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The Conquest of the Pole

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Harvesting Food and Fuel For the Polar Trip. Narwhal Hunting an Exciting Sport

[THIRD ARTICLE]

WITH a hasty farewell to Mr. Bradley and the officers and encouraged with a cheer from all on board, we left the motherly yacht for our new home and mission. The yacht stood off to avoid drifting ice and await the return of the motorboat.

When we were set ashore we sat down and watched with saddened eyes the departure of our friends and the severing of the bond which had held us to the known world of life and happiness.

The village of Annootok is placed in a small bay just inside of Cape Ingfield. Its population changes much from year to year, according to the known luck of the chase or the ambition of the men to obtain new bear-skin trousers.

Scattered about it were twelve seal-skin tents, which served as a summer shelter for an equal number of vigorous families. In other places nearer the sea were seven stone igloos. Upon these the work of reconstruction for winter shelter had already begun.

moons, and the periods are named in accord with the movements of various creatures of the chase.

In early September at Annootok the sun dips considerably under the northern horizon. There is no night. At sunset and at sunrise storm clouds hide the bursts of color which are the glory of twilight, and the electric after-glow is generally lost in the dull gray which bespeaks the torment of the storms of the setting sun.

The gloom of the coming winter night now thickens. The splendor of the summer day has gone. A day of six months and a night of six months are often ascribed to the polar regions as a whole, but this is only true of a very small area about the pole.

As we come south the sun slips under the horizon for an ever increasing part of each twenty-four hours. Preceding and following the night as we come from the pole there is a period of day and night which lengthens with the descent of latitude.

It is this period which enables us to retain the names of the usual seasons—summer for the double days, fall for the period of the setting sun. This season begins when the sun first dips



THE MIDNIGHT SUN IN THE ARCTIC.

In the immediate vicinity there were some turf and moss, but everywhere else within a few hundred feet of the sea the land rose abruptly in steep slopes of barren rock.

To the westward across Smith sound in a blue haze were seen Cape Sabine, Bache peninsula and some of the land beyond which we hoped to cross in our prospective venture.

The construction of a winter house and workshop called for immediate attention after the wind subsided. Men, women and children offered strong hands to gather the stones strewn along the shore.

When the cargo is packed in this manner the things can be quickly tossed on deck and transported to floating ice or land. Later it is possible, with packing boxes of uniform size as building material, to erect efficient shelter wherein the calamities of arctic disaster can be avoided.

Building Winter Quarters.

This precaution against ultimate mishap now served a very useful purpose. Inclosing a space 13 by 16 feet, the cases were quickly piled in. The walls were held together by strips of wood or the joints sealed with pasted paper with the addition of a few long boards.

A really good roof was made by using the covers of the boxes as shingles. A blanket of turf over this confined the heat and permitted at the same time healthful circulation of air.

We slept under our own roof at the end of the first day, and our new house had the very great advantage of containing within its walls all our possessions within easy reach at all times.

As the winter advanced with its stormy ferocity and frightful darkness it was not necessary to venture out and dig up supplies from great depths of snowdrift. Meat and blubber were stored in large quantities about the camp.

Much Work in Sight.

But our expedition was in need of skins and furs. Furthermore, as men engaged for the northern venture would be away during the spring months, the best hunting season of the year, it was necessary to make provision for house needs later. There was therefore much work before us, for we had not only to prepare our equipment, but to provide for the families of the workers.

In the polar cycle of the seasons there are peculiar conditions which apply to circumstances and movements. As the worst seasons is ordinarily understood there are but two, a winter season and a summer season—a winter season of nine months and a summer of three months.

under the ice at midnight for a few moments.

The Arctic Night.

These moments increase rapidly, yet one hardly appreciates that the sun is departing until day and night are of equal length, for the night remains light, though not cheerful. Then the day rapidly shortens and darkens, and the sun sinks until at least there is but a mere glimmer of the glory of day.

Winter is limited to the long night, and spring applies to the days of the rising sun, a period corresponding to the autumn days of the setting sun.

At Annootok the midnight sun is first seen over the sea horizon on April 23. It dips in the sea on Aug. 19. It thus encircles the horizon, giving summer and continuous day for 118 days. It sets at midday on Oct. 24 and is absent a period of prolonged night corresponding to the day and rises on Feb. 20.

Harvesting Food and Fuel.

