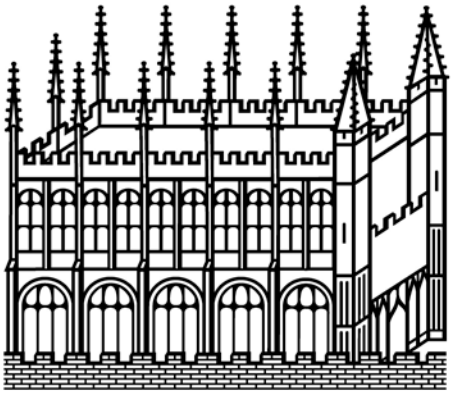

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DR. KANE
THE
ARCTIC HERO

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THE BEAR-HUNT.

DR. KANE: THE ARCTIC HERO.

A NARRATIVE OF HIS

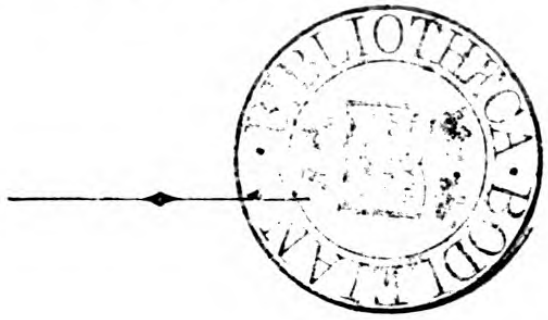
ADVENTURES AND EXPLORATIONS IN THE POLAR REGIONS.

A Book for Boys.

BY

M. JONES,

AUTHOR OF "THE BLACK PRINCE," "STORIES FROM EUROPEAN HISTORY," ETC.



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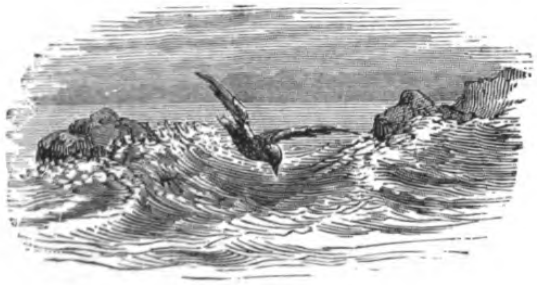
PREFACE

THE fate of Sir John Franklin, who went out in 1845 with the object of seeking what is called the North-West Passage—that is, a passage by sea from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, north of the continent of America—long excited the liveliest anxiety both among his own countrymen and foreigners. Several expeditions were at different times sent out in search of him, but all ended in disappointment. Among the most remarkable of these is that despatched from the United States in 1853, under the command of Dr. Kane of the United States navy: one of the brightest, most undaunted, energetic spirits that ever passed into that drear zone, and who has left a record of his arduous undertaking fascinating enough to tempt out others, spite

of the sufferings he and his brave crew experienced in their twenty-one months sojourn in that world of ice. For the facts of my own little volume I am indebted to this work of Dr. Kane's, published under the name of "Arctic Explorations." For the mode of their narration I must myself be chiefly responsible, as, considering the purpose I had in view, I preferred telling the story of Arctic life and travel in my own fashion, and mainly in my own words, to making a mere abridgment of his copious journals.

M. J.



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Memoir of Dr. Elisha Kent Kane.

ELISHA KENT KANE, the Arctic discoverer, and leader of the Second Grinnell Expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, was born in Philadelphia, United States, Feb. 3, 1820. His ancestors were Irish, Scotch, Dutch, and English. His father was a barrister, afterwards well known as Judge Kane; and Elisha was the eldest of his seven children.

He was a vigorous child, and grew up a bold, fearless, high-hearted boy, excessively troublesome at times, as boys of such character will be, before they have learned the great duty of submission to authority. Some amusing stories are told of him at this period of his life. It seems that before he was nine years old he had, as eldest, chivalrously taken

upon himself the protection of his younger brothers; and this led him one day into a rather desperate encounter with their schoolmaster, who had ordered the younger one for punishment. On hearing this, up jumped Elisha, exclaiming, "Don't whip him, he's such a little fellow—whip me!" It was said in all honesty and simplicity of purpose, offering himself as his brother's substitute; but the tone in which it was spoken, sounding excessively like defiance, was so construed by the master, who of course met it with the reply, "I'll whip you too." The result was something like a pitched battle between himself and the lad; for Elisha, who had no notion of taking quietly what he thought an unjust whipping, used his small fists to the best of his ability on the sacred person of his master, but with unsatisfactory success, seeing that he retired from the contest, not "covered with glory," but with what bore a very suspicious resemblance to cane-strokes.

But though utterly discomfited on this occasion, the spirit of generous protection of the weak was not knocked out of him. When he was ten years old, a cry from his

little sisters one day drew him to the yard at the back of his father's house, to find that some big neighbour boys, who had climbed on the roof of a building overlooking it, were entertaining themselves—like little shabby wretches, as they were—with shooting dabs of putty at the girls with a "blow-gun,"—what English boys call a "pea-shooter." They were peremptorily bidden to desist and take themselves off; to which their response was a volley directed against himself. Elisha's blood was up. Grasping the rain-spout, he was among them in an instant; and with firmer footing on the steep slope than they, seized and beat each one of them handsomely; then one by one dragged them to the very edge of the roof, and there demanded an apology for their misconduct, which, in terror for their necks, they were not slow to give. His little brother, who was watching the proceedings from below, utterly terrified at thought of what might come of penance performed in such circumstances, called out to him,—"Come down, Elisha! O, come down!" and got the answer,—"No, Tom; they an't done apologizing yet!"

The manner in which, on another occasion, the spirited boy avenged his own wrongs, was exceedingly ingenious. Being on the wharf one day, a great brute of a fellow insulted him grossly. The man was much too big to be beaten in the way in which Elisha had thrashed the offending boys, and he was known as bad enough to be capable of doing the child some serious injury; still, to take his impudence quietly was simply impossible. Fortunately, the rope attached to a crane dangled invitingly near the indignant lad. He seized it, took a short run that stretched it out tight to its full length, then, swinging himself back with it, went with all the force of a stone from a sling, with his knees right into the fellow's face, who dropped like a shot, to the delight of the spectators; they protecting little Kane from what might have been the consequences of this novel mode of attack.

In these instances Elisha appears in the character of a righteous avenger of what he thought wrong-doing. His sense of justice was outraged, and that he could not endure. But it must be owned he had rather the art of getting himself into mischief, as it is called.

Climbing, clambering, scrambling hither and thither; up to chimney-pots—it was "so grand" up there—or tree-tops, all came alike to the future Arctic explorer, who, in addition to unconquerable purpose in these expeditions, had a cat-like agility in carrying them out. And all helped on his education for the strange, little-thought-of life that lay before him.

As for his book-learning during this period, little can be said in favour of it. He had his likes and dislikes in the matter, and acted upon them: a thing intolerable in boyhood, though in his case, and the few like his, explained (and, therefore, more than forgiven) by his manhood, for which the wild lad-life appeared to have been the fit training. But the truth remains that he was not a pattern school-boy. At the age of thirteen his father was almost in despair about him, and told him plainly that he must choose at once between learning and work. By the time he was fifteen, he found out his deficiencies for himself. Strong self-will had been his rock ahead; he fortunately became aware of it, and set himself earnestly to mend matters.

Breaking health gave some formidable hindrance to this; but he did what he could to prepare for college life, with the intention of making civil engineering his profession.

What is called civil engineering (to distinguish it from similar arts of construction for military purposes) comprehends many constructive arts: such as mining—road, railway, and canal-making—banking out the sea, or other waters—clearing the bed of rivers—the construction of docks and harbours—and the like. And with the object of devoting himself to this, he was at once entered at the University of Virginia, where he went heartily to work at the course of study marked out for him. With Latin, Greek, and mathematics (the latter all-important for his intended profession) he got on pretty well; and he possessed the great advantage of a most retentive memory. What he got he kept. He did not, after the manner of some, put his mental gains into a sieve; and the result was that he passed, with great credit, two examinations in subjects connected with his special aims. His health, however, again failed seriously; and when just seventeen he

was carried off home, wrapped in a blanket, to bide his time through a long and dangerous illness. It was one that affected his future life. Civil engineering was considered an unsuitable occupation for one suffering, as it was thought, from heart-disease. In these circumstances, his friends recommended to him the profession of medicine. He acquiesced in their choice, and at once gave himself up, with all the energy of his character, to the studies requisite for it.

Whatever a man like Kane had applied himself to, in that he would have excelled. And young as he was for a physician, his intelligent, patient, close study — such as might scarcely have been expected from the hot, wayward, somewhat ungovernable boy — soon placed him in a most honourable rank in his profession. The amount of work that he got through was astonishing; but he considered that constant hard work was a necessity of his constitution—the only thing to keep him in tolerable health: and so entirely was his father also convinced of this, that, by way of ensuring it for his son, he took the liberty of making a navy surgeon of

him without his knowledge, and, as it proved when he discovered to what he was committed, against his will. That the young man submitted to this, and accepted a post that appeared to make against, at least, one of his most cherished pursuits—that of the philosophical investigation of disease, in which he had already earned great distinction—shows a considerable amount of amiability on his part, and that the strong will was learning to give way.

He took his degree of doctor in medicine in 1842; and his first active employment in the new branch of his profession, so unexpectedly thrust upon him, was to go out, in 1843, as physician to an embassy from the United States to China. During the voyage, he occupied himself with the study of geometry, navigation, and modern languages. The Bible and Shakspeare were among his cherished books, and he was singularly (and profitably) well acquainted with the contents of both. As a boy, Robinson Crusoe and the Pilgrim's Progress had been his favourites.

Some months spent, not idly, at Bombay, broke the monotony of the sea-voyage. He

visited the country around, and also crossed over to Ceylon to hunt elephants, and join in other wild sports—rather more respectable entertainment than our English pigeon-shooting, and scampering on horseback after a half tame deer. He was what is called a "good shot," a good horseman and pedestrian, loving the exercise and excitement of the chase, though the tenderness of his nature made him shrink from the killing part of these recreations—the "gun-murder," as he in later life expressed it, in reference to shooting seal, when that was a necessity for his sick Arctic crew, languishing for want of fresh meat. One may imagine the utter scorn and contempt with which such a man would have regarded the modern *battue* system—happily not an English one—which collects together, in small space, a vast number of the objects of the so-called sportsman, and then permits him (in the spirit of a butcher on slaughtering days) to let fly among them, and deem it gentlemanly enjoyment. Stalking seal—the slow, cautious, prone approach to the animal—it may be said, is perhaps as good a test of a man's powers as is deer-stalking.

STALKING SEAL.

On arriving at Macao, the doctor left his diplomatic friends for awhile to try their wits against the Chinamen, whilst he visited the Philippine Islands, the largest of which, Luzon, he thoroughly explored, and had even the audacity to descend into the crater of its volcano, an undertaking of no small difficulty and danger. His companion in the enterprise

was soon daunted and gave it up, strongly, but in vain, urging him to do the same; but Kane was not a man to be foiled—the word "impossible" was not in his dictionary. He made the guides gather a number of bamboos, which, being twisted into a strong, tough rope, were used to let him down over the brink of the crater. At two hundred feet he felt ground, let go the cord, and scrambled as he could still downwards, until, reaching the sulphurous lake at the bottom, he filled his specimen bottles with the seething, unsavoury waters. But it is a mistake to suppose that, as the proverb says, "it is only the first step that is the difficulty." Getting down had been formidable, but it was a trifle compared to getting up again. As he worked his stumbling way to the rope, the hot ashes at every step yielded under his feet, sulphurous blasts nearly suffocated him; and it was only after frequent falls, and having one of his boots burned to pieces with the fiery road, that he managed to gain the rope, got it fastened round him, and, swaying and twirling, was drawn up nearly senseless. The natives, when he made his appearance in this state,

declared that the deity of the volcano had punished him for his invasion of sacred territory. A good dash of cold water, however, with other appropriate remedies, freed him from the consequences of demon anger; and he carried off his specimens in triumph; with the minor drawback of a little "brush" with the natives about, who objected to the whole proceeding, but were soon quelled.

The treaty between the United States and China having been concluded in July 1844, though the Chinese carried their point in politely but resolutely keeping the embassy out of Pekin, whither it had desired to go, Dr. Kane resigned his post in connection with it and remained behind, practising with great success as physician and surgeon at Whampoa. But at the end of six months the fever of the country—rice-fever it is called—knocked him down so completely, that he was obliged to give up his cherished plans and return home. The overland route to Europe was the one chosen; and taking plenty of time by the way, he visited the interior of India, passed temporarily into the service of an Indian prince on his way to the English Court, with whom he travelled

in Persia and Syria, then, turning off at the Mediterranean, pursued his course alone to Egypt, where, under the special protection of the Pasha, Mehemet Ali—to whom his Indian friend had consigned him—he sailed up the Nile to the Pyramids, Thebes, and the second cataract, the ordinary termination in those days of the voyager's route. His Thebes' life he describes as a wild one: going about in native dress, with a beard so long that it had to be tucked in; walking some twenty-six miles daily; sleeping on the ground; and living almost entirely on young pigeons, which, in some form or other, were served up five times a-day, and duly washed down with coffee or tea without sugar. A man need rise early to get through five meals a-day—some profess horror at even four—and it appears that in Dr. Kane's case the feeding began at four o'clock in the morning, and ended at nine at night. There is no mention of the traveller's pipe—hookah, or whatever the folk of that region may call it. This Eastern luxury was none to him, for, in all its shapes and forms, he had a horror of tobacco. In everything he was most temperate.

On this Egyptian tour Dr. Kane distinguished himself by climbing the colossal statue of Memnon; that statue which, in the olden time, was fabled as giving out sweet sounds when touched by the beams of the rising sun: and having climbed it—at least some half-way—he found he could not get down again. There he stuck, in danger of his life, until an Arab guide adroitly rescued him. If he had climbed for mere climbing's sake, he would have been much to blame. But such a bit of foolhardiness would have been entirely foreign to his nature. The object of his desperate clambering up a statue, whose leg, at the calf, has a girth of thirteen feet, was to ascertain the existence, or otherwise, of hieroglyphic inscriptions on a slab of stone placed between the knees of the sitting figure; which, after all, he was unable to reach. His mode of ascent was by placing his back, or neck, according to the varying width, against one of the legs of the statue, and his feet against the other, and then gradually wriggling himself up; but not, alas, as has been said, to what he sought. That was provokingly and utterly unattainable.

Whether there are or are not important hieroglyphics telling something of the world's story up aloft there, must, spite of Dr. Kane's risking his life to ascertain it, remain unknown. An attack of the plague put an end to his Egyptian wanderings. Recovering from it, he made his way to Greece, through which he walked—slowly, for he was still an invalid—not omitting any object of classic interest in this most classic land. Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, and England followed before he found himself once more at home. A pretty extensive system of travel for a man little more than twenty-five years of age, who had gone through East and West, not as an idler, lounging his time and his life away, but as an intelligent student of men and nature.

It is wonderful how much is done by some, how little by others. Idle folk say they have not time for this, that, and the other.

Dr. Kane's position as naval surgeon was still anything but agreeable to him. The trammels of the service he detested; and, further, from the beginning to the end of his days, he was always sea-sick in rough weather. An extra roll, or a still more sickening heave,

of the long ocean wave, and it was all over with the unfortunate navy surgeon. But though at this time urged by his family (who, it must be remembered, had committed him to it without his consent or knowledge) to quit the distasteful service, he could not yield to their solicitation, for the simple reason that war between the United States and Mexico was just on the point of breaking out; and everybody knows that no man can withdraw from his post just when that post implies danger. But, oh, the mortification of the doctor—and numbers like him have suffered in the same way—on finding his sense of honour rewarded, not by his being sent to take an active part in the contest which had kept him in the service, but by an appointment on the coast of Africa, among slaves and slave-dealers, and such a state of things in the dominions of his majesty, the King of Dahomey, as caused him to think that the exported slaves had certainly not the worst of it.

But here again "coast fever" settled the point as to his remaining in this hideous place or leaving it. After six weeks' severe illness he was just sufficiently recovered to be lowered over the ship's side, and sent home to recruit.

His active mind could not allow him long to do this; and before he had fully recovered from the long illness that ensued on his reaching home in April 1847, he had sought and obtained employment with the army in Mexico, the States being at the time at war with that country. From it, after a variety of disagreeable adventures, and with no slight contempt for those with whom he had been serving, he returned wounded and ill, to be nursed up into strength for more work. That work was to be the crowning work of his short life,—the search for Sir John Franklin.

It will be remembered that in May 1845, Sir John, with two ships, the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, and a crew of a hundred and thirty-eight, officers and men, had sailed from our own shores, with the object of seeking the celebrated North-West Passage; and that, after July of that same year, when his vessels were seen moored to an iceberg, waiting for a passage through the "pack," all trace of him had been lost. For a couple of years or so before Dr. Kane's special attention had been directed to the matter, both in England and the United States strong feeling had been aroused on the

subject of the lost commander and his crew; and in addition to the several expeditions sent out from England for his relief, the liberality of a private individual, Mr. Henry Grinnell, of the United States, aided his government to join in the search. Two vessels, the *Advance* and the *Rescue,* were given by him for this purpose; and Dr. Kane was connected with the enterprise as chief medical officer. The command of it was bestowed upon Lieutenant De Haven, who had been in the Arctic seas before; and serving alongside us English out there, by an act of daring earned from our sailors the name of the "mad Yankee." He used the stout oak-bulked bow of his brig as a battering-ram against the ice, letting drive at it with such force as opened a passage for his English friends.

When this dashing sailor first saw the doctor after his appointment he was somewhat appalled, thinking the small, feeble-looking man before him would not be of much use in the trying work to which they were proceeding, and that he should most likely have to send him back by the time they reached Greenland. But he said nothing. The doctor's continued

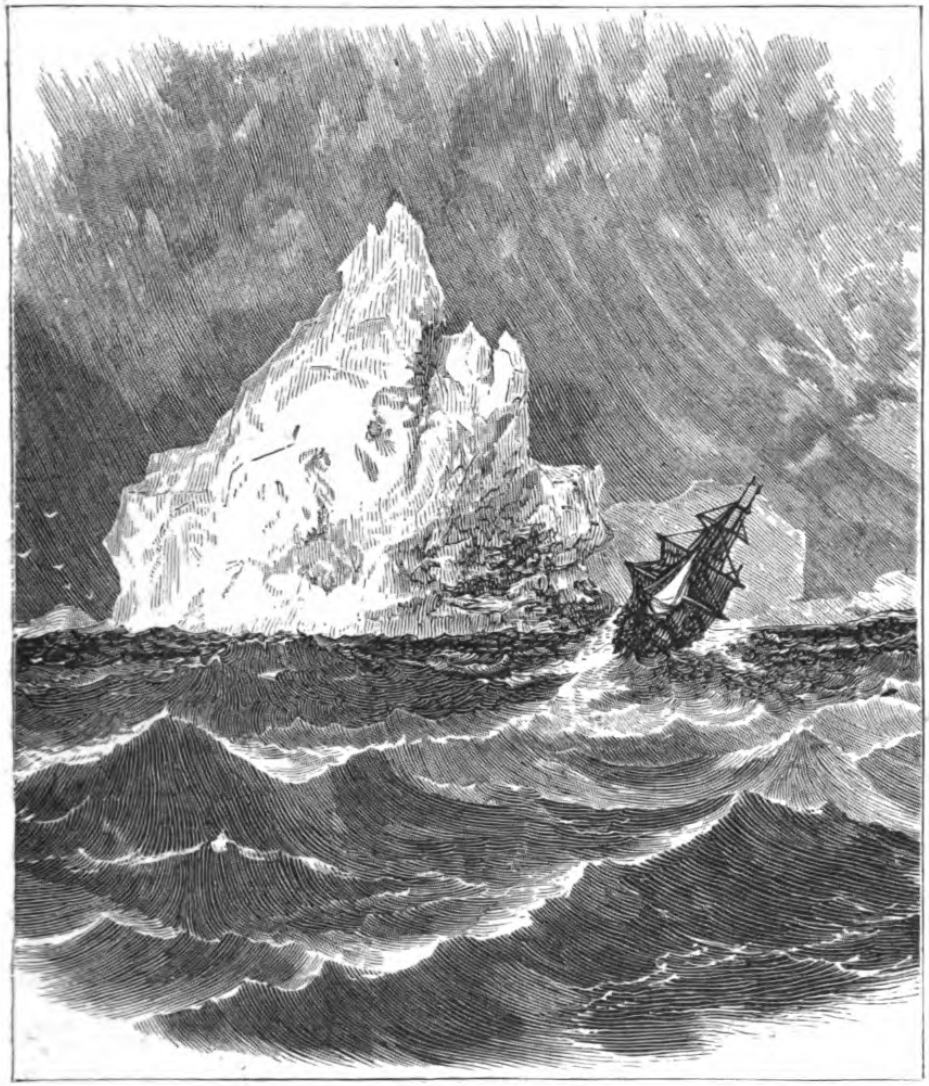
sea-sickness after they were afloat tended to confirm this view; so, when they had been out thirty-one days, on meeting with an English homeward-bound vessel, the commander at once, with considerable urgency, proposed that the invalid should give himself a medical certificate of unfitness for further service, and take this opportunity of getting home. Kane, however, would not give in; he point-blank refused to do as he was requested; and, happily for all concerned, in the course of a fortnight he was able to be as hard at work, and as usefully, as any of them.

The expedition was out sixteen months, nine of them stuck fast in the ice, drifting on the ocean; and its doings were chronicled by the doctor in a volume published in 1853, after he had again sailed north, with the same object, in what is known as the Second Grinnell Expedition. This was a private one, commanded by Dr. Kane himself; his one little vessel, the *Advance,* being given for her second trip by Mr. Grinnell. The funds were partly provided by Dr. Kane; and he worked exceedingly hard in the preparation of this expedition, for his whole heart was in it.

Mixed motives—as is almost always the case in this world—actuated him in the matter. His intense sympathy with the lost Franklin and his crew, some of whom he was persuaded must have survived (he knew what Arctic hardships were, and also knew that they could be endured), led him to an ardent desire of being himself their liberator from frozen thrall. His patriotism made him eager to gain honour for his own country; whilst he was spurred on to extra exertion by the various English schemes for Franklin's relief that were then being carried out. It seemed at one time a sort of neck and neck race between him and Captain Inglefield; though this idea of competing with the captain proved to be erroneous—the English expedition of 1853 under that officer being bound to a different area of search from the one selected by Dr. Kane.

The variety of duties that devolved upon him in his preparations was really amusing. Writing letters, telegraphing, bargaining for rounds of beef, medically examining his volunteers to see if they were strong enough for the work, contriving stoves for cooking, "worry-

ing" with officials, and trying to make bread; in which last achievement the valiant doctor



MELVILLE BAY.

was worsted—it *would* not rise. "Change of work" is said to be "as good as play." There was change enough here undoubtedly.

