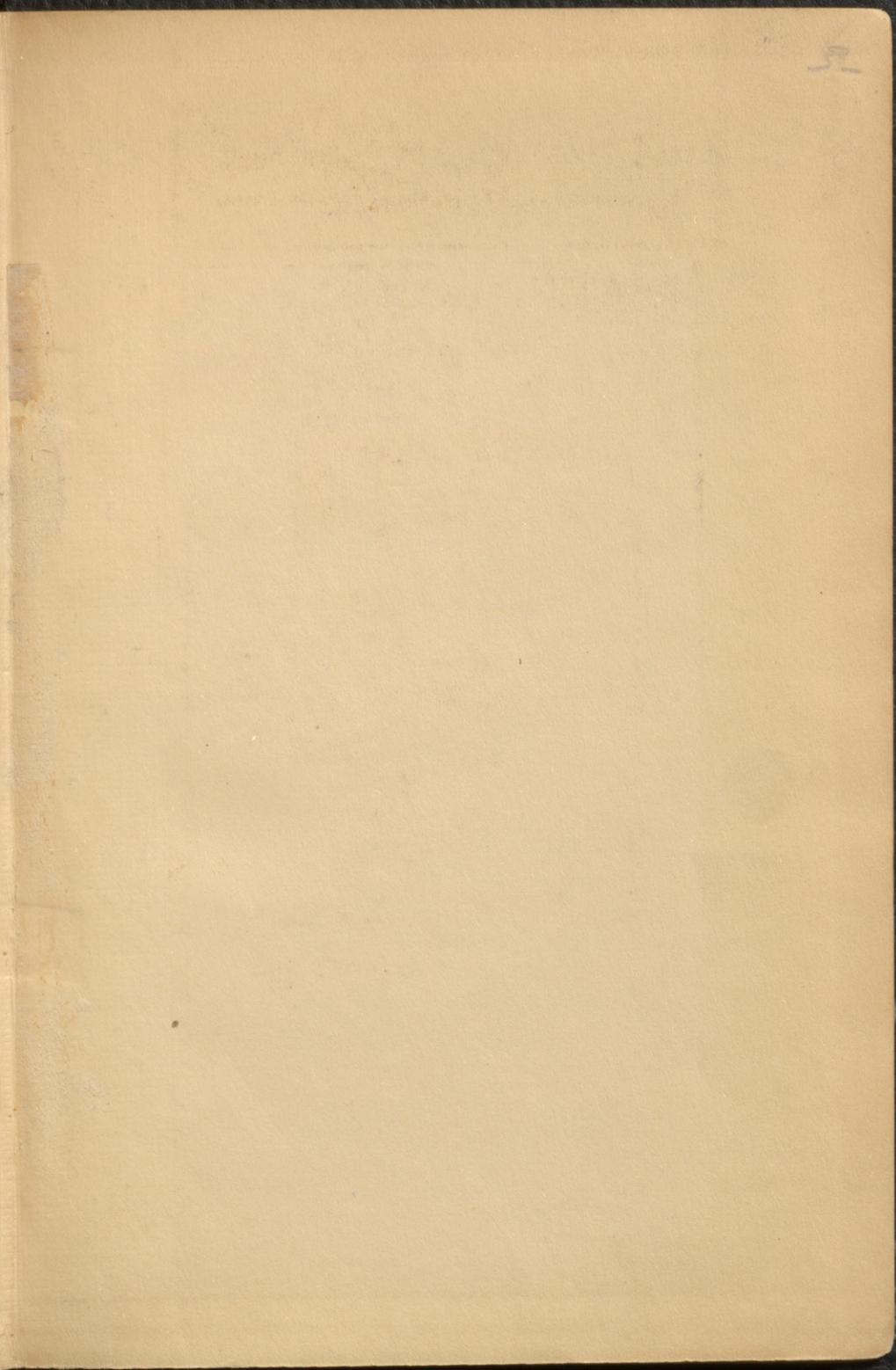


PRESENTED BY THE
UNIVERSITY BOOK CLUB



ACC. NO. 292925 . DATE 1934

5081