Then follow the eye opening days of spring. In the fall, when the harmonizing influence of the sun is withdrawn, there begins a battle of the elements which continues its smoky agitation until stilled by the hopeless frost of early night.

At this time, though field work was painful, the needs of our venture forced us to persistent action in the chase of walrus, seal, narwhal and white whale. We harvested food and fuel.

Before winter ice spread over the hunting grounds ptarmigan, hare and reindeer were sought to supply the table during the long night with delicacies, while bear and fox pleased the palates of the Eskimos and their pelts clothed all.

Many long journeys were made to secure an important supply of grass to pad boots and mittens and also to secure moss, which serves as wick for the Eskimo lamp. The months of September and October were indeed important periods of anxious seeking for reserve supplies.

Aid From the Eskimos.

There was a complex activity suddenly stimulated along the Greenland coast which did not require general supervision. The Eskimos knew what was required without a word from us and knew better than we did where to find the things worth while. An outline of the polar campaign was sent from village to village, with a few general instructions.

Each local group of natives was to fill an important duty and bring together the tremendous amount of material required for our house and sled equipment. Each Eskimo village has, as a rule, certain game advantages.

In some places foxes and hares were abundant. Their skins were in great demand for coats and stockings, and

Eskimos must not only gather the greatest number possible, but must prepare the skins and make them into properly fitting garments.

In other places reindeer were abundant. This skin was very much in demand for sleeping bags, while the sinew was required for thread. In still other places seal was the luck of the chase, and its skin was one of our most important needs. Of its boots were ordered, and an immense amount of line and lashings was prepared.

Thus in one way or another every man, woman and most of the children of this tribe of 250 people were kept busy in the service of the expedition. The work was well done and with much better knowledge of the fitness of things than could be done by any possible gathering of white men.

Use of the Narwhal.

The quest of the walrus and the narwhal came in our own immediate plan of adventure. The unicorn, or narwhal, does not often come under the eye of the white man, though one of the first animals to leave our shores.

It gave for a brief spell good results in sport and useful material. The blubber is the pride of every house-keeper, for it gives a long, hot flame to the lamp, with no smoke to spoil the igloo fire. The skin is regarded as quite a delicacy. Cut into squares, it looks and tastes like scallops, with only a slight aroma of train oil.

The meat dries easily and is thus prized as an appetizer or as a lunch to be eaten en route in sled or kayak. In this shape it was an extremely useful thing for us, for it took the place of pemmican for our less urgent journeys.

The narwhal, which, apart from its usefulness, is most interesting to denizens of the arctic deep, played in schools far off shore, usually along the edge of large ice. Its long ivory tusks rose under spots of breath and spray.

When this glad sight was noted every kayak about camp was manned, and the Eskimos' skin canoes went like birds over the water. Some of the Eskimos rose to the ice fields and delivered harpoons from a secure footing. Others hid behind floating fragments of heavy ice and made a sudden rush as the animals passed.

Still others came up in the rear, for the narwhal cannot easily see backward and does not often turn to watch its enemies, its speed being so fast that it can easily keep ahead of other troublesome creatures.

Hunting the Narwhal.

The harpoon is always delivered at close range. When the dragging float marked the end of the line in tow of the frightened creature the line of skin canoes followed. The narwhal is timid by nature. Fearing to rise for breath, he plunged along until nearly strangled. When it did come up there were several Eskimos near with drawn lances, which inflicted deep gashes.

Again the narwhal plunged deep down with but one breath and hurried along as best it could. But its speed slackened, and a line of crimson marked its hidden path. Loss of blood and want of air did not give it a chance to fight. Again it came up with a spout; again the lances were hurled.

The battle continued for several hours, with many exciting adventures, but in the end the narwhal always succumbed, offering a prize of several thousand pounds of meat and blubber. Victory, as a rule, was not gained until the hunters were far from home, also far from the shore line. But the Eskimo is a courageous hunter and an intelligent seaman.

Towing the Carcass.

To the huge carcass frail kayaks were hitched in a long line. Towing is slow, wind and sea combining to make the task difficult and dangerous.



DR. COOK IN ARCTIC COSTUME

One sees nothing of the narwhal and very little of the kayak, for dashing seas wash over the little craft, but the double bladed paddles seasaw with the regularity of a pendulum.

Homecoming takes many hours and engenders a prodigious amount of hard work, but there is energy to spare, for a wealth of meat and fat is the culmination of all Eskimo ambition.