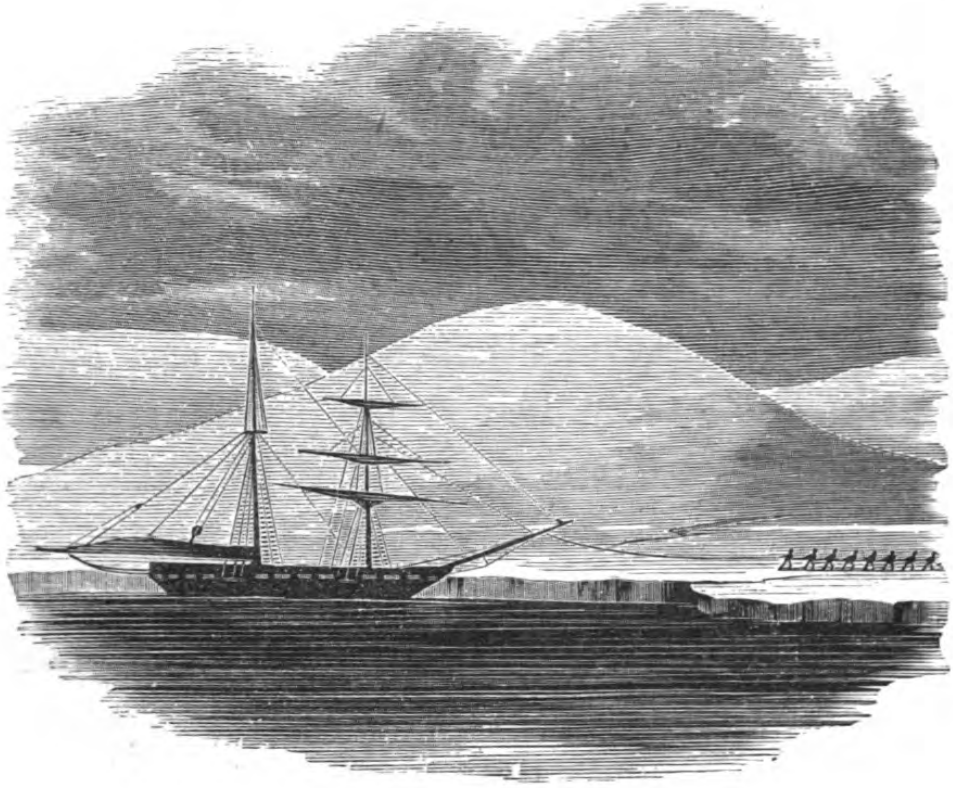
A severe fit of illness preceded his departure

in the *Advance*, which sailed from New York May 20th, 1853. Letters were received from him, bearing date of the following July. The tone of the first was solemn. He was within three days of entering Melville Bay—a region so crowded with icebergs as to have obtained from whalers the name of "Bergy Hole"—and his responsibilities were heavy upon him. That of the last was cheerful,—telling his father what exertions he had been making to get his supplies at that place, so as not to delay his progress; taking advantage of a long calm to go about in his boat to make the necessary purchases without once coming to anchor. And he had been successful in everything: furs of all kinds, sledges, harness, lines, and even dogs for draught, almost the most important item of the whole; for, as he observes, "the dog is the camel of these snow deserts;" and the Esquimaux grudges parting with a single one as an Arab would grudge parting with "the ship" of his "desert." On these long excursions the contrast between the filthy squalor of the natives and the glorious scenery of their country struck him forcibly.

ESQUIMAUX DOGS.

Of course after these, communications could not be expected from him for a long time. But when the second winter after his sailing

set in without either bringing him home, or tidings of him, the most serious alarm was felt, not only by his own friends, but by his countrymen generally; the greater that it was known the first winter had been an unusually severe one, and that the provisioning of the *Advance* would not suffice for a second. A relief expedition was therefore immediately organized and sent out to seek him. It comprised two vessels, under the command of Lieutenant Hartstene, of the United States navy; a man so thoroughly alive to the perils of a hunt through the Polar Seas—its crashing encounters with icebergs and hummocks, and its wearying, slow tracking along the margin of the ice-belt—that, before sailing, he begged that no expedition might be sent in search of them if they failed to return. He left New York on the 31st of May 1855, precisely two years after the sailing of the little vessel of which he was in search. And the search proved successful; for they found Dr. Kane and his crew, just when all their dangers were at an end, and themselves coming comfortably home in a Danish vessel. Naturally enough, though



TRACKING ALONG THE ICE-BELT.

rather ludicrously, one of the crew felt a little provoked at not having been found earlier, when they wanted help, rather than now, when it was no longer needed. "There now," said he, "we have had all our hard work for nothing." "Are you sorry," was Dr. Kane's reply, "that we owe our deliverance to our own exertions?" But it must have been disappointing to everybody; not the least so to those who had gone on this mission, and encountered all its hardships, just too late to be of any use.

The missing ones—such as had survived—were landed in safety at New York on the 11th October 1855, after an absence of thirty months.

The commander did not seem much the worse for the terrible exertions and anxieties of those thirty months—exertions and anxieties continually helped by prayer, and an unfailing trust in the providence of God. He rather seemed to have gained strength by privation and hardship. "My health," said he to a friend, "is almost absurd; I have grown like a walrus."

But it was only for a time. Payment was to be exacted for the long and unnatural strain upon both mind and body, under whose tension nothing but an indomitable will, together with that firm trust in God which was a principle of his manly life, could have sustained him. Not long after his return he began to fail. The unaccustomed toil of literary work in preparing for publication an account of his recent Arctic experiences and discoveries, told upon him severely. The work was laborious, and he worked too hard at it. He was artist as well as author. Many of the

exquisite sketches, which add so greatly to the charm of his book, had been made in pencil, at a temperature of nobody knows how many degrees below freezing-point, with the paper steadied on the shoulders of one of his crew; and these all required his own close attention in the process of transferring them to his printed pages. The whole thing weighed upon him like a nightmare. "The wretched book," "the incubus," he writes at half-past three in the morning. "The book has been my coffin."

Illness crept on by degrees. There was also annoyance from his own government—the doctor had never been its spoiled child—and he was indignant at it. A voyage to England being decided on, in the hope of benefit to his health, he sailed thither with his old friend and Arctic companion, Morton, on the 16th October 1856. He did not seem sanguine as to the result of this voyage, yet, when his strength permitted, enjoyed it; cheerful himself, and contributing, with his natural unselfishness, to the cheerfulness of others. He landed at Liverpool on the 24th of the month, and speedily went on to London,

where it was remarked by Sir Roderick Murchison, who honoured and esteemed him, that he appeared to be in all but a dying state. Spite of the destructive fogs of the season, a little amendment afterwards took place, and he proceeded, still accompanied by his faithful friend, to the island of Cuba, as offering the mild temperature suited to his condition, and possessing the further recommendation of being near home, in case of need. But before reaching his destination he was stricken by death. Landing at Havana on the 26th December, he was received by his brother Thomas, and speedily joined by his mother and brother John, who had come out to soothe and cheer him in his last hours. They were those of a Christian man, as had been those of his most active life. Daily the Bible was read to him by his mother; and finally, as she read, his spirit was dismissed, so quietly that the reading had continued some minutes before it was discovered that the listener was in the "land that is very far away."

He died, on the 16th February 1857, at the age of thirty-seven: a good, brave, Christian man, whose short but hard day's work had

been done under such circumstances of bodily infirmity as might have kept more than one half of such invalids petting themselves up in the chimney corner. Whether a less laborious

DR. KANE.

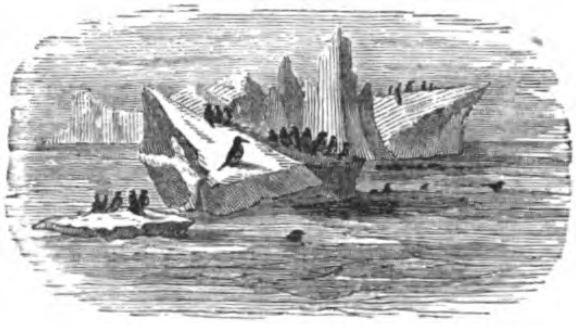
life would have prolonged his useful days cannot now be determined. He thought otherwise; acted upon his conviction, and perished: leaving "footprints on the sands of time" that may guide other brave spirits, whether their

course be, like his, one of wild adventure, or in the less conspicuous, not always less heroic,

"Daily round, the common task,"

of quiet home life.

Perhaps the most complete understanding of Dr. Kane's character may be had from his own record of those "Arctic Explorations," which cost him his life.



DR. KANE: THE ARCTIC HERO.

CHAPTER I.

SAILING NORTH.

ON the 30th of May 1853, a little naval procession was seen sailing out of the harbour of New York. There was a small, stout brig, perhaps not quite so elegant in her outline as might be desired for beauty; but as she was designed for tough work, her proportions were admirable to knowing eyes. For the present she lazily followed a steam-tug to which she was attached, and a number of fine steamers attended as body-guard. Slowly they passed through the Narrows, amid cheers from the shore folk, and those who thronged the vessels lying about. First the forts were passed, next the light-

house; and then, being fairly out, the brig felt able to take care of herself. Forthwith she cut the connection between herself and the tug; the steamers reversed their paddles, and swept round their great bows shorewards, while the little brig, steering in a northerly direction, pursued its lonely way on the broad seas.

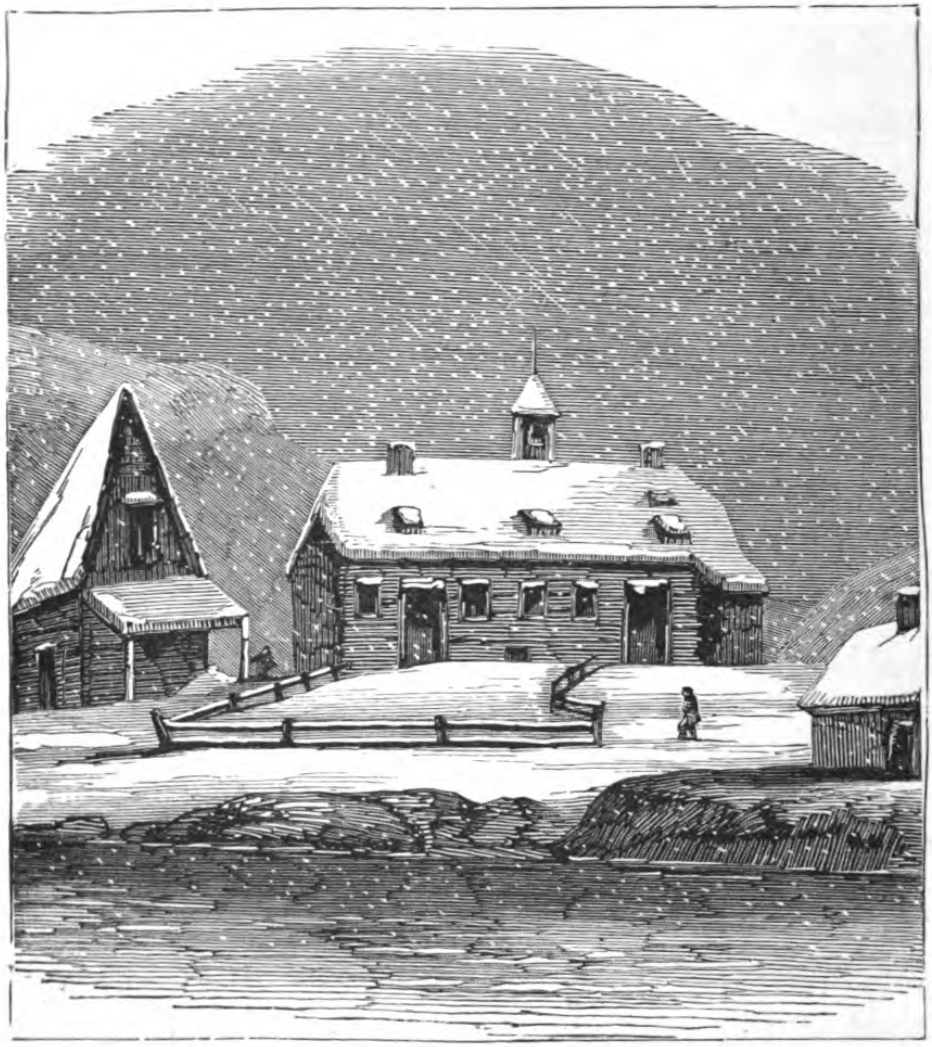
This little vessel was the *Advance*, going in search of Sir John Franklin and his companions, lost amid the wide, icy wastes of the Polar regions.

The *Advance* was but a small vessel—only a hundred and forty-four tons burden; but she had already made for herself an Arctic reputation. Her crew was to match, consisting of but eighteen men, including their gallant commander. Their equipment and stores were of the simplest description, though, as was hoped, sufficient for the hardy adventurers embarked on this expedition. They had five boats on board, one of them a life-boat; a number of planks for covering over the ship in her winter quarters (for being frozen up out there was part of their plan); India rubber and canvas tents, with sledges for ice-travelling. Their provisions were the

usual navy salt beef and pork, and biscuit; two thousand pounds of pemmican, and a quantity of meat biscuit; with pickled cabbage, and plenty of dried potatoes and other vegetables—the use of these, after being a certain time at sea, being the only means of warding off that dreadful sailors' malady called scurvy. Pemmican, it should be explained, is meat dried and then pounded, melted fat being afterwards poured in among it. Meat biscuit is made of the strongest soup possible, into which flour is stirred till it becomes a stiff paste; this is then rolled out, and dried in shapes like biscuit, whence its name. They are both American modes of preserving meat without the use of salt.

Something to drink was also added, in the shape of a very moderate supply of wine, beer, and brandy, together with a stock of malt and brewing vessels. But these good things were not for everyday use. Nothing stronger than coffee was allowed to be drunk, except by special order. They had, of course, plenty of warm clothing; together with a lot of knives, needles, and such articles, with which to make purchases from the Esquimaux.

Thus furnished, the little vessel set off on her perilous expedition. They had a prosperous voyage to Greenland, into one of whose harbours they sailed on the 1st of July, for



MORAVIAN SETTLEMENT AT LICHTENFELS.

the purpose of getting fresh food for the dogs, of which they had taken a team on board at Newfoundland, for sledge-travelling. Here

they had their last glimpse of civilized life at Lichtenfels, where some Moravian missionaries had long had their simple settlement for Christianizing the natives.

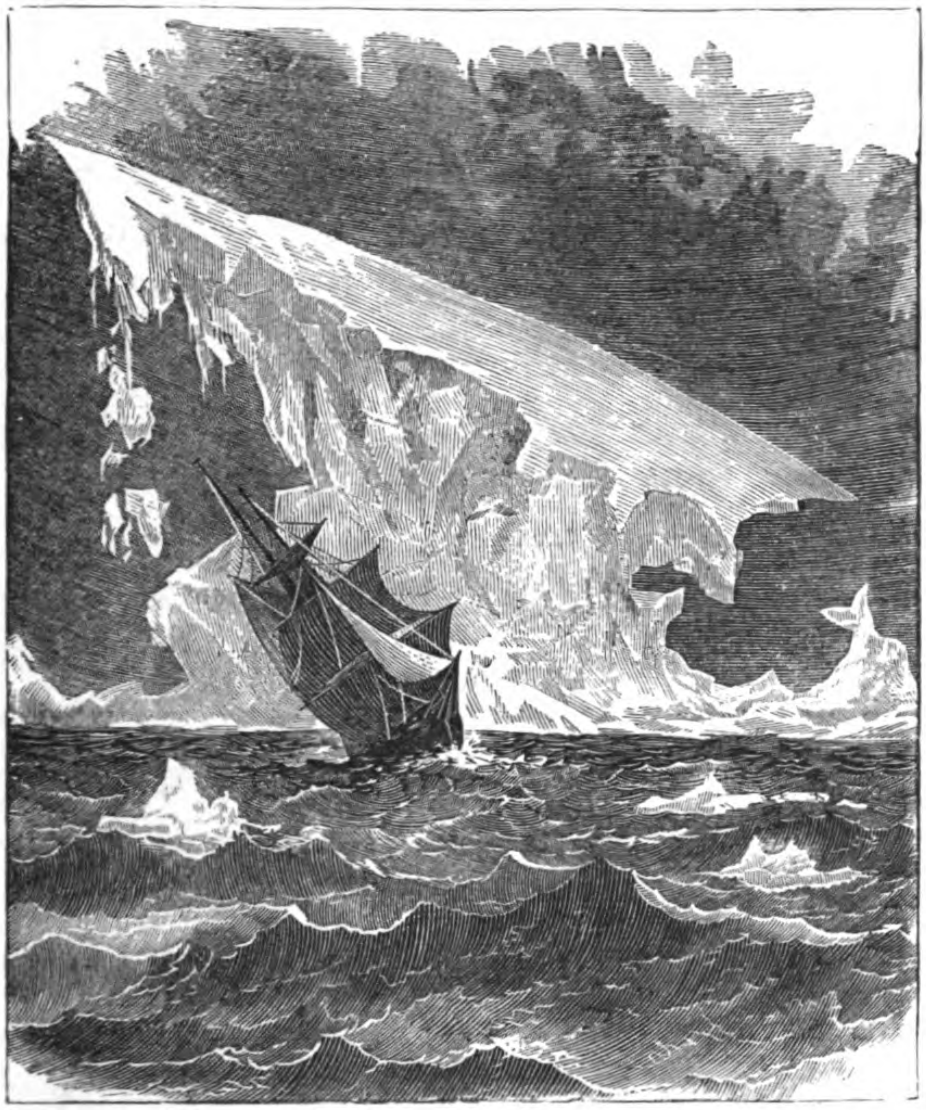
It was a dreary life for these good people, shut up in that cold corner of the world—chapel and dwelling-house under the one roof of the old-fashioned building, with its dormer windows, plenty of chimneys, and spiring belfry. And very grave they seemed, children and all; but they were kindly hospitable to their visitors, who left after a short stay, carrying off with them an Esquimaux boy of nineteen, as hunter and provider-general, especially for the dogs, whose ravenous appetites, if they were to be of any use, it was absolutely necessary to satisfy, while it was by no means easy to do it.

Hans Cristian the Esquimaux turned out a very important personage in the expedition, and a very good fellow into the bargain. Indeed, that was evident at starting, from the lad's insisting that, in addition to his own wages, two barrels of bread (sailors call biscuit bread) and fifty pounds of pork should be given to his mother before he left her. He was fat, and

tolerably stupid, except when he was hunting; then he was as "wide awake" as possible, able to shoot a bear, harpoon a walrus, and even spear a bird flying.

Coasting northwards, the 27th of July brought them to Melville Bay, among the icebergs, in the midst of such a fog, that it was scarce possible to see across the decks. This was awkward—to have to pick their way in and out among these floating castles, through what is called *rotten* ice; that is, ice that has lost its stone-like hardness, broken and mixed up with water: a sort of ill-made ice-gruel, with large lumps in it! It was dangerous, too, for sometimes a quantity of the stuff, driven together by the action of the waters, altogether impeded navigation. Dreading this, Dr. Kane made up his mind, as the wind was freshening, to anchor himself to an iceberg, whose fortunes he must of course share. But the huge floating thing could make its way where the little *Advance* would have stuck fast; though, as has been said, it was not the first time that she had crunched ice with her bows, or had been "nipped" in these seas, so of course she was used to it.

This anchoring to an iceberg was rather a nice operation, sooner said than done; and it cost them eight hours' hard work before they



FASTENED TO AN ICEBERG.

succeeded in planting their ice-anchors so firmly as to secure their not being carried away by the gale that had by this time risen.

It was hard work; unluckily, it was useless work also; for almost before they had time to draw breath, some suspicious sounds were heard; then small fragments of ice began to pelt the water; and though at once all haste was made to undo their day's work, and "cast off" from the berg to which they had so painfully fastened themselves, it was only just accomplished when, splash, dash, crash, *thunder*, down came the whole face of the berg, a shower of ruins, into the sea.

Their next "attachment" to an iceberg proved more fortunate; for eschewing such towering concerns as had nearly put a premature end to their adventures, they planted their ice-anchors in a low, safe one, in whose company they drifted slowly right on, instead of being hurried by the gale violently south, precisely the way they did *not* wish to go. For their mission was to work their way to the north, to seek the missing Englishmen, who were destined never to be found—a few bones, scraps of clothing and furniture, with little personal possessions, being all that even at last ever came to light as remains of the brave Franklin and his crew.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEARCH FOR WINTER QUARTERS.

THIS working their way through ice and water, mixed up in various degrees of thickness, is a trying performance. Sometimes the vessel has to bore a passage, trusting to its hard head to push through the obstacles that beset it. Occasionally even its oaken bows fail to break up the iron incrustation (for Arctic ice is far more iron in its character than our feeble southern congelation); and then implements of different kinds—saws and chisels—have to be employed to cut a canal through the ice-field or pack.

When the extent of frozen surface is so great that its limits cannot be seen from the mast-head, it is called an ice-field; the pack is the same field broken into fragments, which, pressed more or less closely together, are car-

ried hither and thither by the motion of the waves.

Progress, thus obtained, is slow, and the labour great. A man who has not abundant patience, as well as courage, self-denial, and powers of endurance, had better not ship himself for the Arctic regions.

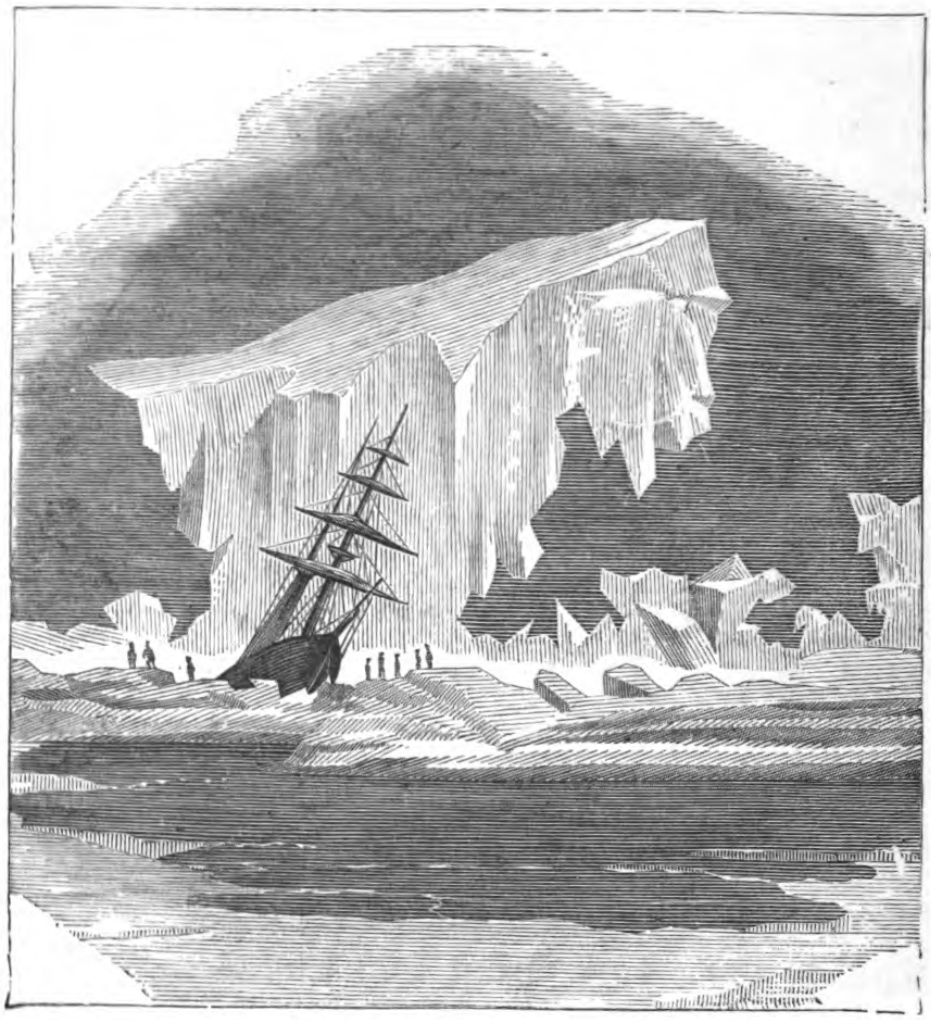
One of the great difficulties that had to be contended with during this expedition was the feeding and otherwise keeping in good condition of fifty dogs, partly Newfoundland, partly Esquimaux, which were on board, for sledge-travelling when the time for that came. Dogs, especially these wild creatures, are not particularly orderly animals, and their vagaries involved the voyagers in constant perplexities. The appetites of the beasts were something to be wondered at, rather than admired. Nothing came amiss to them, from natural history specimens of all shapes and sizes, including birds' nests, to even a feather bed, the attempt upon which did, however, prove a failure. While whenever the slow-advancing brig, working its way through ice and water, came to a full stop against any impassable piece of ice, out they would all rush, like fifty

plagues as they were, spite of shouts and the liberal use of the Esquimaux whip, which is no joke; and then catching them again, after they had had their own sweet will, was easier to talk of than to accomplish. Early in the voyage two of the dogs, having scampered off in this wild fashion, got left behind; and as they could not be spared, it cost a boat party eight hours' hard rowing, through the ice-porridge we have described, before they were found alongside a dead narwhal, upon which they had gorged themselves. Another hour was spent in coaxing and catching one of the two—the blandishments employed for this purpose being utterly unavailing with the other, who had to be left to his own devices.

These Esquimaux dogs, half wild to begin with, readily become wild outright; and then they hunt and kill reindeer on their own account, much to the disgust of the natives who, in their turn, hunt and kill *them*.

Dog troubles, however, were things by the way; the main business was to keep going north, through ice and hindrances of all sorts; while in addition a secure wintering place had to be sought. It looked as though this would

be found for them, whether they would or not, for "nippings," and occasional stickings fast, at length ended in the brig's fairly getting aground near what is called the Ice-foot,



AGROUND NEAR THE ICE-FOOT.

where she had to be tackled for safety, till the return of the tide might, as it was hoped, release her from her enforced proximity to the fantastic berg towering high above her masts.