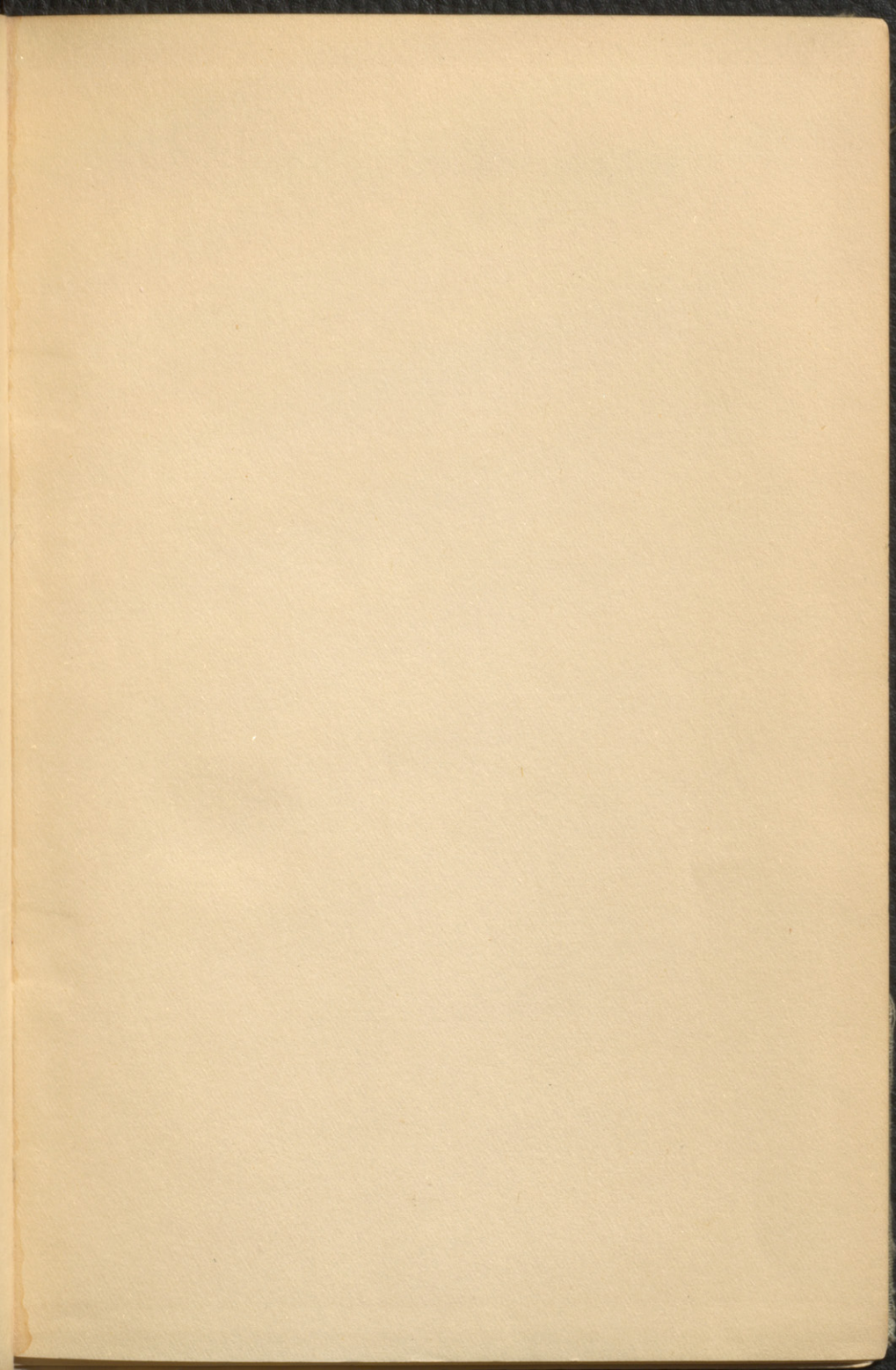
McGill University Libraries

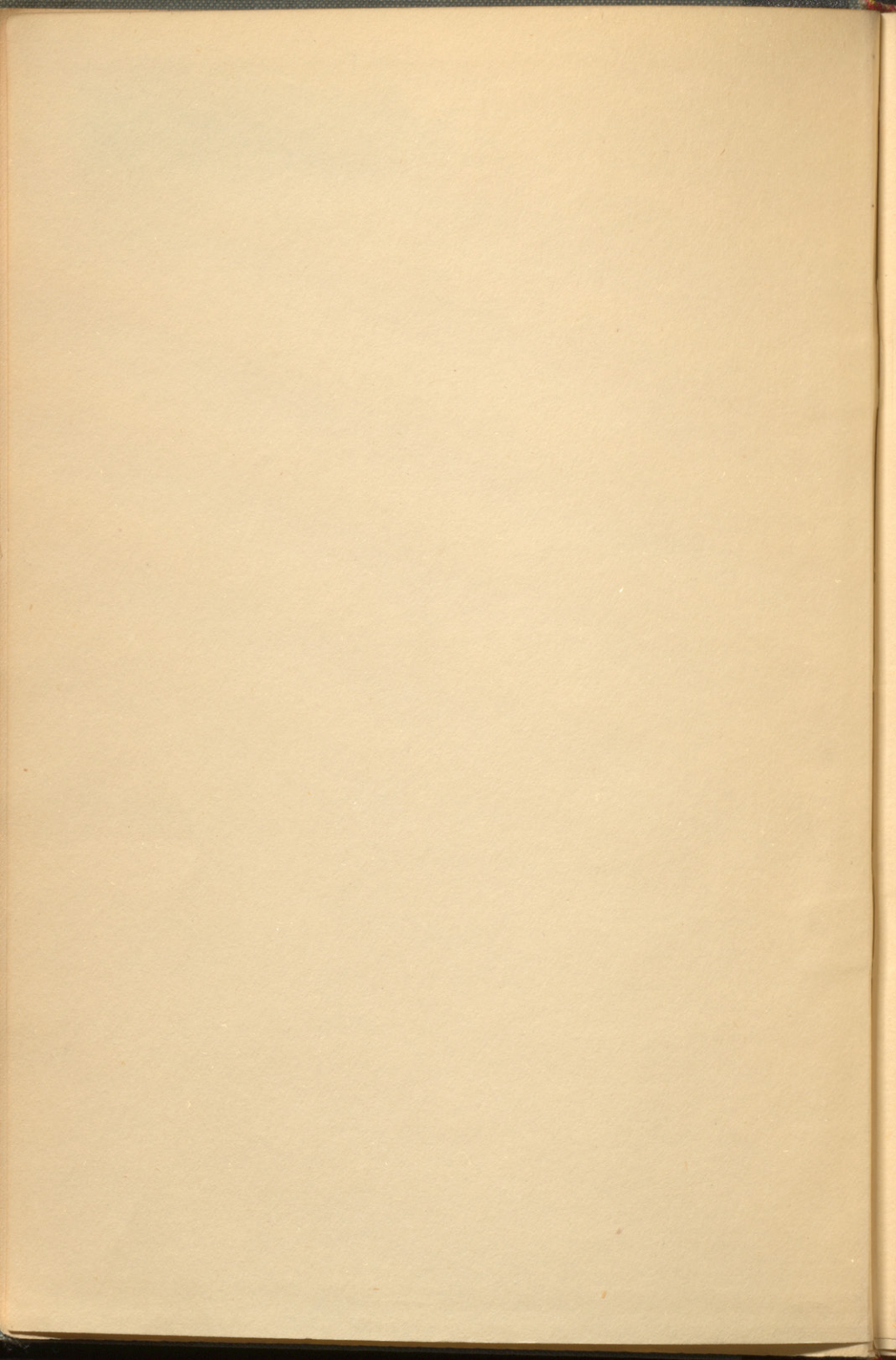
G 608 K6

Klengenberg of the Arctic :