Seven of these ponderous animals were brought in during five days, making a heap of more than 40,000 pounds of food and fuel. Then the narwhals suddenly disappeared, and we saw no more of them.

Three white whales were also obtained in a similar way at Etah at about the same time.

(Continued next week.)

J. D. WALCK Real Estate Dealer

NOTARY PUBLIC Mitchell Hotel Block JOSEPH, OREGON

To the Citizens of Wallowa County:

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E. W. SOUTHWICK, Proprietor.

Advertisement for 'DHL RECORD' featuring an image of a horse and text describing 'Pacific Horse Liniment' as a remedy for various ailments.

Advertisement for 'ENTERPRISE OPERA HOUSE' with the text 'Watch for Next Announcement'.

Advertisement for 'New and Elegant Furniture Queensware Glassware' by 'Hunsaker & Taylor's' in Joseph, Oregon.

Advertisement for 'The Eldredge' sewing machine, highlighting its 'ROLLER BEARING HIGH GRADE' and 'Automatic Lift' features.

A Curious Needle.

A curious needle was once in the possession of Queen Victoria. It was made at the celebrated needle factory at Redditch and represents the column of Trajan in miniature.

This Roman column is adorned with numerous scenes in sculpture, and on the needle (which was presented to the queen on her visit to the famous factory in December, 1864) scenes in her life are presented in relief, but so small that it requires a powerful magnifying glass to see them clearly.

This "Victoria" needle can, moreover, be opened and contains a number of needles of smaller size, which are also adorned with scenes in relief.—London Spare Moments.

Equals.

One day a distinguished notary while breakfasting with a friend at a cafe in Paris indulged in some stinging comments on the public acts of Marshal Marmont. Suddenly another gentleman, dining at another table, arose and approached them, his mustache bristling with anger.

"Sir," cried he tragically, "you shall give me satisfaction!"

"Are you Marshal Marmont?" quietly asked the notary.

"I have not that honor," was the indignant reply, "but I am his chief aide-camp."

"Give me your card, then, sir," said the notary. "I will send you my head clerk."

Witchcraft.

Perhaps the most interesting of English trials for witchcraft was that of the Suffolk witches in 1665, for Sir Matthew Hale was the judge, and Sir Thomas Browne appeared as an expert medical witness. The two prisoners were accused of bewitching young children, a great point for the prosecution being that out of the blanket of an infant suckled by one of them a great toad had fallen and exploded in the fire like gunpowder. Immediately after the witch was found at home scorched and maimed. In spite of unsatisfactory evidence, the two were convicted, whereupon the children's health at once began to improve.—London Times.

Evil Effects of Shoes.

With the increase of protection the feet have become weaker from confinement and to a considerable extent have lost their natural elasticity and mobility. Their ventilation and circulation are also interfered with. Moreover, certain deformities and painful affections have become so common from unhygienic footwear and from too prolonged standing that the idea is prevalent that all feet are more or less ugly, painful and helpless. Even the idea of the natural shape of the foot is lost, and a false standard of shape, having as its basis the conventional shape of the shoe, has to a certain extent taken its place.—Henry Ling Taylor in Good Housekeeping.

The Jarndyce Case.

The Jarndyce case in "Bleak House" was based on fact. It was actually the famous Dye-Sombre case. A French adventurer in the eighteenth century married a begum of Oude and acquired enormous wealth. I think it was he who built the Martimere at Agra, so famous in the Indian mutiny, and miles of other beautiful buildings of mud and chunam. How his affairs after death got into chancery I don't know, but the fact remains that every scrap of his wealth dissolved in the litigation. While it lasted members of the contesting families were cared for, and descendants are today holding commissions in the English army and other reputable positions.—New York Sun.

Not to Be Balked.

The Lawyer—The precedents are against you, madam.

The Lady—Well, sue them too.

Kills Her Foe of 20 Years.

"The most merciless enemy I had for 20 years," declares Mrs. James Duncan, of Haynesville, Me., "was Dyspepsia. I suffered intensely after eating or drinking and could scarcely sleep. After many remedies had failed and several doctors gave me up, I tried Electric Bitters, which cured me completely. Now I can eat anything. I am 70 years old and am overjoyed to get my health and strength back again." For indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Kidney Trouble, Lame Back, Female Complaints, its unequalled. Only 50c at Burnaugh & Mayfield's.

Orchids.

Only \$5 is paid in Brazil to the finder of an orchid which is sold in New York for \$150 or more.