.

Scott's plan was to enter Ross Sea and sail to McMurdo Sound on the shore of Victoria Land, landing there and marching across the ice-barrier, toward the Pole. The ice-barrier extends between Victoria Land and King Edward VII Land for a distance of about two hundred miles. This crossed, there would be a toilsome ascent up what Shackleton called the Great Glacier, a distance of nearly a hundred miles, after which would come the journey across the summit of the south polar continent at an altitude of ten thousand feet, until the Pole was reached.

Like Shackleton, Scott planned to divide his party. One body, consisting of Lieutenant Campbell and five men, was to be sent east to attempt a landing on King Edward VII Land, forming the eastern shore of Ross Sea. While this land was discovered years ago, nobody had ever been able to step foot on it because of the ice surrounding it. As a matter of fact, subsequent reports brought back by the Terra Nova last year showed that this party had failed in accomplishing its object on account of the ice and had shifted the scene of exploration to Victoria Land.

The main party was to be led by Scott himself and was to consist of at least sixteen men, and possibly more

at the start. Following the example of Peary and other explorers, however, some of these men would be sent back from time to time as the journey progressed, until a few would make the final dash for the Pole.

At the Pole Scott intended to plant the two flags which had been presented to him just before he started by Queen Alexandra. They were two Union Jacks. The larger one was to be hoisted at the Pole, if reached, and then brought back and presented to her. The other flag, made of stronger texture, it was planned to leave flying as a permanent record.

The Antarctic has not been the scene of so much exploration as have the Arctic regions. Among the earlier names linked with the discovery of the southern continent are those of the American Wilkes — whose discovery of Wilkes Land was disputed for many years — and the Englishman, James Clark Ross. It was the latter who, after making his way through the pack-ice with two sailing-vessels, the Erebus and the Terror, in 1842, came across the great ice-barrier, one hundred feet in height, which for nearly fifty years was believed to be insurmountable. It was not until 1900 that Carsten Borchgrevink, a Norwegian, found an opening in the huge wall of ice and entered it. He then discovered that a wide expanse of land, over which travel was plainly possible, lay behind it. Captain Scott, following him, succeeded in penetrating McMurdo Strait. In 1908 Shackleton reached a latitude of 88° 23′, and would have reached the Pole but for the loss of a pony laden with supplies. Shackleton found that the land was the most desolate in the world, containing no animal life except a single species of flea.

Roald Amundsen, the conqueror of the Pole, is about forty years of age. He is a graduate of the University of Christiania, but, after taking his doctor's degree, he abandoned medicine to follow the sea as his forebears had done for generations. In 1903, he effected the conquest of the Northwest Passage in a little sloop called the Gjöa, manned by seven men — a feat which had been attempted vainly by many since Franklin's voyage, and had involved the loss of many ships and men.

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S LAST MESSAGE

BY ROBERT F. SCOTT

[CAPTAIN SCOTT, in command of the British South Polar Expedition, succeeded in reaching his goal on January 18, 1912. On his return, weakened by need of food, he was overtaken by a blizzard only eleven miles from the camp where fuel and provisions had been deposited. The following message was written by him shortly before his death, and was found by the relief expedition some months later.

The Editor.]

THE causes of this disaster are not due to faulty organization, but to misfortune in all the risks that had to be undertaken. One, the loss of pony transport in March, 1911, obliged me to start later than I had intended, and obliged the limits of stuff transported to be narrowed. The weather throughout the outward journey, and especially the long gale in 83 degrees south, stopped us. The soft snow in the lower reaches of the glacier again reduced the pace.

We fought these untoward events with will and conquered, but it ate into our provisions reserve. Every detail of our food supplies, clothing, and depots made on the interior ice-sheet and on that long stretch of seven hundred miles to the Pole and back worked out to perfection. The advance party would have returned to the glacier in fine form and with a surplus of food but for the astonishing failure of the man whom we had least expected to fail. Seaman Evans was thought to be the

strongest man of the party, and Beardmore Glacier is not difficult in fine weather. But on our return we did not get a single completely fine day. This, with a sick companion, enormously increased our anxieties. I have said elsewhere that we got into frightfully rough ice, and Edgar Evans received a concussion of the brain. He died a natural death, but left us a shaken party, with the season unduly advanced.

But all the facts above enumerated were as nothing to the surprise which awaited us at the Barrier. I maintain that our arrangements for returning were quite adequate, and that no one in the world would have done better in the weather which we encountered at this time of the year. On the summit, in latitude 82 degrees to 86 degrees, we had minus twenty to minus thirty. On the Barrier, in latitude 82 degrees, ten thousand feet lower, we had minus thirty in the day and minus forty-seven at night pretty regularly, with a continuous head-wind during our day marches.

These circumstances came on very suddenly, and our wreck is certainly due to this sudden advent of severe weather, which does not seem to have any satisfactory cause.

I do not think human beings ever came through such a month as we have come through, and we should have got through in spite of the weather but for the sickening of a second companion, Captain Oates, and a shortage of fuel in our depots, for which I cannot account, and, finally, but for the storm which had fallen on us within eleven miles of the depot at which we hoped to secure the final supplies. Surely misfortune could scarcely have exceeded this last blow!

CAPTAIN SCOTT'S LAST MESSAGE

We arrived within eleven miles of our old One Ton camp with fuel for one hot meal and food for two days. For four days we have been unable to leave the tent, the gale blowing about us. We are weak.

Writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks. We knew we took them. Things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last.

But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honor of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for. Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman.

These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale. But surely, surely, a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent on us are properly provided for.

(Signed) R. SCOTT.

March 25, 1912.