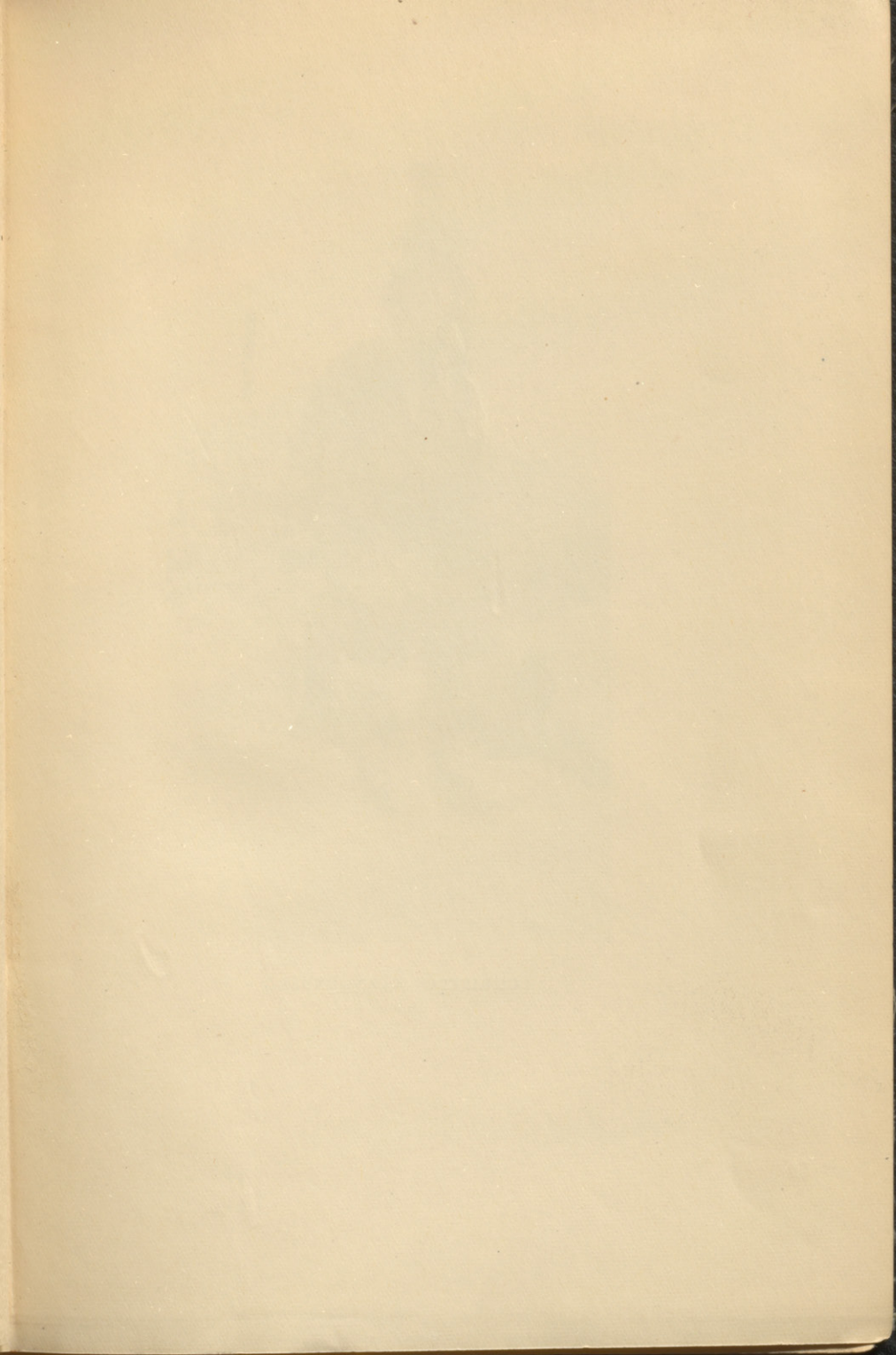
3 000 693 253 8





KLENGENBERG OF THE ARCTIC

K. ENGELBERG OF THE ARCTIC





CHRISTIAN KLENGENBERG

Klengenberg of the Arctic

An Autobiography

Edited by

TOM MACINNES



LONDON · JONATHAN CAPE · TORONTO

FIRST PUBLISHED 1932

JONATHAN CAPE LTD. 30 BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON
AND 91 WELLINGTON STREET WEST, TORONTO

G608 K6 McLennan
Klengenber, Christian,
Klengenber of the Arctic
EK674 71789719

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE CITY OF OXFORD
AT THE ALDEN PRESS

PAPER MADE BY JOHN DICKINSON & CO., LTD.

BOUND BY A. W. BAIN & CO., LTD.

CONTENTS

	INTRODUCTION	9
I	IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH	17
II	I GO TO AMERICA AND FARTHER	25
III	NORTH AND SOUTH AND HONOLULU SIDE	35
IV	THE REAL ARCTIC AT LAST	50
V	ARCTIC SOCIETY	56
VI	BIG WIND	65
VII	WHAT CAME OF SLAYING BEARS	71
VIII	FLOOR WHALING	81
IX	ANOTHER DANCE AND AWAY	100
X	ADRIFT ON THE ICE	114
XI	HERSCHEL ISLAND	119
XII	BACK TO WIFE AND ANOTHER	134
XIII	ETNA ENTERS THE ARCTIC	138
XIV	REINDEER, RASCALS AND GOLD	149
XV	FOUR WHALES IN A DAY	163
XVI	MUSHING WITH THE BARROW MAILS	175
XVII	TROUBLE FOR ALL ON THE OLGA	195
XVIII	THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT	216
XIX	MY ENTRY ON VICTORIA ISLAND	222
XX	SUFFICIENTLY TRIED	237
XXI	OVER THE HARD TIME HILLS	260
XXII	BLUFFING A BEAR FROM HIS MEAT	280
XXIII	MEAT, MEDICINE AND RELIGION	293
XXIV	CLASH OF OLD CUSTOMS AND NEW LAWS	307
XXV	MY LAST TROUBLES IN THE ARCTIC	329
XXVI	HAPPY AND READY FOR MORE	349
	POSTSCRIPT	350