There, however, from time to time she kept sticking fast "high and dry," in spite of all that could be done in the way of lightening her by hoisting heavy goods into the boat alongside, until at last it seemed as if they must make up their minds to be stuck fast, somewhere or other, for the winter. The best thing to be done under these circumstances was to seek a suitable spot, get into it, and resign themselves to their fate; for this year of all years, winter threatened to fall early upon the Arctic zone.

A travelling party was therefore organized for this purpose, preparations for which had for some time been going on, without much having been said about it by the wise commander of the expedition, who had all hearts to keep up, as well as to make all arrangements. His plan was to leave the brig, in her helplessness, in charge of a competent officer, and make a journey himself, partly boat, partly sledge, to explore the neighbourhood in order that they might be frozen up as judiciously and as snugly as possible.

Their best and lightest whale-boat, which was dignified with the name of the *Forlorn*

Hope, was accordingly covered with tin, to prevent the wood being cut by the *bay*, or new ice, and supplied with a canvas covering to put up overhead, to convert it into a sort of tent at halting places. Provisions—that everlasting pemmican chiefly—were placed in

THE FORLORN HOPE.

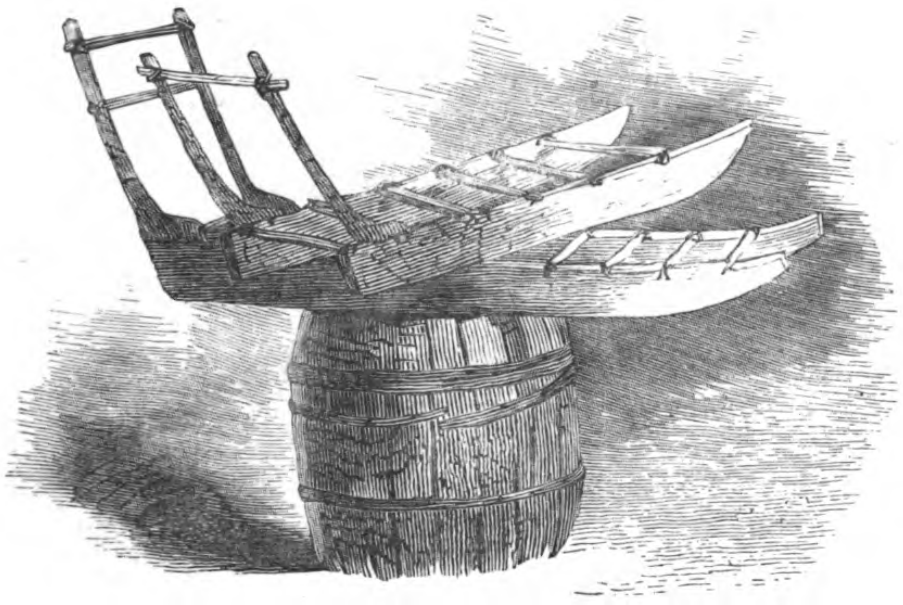
small cases; a sledge, reduced to its original elements, that is, pulled to pieces for the convenience of carriage, also formed part of their baggage, for use when water utterly failed.

The dress of the travelling party, eight men including the commander, Dr. Kane, was the ordinary one of the Esquimaux; a compound of bear and buffalo skins that made each man look amazingly like a bear on its hind legs. A glance at our cut will give a better idea of it than a page of description. Of course the amount of inner clothing in the way of woollen wrappers, and the like, depends upon each man's taste, and his personal and peculiar sense of cold, which differs with each individual; and according to the more or less of this, is his external appearance, more or less like a *tombola*, with the addition of a trifle of legs. Buffalo skins, called by the Indians buffalo robes, supplied the place alike of bed and blankets, and are of course infinitely more *sleepifying* than a "soft plank;" in fact they may be deemed to verge on the luxurious, always bearing in mind that it is Arctic luxury of which we are speaking. One extra suit of furs also found its place among their stores; to give some favoured *one* individual a chance of a dry set, if all went into the water at once. Woollen socks were stuck in the belt, where, if they were wet, they gradually dried

with the heat of the body; these with a tin cup and sheath knife were private property. A soup kettle and lamp, in which spirit or fat could be burned as fuel for cooking purposes, were held in common. These lamps give out an amazing amount of heat. With a proper wick they could use them even for baking bread.

The sledge merits a word. This is constructed of well-seasoned oak or hickory—a very tough American wood—without a particle of metal in its composition, except a few unavoidable screws and nails, as in those transcendently cold regions iron snaps like glass. The various parts are accordingly bound together by thongs of seal-skin; which have another valuable effect, that of allowing the vehicle to give way to the thumps and bumps it gets in travelling swiftly over the rough frozen surface, and which would soon tear it limb from limb if it were more tightly fastened together. It is well to give way a little sometimes, if one wants to carry one's point; and this is eminently true where an Arctic sledge is concerned. The whole fabric thus built up is extremely light, and when drawn by a team

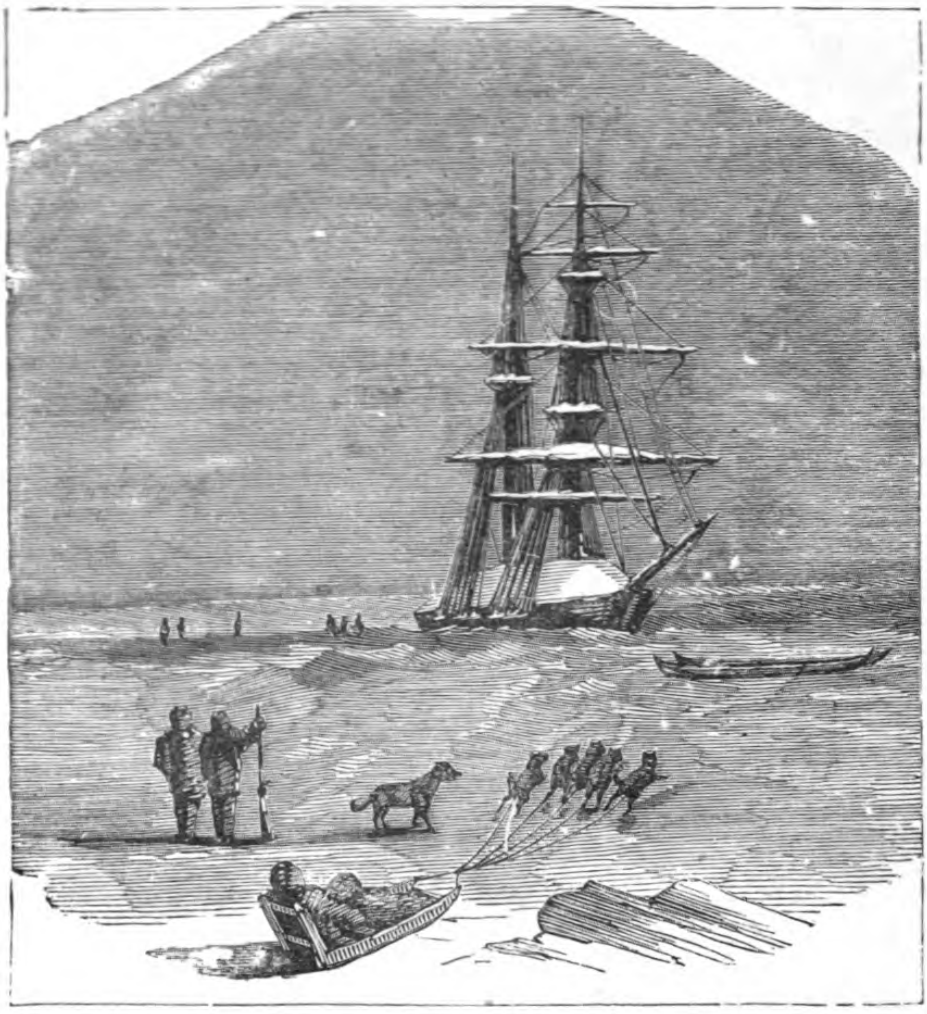
of Esquimaux dogs, in good working order, tears along like the wind, its steel-shod runners gliding easily over even the roughest ice.



SLEDGES.

The equipment being complete, off they set on their travels, in search of comfortable freezing quarters during the long Arctic winter of a hundred and forty sunless days. Not what we here call sunless days; dark, sullen skies, when one has to light up, grumbling, at three or four in the afternoon; but so dark that stars of the sixth magnitude, that is, mere pin-point stars, are visible at noon-day, and lanterns having to be always kept burning, at last becoming so utterly ghostly dark that

you cannot see to count your fingers a foot from your eyes, and noonday and midnight are alike. Even the dogs are cowed by such thick darkness as this, which reminds one of



RENSSELAER HARBOUR.

the Egyptian darkness, that "might be felt."

The journey had its various incidents, including that of leaving the poor *Forlorn Hope* very forlorn indeed, stuck away on the ice,

(with which she could no longer contend) under the friendly shelter of a *hummock*, or rising edge of the ice that had been broken up and squeezed together. The result of it was that the brig could be in no better position for the rapidly advancing season than where she already was; and they gladly returned to Rensselaer Harbour to prepare for and begin their settled winter life in this the highest latitude in which that season had ever been spent by any save natives.

CHAPTER III.

FAST IN THE ICE.

THE cares of housekeeping came first on board the poor ice-fast brig,—fast for good and all, for there she is still. Of preserved provisions the party was very short; and the continued use of salted meats is certain to bring on scurvy, a malady at once painful, depressing, and destructive to life. Fortunately a fresh water pond was discovered, and in this, long strips of salt meat, were hung in festoons under the ice to take the salt out. The salt fish, salmon trout, and cod, which they had got at Fiskernaes in Greenland were put in barrels, bored full of holes, so as to let the water pass through them, and these were then placed in the stream. Their pickled vegetables were treated in the same manner; and it was hoped that by this process all would be freshened up

so as to be less unwholesome than they otherwise would be. Then game of various kinds was looked forward to, when the time came; for there, as with us, game has its season, though Act of Parliament has nought to do with it; it is the act of Nature, which is equally binding.

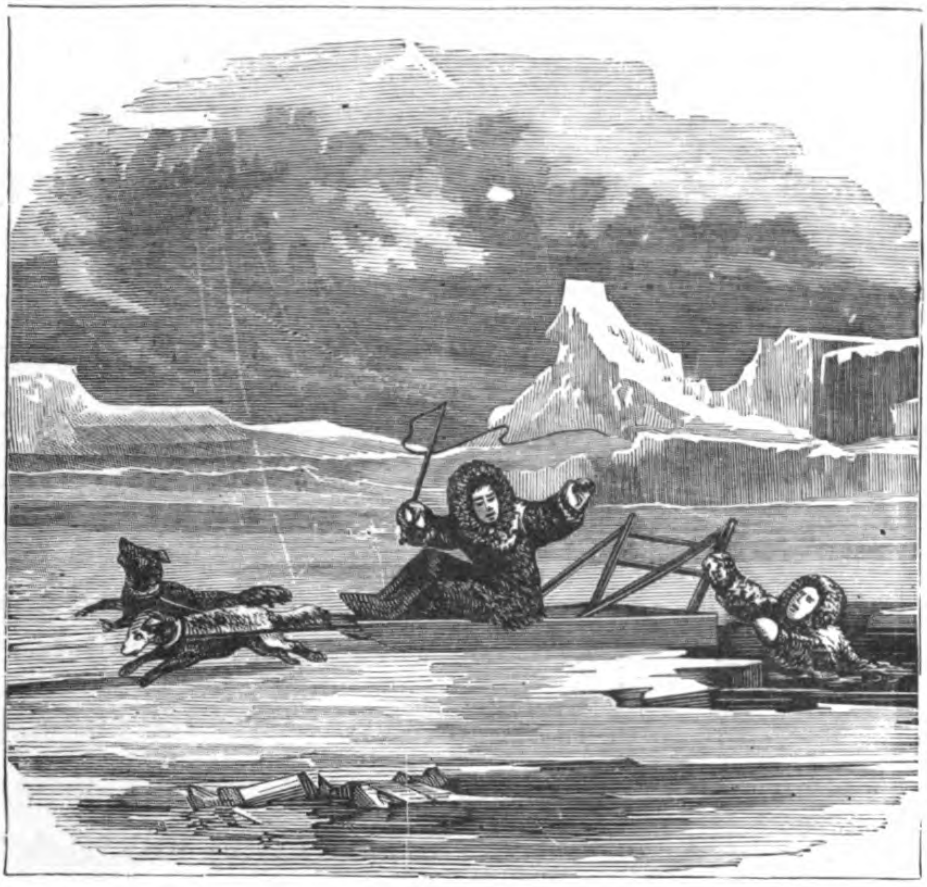
At the same time the vessel had to be made as cold-proof as possible, for a winter habitation; and a dog kennel established at a little distance. Strange to say when this last was completed, the dogs would not sleep in it; the brutes preferred society to warm lodgings, so made themselves comfortable on the snow in the immediate neighbourhood of the ship. All on board, officers and men alike, were as busy as a whole hive of bees; for they had only a month's daylight before them—this was on the 10th of September—previous to the setting in of the long, dark Arctic winter.

Learning the art of sledge-driving was one part of the commanding officer's important business at this season. The driving of a team of twelve half wild dogs is decidedly one of the fine arts. The mere use of the whip, if it were to be used successfully, required a

series of lessons by itself. The lash was six yards long, while to propel the mighty flagilator, there was a handle measuring only sixteen inches, so any one may imagine the difficulty of making that long lash reach its journey's end on, say the leader of the team. Nor was that all; even if it did arrive there safely, there was the getting it safe back again, against which there were various chances including those of its becoming entangled in the harness—if one must dignify dog-lines with the name—or of its whipping round pieces of ice, the immediate result of which was the jerking out of the unfortunate Jehu from his warm fur-wrapped seat in the sledge and sending him heels over head into the snow.

The dogs are harnessed by one trace, a long line of seal or walrus-skin, cut spirally from the animal, so as to make it all of one piece, and then well chewed and greased to render it supple; and according to the number of the team are the chances of this long, slender trace becoming twisted or knotted by the leaps and bounds of the dogs. If the cold be not too intense to allow of the surrounding snow being

thawed, this, properly applied, will so soften the knot that it will be possible to untie it; if otherwise, there is nothing for it but cutting it, an operation that, frequently repeated, inconveniently shortens the traces. On one



A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG TEAM.

occasion the sledge-driver had such a series of disentangleable knots that he was at last obliged to cut up a considerable portion of his own seal-skin trousers to supply dog lines.

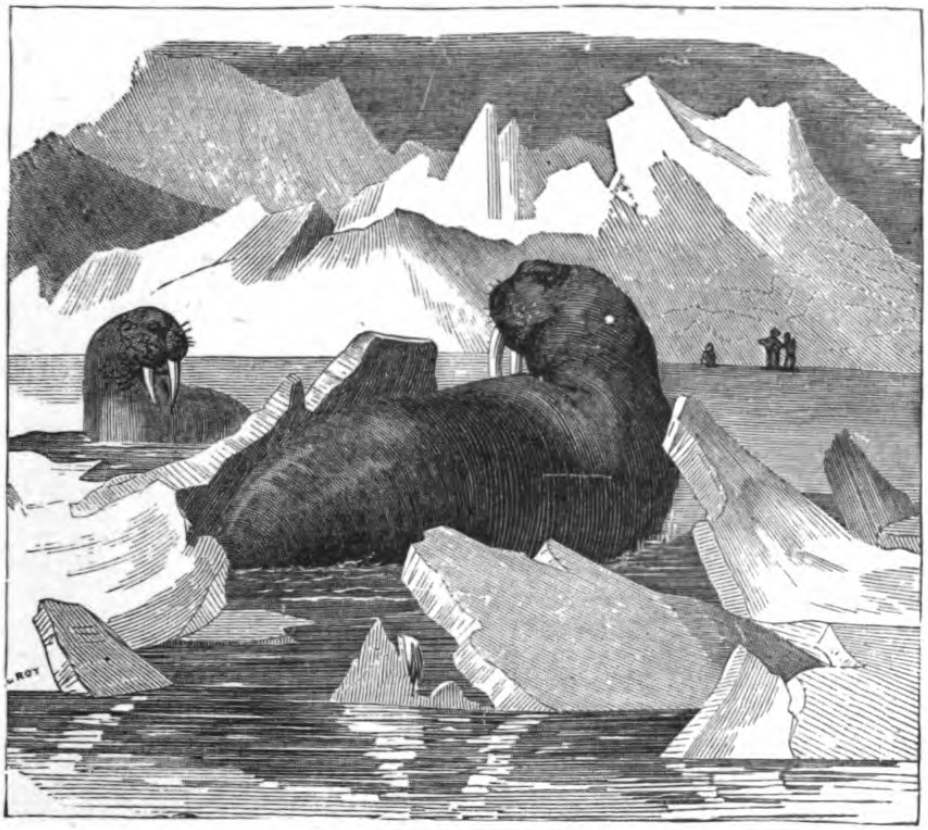
However, having made themselves perfect

in the art of sledge-driving, there they go, whip aloft, spinning over the ice, and leaping the cracks that at times beset it. Alas! they have also just sustained another of those accidents that "will happen even to the best regulated" sledge parties; one of the inside passengers having been suddenly converted into an "outside," by being flung out of the vehicle as a chasm was leaped, and sent plop into the water, saving himself only by clinging to what is called the *runner* of the sledge. Luckily he was only wet through with his icy bath, so that, when furs, and bears' skins, and all the rest had been dried by the good fire they managed to keep down below in the brig, which was not far off, he was none the worse for it.

"Down below" they were fortunate enough to secure the respectable warmth of sixty-five degrees,—a comfortable warmth anywhere, but admirable in that latitude. Their deck-house, however, they could only keep a little above freezing point; the atmosphere outside being twenty-five below it, and there was some degree of wind, which always adds greatly to the sensation of cold. Almost any

degree of even Arctic cold may, it is said, be borne as long as there is no wind, but let that only get up, and the same temperature becomes unbearable.

Up to the second week of September the walrus still remained around their home, floun-



WALRUS SPORTING.

dering about in the mixture of ice and water, in which they seem to play bo-peep with each other. Where the ice is more compact they break breathing holes, at which they may come up to breathe, by rising up in the water

beneath it with such force that their broad backs *start* it; afterwards they manage in some way or other to make a tolerably clean circular opening of it.

The walrus is harpooned like a whale. Sometimes he is caught napping, having stayed so long on land enjoying the spring sunshine, that his hole has been frozen up behind him. Of this the cunning Esquimaux takes an ungentlemanly advantage, creeping along so as to cut off his retreat, and get an opportunity of pitching his lance into him, when poor Walrus ordinarily comes off "second best;" not, however, before he has done fierce battle in defence, not only of himself but of his family, for the walrus is very fond of his one baby and its mamma.

Amid the thick darkness that had by this time fallen upon them it was no easy matter always to keep up a cheery tone; and when people, either north or south, get thoroughly out of spirits, the next thing is that they are apt to fall ill. Even Hans, the Esquimaux, native as he was, felt the dreary influence of the season, and, like the rest, moped. But then the poor lad had become home-sick, and

HUNTING THE WALRUS.

bundling up his traps (not forgetting the rifle Dr. Kane had given him over and above his stipulated wages), he formally announced that he was going home. He was home-sick; further, the fat Hans was in love, and in his Arctic quarters he was pining for the lady of his choice, whom he had left behind him in the more favoured regions of South Greenland. To spare Hans was simply impossible; so, in the first place, a dose of physic was given him, not exactly the brimstone and treacle with which the boys at Dotheboys Hall were regaled by Mr. Squeers, but something perhaps about as disagreeable; in the second, promotion to the rank of life-guard to the commander of the expedition was conferred upon him; and under the double influence of these curatives for his malady, Hans became himself again. For the crew at large, *light*-sick if not home-sick, like the Esquimaux, a fox chase round the decks was set a-going. One was pitched upon for fox, who, leading off, was followed by the others, pelting along as hard as ever they could to catch him; the fox who led his pursuers the longest chase being winner of the prize, a Guernsey shirt.

Every four minutes a halt was allowed to take breath. One of the crew kept up this dance fourteen minutes, when he won and wore the prize in triumph. Between the exercise and the laughing this would save some coal, of which they had need to be careful.

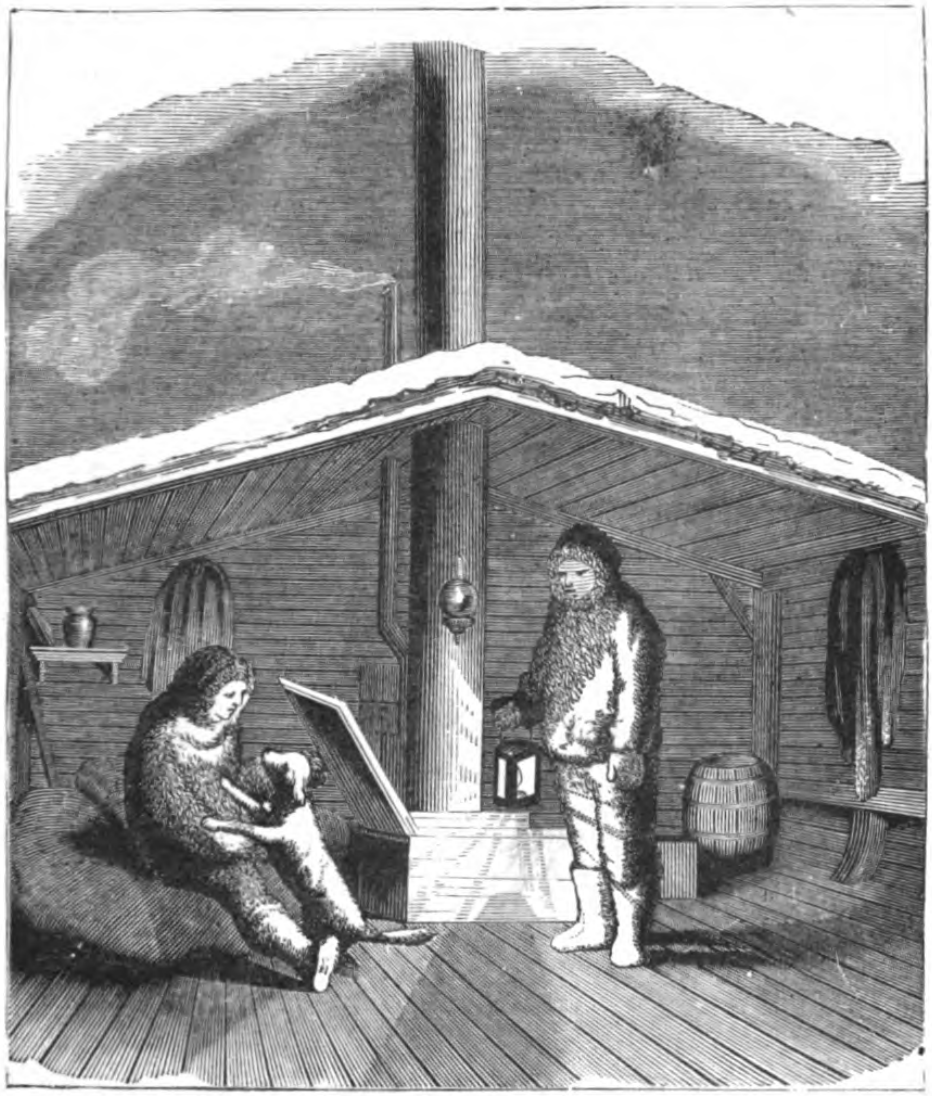
A hunt of a different character had to be called and sent out in pursuit of old Grim, the patriarch of the dog kennel, who, having been taken out with the sledge against his will, jerked his trace in two, and bolted off in the darkness right for the brig, where he never arrived.