ILLUSTRATIONS

CHRISTIAN KLENGENBERG	<i>Frontispiece</i>
FLOOR WHALING: RAISING A CARCASS	<i>facing p.</i> 82
FLOOR WHALING: CUTTING-IN	" 82
OOMIAK	" 118
SUMMER AT HERSCHEL ISLAND	" 118
SIBERIAN HUSKY	" 180
ARCTIC HUSKY	" 180
HERSCHEL ISLAND IN WINTER	" 216
BACK FROM WINTER HUNTING	" 216
CAPE LISBURNE	" 268
DARNLEY BAY	" 268
VICTORIA LAND ESKIMOS	" 309
VICTORIA LAND ESKIMO (TARTAR TYPE)	" 309
PATSY KLENGENBERG'S TRADING POST	" 348
SCHOONERS AT RYMER POINT	" 348

INTRODUCTION

OVER the years, and among the living and the dead, I have had the luck to become intimate with men whose doings have been remote from those of others in the fields of achievement. Some notorious — some obscure — some heroic — but all of them clear-cut characters. I found them especially interesting because of the friendly eye they had for me, which sweetened the use I made of them whenever the chance came.

Now this will be the relation of Captain Christian Klengenber, as it is to be made to me this winter in Vancouver. I had Klengenber in mind before ever I met him, because of a slight and rather slighting reference made to him in Vilhjalmur Stefansson's book, *Hunters of the Great North*. Stefansson wrongly calls him 'Klinkenberg', but rightly says that he first went to the Arctic as a cook on a trading schooner. Stefansson indeed credits Klengenber with qualities of patience and perseverance and endurance, the which are good qualities, even in a spider, but at the same time he ascribes to him a character 'not very different from that of the buccaneers of old, or the Sea Wolf of Jack London's story'.

I knew the man who was the Sea Wolf. I met him about thirty-five years ago at Victoria, that retired and nonchalant little town which serves as a capital for British Columbia. He was known as Captain Alexander McLean — a native Scot of Nova Scotia — and accustomed to schooners. Even at that time he was renowned for his risky exploits in the North Pacific and Bering Sea. The Bering Sea Claims Commission was then in session at Victoria, and I was attached to it as one of the secre-

taries. McLean had business with the Commission, and during the course of getting to the bottom of that we had one drink and another. Some years later McLean fell in with Jack London at San Francisco, and of a night would spin for him a mix of many things about his experiences and escapades in the Pacific. London took the rough stuff of the yarn, and worsened it until it was worsted as novel material for the public which has a taste for that sort of thing, if it can be read comfortably at home. But doing so he published McLean to the world as the bestial Sea Wolf. He did not name him, of course, and he turned the Scotch of him into something Teutonic, but for all that it was made plain to seafaring men of the North Pacific that Aleck McLean was the Sea Wolf. Eleven years after first meeting him I met McLean again, but it was a full thirty years before I found occasion to write this of him:

‘McLean was by no means the aggressive ruffian pictured by Jack London in his novel, *The Sea Wolf*. Incidentally, in 1907, he complained bitterly about the way Jack London had maligned him. He expressed a hot desire to be in a position some day to shanghai him; and having him at sea to put him through his paces in a way that he had never treated any member of his crew. I knew McLean for a fair-going man among his men. Yet once, on being asked how he controlled his men so well at sea, when things went wrong with whatever odd business he had in hand, he answered:

“Mac, I always carry enough handcuffs on my ship for the whole crew; and I have never sailed a ship with a crew that I could not put the handcuffs on!” — *Chinook Days*.

Klengenberg was no more of a wolf in the Arctic than

McLean was in Bering Sea. But he won to his command after greater trials and in bleaker circumstances. As to being a buccaneer, which, in a loose way of speaking, Aleck McLean almost was, Christian Klengenber is not. I have it from his own lips.

Being called a wolf, wet or dry, unless at the bar in a friendly way, was something which Aleck McLean would take from no man as a compliment. Neither now will Christian Klengenber. But as there has been so much talk about this, it may be as well to mention here that *Sea Wolf*, as title or epithet, was not original with Jack London. It was a name assumed by the English pirate, Arnold Winterton. He called himself *The Sea Wolf*, and put the figure of a snarling wolf on his ship flag, and that showed the sort of man he was. *Wolf* was a name too noble for the like of him, for no wolf, however wild, is vile or cruel of set purpose, while Winterton was a treacherous murderer of men, women and children at sea. His ship, the *Scorpion*, was captured in a fight off the coast of Kent, England, in the fall of 1723, and Winterton, and all survivors of his crew, were hanged.

However, the title seems to have passed, it having been conferred quite emphatically on another person by an American writer, who writes as one having authority, John B. Burnham. In this traveller's recent and interesting book about hunting on one edge of the Siberian Arctic he says:

'Max Gottschalk is the real sea wolf of the North. Alexander McLean, who served as a model for Jack London's character in fiction, was milk and water compared with the cognac of Max Gottschalk . . . The story of Max's exploits would fill a dozen volumes. He is a man in the raw, unmoral rather than immoral, a careless gambler with death. Captured, like Samson by a woman's guile at Bering Strait, he

was sentenced to death at Vladivostok, but before he could be executed the Tsar was overthrown, and along with other prisoners he was released. . . . When Nome becomes untenable he has a rendezvous arranged at the tail of the Aleutians from which to carry on. Max is having his fling before the curtain drops.' — *The Rim of Mystery*, pp. 42-44. Ed. 1929.

Nothing so much wrong about all that, so far as I can see. Nothing brutish or sadistic. Just a man living as needs must in a hard land where every day is a day of taking chances — if he would remain alive. But dog on a wolf, anyway, as our forthright Saxon ancestors used to say!