Grim was quite a character, who, by dint of discreet flattery—tail-wagging flattery—and intense selfishness, contrived to lead a remarkably easy life for a dog whose duty it was to draw sledges, and otherwise work for his living. He was highly sagacious, so far as his own interests were concerned. Whenever harnessing time came he was sure to be absent without leave, and once, when he was finally hunted up for the occasion in an empty barrel where he had sought elegant retirement, he was found to be suffering severely from lameness—an infirmity from

which he never experienced any relief save when the team was away without him. Then, and then only, was there a "remission," as doctors say, of his "symptoms." Besides disliking work, Grim further did not love cold, so, by dint of keeping watch by the cabin-door, and judiciously wagging his tail to all in-comers and out-goers, he at last got invited in, and found the commander's seal-skin coat a very tolerable bed under the circumstances. Sleeping in-doors in this luxurious fashion in time rendered him too fat for his health, so he was remorselessly hauled out, spite of his barking and snapping—for he could be ferocious when his comfort was interfered with—duly harnessed to the sledge for a "constitutional," and thus came to his end, as has been described, for Grim "was lost, and never found."

But, indeed, even the dogs required some kindly sympathy, as well as food and lodging during this long depressing winter's night. Early one morning Dr. Kane going on deck amid such darkness as required him to grope his way, felt the cold noses of two of his Newfoundlanders stuck into his hand, the poor beasts instantly falling into such an ecstasy

of gladness at the touch of him as led the kind-hearted man to determine that, living as they did in continual darkness and cold, ever so



THE DECKS BY LAMPLIGHT.

many degrees below freezing-point, they should at least see the lanterns more frequently than they had done, as of daylight there was not

a spark during the whole long twenty-four hours. This was policy as well as kindliness, for, existing in this manner, a species of epilepsy, or insanity, or something of the sort, took possession of the dogs, who had to be brought within the sacred enclosure of the warm "down below," and nursed as tenderly as babies. It was dreadfully uncomfortable for every one on board to have a lot of ailing dogs fed, bedded, washed, and *doctored* among them, but there was no help for it, and what was worse, it was of little use. Spasms or something seized them, and they went fairly out of their minds, finally dying at such a rate that out of a splendid pack of Newfoundland and Esquimaux dogs, nine of the former and thirty-eight of the latter, only six survived, and one of these was useless for sledging. Still these were all they had to trust to for travelling, so, besides cockering them up, a small, light sledge was built, such as might be drawn by the now sadly diminished team.

"Never despair," was Dr. Kane's motto. It is a good one for all of us.

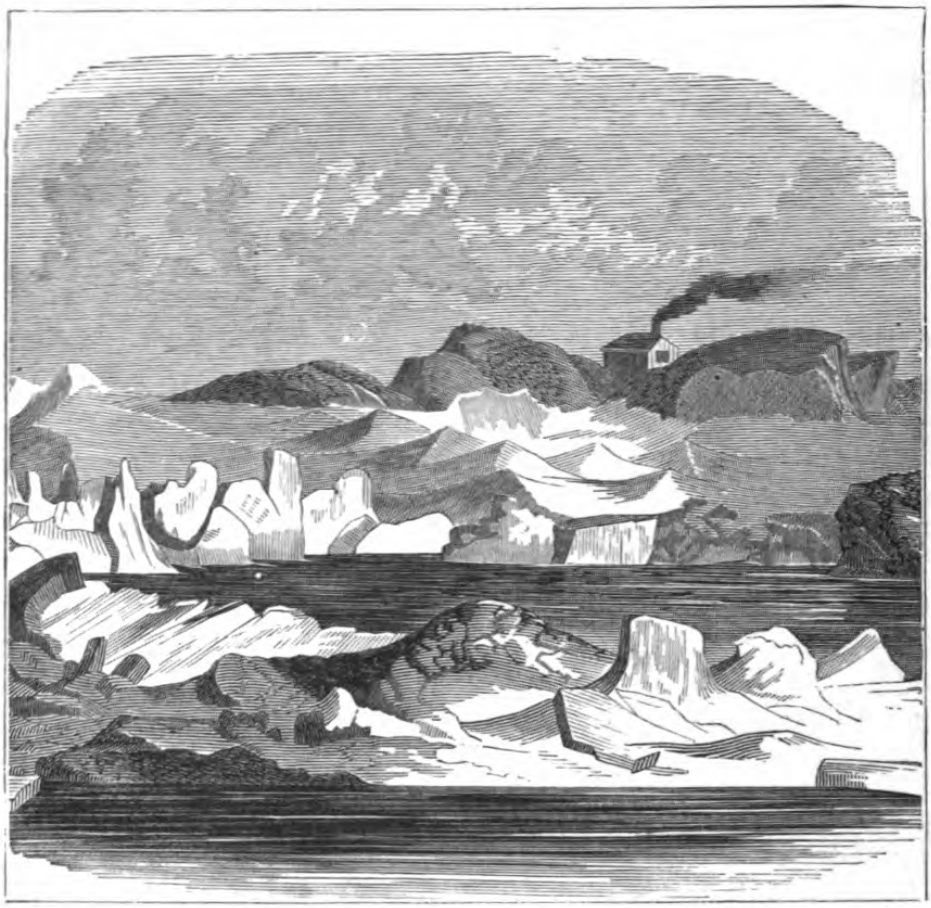
CHAPTER IV.

THE DAY'S WORK.

THE search for Sir John Franklin was not the only object of this daring expedition, which included wintering up against the North Pole. Scientific observations formed part of the scheme; and the making them, in that chill latitude, was no easy part of the uneasy day's duty.

The observatory was erected upon a little island at hand, about the size of a good sized dinner table; that is, fifty feet by forty, and standing twenty feet above the water. Four strong granite walls were here raised, the blocks being mortared with moss and water, and, above all, *frost;* and a wooden roof was placed overhead. To mount their instruments, which it is always essential to preserve perfectly free from shaking, they constructed pedestals of gravel and ice, rammed down in

the hooped pemmican cases; and when that was well frozen, it was about as solid as the



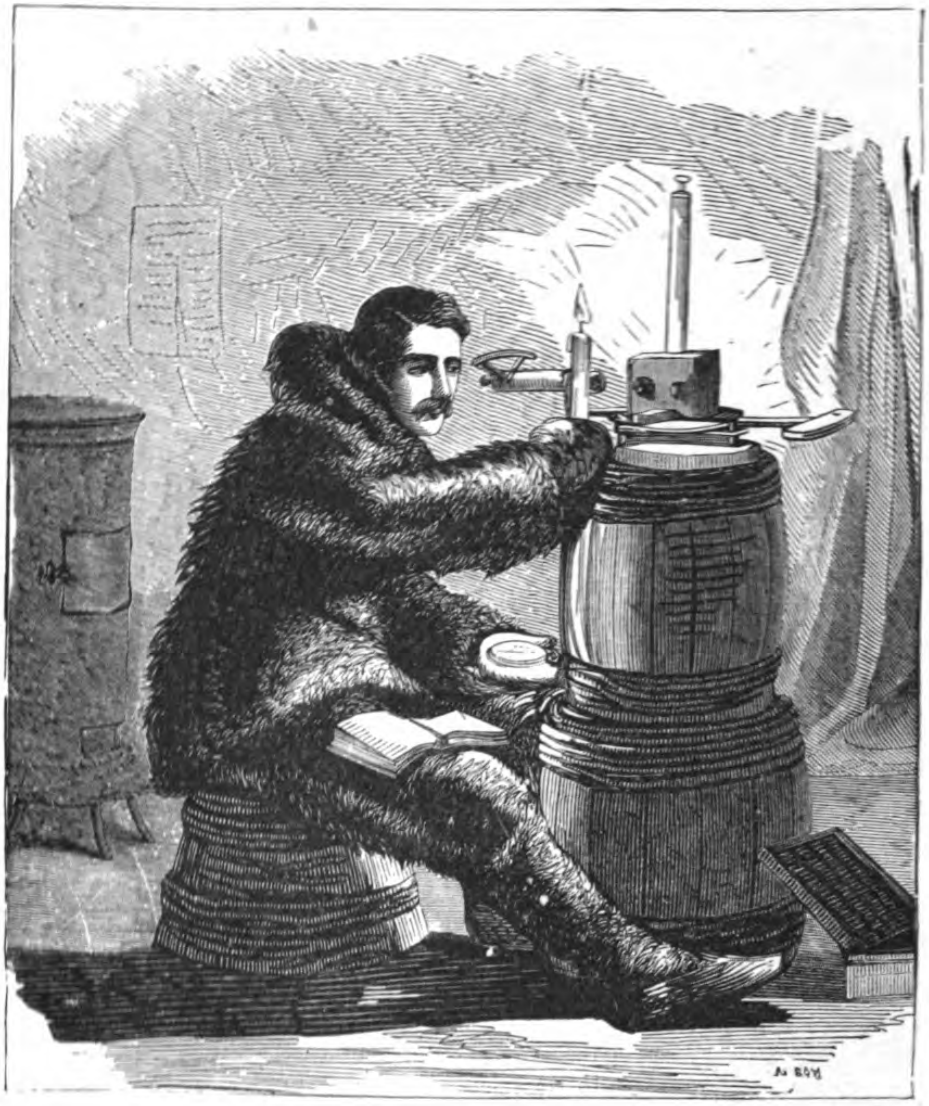
THE OBSERVATORY.

rock itself. For delicate magnetic observations, a four-square ten foot room was built of stone, floored and roofed with wood; and having supports for the instruments of the mixed gravel and ice rammed down, that was used in the other observatory. It further boasted a copper fire-place: iron in any of its

parts was inadmissible, as that would have disturbed the accuracy of their observations. The metal portions of the various instruments were covered with chamois leather, to prevent their burning the hands of the operator,—intense cold acting like red-hot iron. And so—to work!

But before you can get to work, the observatory has to be reached. At the best of times, once in the four and twenty hours, this has to be done in the dark. Taking an ice-pole in one hand, and a lantern in the other, the observer turns out into the blackness around, taking for his Pole star to guide him a lump of greater blackness in the shape of a bit of rock. Stumbling along he plants his pole on a slippery slope of ice and jumps to the hummock opposite; that particular hummock being no stranger to him, seeing it is the one that took the skin of his shins the last time he was there. So he goes on, jump, stumble, slip, slide; and if he has good luck, arrives at the coldest of all observatories, without having had a cold bath in an ice crevice, or, a trifle less unlucky, a souse into the soft snow, to brace his nerves for the

trying work within. He enters, and sits down to his task, swaddled up in furs, and wearing walrus boots; for spite of the glowing little



INTERIOR OF THE OBSERVATORY.

stove, the temperature of that icy building has been twenty degrees below freezing point at two feet from the floor, and forty-three at

the floor itself. The extremes sustained by the operator in his own person are, meantime, something marvellous; ninety-four degrees of heat—raging summer heat—on that part of him next the stove, ten degrees below freezing point on less favoured portions of his surface.

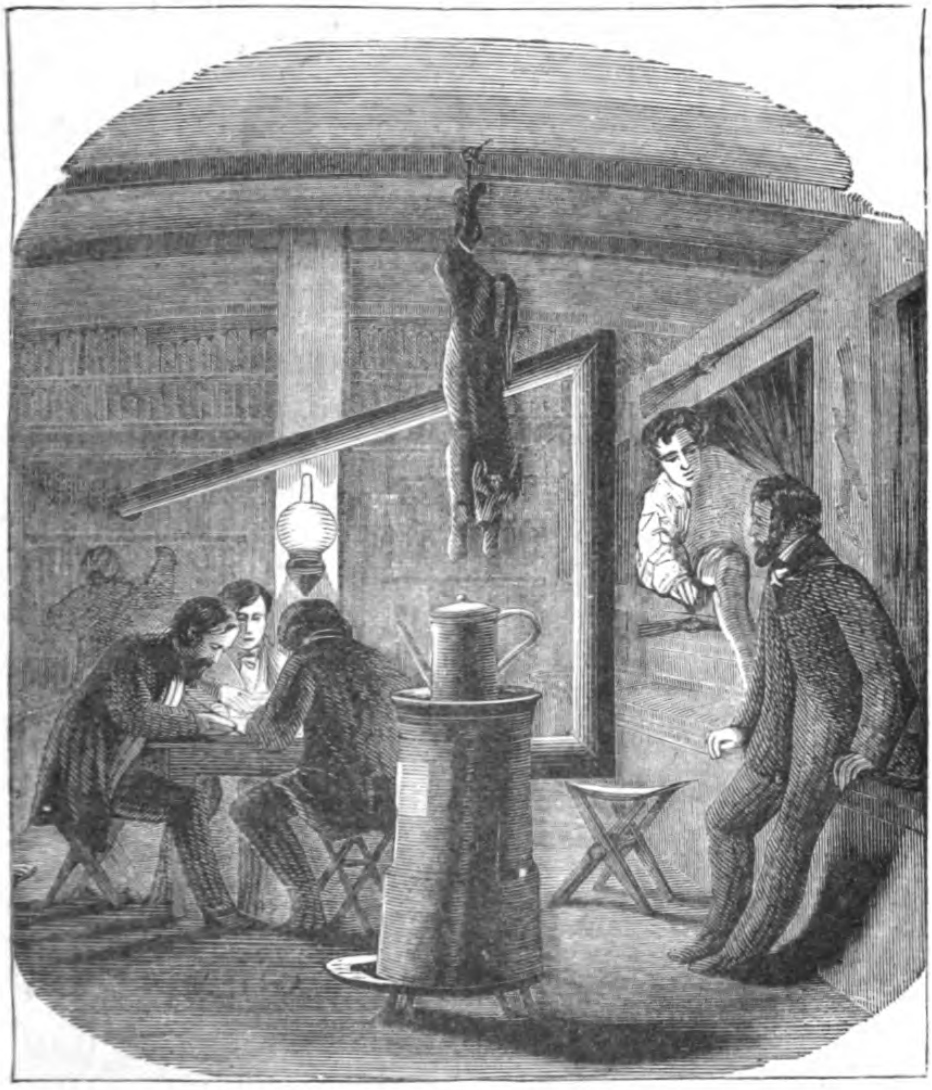
Perched on an empty box, or half barrel turned upside down, one happy hand retains its fox skin mitten; the other, holding the chronometer, is left uncovered to impart to it some portion of its own warmth. This is soon abstracted; and then the mittened hand comes into play, drawn out of its luxurious cover to receive the cold-burning chronometer, while the chilled hand takes its turn in the glove. And there he sits, peering into the telescope that projects from his instrument, devised for measuring minute amounts of magnetic influence, which he duly records in his memorandum book for the benefit of the learned who understand these things.

Observations of this kind are made only once a week. The ordinary winter's day on ship board begins at six o'clock, when a part of the crew tumble out of their beds, clean the decks, put things generally to rights,

break open the ice collected over the hole in the pond, where the salt meats are being freshened, and see that that important process is going on properly. At half-past seven the rest—lazy fellows—turn out, do a little spell of duty, and then all sit down to breakfast on ship biscuit, salt pork, stewed apples frozen, tea and coffee, and raw potato. That raw potato seems a queer dish, but it is one that could be least spared, whatever wry faces some of them make at it; for it is a grand resource against scurvy. So the commander, who is physician as well as captain, after making it is as appetizing as possible by grating it down and adding oil to it, after the manner of a salad, induces them to "shut their eyes, open their mouths," and bolt it: all except two misguided men, who cannot by any means be induced to banquet thereon. They either prefer taking their chance of scurvy, or won't believe that raw potato is the right thing for keeping it off.

Breakfast over, those who smoke indulge in a puff: when people are so very near the North Pole we may excuse their pipe; then at nine all hands fall to their various occupa-

tions for the morning—doing something, or doing nothing, as the case may be. The carpenter is busy enough with hammer and saw; one does a bit of tailoring; another



WINTER LIFE ON BOARD SHIP.

betakes him to shoemaking; skinning birds occupies a third; a fourth gives himself up to tinkering; while five and six are, we are

ashamed to say, the one doing nothing, and the others helping him. The heads of houses, that is the officers, are clustered round a table, seated on as many stools, writing, sketching, mapping, by the light of a salt-pork-fat fed lamp. This goes on till twelve, when again "things generally" are looked over, after which the dogs—and driver—are drilled, it being difficult to say to which of the two the process is most unpleasant; for the driver is getting rheumatic, and ailing with that wretched scurvy, spite of raw potato; so that each well-directed lash that alights on an unhappy dog is chronicled in the aching shoulder of the unhappy inflictor. Dinner is much like breakfast, *minus* the tea and coffee, *plus* pickled cabbage and dried peaches; but *not* without raw potato,—that is inevitable, leaving to those who dislike it the choice of regarding it as food, "or doctor's stuff." Sleep, work, play, exercise—any way of getting through the time—is allowed at will until supper at six,—a meal that is a mild edition of breakfast and dinner rolled into one. Then reports from the various officers, of weather, tides, thermometers, are examined and signed;

more cleaning, inside and out—for a ship is one of the cleanest places in the world; perhaps cards, or chess, or a little light reading; and all go to bed to live over the same day to-morrow.

All this does not look so much amiss. But, with the air outside forty degrees below freezing point, and in the luxurious "down below" a temperature no higher than forty-six, they could only afford three buckets of coal a day, so that brown stout and sherry froze in the cabin. No wonder they could not at times put their feet on the floor, but were obliged to tuck them up underneath their stools for a little more warmth.

Their oil was all used up. The lamp in time refused to burn salt lard, so they had to betake them to a clumsy sort of floating light, made of cork and cotton; while, worst of all, they had not a pound of fresh meat left, and only one barrel of those blessed—detestable—raw potatoes!

There was one comfort amid so many disagreeables, and that was, that all got on well together. Not as it was on one of our English Polar expeditions, where two of the officers,

quarrelling over their cards just on setting out, never spoke to each other all the time they were away. Only think of keeping up a paltry quarrel like that amid the cold and darkness of the Polar regions!

CHAPTER V.

IN PERIL.

DOGS were not the only beasts of draught over the ice out there in the extreme north. The men themselves, officers and all, had at times to turn to and drag their own sledges. They were harnessed something like the dogs, with a single line of varying length, so as to keep one man from jostling his neighbour as they sped on. To these trace-ropes each was attached by a shoulder belt.

On the sledge journeys, which were made from time to time as occasion arose, they at first indulged in the luxurious equipment of a blanket bag for each man to sleep in, upon a buffalo robe spread *pro bono*, on the snow, from which it was protected by india-rubber cloth. They had also a canvas tent and a supply of pemmican. But people may live

and learn all the days of their life; and before they had left their Arctic quarters our adventurers had learned to be content with raw meat and a fur bag.

These sledge journeys—man drawing like beast—were dangerous ones as well as uncomfortable ones. One of them had to be made on an intensely cold day in March. It was to deposit stores of provisions at sundry points, to be a supply when the sledging in good earnest after poor Franklin and his companions had been set a-going. The sledge was had out, loaded, and then eight men harnessed to it, whose utmost exertions were scarcely able to stir it upon the ice. A portion of the load was therefore removed, and trusting to milder weather they set off, after being stimulated with a great wedding cake and their last two bottles of port. Under this influence they pulled famously; but alas, at eight in the evening they had only travelled five miles, when they were obliged to camp for the night. Being supplied, however, with a better sledge, the *Faith*, with which Dr. Kane, anxious for their safety, had followed them, they started again next morn-

ing in good spirits, with three cheers on each side.

Ten or eleven days passed; those on board the brig being as busy as possible preparing for the exploring expedition for which these provisions sent in advance had been designed. About midnight, when they were sewing away by the light of their lamps, steps were heard approaching, and immediately three of the sledge party made their appearance in the cabin in a frightful condition, their faces haggard, their bodies swollen, themselves almost speechless. When they did contrive to get a few words out, it was to report that they had left their comrades, five of them, frozen and disabled, *somewhere*, they did not know precisely where, save that it was in among the hummocks, in a heavy snow-drift. More they could not utter; and it was with the utmost difficulty that the commander made out from what direction the poor half-frozen men had travelled.

In a trice the *Little Willie* was rigged out with a buffalo cover, a tent, and some food. Dr. Kane and eight others harnessed themselves to it, and with Ohlsen, the best among the

exhausted lot, who had brought the news, strapped on it (enveloped in fur) as a guide, off they raced in search of their lost companions, the cold being seventy-four degrees below freezing point.

RESCUE PARTY.

Sixteen hours of this kind of work lost them their way. All that they knew was that the missing ones were somewhere in the wide tract before them, and within a circle of forty miles; Ohlsen meanwhile, after fifty hours' want of rest, having first fallen fast asleep, and then waked up delirious. This was an encouraging

state of things, and with one iceberg so like its fellow that there was no telling which was which, and which was the other, together with a dead level of monotonous snow, the chances of finding out the right track were small indeed.

The sledge was at length abandoned, and each man bidden to hunt out for footmarks by himself. But though dispersing in obedience to orders, instinct, a dread of being lost, or the benumbing influence of the cold, which froze their very wits, caused them to keep meeting again in a group. Some were breathless and trembling in that terrific atmosphere of cold and wind, in which it was impossible even to melt ice for drinking water, while the touch of snow to their parched tongues drew blood. Kane himself, whose stout heart and sense of responsibility usually kept him up while others succumbed, twice fell fainting in the snow.

At length the keen eye of Hans detected some slight rising in the snowdrift around, which, carefully followed, at length brought them to the spot where a little fluttering American flag indicated the tent in which the half dead, lost men had taken refuge. Their burst

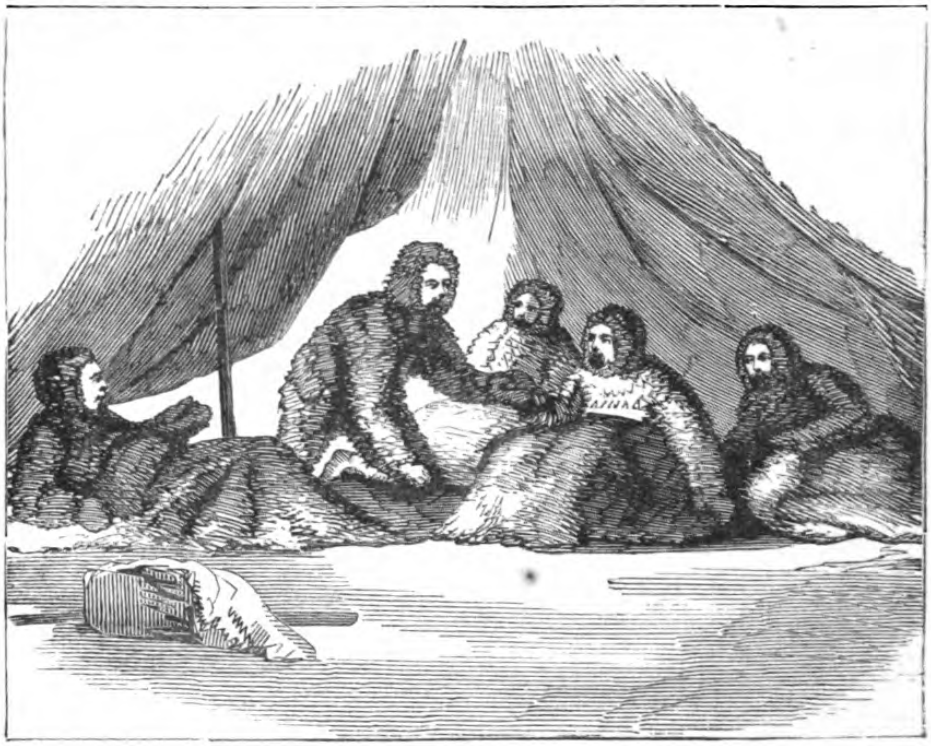
of gratitude, when Dr. Kane crawled in amid the darkness, was almost overpowering—they had expected him, they were sure he would not desert them: such was their faith in their leader.

It was difficult to know what to do. The tent where these poor creatures lay on their backs would only hold eight at a stretch, and there were fifteen of them, now the rescue party had come up; so while some slept inside the rest kept life in them by quarter-decking outside, in the killing cold already described. The rescuers required recruiting, for they had been twenty-one hours without food or rest. Getting back to the shelter of the brig—that was *home*—was the first thing to be accomplished; and, huddled up in furs, the sufferers were with infinite labour got on the sledge by their frost-bitten, heroic comrades. A short prayer before starting, and then off they went, hauling their burden over the tumultuous ice that lay before them. But, within nine miles of their half way house (the tent they had left the day before), even the energies of the best of them began to fail. An inclination to fall asleep, generally fatal when yielded to in in-

tense cold, laid hold of the stoutest of the party. They protested they were not cold, they did not feel the cutting wind then, all they wanted was a little sleep. Hans, the seasoned Esquimaux, was soon found nearly stiffened on the snow; one, still standing, had his eyes closed, and was almost speechless; another threw himself down, and point blank said he would *not* get up. Their experienced commander too well knew the meaning of this, and persuaded, scolded, dragged, and knocked them about in vain; it was evident that halt they must.