From preliminary interviews I gather that Christian Klengenberg's first memories reach back into a little carpenter-shop, where he played in the shavings, and happily thought that he was helping his father's business. After that he consorted with fishermen. So what between his start in a small workshop, and then having his ambition roused for ventures on the deep through listening while young to the talk of the Baltic and North Sea fishermen, the first setting for Klengenberg's career was not unlike that of our great Captain Cook. Klengenberg rose from being cook to being captain, and as a youngster on the *Venus* he travelled farther, and with more of outlook and insight and mishap, than did young Jaimie Cook on the *Freelove*. What I am trying to say is that the position of sea-cook may open the way for many an adventure far and wide, and farther inside than the pantry. There may be more than soup in it for a man of parts, as was so excellently shown in the case of John Silver, sailing to Treasure Island.

Seems to me, from acquaintance with such characters, or reading of them, that if one have some demon in him seeking expression of this world, rather than the finer way

of escape, it will generally worry him until it comes through for itself to suit itself—regardless of a man's comfort or domestic welfare or proper business. Occasionally it may leave him prosperous, but when he is prosperous it is like to leave him, and it may leave him in the lurch long before that. Klengenber, however, seems to have won his way now into easy circumstances without losing that flair which has so little concern for mere ease.

Klengenber came to me before last Christmas, asking if I would do the writing of a book about his life, and I said I would. He thought his observations of the Arctic worth recording, because supplementary to such as are merely of an official or sectarian character, and liable therefore to be cut a bit on the bias, and I agreed that was so, but told him his adventures would be more so. Likely we both are right.

Klengenber is a neat man, and of elegant intent at all times. Being a Dane, his mother tongue is the rich Norwegian, but I am to try and put into plain English what he tells me, after I understand what he means. So for that he says he will be seeing me.

Because of what I already know, I expect that what I am to write truly of the life and character of Christian Klengenber will demonstrate how doggedness and settled purpose to be up and doing in high latitudes, together with right knowledge and training in youth, may now and then be helpful in attaining success—after a lifetime of struggle against desolate conditions. Young men of proper ambition may receive encouragement from this relation. Likewise young women may rejoice in the example set by clever Gremnia and her brave daughters, even although what is to be told of their goings may

appear only as the like of a shy auroral glimmer from the North, revealing how admirable are the domestic virtues, and how labours and hardships should be shared with husbands, as well as those few delights which properly may be had of this life, whether at home or in the wilderness or abroad in foreign parts.

Vancouver,
Canada.

January, 1931.

KLENGENBERG OF THE ARCTIC

CHAPTER I

IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH

I am an old Dane. My name, as first registered, was Christian Klengenbergh Jørgensen. But when after I got to sea I became identified as Kim Klengenbergh, and as the years passed I let it go at that. To the few good words and letters and propositions in the Arctic which I could meet, and who treated me and returned my thanks when I was in trouble, I was known as "Little Charlie". The best name in Polar regions which my wife and I got for our "Klengenberghs" which is about the same thing with many of our relations is the designation, "Little Charlie". I never expect to tell his name when I am in the Arctic for the first time, or a sign of good nature, and so I do not want for my vessel's crew who will be meeting me as a stranger. During my years in the Arctic there was another Charlie there, whose name was "Big Charlie" and he was known as "Big Charlie". The vessel was the "Charlie" and he entered the Arctic at about the same time as I did. I may be talking nonsense.

My father had been a soldier, fighting against the Russians when they invaded Denmark in 1808, and he had been badly wounded. That was the first time that the name came from us. On the night of the English invasion, and I was present in the battle of Copenhagen, and I was present in the battle of Copenhagen because of the fact that the Danes were defeated there. I was present in the battle of Copenhagen because of the fact that the Danes were defeated there.

KINCEY BIRD OF THE ARCTIC

CHAPTER I

IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH

I AM an old Dane. My name, as first registered, was Christian Klengenber^g Jorgensen. But soon after I put to sea it became shortened to Kris Klengenber^g, and as the years passed I let it go at that. To the few good whalers and traders and prospectors in the Arctic whom I could trust, and who trusted me and remained my friends when I was in trouble, I was known as 'Little Charlie'. The best name in Eskimo which my wife ever had for me was 'Charlie Urlie', which is about the same thing, with more of endearment in the diminutive. Eskimos expect a stranger to tell his various names when he approaches them for the first time, as a sign of good intent, and so I do that same for my readers, who will be receiving me as a stranger. During my years in the Arctic there was another Charlie there almost as famous as myself, and he was known as 'Big Charlie'. His proper name was Charles Brower, and he entered the Arctic at Point Hope even before I did. I may be telling somewhat of him later.

My father had been a soldier, fighting against the Prussians when they ravished Denmark in 1866, and he had been badly wounded. That was the time that Kiel was taken away from us, for use against the English and others, and I was reared in the sullen atmosphere prevailing in Denmark because of the war that had been inflicted upon us, and so soon as I was aware of

anything at all I was impressed vaguely but bitterly with resentment against the Prussians, of whom I heard so much evil and no good.

I was born on the 21st December, 1869, at Svendborg, a small seaport of Denmark, situate on the south side of the island of Funen. My mother's name was Moller, and she had Viking blood in her veins. She was a very hardy and happy woman, and she found her happiness in working for us all, although we were somewhat of a crowd. I had three brothers and four sisters, and father was often ailing, as a result of his old wound. I thought my father very wonderful as a carpenter and carver of wood. I had my good nature from him, and my good looks from my mother. My mother could sing sagas!

Svendborg of fifty years and more ago may not have been a place of much importance in the eyes of outsiders. But the children born there in my time knew how great it was. Svendborg was founded by Vikings. There was a ruined castle called Orkil nigh the town, and there had been feasts and gay doings in and about that castle through hundreds of brave years. Beautiful ladies had lived there who wore laces and green velvet gowns and chains of gold. My mother told me.

I kept in mind and I have never lost what I heard from my mother's lips about the Norse heroes of old, and about Baldur the Beautiful, and the Apples of Life which gave back youth to the Gods, and about the droll gnomes of Niffelheim and the Frost Giants, and the Great Disaster that was and that is to come, called Regenarok. As a matter of convention I was confirmed in the Lutheran Church when I was fourteen, but always I felt more in touch with Wodin and Thor than ever I was or wanted to be with St. Paul. I have never drifted entirely out of communion with things I knew before I reached America;

nor have I lost what I learned from hearing tales of the queers that live just round the corner of what we can see.

The sea broods and complains and coaxes around Svendborg Sound to the flat shores where in my childhood there were a few crooked, wind-blown trees which could grow no more, and whereon was built the one little town which had ceased to grow long before the trees, but whose solid houses endured, and whose redolent wharves served a little harbour for little ships. I remember all the place and round about from a few years after I was born until the spring of 1886, after which time I saw it no more.

There was a hill on Funen, which was a mountain for me. It may stand two hundred feet above the sea, and it was an adventure for a small boy to climb it and see all the world from its top. I think it was called Ovenhoi — something like that. From it one could see the two other islands, neither of them so big as Funen, but one of them well above the water, and their names were Tasinga and Toora. There were vineyards on Funen and from the fine clay that was there the busy folk made plates and pots. Around our island there would be brigs and schooners and galiots coming and going all the time when the sea was not frozen. When four years old I would steal away by myself to watch them, with their different sails flopping or fluttering or swelling out tight like a great man's stomach. As I grew older I found that of those little ships there was always a chance for something new to come to Funen, whether of cargo or crew. I would prowl and loiter about the barrel-laden docks, loving the clean smell of tar, and there I would study the hulls and lines and masts and spars and rigging of the vessels in port, and I would cast a knowing and critical eye on their

figure-heads. My father carved the best figure-heads in the world at his little shop in Svendborg, and it would always be a happy day for us when he sold one.

Sometimes I would be listening to the sails as they whispered to each other when they were loose on the masts, asking each other where they would be going next. At first it seemed to me that the most important cargoes which ships could carry were nuts and oranges, but soon I learned that they carried many other things to us, for which we gave them butter and wine and brandy and pots and plates. My father would let me go to the shipyard where schooners and sloops and rowboats were being built, and of my long watching there I acquired knowledge which guided my hand in later years when I had to do work on little ships of my own.

Through my first years, as I now remember them, my father was providing well for us as a cabinet maker and joiner and wood carver. I was fond of passing hours with him when he would be at work in his shop. It was full of sweet-smelling wood. There were enticing boxes of tools, and other things for his trade, stowed away in the corners. It was a happy place for me, especially when the sun would be shining through the dusty window-panes, making yellow lines and blue shadows in the shop. My work was to pick up the curly shavings as they fell to the floor, and the odd splinters and ends of wood not wanted, so that mother would have kindling for her fire in the kitchen. Sometimes I would be spellbound watching my father carve the figure-heads for ships. I loved to see them coming out of the wood, as he cut and cleared the way for them to look out and see the world. And what chances they had for long years after they chose their ships — all the way from Europe to the Spice

Islands, and back and forth over the waters that heave between Aurora Australis and Aurora Borealis!

By the time I was ten years old my father's brief years of prosperity were over. The little shop had to be closed. I recall now the grief it was to all of us; and how then mother would be cheering my father, saying that if he would go out to sea, and gather fish from the fishermen as they first had them in their boats, she herself would arrange to cure and smoke them, and would get a staff of women to go about from door to door in the mornings and sell them fresh to the townsfolk. So my father took to the sea for the gathering of fish very early in the morning from the boats that were out on the Baltic, and the fishers went on with their fishing the longer because of that.

I was chosen by my father to go out with him in his dory, which is a small, flat-bottomed sailboat with a sharp prow. We would start away about four o'clock every morning except Sunday, and to do that we needs were out of bed half an hour earlier to eat the hot breakfast which mother would have ready for us. We would get back with the fish in time for me to attend the local school every afternoon.

Thus for several years I had work which was hard for the longer half of the day for more than half the year, that is until the sea was frozen. It was risky very often, but it made me to know the moods of the sea, and the way of its tides and waves. All the while I was close to the water in that dory — as close as the Vikings had been — and that is closer than when one is a sailor on a big ship. I shook hands with the sea every morning. Indoors, through the afternoons, I would be taught reading and writing and geography and simple arithmetic. In the winter I would be at that both morning and afternoon, and be studying history as well in the way to remember it.

If, while one is young, he has much of what I had while out with my father in a dory at sea, helping him earn a living, such a one will learn to feel the company of the elements, and whatever may be back of them imperceptibly. He will learn how to drive with or against them. He will become familiar with all their winds and their variance. Without thought he will be guided aright by signs in the skies. Thus he becomes shrewd of the the sea, with its long brooding and ancient anger, and all its fickleness. Such knowledge crystalized to instinct through all my body, and it stood me well in after years.

Often it would be bitter for us in the cold weather, sidling to this boat and that, so wide apart on the rough waves. We would take over and keep tally of the various kinds of fish received from each boat-crew. Sometimes I would be crying with the ache of my arms, and the sting of the salt spray in my face. It would be hardest of all on the cold days without wind, or when there was a head wind against us, so that we had to row all the way home against the tide. But I was always proud to be carrying fish to my mother. She would tell me how the Vikings learned to know the sea at close quarters just as I was doing, and of how they became fitted then to go forth and raid the coasts of England and harry the bloody Saxons, who were swordsmen, and of how sometimes they would be getting beyond and doing the same to the wild people living in the north of Ireland, although remaining most of the time on good terms with the Scots because of their wisdom and their hospitality and the handy way they had with their weapons. She told me of how they had fought, when there seemed a fair chance, with the fierce Moors who had built splendid cities in Spain, and had schools such as the world never had known before. And of the plunder which some once had of the wicked Romans

she told me much, and a little also of the Vikings who had gone away into the mystery of the North, braving the Frost Giants and their great blockades of ice, and of how they never had been heard of again, which showed perhaps that they had fought their way through into a fairer land of plenty, and had there made a good end.

Thus it was I came to know the most important facts of history; and it made a hopeful foundation for one who was destined to fare forth and seek his fortune as a cook.

Early in the summer of 1884 I told my father that I should like to make a voyage somewhere on a ship, and see the world as it was beyond Funen. Both my father and my mother agreed that it would be a good thing to do, and that it would help to make an able man of me. So it was settled.