They did contrive to get the tent up; their hands were too benumbed to strike a light, so they had no fire, neither had they food or water. There was some whisky, but as it was frozen hard, beneath all the heap of furs they had piled upon the sick, that was of no use. So the worst of the dismal party were thrust—as many as they could for the sake of what little animal heat was left in their half dead bodies—inside the tent, while Dr. Kane and a volunteer companion started off for the half way house, there to prepare food and water for the others, who were to follow after a four hours' rest. They reached it at length, almost

delirious with cold, and found that an intruding bear had overset it, tossing buffalo skins and food into the snow. With difficulty they set things to rights, and then creeping into their sleeping bags of reindeer skin, sank into a heavy sleep, in the course of which Dr. Kane's



INSIDE OF TENT.

beard was so hard frozen to the furs in which he was wrapped that it required a knife to release him—he was fairly carved out of them. Recruited by their sleep, they had everything ready when the invalids, who had taken five hours to walk nine miles, came up; the hot

soup refreshed them all amazingly, yet after another toilsome and perilous journey, stumbling over snow and ice, they reached home—that is, the brig—in a terrible state. Not a man of them but was delirious with cold and fatigue; some were frost-bitten; two of them had to have portions of their feet amputated; two died. But the lost men were rescued by this devoted and heroic enterprise, in which, with the cold at times fifty degrees below freezing point, a distance of between eighty and ninety miles had been travelled in seventy-two hours, and a heavy sledge dragged the greater part of the way.

The week that followed their return was a very sad one with the heavy illness of all the sufferers; Dr. Kane himself, heart and soul of the expedition as he was, becoming delirious, lay in his cot shouting out, as commander, the most absurd orders, one of which was to direct all hands to stir about and take in "two reefs of the stove-pipe," as though it had been a sail instead of a chimney. Fortunately he had recovered sufficiently to be about when the first death took place. The poor fellow, being placed in his coffin, was borne by his sorrowful com-

rades over the rugged ice and slippery ascent to the observatory, where, being reverently placed upon the stands used for the instruments, the burial service was read, snow being sprinkled upon the coffin instead of "*earth* to earth." Then it was placed in an opening made for the purpose in the walls, for there could be no digging of a grave in that iron earth, the aperture was hermetically sealed with ice, and he was left to his sad rest. It was not long before another was laid by his side. But the passing and re-passing of their comrades was too depressing, more especially as the survivors had become weak and nervous with their hardships. So as soon as the summer's thaw rendered it possible to collect stones enough, a grave was built up with them on a hollowed out part of the rock, while others were piled up over it so as to protect the sleepers beneath from the ravages of wild beasts.

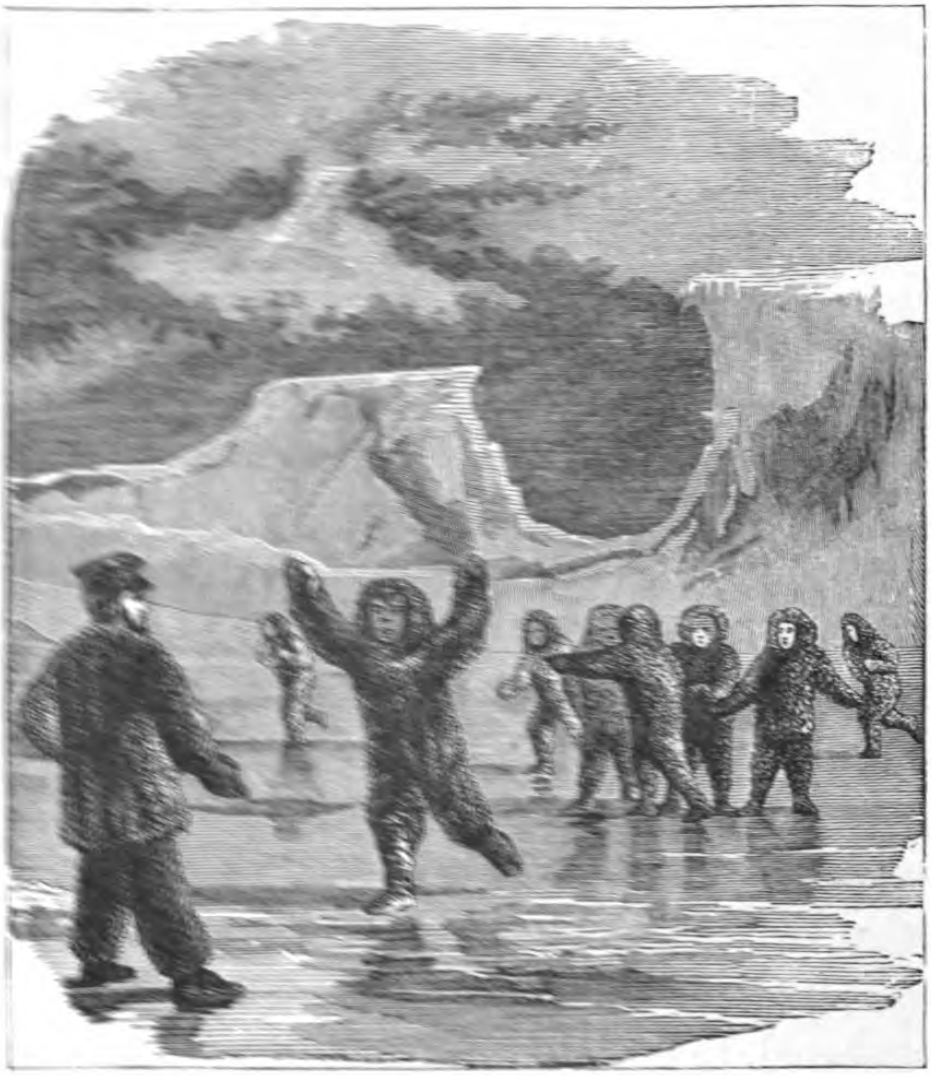
CHAPTER VI.

AMONG THE NATIVES.

WHILE watching the first death-bed a cry was raised that men were hallooing to them from the shore. Going on deck it was seen that the dim landscape was dotted over with creatures, certainly not bears, however much like them, and that they must therefore be Esquimaux.

On they came with wild, unintelligible shouts, but as they had no weapons their tossing their heads and arms about violently was no reason why they should not be invited to come a little nearer. A huge, powerful fellow, who appeared to be a chief, readily came forward to meet Dr. Kane. He was dressed in white and blue fox skins, with white bear-skin trousers and boots in one, the toe of the boot being finished off by the claws of the bear. Piercing black eyes gleamed from under his

fur hood and altogether it was apparent that Metek—such proved to be his name—was a man of mark.



MEETING ESQUIMAUX.

As soon as—with the help of Petersen, the interpreter of the expedition—he was in confab with the doctor, the rest of the Esquimaux thronged around them. They were presently,

however, made to understand that none must go on board but their chief, upon which they at once fell back, and he fearlessly followed the first white man he had ever seen, down into the cabin, whence orders were soon issued that the others might come if they liked. Nine or ten at once accepted the invitation, some of their fellows meanwhile bringing up their sledges and dogs, fifty-six of these latter, who were picketed by their long traces to lances set up in the ice. The dogs were fine creatures, the sledges beautiful, made of small pieces of bone, bound together by strips of stout leather, while the runners were of ivory —the tusks of the walrus.

The dress of the Esquimaux was similar to that of their leader—frocks, trousers, and boots, with bear-claw toes of white bear-skin. Their arms were knives, scabbarded into their big boots, and lances, shaft and point of bone, steel-tipped, which were left secured to their sledges.

When on board they were perfectly well-bred—that is if, as one has heard, good breeding consists in being entirely at your ease, for they made themselves at home in the most charming fashion, running hither and thither,

poking into all sorts of holes and corners, fingering everything they could get at, begging anything they took a fancy to, and stealing wherever they could. This sort of rough work was borne very patiently for a time, but at last the jabbering, laughing, mischievous creatures got so troublesome that they were obliged to be *handed* out—that is to say, laid hold of and pushed bodily out of the place. They took it good humouredly, stealing cheerfully all afternoon, until, being tired with their exertions in "conveyancing," they just dropped off asleep where they sat, on a buffalo skin hospitably placed for them by the cooking fire.

Wheaten bread, salt pork, and large lumps of sugar, as a treat, had been offered them on the ice, but they would have nothing to do with them. Now, admitted to the interior, they cooked for themselves, in an iron pot lent for the occasion, some walrus beef, though the staple of their enormous meal consisted of raw meat, which they ate artistically in long strips of alternate fat and lean. There they sat by the fire, munching and sleeping on and on; falling asleep with their raw meat by them, and setting to again the moment they awoke.

They have excellent appetites. An Esquimaux will eat eight or ten pounds of meat a day, together with liquid, soup and water, to the amount of half a gallon. But in those intensely cold countries people not only *can* eat more, but they require much more, than they do in temperate climates; it is the only way to keep life in them. So that we must not measure a man's eating so much by its quantity, as by his special requirements. The fun was that even the babies ate away at raw meat to the same extent, according to their smaller powers, as did their elders. One little two-year-old savage, that bit Dr. Kane, when by way of making himself agreeable he tickled it as people do to British babies, cut away for itself at the raw lump, with an old iron-hoop knife that it could scarcely lift, and ate, and cut, and cut and ate again, until it had eaten the size of its own head of raw walrus; and after dedicating three hours to the digestion of the same cut and ate again! Their mode of cramming was peculiar: a long strip of meat was cut, which they began eating at one end; when they had swallowed as much of this as they could, all in one piece, it was cut off close to

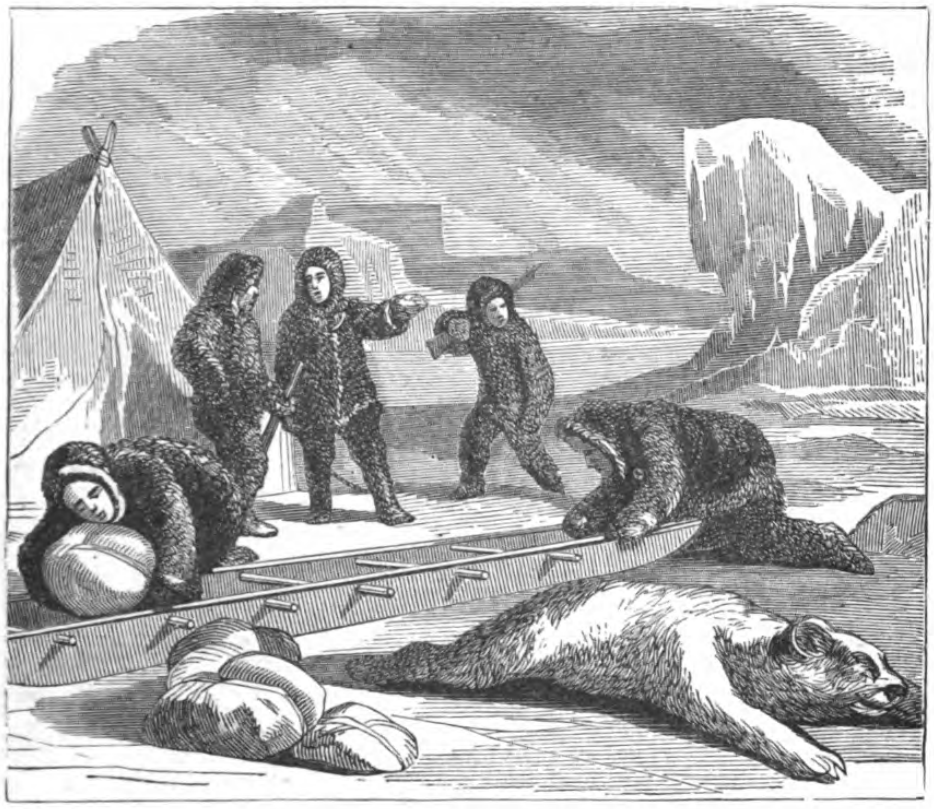
their mouths so as to form a new end to begin with; and in this manner even infants under two years old fed themselves with entire success, though the strangers found it a difficult accomplishment.

The visit passed off safely; though the visitors stole so many things, that at length their homeward pace was somewhat quickened by a charge of small shot sent after them, harmlessly enough.

The season for Arctic travel is very short; and as April was now almost at an end, it was time to bestir themselves, if anything was to be done to further the object of their sojourn in those regions. They were in poor condition for travelling; four sound men, and six invalids were to be left in charge of the brig; the commander and seven men, none good for much, were to form the sledge-parties.

An officer with their fine, large sledge the *Faith*, laden chiefly with bread, which was almost indispensable to eat with the over-fat pemmican, was despatched in advance. Dr. Kane followed with a small and very light sledge, built on board, of hickory, carrying with him pemmican, bread, tea, a canvas

tent, two bags made of rein-deer skin to sleep in, and a soup kettle, which was to be a sort of utensil of all work, so far as cooking was



THE FAITH.

concerned, and so constructed that it might be used with either fat or spirits, for fuel.

The journey was not a successful one. First one, then another fell ill, for they were not in a state to bear hardships; and when Dr. Kane himself broke down, and took to fainting every time he was carried from the tent to the sledge, it was time to give it up.

He was brought back to the brig more dead than alive, and the others were little better.

The wild forlorn regions of the extreme north are by no means so destitute of pictur-

THREE BROTHER TURRETS.

esque features as one might suppose, and these, as they gradually came in view, filled the travellers with astonishment, as well as delight.

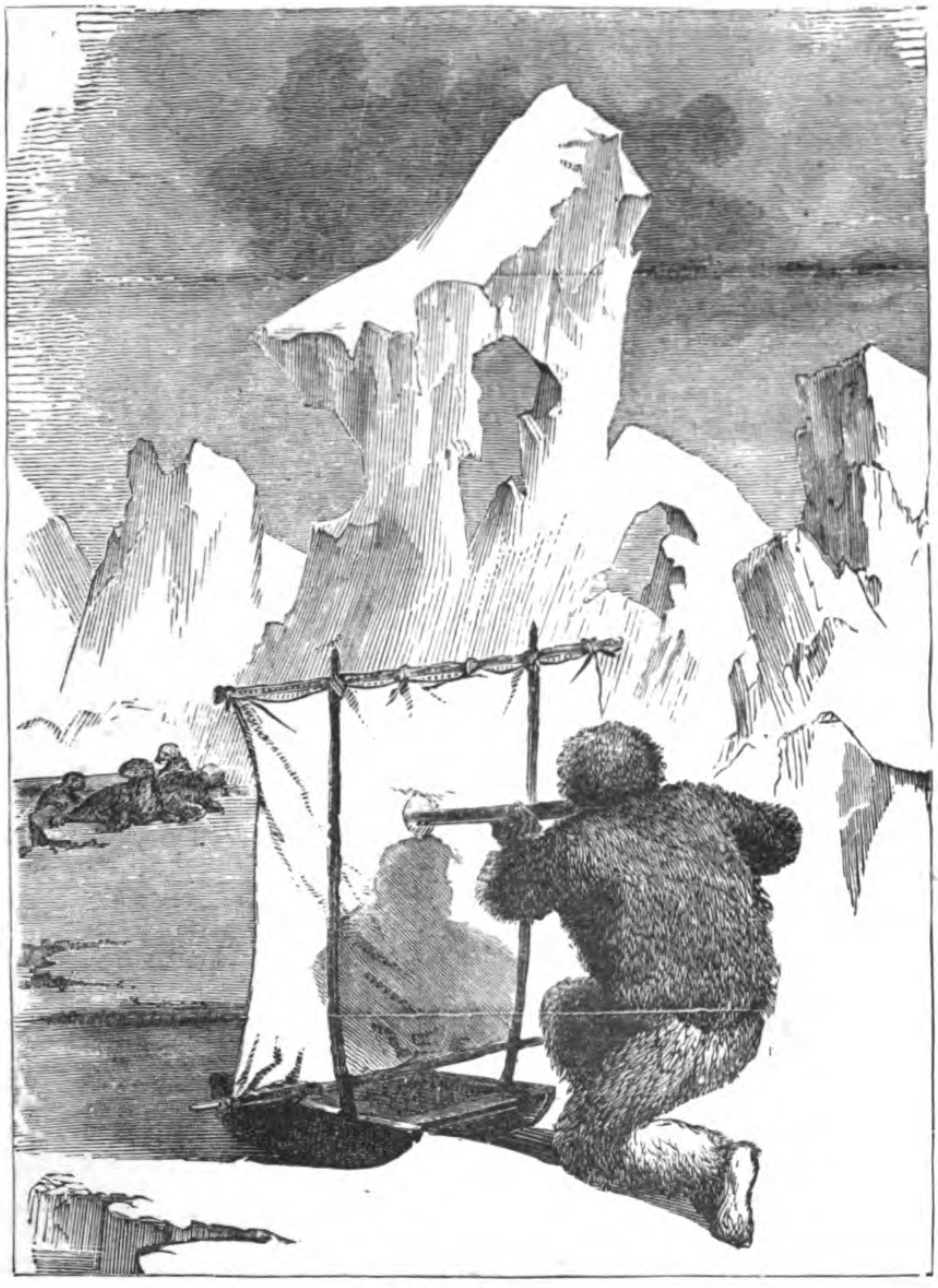
Above the white monotonous surface rose frowning rocks, weather-stained into something like beauty; and worn by the action of the elements—and Time, that grand artificer—into all sorts of fantastic shapes. One had been gradually worn away into the likeness of a castle, by whose side stood, as if for defence, three towers, to which they gave the name of the "Three Brother Turrets." Another shot up, slender and shapely, tapering to its crown, a height of four hundred and eighty feet, and this, as "Tennyson's monument," was dedicated to the fame of Alfred Tennyson. A magnificent commemoration of a great man; nobler than any work of art could possibly be.

One cause of the failure of this exploring expedition was the unusual, and excessive amount of snow on the ground as they proceeded. At the brig side, it was only four inches deep; as they advanced they sank in it up to the waist, while the dogs were so buried, that their help was out of the question. Further, the ever mischievous white bears had been beforehand with them, at their provision depôts, called *caches;* and though the stones with which one of these was covered were so

heavy that it required the united strength of three men to place them over the deposit, pemmican, it seems, transpired through all, and the creatures removed them. The iron cases in which the meat was contained, were cut up into bits as if with a steel chisel. A cask with spirit in it,—of so much importance for their cooking lamps, that a separate journey had been made to place it there in readiness—was so knocked to pieces that not even a bit of it could be found.

During Dr. Kane's absence on this disastrous sledging expedition Hans the Esquimaux was left with the brig, in the especial capacity of hunter. Hans deserved the high dignity of this post, for he very speedily shot two deer, the first that they had been able to secure; and the fresh meat was a very God-send to the scurvy-enfeebled crew; for it was that dreadful scurvy, brought on as it always is by the want of fresh food, that was knocking them all off their legs. But with regard to this their prospects, now that spring—May—was fairly in, were brightening. Numbers of little snow-birds, made their welcome appearance on the first of the month, making a very May-day of

it; and seal, which is not bad eating, to those who have nothing better, was in abundance.

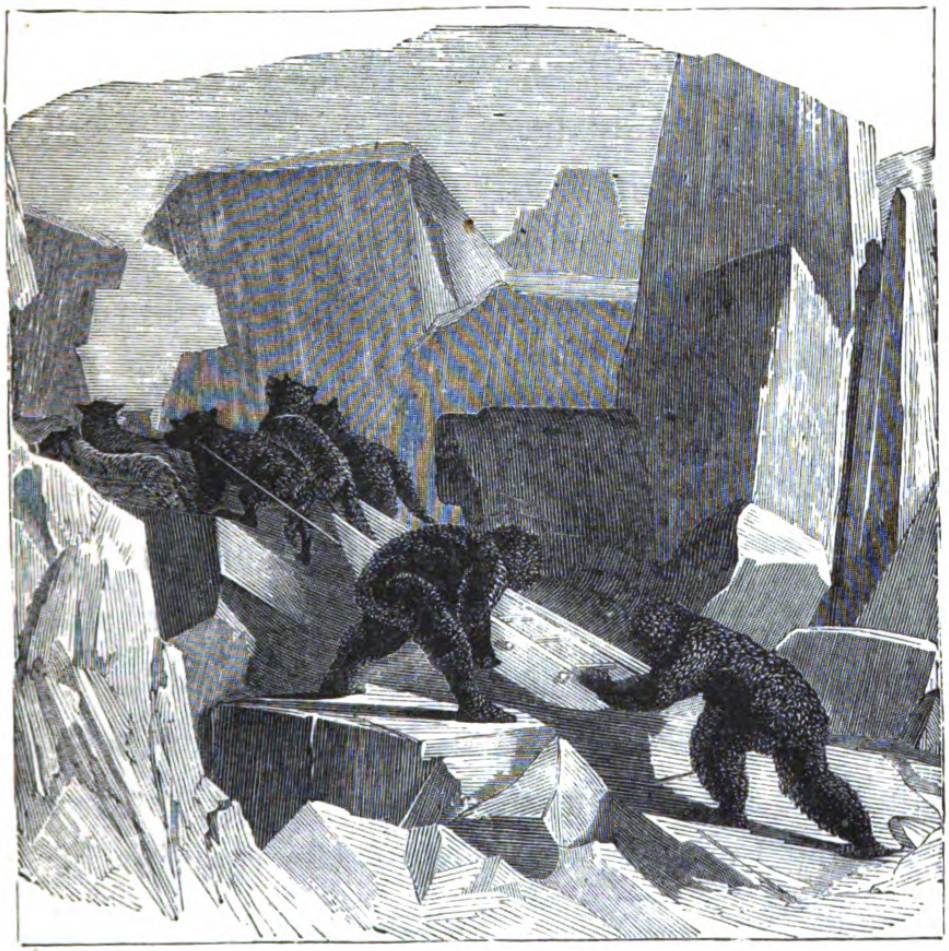


SHOOTING SEAL.

Here the services of the ever ready Hans again came into requisition. Hans was a good shot,

but, to shoot a seal who, so to speak, sleeps with one eye open, by his breathing hole, into which he can instantly pass, if need be, requires a little cunning, or, a great deal of address. The former was preferred; so with the native contrivance of a white screen, put up on cross sticks and mounted on a sledge that can be noiselessly pushed forward as required, Hans kneeled him down to his work, poked his rifle through the hole in the screen left for that purpose, and shot his game, Esquimaux fashion. He made a good bag; bringing down four of them. Indeed at this time their living, thanks to Hans, became luxurious in the extreme; seal, rabbits, reindeer, ptarmigan, all these were included in their bill of fare, and were rapidly bringing the half-starved crew to life again. Hares were at times to be had; but as the dogs also liked them, the men got the fewer. Things outside too looked more cheery; and the tiny vegetation of the pole, a species of heath, had already made its gladdening appearance. While instead of buckets filled with chopped ice, hung up over head in the cabin, to melt into water, that was drawn fresh from slender rock streams.

Dr. Kane was still too helpless from the effects of his unlucky journey, to venture out sledging himself; but as he thought he could, if he were carried round to the sick men as they lay in their cots, attend to them as well



DOGS AMONG BERGS.

as Dr. Hayes, the surgeon of the expedition, the latter was sent off with a noble team of dogs, the leaders of which spanked along with the grand bounds of wild beasts. They did

their work well. In some places the travellers would have been quite at a stand still but for the powerful efforts of these fine creatures, who strained along with the sledge at their heels (to which a hoist was perchance given by their masters) over great blocks of ice, whose intervals were filled with deep snow, out of which they would have had no little difficulty in scrambling, had any been unlucky enough to sink in. At times the heavy sledge itself went down; and then it was "all hands to the great cable" to haul it out. The poor dogs after this gallant work deserved better feeding than fell to their lot more than once during the journey; when, on one occasion, they ate some of their traces and harness for sheer hunger; and on a second, had a meal served out to them consisting of the last crumbs that could be shaken out of the bread bag, rendered savoury by an admixture of the remains of a pair of skin gloves, and some cuttings from the lower edge of their master's trousers! One thinks it would require an Esquimaux dog to digest that; at which any civilized dog would unquestionably turn up its nose.

CHAPTER VII.

BEARS, AND OTHER THINGS.

THERE is summer in the Arctic regions as well as winter; a short hot summer, with the sun always staring you in the face. For, as during a long period of the winter he never rises, so now he makes himself amends by never going to bed. Idle sun in the winter; tiresome sleepless sun in the summer!