I will not be telling you now of all my ups and downs at sea before I entered the Arctic as a grown man. But always the sea will be stirring in my blood, even though I live ashore for years. Whenever I hear the sea-gulls laughing and talking, as they do, or crying on a windy morning for their breakfast, I want to be off with them. In such moments I feel fit to take command again on sea or ice, and to lead men in any direction, so long as it be of the North. Yet now, as the seasons pass, I am being made to realize every day in every way that my stomach is not what it was. A pleasing friend of mine tried not long ago to give me her cult of something she called science — telling me to tell myself that all is white, and that there is no black in the world, and that if there is it must be a illusion anyway because it is entirely negative. No doubt she means well, trying to get me to kid myself, but by a bottle of rum at night I know better in the morning — and I know that a pain is very positive, say what you will. So I must be careful.

When one has sailed roughly over every ocean for seven years before coming twenty, and then adds another five years of the like before going completely Arctic, and then lives for thirty-three years where the utmost Eskimos live, with only the primitive comforts to sweeten the continual hardships, it is but natural that he should begin to slow down, and remember for choice what has been most choice of the past, rather than plan for what next shall be. So I am no longer chasing around with sea-gulls, keeping a bright outlook in the wind for new things. For my future I shall turn to the past, where, perhaps the seeds lie buried for another future! Who knows?

CHAPTER II

I GO TO AMERICA AND FARTHER

I HAD a happy time at home with my parents from October, 1884, until the following Easter. I could be of great assistance to them, but mother insisted upon my attending school and taking special courses in history and geography. I contrived to make my father's work lighter, and I saw that he was on the way to go before my mother. It was the last time I was to see either of them, although almost ten years later, in April, 1894, a letter from my mother reached me in the Arctic, delivered at Point Barrow.

Mother made both Christmas and Easter the real feasts for us which they always have been since no one knows when, and especially for the people of the North. The turn of the sun when winter is darkest, and the victory of spring when the day comes to be as long as the night! It was wise of the Church to adorn its religion by adopting and applying the beauty and the hope and the pleasantness of these ancient natural holidays. They help to reconcile one with what is, and give a taste of what should be. Except in dreams I never had the full spirit of them again.

In April, 1885, there was a Danish ship called the *Iceland*, sailing out of Sweden for New York, and crowded with hundreds of immigrants. I was on that

ship as assistant to the cook, and naturally I was elated for my first voyage across an ocean. I gave to my father what little money I had saved, and went aboard without a cent. But I soon perceived chances for trade. I was put in complete charge of making the sweet soup, at which, by that time, I was an expert. So every time I went to the store room to get prunes I took more than I required for the soup that day, and by the handful I sold them to our immigrant passengers, who, when not sea-sick, were always hungry, and wanting tit-bits. A penny would be all they could pay for a handful, and sometimes they could only pay with a promise, and some of the girls with a smile, so that by the time we arrived at New York I only had the equivalent of about two dollars in my pocket.

New York looked very inviting to me from the waterfront, and I was impatient to get ashore. Of course I could not land when the passengers did. But I got through with my work as quickly as possible, and that evening I had shore leave given me. I had a few words of English which I had learned in Scotland when with Elsie, and I had not forgotten them, but I did not expect to find them useful immediately in New York. The young Dane who was with me had no English at all except two phrases which he had memorized: 'Ferry to New York, please!' and 'Ferry to Hoboken, please!'

I approached a policeman on the wharf, and he understood what we wanted and gave directions which were understandable. Soon we were on the old-time sidewalks of New York. My pal had no money, but I felt immediately that I wanted to spend what I had, and I fingered the two big silver dollars in my pocket, which I had exchanged on shipboard for my collection of Danish pennies. It was an occasion to celebrate, and the only

way I could think then for doing that was to offer to buy a drink.

Soon we came to a brilliant pub — at least that was the name I had for it from Elsie, who warned me that I should never be seen in the like — but in New York I quickly learned that the right name for it was saloon. We entered and stood at the bar and ordered beer. As I was putting the change in my pocket which I received from my silver dollar — ninety cents because of the good five cent beer of those days — a big and ugly looking ruffian pushed himself in front of me at the bar, saying: 'Where de hell did jou get all dat money?'

I remember the words, although at the time I did not clearly understand them. But I did know that he was hostile, and in a mood to rob me. It was just then that a policeman was looking in over the swing doors of the tavern, and he had seen and heard. Without entering he roared: 'G'wan there ya mug, and leave dat kid alone!' At which the 'mug' quickly vanished through another door.

I remembered those words also, and from the effect of them I gathered the purport immediately. Ever since then I have had a kindly feeling for the police, although they may not always have had the same feeling for me, on account of being misinformed.

We wandered on through the streets. We were in one of the less reputable districts of the city, but almost at every step we saw or heard things to interest us. We had more beer, and then, as the hour grew late, we were sleepy. I had heard of the high prices charged in New York for a room to sleep in, and so when we came to some street excavations we crawled into a large new sewer-pipe which we saw lying near at hand. It would have been

an uncomfortable thing in which to sleep, but we did not have the chance, as we were seen by a watchman and chased out. He crawled in after us with a stick, but we reach the other end faster than he did, and soon were beyond him and his premises. Some while later we saw a big wagon standing on a side street, with a pile of empty sacks in it. We arranged ourselves in among them and fell fast asleep.

We were not disturbed during the night, and at dawn we wakened, feeling very hungry. We both began to talk about the cook's galley on the *Iceland*, and the hot breakfast to be had there. So we bestirred ourselves and soon found the waterfront once more. There another good policeman, hearing our 'ferry for Hoboken, please!' directed us, and in another half hour we were back aboard the *Iceland*. We had spent a night in America, and felt proud of ourselves. Our breakfast tasted unusually good.

That day I was put to work cleaning up the hospital of the ship. Each hour was uncommonly long, and became longer as the day progressed. The beds in the hospital looked so inviting that I lay down on one of them to rest for a minute. In a twinkling I was fast asleep.

More than an hour later I was wakened by two voices in the air. The chief steward was saying to the cook, in Danish: 'Well, if that's the way a night ashore affects him he won't get any more shore leave while we are in New York. From now on he stays aboard!'