They were now in the midst of this season; the first summer of their two years' sojourn in that dreary part of the world, which one might think almost God-forgotten, but that there His mighty hand is visible in the rock and snow, and wonderful mountains and fields of ice, glittering in many coloured beauty; for ice, like glass and diamonds, throws off rainbow tints under the influence of varying light. While rivers of it pour themselves slowly down from some vast unknown deposit of

eternal ice in the interior of the country. And there too His benignant hand is seen in the tiny little shrubs and plants that, covered up warmly with layer upon layer of soft snow —a ten-feet-thick blanket—spring up fearlessly in the brief summer time, and open their bright flowers to the gladdening sunshine.

Tiny heath and saxifrage are gladdening to look at, but it may be doubted whether the most grateful sight of that brief summer, to those disease-enfeebled men, was not a little handful of humble scurvy grass, so called from its supposed virtues for the cure of that miserable complaint. The interpreter stumbled upon this in the month of June,—each little plant an inch high—and brought it to Dr. Kane, who did what he knew the man would best like,—ate it up himself, without going through the ceremony of offering it to any one else. Other plants having valuable properties to men in their circumstances were also discovered, so that it became one of their afternoon recreations, after light work and plenty of basking in the sunshine, to stroll on the shore eating such green plants as were known to be eatable, and which did them a world of good.

Their spirits too were cheered by the return of their exploring parties, who had been able to make some satisfactory astronomical and geographical observations, as well as to bring back interesting details of their adventures.

It was just the time of year when bears were in season, and pretty work they made for the travellers. Snugly sleeping in their tent one night after a very fatiguing day, one of the party heard something, he knew not what, outside the tent, scratching away at the snow not far from his head. He shook himself, and peering cautiously saw a great beast of some kind, who was evidently taking a lively interest in the tent, and its inmates.

The result of his scrutiny was that he uttered, what if he had been a fine lady would have been called a scream ; as he was a man, it must be dubbed simply a cry, which did quite as well, as it woke up his companions, who, as they rubbed their sleepy eyes, painfully remembered that all their guns had been left in the sledge outside, and that they had not even so much as a walking pole, with which to do battle with the beast, name unknown.

As they half sat up in their fright, wondering

what must be done, seeing that to make a rush for their arms was impossible, their considering was cut short by a great big bear coolly sticking his head in among them at the

THE BEAR IN CAMP.

opening of the tent. Letting off lucifer matches at him was first tried, and then flaring newspapers in his face; but he heeded neither the one nor the other. Instead of that, he quietly sat him down to supper off a seal—*their* seal—that was lying conveniently for the brute; and then they felt themselves

posed: a great bear sitting there peacefully eating his supper—that is, their supper—as though he had received a regular invitation to do so! Bear ate; men stared and pondered. At length one, more wily than the rest, bethought him of cutting a hole with his knife in the opposite side of the tent, through which he slid out, without disturbing their volunteer guest. Then, seizing a boat-hook, he dealt the animal a sounding thump on the nose, as he sat there munching. Could inhospitality go further? The bear backed on being thus set upon, for blows on the nose are not pleasant either for bears or boys (of course, the two have nothing in common!); and availing himself of this, the valorous Tom Hickey sprang to one of the rifles, and got it safely inside with him. A well-directed shot, right through him, put an end to the unfortunate bear; and henceforth fire-arms inside the tent and a wide awake watchman were among the standing orders of their night encampment.

This was by no means the end of the mischievous tricks of these animals. The provisions, that had from time to time been so painfully deposited in the *caches*, to be in

readiness for the travelling parties—thus diminishing the load they had to carry—were clawed up, and eaten in the most ruthless manner by them. Nothing was too hard or too heavy for their steel talons. There is a tool known to carpenters called a ripping-chisel (the name explains its use); and the white bear appears to have five of these implements at the end of each of his four feet. The last *cache* of all was found destroyed utterly. It had been made with uncommon care and pains. Great fragments of rocks had been placed over it with the help of capstan bars (those are the bars that turn the capstan in winding up or down the anchor of a ship); and when the panting labourers ceased from their toil, they flattered themselves that they had "done" the bears this time. No such thing. Every morsel of pemmican was dug up and eaten, save that which, being made up in round iron cases with pointed ends, offered no point of attack to them; their claws slipping off in all directions as they tore at them. Square cases would soon have been got into. The round, pointed ones defied even their accomplished pickers and stealers, whose efforts

to break through them were apparent in the way in which, though eighty pounds in weight, they had been tossed about like a football. A case of spirits, strongly bound with iron, was crushed to bits; a tin case was squashed, and knocked almost into "a cocked-hat," doubled

THE CACHE DESTROYED.

up, and torn in all directions by the bears' powerful claws.

They had their peculiar tastes too, the creatures! All the articles in the cache, or hiding-place, were not, it is evident, equally acceptable to them. Salt meat was left un-

touched; were they wholesomely afraid of scurvy? Ground coffee was appetizing, and old canvas, including the flag set up by way of taking possession, relishing. There is no accounting for tastes; some of us like queer things,—so did the bears. While, obviously alive to the fact, that "mirth at meals is wholesome," they had amused themselves by rolling the bread barrels overboard, plump into the broken ice, and twisted up into all sorts of inexplicable and inextricable knots the India-rubber cloth, which even they voted uneatable.

The whole space around the cache bore traces of these animals; who, doubtless, by way of digesting the hearty meal they had made from its contents, subsequently gave themselves up to the recreation of sliding down a steep, icy plane, in a sitting position! The thing was undeniable; there was the slope covered with their fur; further, they were caught in the fact. O incorrigible beasts, thus to steal the poor travellers' goods and chattels, and then, as if they had no conscience at all, take to poking fun on an ice-slide!

But it was not all merrymaking with the bears. That mighty hunter Hans spoiled

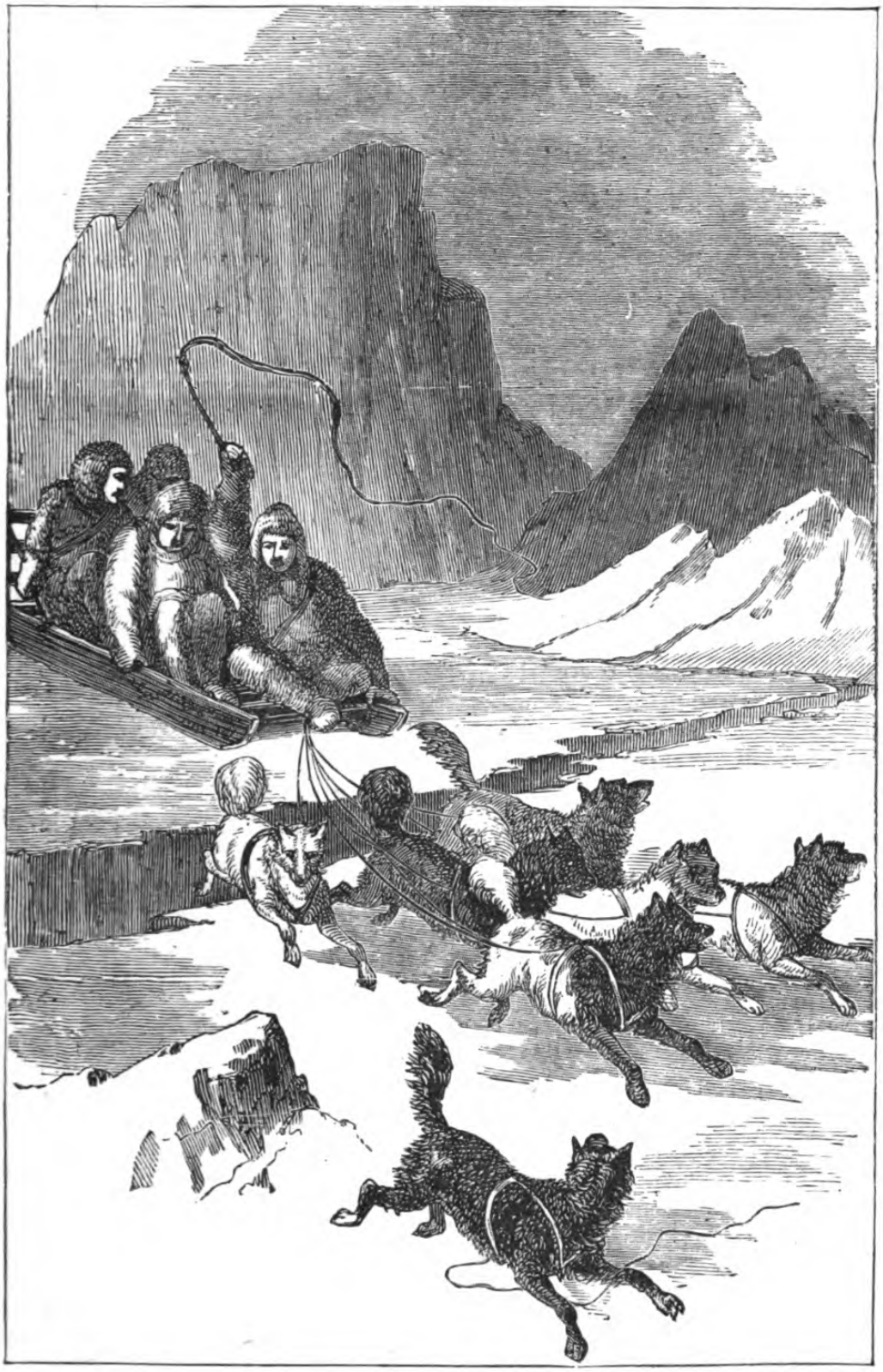
their sport now and then. Falling in with a she bear and her cub, the two turned and fled; but the little one being unable to keep up so brisk a pace as its mother, she kept giving it a hoist, that sent it lumbering ahead, when she followed to repeat the process; from time to time stopping to keep the dogs at bay, as if to give it a chance of making off. The poor little thing was, however, too stupid to do this; there it lay where she had pitched it, till she gave it another toss, or lifted it by the neck, as a cat does her kitten. The two retreated a mile and a half in this manner, followed by the hunters, who were too far behind for the chance of a shot at her. At length both were tired out, and the mother-bear stood bravely at bay; sitting up and screening her cub with her hind legs, while she fought the dogs with her paws, roaring so that it might have been heard a mile off. Grinning, roaring, snapping, fighting, she held the five dogs in check, protecting her little one all the while, until at length Hans, crouching down, deer-stalking fashion, got a clear aim at her, drew his trigger, and dropped her stone dead.

The dogs sprang forward then, thinking

they should have it all their own way. But up jumped the plucky little cub on the prostrate bear, and dealt so briskly with them, making as much noise all the time as it could with its miniature roar, as frightened them effectually; and it, like its mother, had to be despatched with the rifle. Poor little thing, it fell, defending its mother's body to the last.

The dogs ate the old bear; the young one was put aside for the hunters' own eating.

We have named how cracks and fissures in the ice are jumped over by sledge and dogs, flying. Sometimes they are too wide to be got over in this manner; and the mode of proceeding in that case is to chop up with their axes the hummocks nearest at hand, and then roll the large blocks into the crevice, filling up the interstices with smaller fragments, so as to make a rough sort of level, over which the dogs might be coaxed. If they went, the sledge bumped over, as a matter of course. This process of making a road, and crossing it, would occupy about an hour and half for one crevice. One may imagine the speed of travelling so carried on; the other extreme of an express train.



CROSSING A FISSURE.

But even dogs used to that sort of thing were not always to be coaxed into such performances. Sometimes the ice was unsafe—*rotten*, as it is called; and the sagacious creatures, perceiving this, would crouch down, trembling with fright, and absolutely refuse to go on. In that case Hans—what would they have done without that fat Hans?—would hunt about till he discovered a spot a little less unsafe; and then, exerting all his blandishments, in the way of "Good dog!" "Poor fellow!" done into Esquimaux, which they understood, would induce them to follow his lead, grubbing on their stomachs, for they feared to trust their feet on the treacherous stuff. Then there was a certain game of "pitch and toss" to be played. This consisted in throwing their baggage, in parcels, from the ground on a ledge of ice eight or nine feet high above them. These safely landed, the sledge would be set up, ladder-fashion, up which one of the party climbed to the high ice, whither, pulling and hoisting from behind, got the dogs, one after the other. The beasts all safely landed, the last man—Hans again—climbed up, and the sledge-ladder was drawn up after them.

"Nothing is denied to well-directed labour." Both labour and wise direction of labour are

MAKING THE LAND-ICE [CLIMBING].

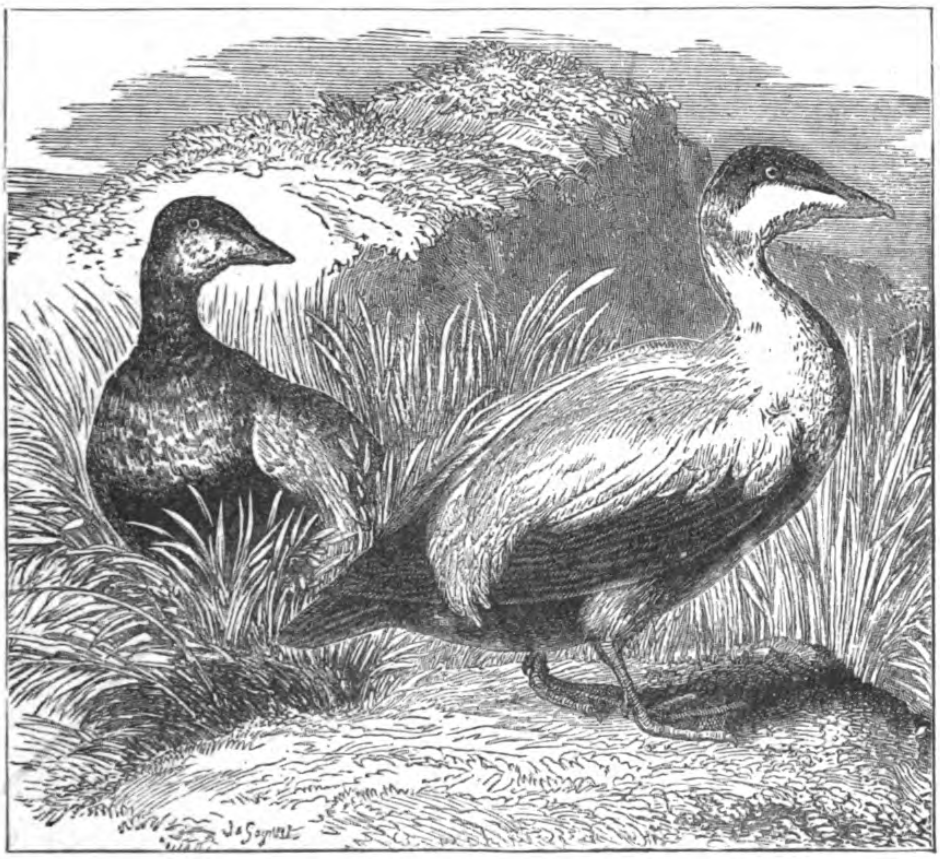
abundantly needed in the neighbourhood of the North Pole; as, indeed, where are they not? One thing is certain—north, south, east, west—God never created people to be idle.

There was something, however, at the ex-

tremest point of this laborious journey to reward the adventurers. Standing on a cliff four hundred and eighty feet high, there, right before them, lay the open sea lashing in great waves at their feet, without a speck of ice to be seen by the most piercing gaze. Oh what a glad sight that was to men who had so long been ice-bound!

The spectacle and the milder season were tempting to try a boat voyage in place of sledges. The old *Forlorn Hope*, which had been recovered from her sheltering place behind the hummock, was accordingly tinkered up for the purpose. She was a mere cockle-shell after all, but the best that they had. So with a new false keel, and some india-rubber fittings to remedy her over sharp bows (a boat may, it seems, cut the water too easily), she was launched—after crossing a considerable width of ice on the *Faith*—with a good store of pork for food. Pemmican they had none, as in addition to the bears gobbling up more than their share of the stores of this meat which had been cached, other deposits of it, carefully marked as they thought, were not to be traced now they were

wanted: a mortifying circumstance, but one which had to be "endured" seeing it could not "be cured."



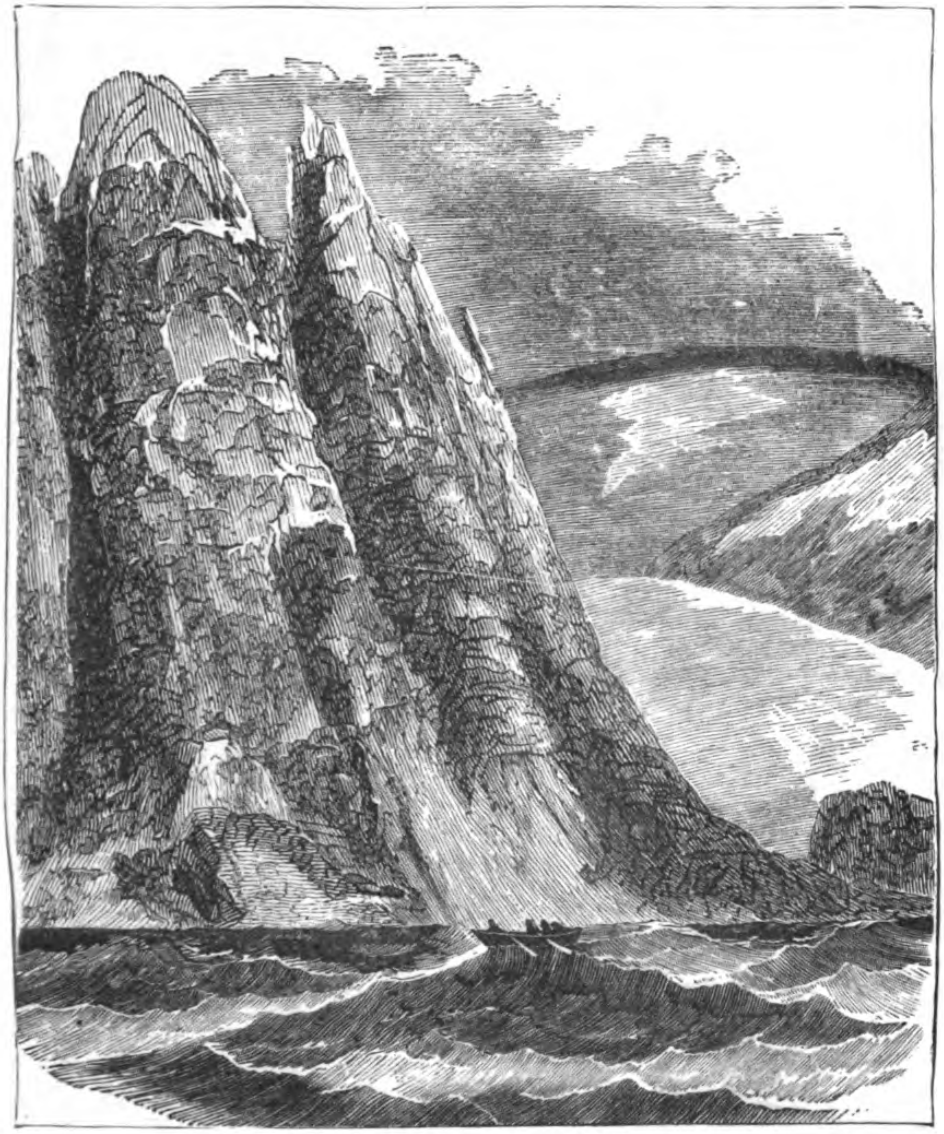
EIDER DUCKS.

The water was somewhat clogged with ice to begin with; but that was surmounted; and then they had the novel entertainment of sailing about, and being nearly sea-wrecked as they had so often been nearly ice-wrecked. Scudding along among the headlands and islands of the coast, one of these latter was

worthily named after that good fellow Hans, the Esquimaux; and as Hans Island accordingly it figures in the chart. Hans Island was a famous place for birds. Gulls, strong, impudent, hovered around and swooped down upon the unfortunate eider ducks, who were occupied in the interesting process of rearing their families—small members of which were from time to time gulped down by them. Their poor little splay feet would quiver for a moment at the extremity of a gull's devouring beak; guzzle, swallow,—and feet and all went down its insatiable throat, to be served up a second time to one of the infant gulls, with whom, we hope, it disagreed. Mother duck fights well in defence of her brood; but, alas, too often comes off second best—such is life! —and in her desolation occasionally adopts a few children of somebody else's in place of her own "dear departed." Distressing this, but the game goes round. Gull eats eider, eider eats something smaller and weaker than itself, and the voyagers impartially ate both; for in that outlandish region gull is reckoned delicate eating, and eider eggs are both good and abundant. They carried off with them

from Hans Island four large bags full of birds for future use, and got fat on their new diet.

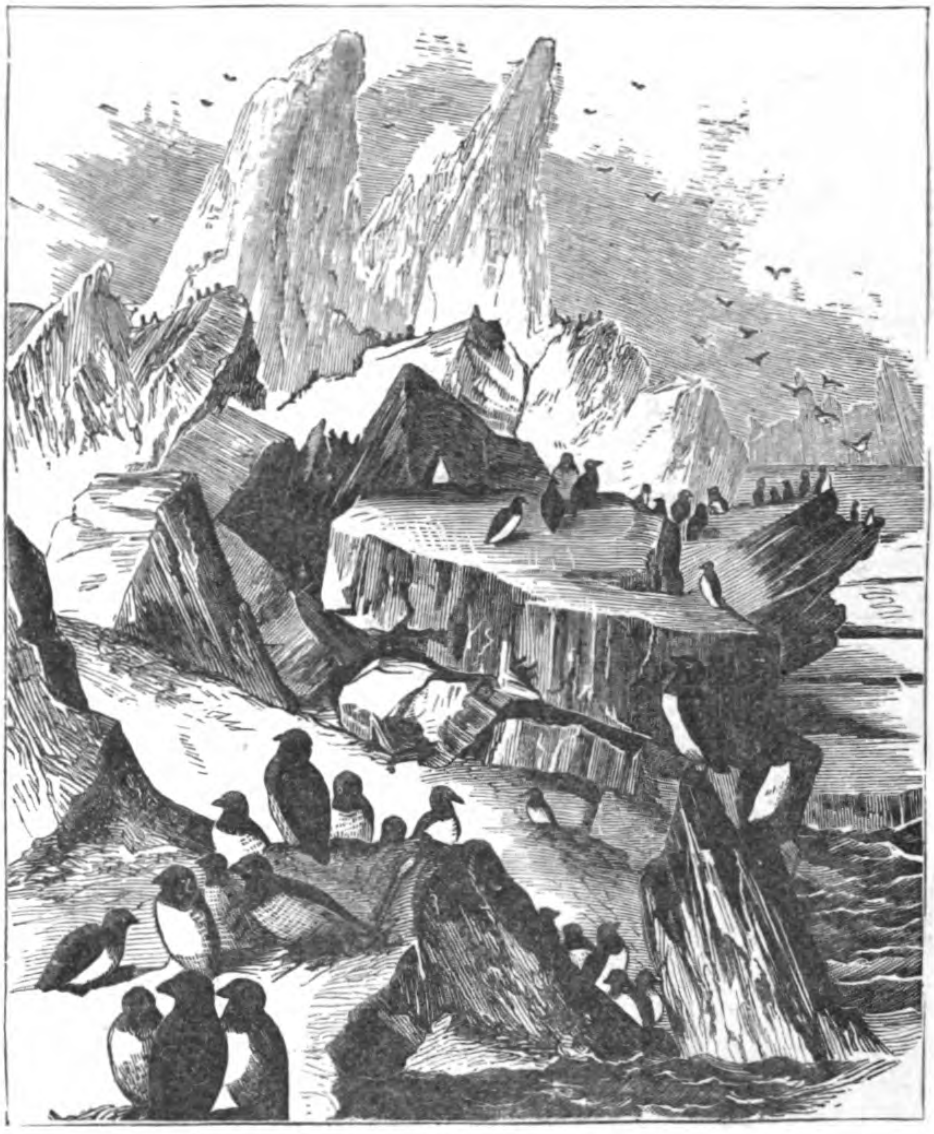
Camping on shore in the course of this



GLACIER OF NORTHUMBERLAND ISLAND.

boat travel, in sight was one of nature's marvels, a sort of waterfall of ice, called a glacier; and this one of Northumberland Island was a

remarkable one of its class, interesting not only from its beauty, but from some peculiarities of high importance in the eyes of scientific

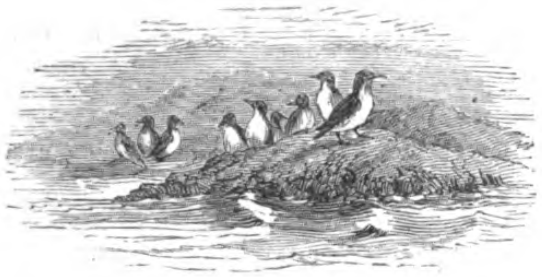


CLIFFS, NORTHUMBERLAND ISLAND.

people. Pieces of ice kept falling down during the night, sometimes sounding like artillery in the distance, and then like the sharp fire of

ill-directed musketry; that is, from what is called the awkward squad.

Glaciers, however, though excellent things in their way, were not the only product of Northumberland Island. Its northern cliff literally swarmed with birds—auks, gulls, and dovekies. There they sat, perched on every possible and impossible ledge of rock; the auks with a droll, bolt upright attitude, for their legs are placed so very much nearer their tails than are those of most birds, that the position is one of necessity. And then, when stuck up in this fashion, their little wings, which are short, make very tolerable sham arms. Black coats and white waistcoasts are the family dress, and very neat it is too.



CHAPTER VIII.

A SECOND WINTER IN THE ICE.

THE winter of 1854 fell early. Ice strong enough to bear a man in August was a fearful sort of thing for those who were destined, with insufficient food and fuel, to spend a second winter amidst its rigours. These good men made daily prayers a part of their daily plan; but now there was a melancholy change in the supplication, from prayer for success in their undertaking, to prayer for restoration to their homes. But both were prefaced with the same thanksgiving for blessings still bestowed; life, dull and dreary though it was, and food sufficient to sustain it, if not to make it vigorous.

The prospect was discouraging. Cold, darkness, disease before them, together with that next best, or rather next worst, feature of arctic life, *rats*. It seems something like an

anti-climax to name them after the other serious evils enumerated; but really the way in which these creatures tormented our settlers in the ice, entitled them to a place among the grievous ills of such a life. They swarmed in all directions, and, apparently, in all circumstances, however unfavourable these might be thought to the well-being of Rat-dom. It was attempted to smoke them out with charcoal and brimstone; and, in addition to half choking one or two of the party, they nearly set the ship on fire with doings of so perilous a character; as, though water is good for extinguishing fire, ice is not. Clothing of all kinds, natural history specimens,—everything that it was wished they should *not* eat, that they did eat; making unto themselves also "happy homes" in the men's bedding. Of course they were well pelted with all sorts of things that came to hand; but this eventually was abandoned, as it was found that Arctic rats do not mind being pelted. Their impudence surpassed belief. One discreet mother of a young family settled herself for nursing purposes in a bear-skin mitten, and bit to the bone the finger of its lawful owner when, in

happy unconsciousness of its being appropriated by another, he proceeded to draw it on. Among them they walked off with the glove before he could well pop his finger to his mouth, as people do instinctively when their fingers are hurt. A dog, famous for its exploits with bears, was set to try his skill upon the rats, but speedily retired yelling and discomfited before the abominable brood. At length want and hunger broke down the strong objection that most people, including even Arctic voyagers who banquet unreluctantly upon raw meat and blubber, feel to eating rats. Hans the hunter did not disdain to turn his weapons against these small pests; and shooting right and left among them with his bow and arrow, procured many a hot, savoury stew of rat for the enlightened commander of the expedition; who, however, had that stew all to himself, for he could not prevail upon his hungry companions to eat of *his* dainties.

Preparations had now to be steadily made for the approaching winter. The first thing was to make their home, the stranded brig, as warm as their lamentable deficiency of fuel

would permit. Their plan was to cut as much turf and moss as could be found—it

GATHERING MOSS.

was frozen nearly as hard as stone, and had to be quarried like it with crow-bars and such tools,—and then give the quarter-deck a thick layer of this, well padded down, so as to make a warm roof over their heads. Down below it was to be liberally employed in stopping up every crack and cranny, and forming a

thick lining for the walls. The floor was to have its crevices filled with plaster of Paris and paste, over which was laid a couple of inches of oakum—oakum is old rope pulled to pieces until, in texture, it is like new hemp,—carpeted over with canvas. It was to be entered from the hold by a low, narrow passage, also lined with moss, and curtained, and doored *ad libitum*, all to keep out the cruel cold, if that might be. The avenue received the poetical name of Ben-Djerback; which, alas, only indicated that from its extreme lowness you must go down on your hands and knees—*bend your back*—to get through it into the living-room. In this apartment of all work, for it was kitchen, dining-room, study, and everything, they also put themselves to bed, lying in their berths like so many bundles on shelves, each man tied up in his fur sleeping bag. For fuel, the outer deck planking, and all the wood work that, according to the critical judgment of the carpenter, could possibly be spared from the brig without rendering her unseaworthy, in case she ever got again into open water—which she never did,—was ripped off and carefully

stacked. Later on, even this running short, they were glad to cut up lengths of cable to feed the stove, and found it answer very well. But the cutting it up was tough work, seeing it was frozen.

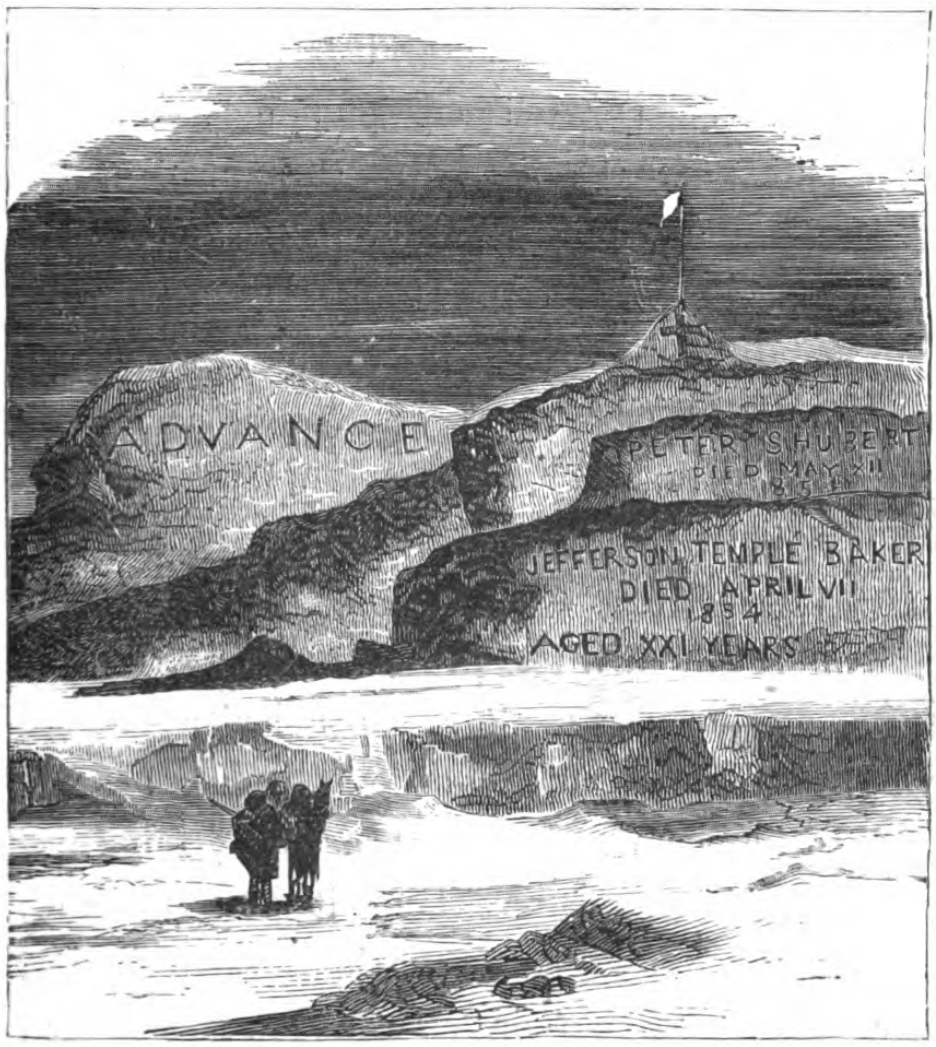
Their provisions, in small bulk now, were piled up in barrels, forming a square upon the ice, from one corner of which rose a flag-staff, whence flaunted a red and white flag in the frosty air. A she bear who paid them a visit clawed these down with strokes of her sinewy paws. Boats and spare ropes were arranged beyond this; and outermost of all was a sort of hut, built of old barrels and snow, to accommodate their Esquimaux visitors, with whom they were glad to make friends; for the poor savages turned out hospitable and kind in their way, and seemed to acquire a genuine regard for their civilized neighbours; though at times they plagued them horribly with stealing—the national weakness. Occasionally they showed their good will in an odd kind of manner, such as giving to Dr. Kane the place of honour in their filthy, crowded huts, where all lay higgledy piggledy for warmth, and handing him a fat baby for his pillow.

It was dreadful accommodation that, but it was the best the poor things had, and they gave it willingly; so it was true politeness after all—especially the baby!

To prevent misunderstandings between these good, kind, dirty, thieving, laughing folks, and their polished acquaintance, terms of amity were arranged and agreed upon. The Esquimaux on their part promised that they would not steal, and that they would bring fresh meat, as well as a supply of dogs for sledging. On the other side it was engaged not to kill, or bewitch the Esquimaux (for being bewitched was one of the fears of these simple people), who were to have the benefit of the voyagers' guns; permission to come on board was also secured to them, and they were further to receive valuable presents of pins, needles, bits of wood—all precious to an Esquimaux, who seldom has a scrap—with full leave, if they wanted more of these good things, to trade for them, the purchase-money being walrus and seal meat.

The treaty was religiously observed by both parties. All honour to both; but especially to the loving, greasy, pagan Esquimaux.

On a conspicuous point of the harbour where, frozen in, they were thus preparing to pass their second winter, the name of their vessel, the *Advance* was painted in large



THE GRAVES BY MOONLIGHT.

characters, extending over the side of the rock. Crowning a second, a small conical heap of stones, marked with a cross, and surmounted

by a small flag, indicated the last resting-place of their unfortunate comrades, who had sunk under the terrors of this Arctic wilderness. Their names, Peter Schubert, the light-hearted Frenchman, who was wont to chant Beranger's songs from his sick cot; and Jefferson Temple Baker, were painted conspicuously on the rock-side beneath; a dreary memento, in the glittering moonlight of those brilliantly moon-lighted northern regions. And here also documents were sunk into the rock, carefully secured, for the purpose of informing all comers, should there ever be any, of the fate of the little party, in case the worst came to the worst.

This second winter proved one of excessive suffering—as how could it be otherwise?—cold. hunger, disease, darkness, depressed hopes, all had to be sustained. Fuel, as has been said, was scanty, and the cutting it was at times almost beyond their strength. As to food, a stray rabbit or two was a God-send to the sick, for whom in their dreadful state of illness, fresh meat was absolutely necessary, only it was not to be had. Brave Hans did indeed about this time manage to kill them a deer, so big

that the difficulty was to get him down below; until the bright idea struck them that it was possible to cut up the animal *before* getting him aboard. They banqueted upon this deer.

Among the incidents of this trying winter was one not much in keeping with the harmony and good feeling that under Dr. Kane's skilful leadership seems to have prevailed among these ice-locked men; and this was that one of the party thought proper to desert.

Will Godfrey and his chum John, had for some time excited the commander's suspicions, who could not get rid of the idea that it was not all right with them. They were bold, hearty, daring fellows, and valuable on that score; but who, or what, they had been before that voyage he would have given something to know. At this season, however, it became apparent that some mischief was brewing between the two, and it was conjectured that their plan was to give their comrades the slip, steal their dogs, and drive off themselves, to "squat," in dirty plenty, among the Esquimaux.

At length Bill was overheard whispering to

his ally, whose part of the compact was to be lame, his intention of going off that very day. This was in the night. When morning came, Dr. Kane was quite ready for him. Bill was ordered to cook breakfast, which duty, after some whispering with John, he performed with considerable placidity. Meanwhile the commander, well armed, and accompanied by two of his officers, lay in wait for his man near the entrance of the room of all work. He had not long to wait freezing. First emerged John, limping and groaning, very lame indeed, until, having looked round, and satisfied himself that the coast was clear, as he thought, his infirmity left him in an instant. These remarkable cures *will* take place at times. Planted on deck, Bill soon followed him, dressed and booted for a journey. But before he gained the deck, that unpleasant Dr Kane, pistols and all, stepped forward, and ordered him down again in a manner that there was no gainsaying. When he was safe below, John was fetched to meet him, and soon made his appearance, suffering as severely from lameness as ever; yea, the symptoms increased in severity as, coming fairly into the light, he

got a good view of the group awaiting him in the cabin. Conviction of the culprit was prompt, punishment equally so. We suspect Will was flogged, and, served him right too, a dishonourable, sneaking fellow. Whatever he got seemed to agree with him, as he speedily, after expressing his gratitude for having his handcuffs removed, was at work again,—and deserted within an hour. This was serious; for there was every reason to fear that he had made off with the intention of intercepting fat Hans, who was out hunting for the party, stealing his sledge and dogs, and so leaving his comrades to their fate, whatever that fate might be, *minus* sledge, dogs, and the food they were to convey to the brig. Indeed these dogs were their only dependence for ever getting the helpless sick men away, or hunting bears and seals for food; no wonder they were anxious about them.

Godfrey did ultimately take refuge among the Esquimaux, where, when his commander drove in with his dog team in search of him, he pretended to be as good a savage as any of them, screaming out an Esquimaux welcome like the rest. It would not do, however, he

was detected in a moment, and with the help of a six barrel revolver, and a stout pair of *foot* cuffs—those answer quite as well as hand cuffs—secured and carried off to the brig, where vagabond as he was, his presence was not particularly desired, but desertion *must* be punished. It is a shabby, dishonest thing.

CHAPTER IX.

PREPARATIONS FOR ESCAPE.

AS the winter dragged its slow length along, it gradually became apparent that the brig would never be extricated from the ice; and that the men themselves would never survive another winter in it. How to escape was the next thing to be thought over, and decided upon; and after mature consideration it was concluded that their only chance was to sledge and boat it, a distance of thirteen hundred miles, chiefly over the ice, to the Danish settlement of Upernavik in South Greenland, where they would be sure of finding whalers, or other vessels, in which to get home.

A journey like this required some preparation. The plan decided upon was to take a small supply of food with them, as much as their heavy sledges could conveniently carry,

while from time to time, as long as distance rendered it practicable, Dr. Kane should race back to the brig, their storehouse, with his light dog-sledge, for a fresh stock.

For clothing, in addition to the ordinary furs and blanketings, each man was to have a pair of canvas mocassins—with three dozen on board over and above this supply, in case of accident,—and three pairs of boots, made of thick carpeting, and soled with walrus or seal skin. When these skins were all done, they fell foul on such pieces of leather as could be got from the ship's gear; and better still, the gutta percha speaking tube, which cut up beautifully into boot soles. Then, as to bedding, some old woollen curtains, well quilted with eider down, were not amiss for sleeping bags, especially with the addition of buffalo skins outside. A man might have a worse bed than that anywhere. Bags of all sorts and sizes, so as to stow in and about the boat, had also to be found to carry their provisions. These bags were of sail-cloth well pitched, after it had been coated over with plaster of Paris and common paste. All these things had to be made, and took long making, for the important journey.

Their commisariat was scanty enough. Biscuit beaten to powder with a capstan bar was rammed down hard and tight into bags. Others were filled with melted pork fat and tallow, and also a well boiled-down bean soup. What little flour and meat-biscuit they had left was also carefully enclosed in double bags, to keep it from any chance ducking in the water, or dripping from thawing ice and snow. This meagre diet was to suffice; for anything further they must depend on supplies fetched from the brig, and the produce of their guns; powder and shot for which were stowed away with all the care that their supreme importance demanded.

Their cooking apparatus was as simple as their fare. It was constructed of a quantity of old iron stove pipe, cut down into eighteen inch lengths, within which was placed a metal saucer, full of fat, with a yarn wick. Over this, and inside the cylinder, which screened it from the cold, their cooking pots made out of used-up cake canisters, boiled and bubbled gloriously. Cups and plates were extemporized from the various old, cast-off tin articles that lay about; their sheet tin being much too

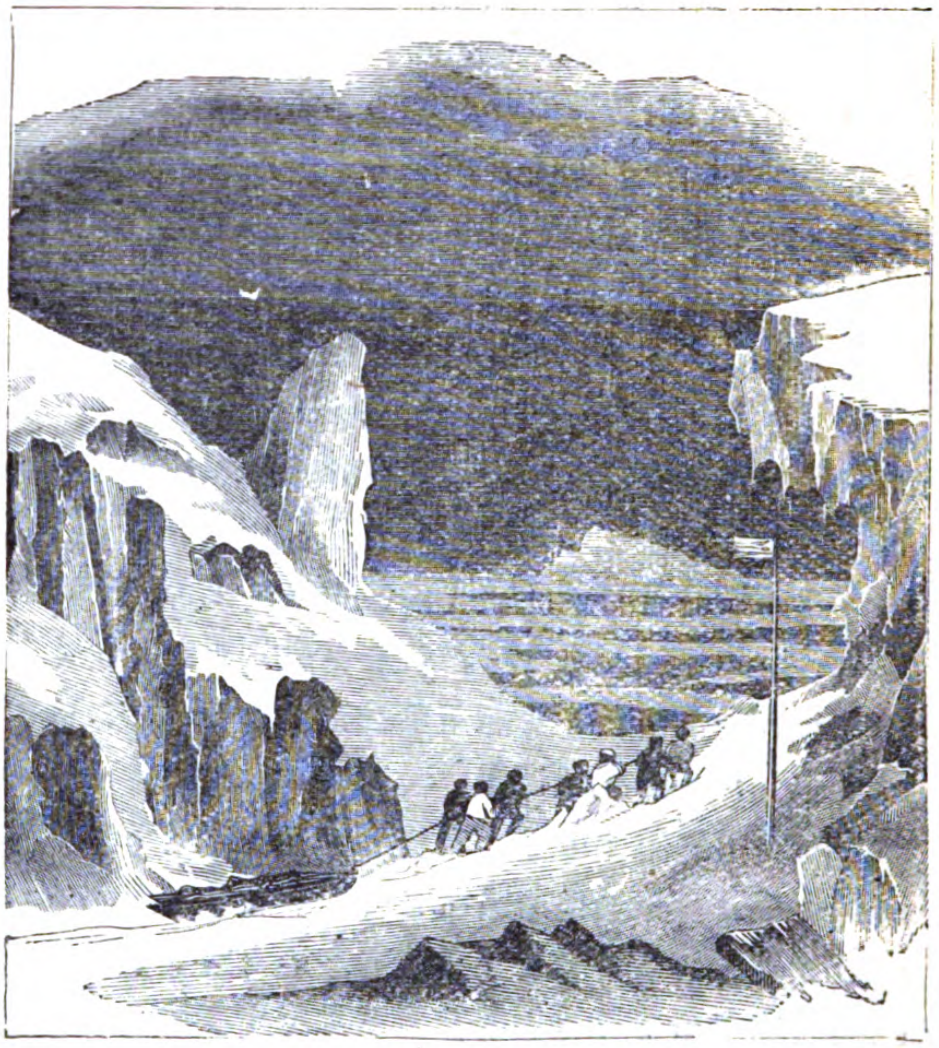
precious to be devoted to such mean uses; it was required for sheathing the boats to prevent their being cut with the thin knife-like ice.

Boats they had three, in poor condition. They were carpentered, however, so as to promise to hold together, and each one was fitted with a covering of canvas overhead, tent fashion. The sledges also were overhauled; and they wanted it, for they were shaky enough. Amid all their misery they had yet spirit left to manufacture a flag of an old linen shirt; the stars and stripes upon which were effected by the red ink bottle, and the laundress's blue bag, and that waved as gaily over their boats as though it were made of more costly material. Then, when all was in readiness, came the leave-taking of the old ice-fast brig, that had so long been their home, dark and dreary enough, yet clung to as being their home; besides that every true sailor is in love with his own ship. It was a solemn and sad little ceremony that Sunday morning, when, everything around stripped bare and dismantled, they read their usual prayers and chapter in the Bible for the last time on

board. The portrait of Sir John Franklin which had up to that time hung in the cabin, was taken down in silence, and put away carefully in a case of india-rubber. Next came a few brave, kind words, on both sides; for the men, with the exception of the deserters, were worthy of their officers. After this the party went on deck, the flags were hoisted and hauled down again for the last time, and farewell looks were taken of the old familiar place. The figure head, Miss "Augusta"—the figure head is always the special pet of a sailor—bumped, and battered, and nose-less—for she had lost that expressive feature by a "nip" in the ice—was yet tenderly placed in the *Hope;* for, as was affectionately remarked by one of her admirers, being wood, she would at least do to burn. Then the word of command was given, and off they set; each one pulling manfully at his line, as they tramped over the ice and snow.

Their journeying homewards brought them once more into contact with their old friends the Esquimaux. Dr. Kane had occasion to drive his dog-team in among them—he careered about, fetching and carrying between the brig

and their halting place, wherever that might be—and so saw an Esquimaux encampment to perfection.



A SKETCH.

Thirty of them, men, women, and children, were out there, camping on the bare rocks, with the thermometer—O how happily ignorant they were of thermometers!—five

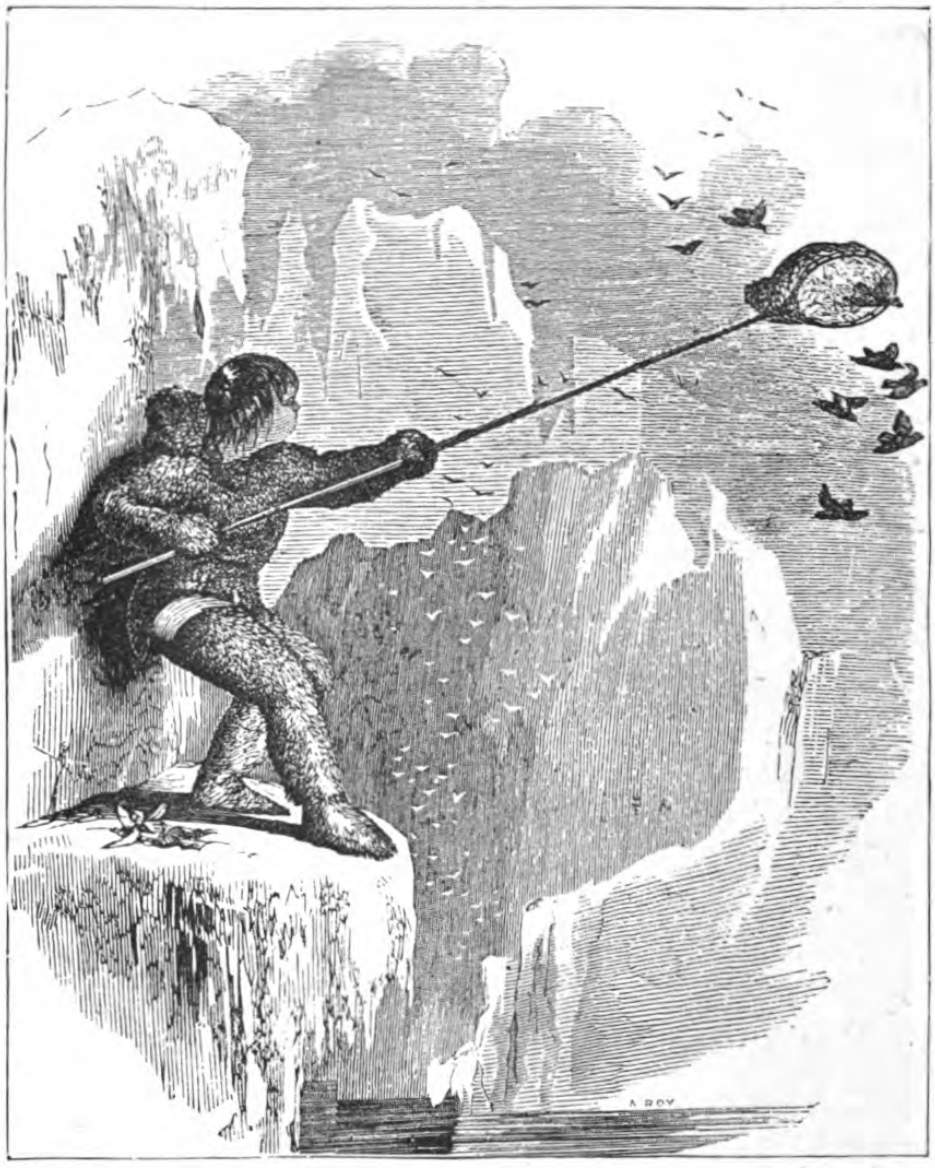
degrees below freezing point. They were as happy in their destitution, as the day was long. Some were feeding, grossly enough; two of the children were quarrelling, and fighting for a live owl, which they at last seized, tore to pieces, and actually gobbled up, picking it from among its torn feathers, before the wretched bird was quite cold. Dr. Kane would have liked that owl as a specimen; the children preferred it as dinner.

Their fires, used for cooking alone, were of peat moss, saturated with fat. For their own personal comfort, so far as heat was concerned, fires were disdained. They managed to keep themselves warm by lying as close together as possible; more like a knot of eels intertwined together than anything else. The little ones kept up the circulation by rushing about, feeding the fires; the blood of their last meal smeared over their ugly little faces, and munching raw liver, by way of finishing touch to the feast.

It was a scene of rude plenty; *very rude* indeed, just lasting for the short summer. Winter and its starvation were utterly forgotten for the time.

Birds were abundant here; the little black

coated, white waistcoated auks, spoken of as swarming at Northumberland Island, being so very numerous that they might be taken, in



CATCHING AUKS.

any number, with the least trouble possible. An Esquimaux boy sent out on a ledge of

rock, with one of their bird nets,—what is called a purse net—of seal skin, caught, in a few minutes, as many of them as he could carry off with him. It was "dilly, dilly duck, come and be killed;" and the foolish birds readily accepted the invitation. The dogs crammed to the very muzzle, were here evidently as happy as their masters; and very much in the same way.

The visitor was kindly treated in the huts of these wild people. The wife of one of them, an important gentlewoman in her way, took him under her special patronage, out of gratitude for his medical skill which had relieved her from some harassing little malady. On this occasion she manifested her esteem for him, by stripping off a portion of her own warm dress, in order to endow him with it, as a coverlet; and she further handed him her baby for a pillow. He had got so used to these delicate little attentions, that he accepted them without demur; wrapped himself up in her bird skin dress, placed the baby conveniently for his head, and then, well filled with a supper of auks' livers, fell asleep in comfort, if not dignity.

These good, dirty creatures did more than giving him their own clothes and babies—they supplied him, unhesitatingly trusting to his honour, with a good, well-fed, vigorous team of dogs—the only one they had left, for dogs had become scarce with them—in place of his own worn-out one, whose nursing they undertook, piled up his sledge with walrus meat, and sent him off a new man.

The Esquimaux boys are famous bird-catchers, flapping at them with their nets at the end of a bone pole, and bagging them to any amount. This, amusement with us, is business with them. The rogues have their fun as well. One of their games is for each youngster to arm himself with a rib of walrus for a bat—wood is too scarce to be so profaned—and with its stroke to send the ball (made of the round knotty bone of a walrus flipper or fore-arm) up a frozen, slippery bank. The young gentlemen were in full career with their sport at this settlement, and they struck and laughed, and laughed and struck with as vehement enjoyment as more civilized folk profess to find in golf or shindy, or even cricket,—games classic or popular among ourselves.

Auks, the natives gorge, but salmon-trout, which abounds in the lake at Etah, they do

CHILDREN PLAYING BALL.

not touch. Perhaps they do not think it fit to eat. If they did they would surely, with all their hunter craft, devise some means of

getting it out of the water, a feat to which they seem utterly inadequate.

Hunting in general they excel in, like all savage nations. A walrus or bear would have their blood up at once, and it would go hard if walrus or bear did not "come to grief" in the encounter. Bear meat they consider the most invigorating of all their provender, and a grand cram of it is therefore deemed all-important before setting out on any especially fatiguing expedition.

There goes one of these furry savages after a bear. Bear is seen looming in the distance at the foot of an iceberg. The dogs are laid upon his track, and Esquimaux follows, in silence, the great stalking beast, who pretends to know nothing about him, but keeps his "weather eye" open nevertheless. Suddenly the dogs bolt forward barking, or rather howling vehemently, for their wild cry has not yet been educated into a bark. Bear sits up on end for a moment, the better to take in his various chances, then dropping on all fours again rushes on as if for his life, for he suspects alike dogs, hunters, and sledge. Off go dogs and hunter after him; hunter gradually setting

them all free from the sledge, till the yelling pack bring the bear to a stand, ready for their master to try his lance on him when he can. If there are two hunters in company then it is two to one against the bear, for while one of them *pretends* to stick him on his right side, the other does it in reality on his left, exposed by the energy with which he turns to the falsely menaced quarter. But if there is only one hunter it comes to much the same thing, though not precisely in the same time. Threatened attacks, masking real ones, soon do the business for poor Bear, and ere long he is converted into roast, and frock coat,—warming his destroyer both inside and out. The dogs often get a precious tossing before Bear succumbs to his fate. The older hands among them allow themselves to be tossed a few yards, relaxing all their muscles for the hoist, so that they alight a limp bundle, little the worse for their ride through the air. Those who do not yield thus discreetly fare the worse for it. The hunter's chances are also various. If driven to bay, Bear will sit up on his haunches and box them powerfully; and when they turn to run from him (discretion being the better

part of valour) bite them unpleasantly behind. Perhaps the bear does not think it polite for people to turn their backs upon him, and so takes this method of indicating his feelings on the subject.

Walrus hunting also has its perils. Not only those of the direct encounter with a powerful beast—a sort of Behemoth, large, heavy, and clumsy—but its incidental ones. During a season of scarcity two Esquimaux ventured to hunt this creature on the open ice, dangerous as they knew it to be. They killed their walrus, an old thing, "bearded and bluff," and were about to return with their prize, when to their dismay they found themselves, game and all, afloat. The ice had broken up under a violent gale, and their piece had taken them out to sea! It was well they had killed their walrus, as it was an entire month before they came to land, and during that dreadful period his flesh served to keep life in them.

One story of the gentler life of the Esquimaux, and we will return to our travellers and their adventures. These frozen, dirty heathens have actually their little etiquettes of polite life, which are as rigorously observed as any

small observances of that class among ourselves. One of these is that of crying with each other if anything is amiss—somebody dead, their harpoon line broken, or the like. On these occasions one begins weeping, and it is expected that all the rest will follow, whether they happen to know what he is crying about or not. Further, when a satisfactory quantity of tears has been shed it is required that the person of highest rank present should—with whatever they may chance to use for a pocket kerchief—wipe the eyes of the leading weeper.

Mrs. Eider Duck (with an impossible maiden name) one day looked up from her cooking, and cried mildly at Dr. Kane. The doctor was equal to the emergency: drawing out his handkerchief—it was a fragment of one of his own shirts—he instantly applied it, in the prescribed mode, to the lady's face, and then performed a few tears himself (which—in utter ignorance of what had set her off—he fortunately for his own reputation as a well-bred man had at command), after which they both "cheered up," and resumed their respective occupations.

CHAPTER X.

HOMEWARDS.

THE party improved in health as they travelled homewards. Perhaps turning in that direction had something to do with it. But as their health improved their appetites did also, and this brought with it its own inconvenience—more frequent return visits had to be made to the brig for provisions, for they did not like to dip too deeply into their travelling store: that must be reserved as much as possible for use when too far off for their storehouse to be available.

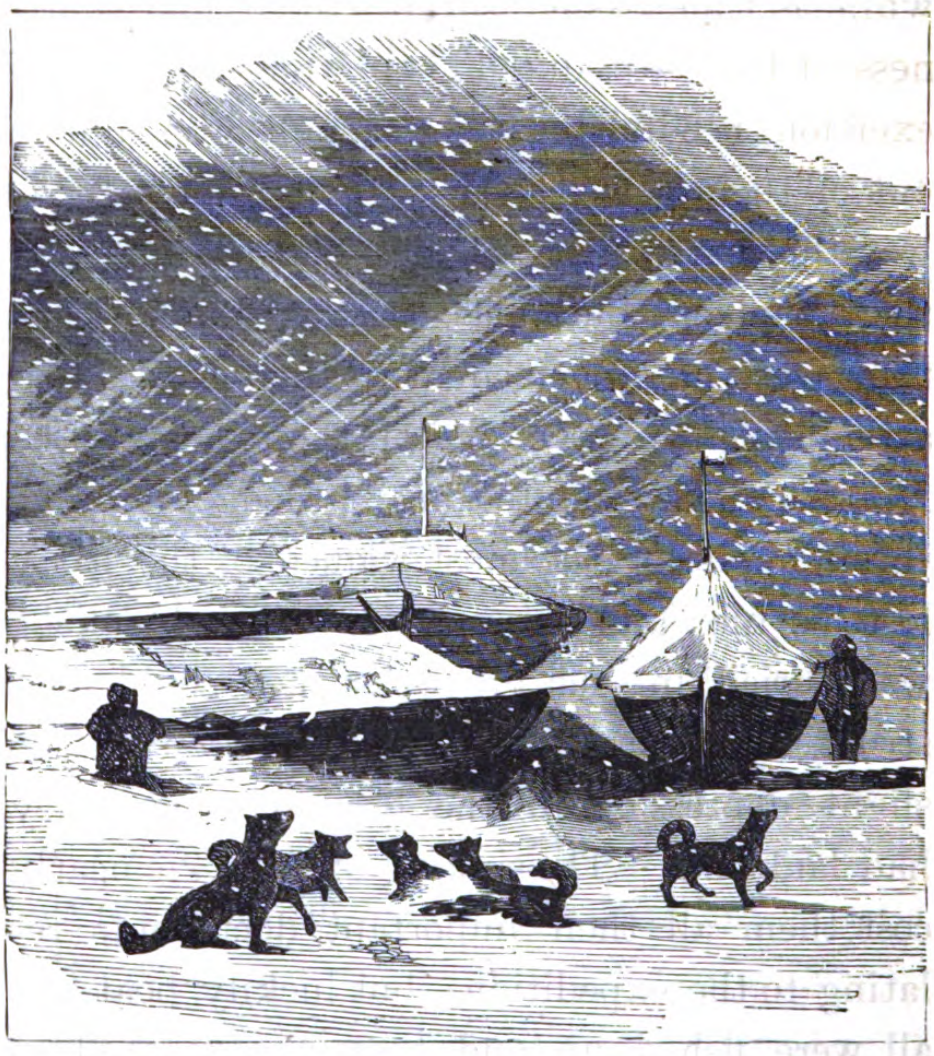
On one of these victualling trips to the brig, as the dogs were employed on other business, Dr. Kane and Tom Hickey undertook to walk back there, do a lot of baking, and have it ready for the dogs to fetch when they were at liberty.

It was a stiff journey, sixteen hours on the

ice, and as they had forgotten their "goggles" —those are pieces of wood with a slit to look through, worn to protect the eyes—they were nearly blinded by the glare of the sun by the time they got there. To work at once they set. Tom was an old professional, the doctor only an amateur baker; but between them they made some miraculous bread, kneading it in an old pickled cabbage tub, and heating their oven with a sufficient quantity of Penny Cyclopædias. Those who put them on board little dreamt of *what* use they would be to the expedition. This wonderful batch—Tom said it would be thought excellent even at home—was, alas, the last of their flour; but they consoled themselves with the reflection that on that account they should not have the trouble of making any more bread.

The dogs duly arrived to carry off the store. But with them came such a storm that departure was impossible for a time; so that once more they had Sunday service on board the desolate old brig. Finally they set out, and reached their companions in safety. They found them camped in the snow, the three boats drawn up side by side, anchored fast with a

whale line, and rigged with their canvas coverings, tent fashion, quite comfortably, though one of them was so buried in the drift that Brooks, getting out of it through the roof,



BOATS' CAMP IN A STORM.

as there was no other road out, looked just like a walrus rising from the sea.

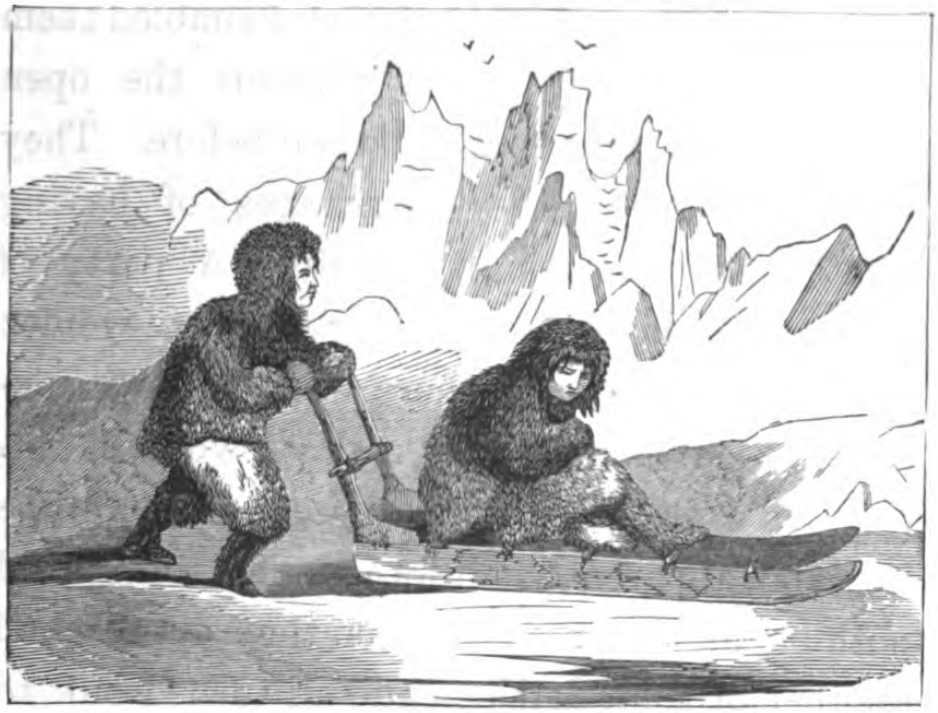
Their slow progress homewards was hard

and monotonous work. Sometimes cutting their way through the ice, then, perhaps, sledging their boats on the treacherous frozen surface, going through, splash into the water; while as time passed, severe labour, and shortness of food so reduced their strength, that the exertion needful to push or pull was almost out of their power. They thought something was the matter with the ice, or the runners of their sledges; but, alas, it was simply that they were no longer equal to their work. In attempting to save one of their boats—the *Hope*—when, mounted on its sledge, it broke through, one of the most valued of the party lost his life; and, wrapped up in his blankets, was buried in such grave as they could construct, by raising fragments of rock over the slight depression in the ground where they had laid him. The sinking of the *Eric* nearly cost them all their important documents relating to the expedition; but luckily, boat and all were fished up, and they were spared so great a mortification as the loss of their papers would have been. Two of the men in her had a narrow escape. One was caught by the sledge, and the other dragged out by his

hair, just as he was sinking beneath the ice. That was literally a *hair*-breadth escape.

The dogs, left with their Esquimaux friends at Etah to recruit, were at length brought back in good working order, and enabled them to prosecute their march towards the open water with rather less toil than before. They still experienced the advantages of having treated the natives so kindly. A party of these one day—five men, and two women just as good as men where working was concerned—gave them half a day's work in getting up a sledge that had gone through the ice; and, apparently, all for love, for they asked nothing in return. Now as they approached another of their settlements, all turned out to help the travellers. Some offered themselves to haul at the sledge, while others removed the invalids tenderly on their little, light hand-sledge. Food they brought in abundance. The little auks swarmed so that they were caught in hand-nets to the amount of eight thousand birds a-week, and as dogs ate them as well as men, it was a prize for all, and put all in heart. The men took to laughing again, and singing their jovial sailor

songs, which had been nearly knocked out of their heads by suffering; and the march, hauling at the sledges, was less gloomy than before.



CARRYING THE SICK.

"Filling their hearts with food and gladness," says the Psalmist. This was precisely the condition of these poor creatures.

The anxiety now was to get to open water, instead of fighting their way through what was neither ice nor water, but both; so dreadfully mixed up that their hearts were nearly broken by contending with it. To induce their Esquimaux friends to guide them to this,

Dr. Kane had to practise a little stratagem. Their old acquaintance Metek, the one who first came on board, a good honest fellow, with a dash of the gentleman in him, one night came privately to Dr. Kane, when all the rest had put themselves to bed, and begged him to prescribe for his youngest son, who was evidently in a bad way, as in addition to eating nothing but blubber, he slept badly, and did not grow. Other symptoms were enumerated, and in reply Dr. Kane said that to complete the cure he himself must dip his hand in the open water, and lay it upon the child, for whom meanwhile a piece of brown soap, a silk shirt, and an absolute prohibition of blubber-eating might suffice. The bait took, and with irrepressible delight they found themselves, on the 16th of June, looking out over the deep blue sea, and hearing its musical roar—such it was indeed to them—in their ears, at Cape Alexander.

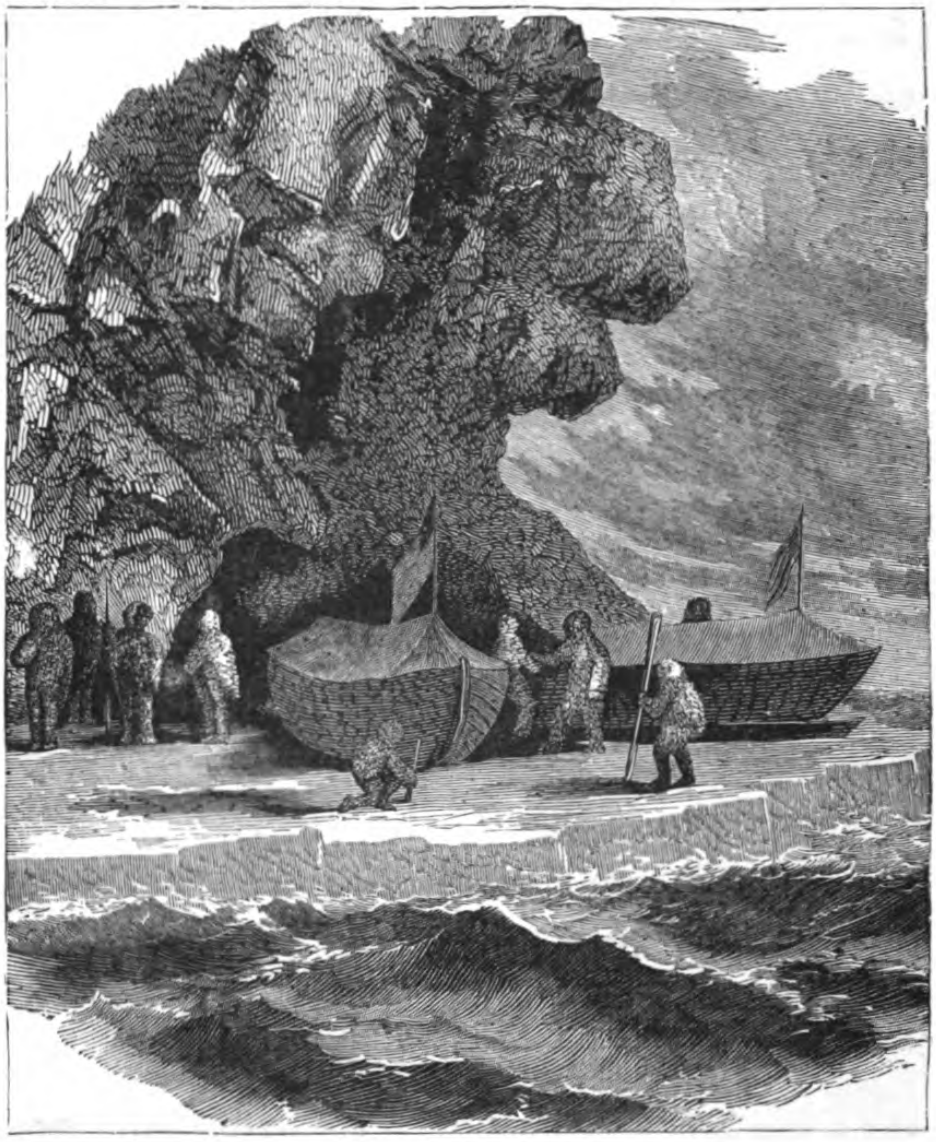
Having done them this, and many other services, their Esquimaux friends prepared to take their leave. It was kindly done on both sides. Little presents—a knife, a file, a saw, or a lump of brown soap, highly esteemed for

its medical properties, for the Esquimaux eat their soap, instead of wasting it upon their outsides—were bestowed upon them, and were gratefully received, even the little children crying out, "Thank you, thank you, Big Chief:" thanks from savages being rarities. In return, endless gifts of birds innumerable were forced upon the travellers, who, after all, could not eat for ever, though their famished performances might well have led to that conclusion, while amid the warm leave-takings, one poor woman stood crying, and wiping her eyes with a bird skin. Surely that should have brought out Dr. Kane's shirt-pocket-kerchief! The sledge dogs, now useless, were presented to the tribe as common property, all save two, the leaders of the team, with whom their master could not bear to part. One of them, the survivor, has strangely found a home in the London Zoological Gardens.

It was on Tuesday the 19th of June 1855, that the three boats—the *Faith,* the *Hope,* and *Red Eric*—were at length launched on the smooth, open water at Cape Alexander, to begin their perilous voyage along the coast.

There was still much tracking through the

ice, now sticking fast, now carried away by a large *floe*—a *floe* is a detached portion of the



PROVIDENCE HALT.

ice, whose extent can be seen from the mast-head—that nearly wrecked them by going crash against the shore ice, until, with incred-

ible exertion they had made their way rather more than one-third of the distance to Upernavik. A halt was called at Providence Cliffs, which, barren and forbidding as they were, were yet better for their wasted strength than fruitlessly struggling with the ice. For they were yet rather too early for the Arctic summer, which was required to remove that obstacle. At the foot of these craggy cliffs there was a five feet wide strip of the old, trustworthy winter ice, washed by the tide, while the waves constantly lapped against it; and upon this the boats were drawn, for their stay of a whole week, rendered positively joyous by the abundant birds, eggs, and scurvy grass with which the place abounded. It was true there was not a speck of fuel to cook with, so they ate them raw, as they had done many a time before.

They carried off with them, when they left, a good store of dried birds, by way of relish to the meagre allowance of bread-dust and tallow to which they had been reduced. Passing the Crimson Cliffs, so called from the patches of red snow on them, which give them that appearance, added still more pleasantly

to their supplies. Resting on their oars, the little auks—thanks to powder and shot—found it impossible to resist the travellers'

PASSING THE CRIMSON CLIFFS.

hospitable invitation to dinner, and were secured in loads. Plenty of turf around gave them lovely fires both for cooking and warm-

ing themselves, and boiling their tea-kettle, their grand treat whenever they could get it; and they enjoyed it as only men who had gone through such bitter hardships of cold and hunger, could do. More fasting followed this feasting. A seal, which they could scarcely shoot for agitation, saved them from famishing; and in two or three minutes they were all eating at it, without waiting for the cooking-pot. Another followed, and that was the last of Arctic starvation.

Their voyage was prosperous after this. One familiar point after another presented itself; and, at last, trembling with joy, they found themselves once more in sight of civilization, and the possibility of home, as they neared Upernavik, rowed into the harbour, and dragged up their boats for the last time, after eighty-four days' life in the open air.

Right hospitable was their welcome from the Danes there. Until the 6th of September the time was spent in much needed recruiting after their toils. Then the party sailed for the Shetland Isles, carrying with them their little boat, the *Faith*, as a memento of the

past. Before they arrived there, however, a steamer was seen in the distance, from which the floating "stars and stripes" were at length visible. The *Faith* was once more lowered, and pulling smartly at their oars, with their little fluttering Arctic flag flying at the mast, they were soon alongside, and had the satisfaction of finding that it was a vessel that had been sent out to seek them in the frozen regions; but which through not having sought in the right place, had now only found them, when they had surmounted their perils. Cheers from the well-manned rigging greeted their approach; and they were gladly taken on board to be conveyed to the homes from which they had been so long absent, after having been frozen up twenty-one months, and travelled, in sledges and boats, thirteen hundred miles of Arctic ice and water.

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