I roused myself, and went to work vigorously. I did not like that kind of talk. I wanted to know more about New York. But I realized well enough that a veto of shore leave from the chief steward would be final. A ruse or trick of some sort would be necessary.

That night, when I began to serve dinner, I saw the

chief steward give a ticket for shore leave to one of the bakers. This baker carelessly put the ticket in the outer pocket of his jacket, and I managed to lift it out of his pocket shortly after without him knowing. It was when we were busy serving soup to the officers. So soon as I was out of the dining-room I went quickly to my bunk, changed into my best clothes, and was out on deck at the gang-plank. The quartermaster took up my ticket, and passed me ashore. I never intended to go back. Fearing that I would be followed I made for the ferry at once, and was soon on the New York side.

I headed away from the waterfront, and from where I had been the night before. After walking at haphazard, although with a show of purpose, for about an hour, I saw a sign in my own tongue and in English: 'Swedish Immigrant Home'.

I was received by a nice, motherly woman who beamed on me when I asked for a room. I had a little over a dollar with me, and that paid for a good bed for two nights and for good meals. The place was really a charitable refuge for Swedes, and was kept up by donations from religious and patriotic Swedish associations.

On the third night my money was gone, and I was changed from the table of the paying guests to what in the good English of New York was called the 'bum's table'. All that was served at it was black bread and weak coffee three times a day, with a spread of rank butter in the evening for the bread. The bread was baked in round loaves, and was baked so hard that I had to cut it with a sharp clasp-knife I had. I made it into thin slices, and this angered the manager, who accused me of cutting the bread that way so as to get more butter for it. I told him I did not want his rank butter, and that I could not eat the bread without cutting it thin as I had, and I

said some other things. For that he played a dirty trick on me. He ordered me to take another bed, and he knew very well that it was about as lousy as it could be. I had a miserable night, for lice are things I cannot abide to have on me, and I became aware of them after my first few hours of sound sleep. I had no clothes to change, and how was I to get rid of them?

Well, I went and told my trouble to the manager's wife, and she understood very well and had no sympathy for her husband's mean and miserable ways. She prepared a good hot bath for me, and gave me some strong disinfectant soap. And she came in and scrubbed me well, according to the Swedish custom which is very proper and comforting, and then gave me clean clothes to put on while my own were being de-loused. They were accustomed to doing such things for their guests in that Home, and had all that was necessary for making a good job of it.

And when I was back in my own clothes, feeling so grateful to the wife that I could hold no spite against her husband, good luck came my way. I had callers. They were distant relatives. By letter from my mother they had learned that I was on the *Iceland*, and the letter had been delivered to them in New York before we arrived. Like the good relatives they were, they arranged to be told when the *Iceland* came into port, but by the time this happened and they had found the ship I was no longer on it. They were informed that I was a deserter, and that I was not considered worth looking for, and that the ship would not have me back even if I came.

So these, my two very distant cousins, had been searching for me at likely places in New York. Father and daughter they were; the father being a middle-aged man, and a widower. Having found me, they seemed

pleased with my appearance, and wanted me to go and make my home with them, and settle down and grow up and maybe be a great citizen of New York in years to come.

The daughter was a nice girl, and about my own age, and you might say that if I had had any common sense in the circumstances I would have accepted what was offered to me. But Destiny — that Dame of the Future for a few — had designs on me! I did not know what or where, but I felt that I must be on my way. New York was much too confining a place for my sort, and the higher it built itself against the sky, the more so.

However, I did spend one happy week with the grave and kindly widower and his nice daughter, and with them I saw the sights as best I could. Then when I said that a ship must be waiting for me, and that I must not miss it, the father took me down to a Deep Sea Sailors' Boarding House — on a street called Hamilton, if I remember rightly — where crews were being got together, and where he had heard of a Norwegian ship called the *India*, which was outward bound from New York to Shanghai by way of Africa. My cousin knew the captain, and he was a good captain, and had a fine crew under him, and the *India* was a new sailing ship. Nothing could have suited me better.

I was signed on as a sailor before the mast, and I was a very proud young man as I kissed my cousins good-bye. I still have a warm spot in my heart for both of them, but whether they be in this world still, I do not know.

We touched at various places in Africa. I had eyes for every novel thing whenever I was allowed ashore. And when we went round the Cape, and up into and

across the Indian Ocean to Ceylon, I was given a long shore leave at Colombo for good conduct, and more spending money than I had ever had before at one time. Not much — but much for me! And I had a good time!

After we left Ceylon I recall that we were lying in the Timur Straits. Native traders came out to our ship in bumboats and sampans. Some of them, for fun I think, would even swim out to and around the ship, calling to us and laughing, and wanting to climb up the anchor chain. They were very nice fellows in those days — not sophisticated as they may be now — not sullen about anything so long as they were not being hurt and could find enough to eat — as they always could out there then. That was how it was in 1885, and that was how I came to get a monkey. I saw it on a sampan, and wanted it at once. It was cute and playful and impudent, just as a monkey should be, and when I spoke to it and engaged its attention it chattered at me very cheekily, and finished by turning around and slapping its behind at me. Any child or sailor would understand a retort like that — and the other fellows laughed. Being such a witty monkey, I asked the captain if he would allow me to keep it aboard, in case I could buy it. He made no objection. He was a good captain.

By that time I had no money left, but I did have a pair of pants which were too narrow for me, so I signified to the thin-legged little man in charge of the sampan that I would trade my pants for his monkey. The idea seemed to amuse him. He had no more use for a pair of pants than I had for a monkey. However, the trade was made.

I named the monkey Amélie, after the Princess and the galiot on which I first went to sea, and because she was that kind of a monkey. Amélie became very popular

with the crew, especially when she got sick from the second mate's pipe, which she picked out of his pocket. She smelt the bowl, and sucked at the stem, and then threw it overboard with grimaces, and went off and was sorry for herself.

A Chinese shoemaker had come aboard with a stock of shoes. In return for a passage up to Shanghai he agreed to cobble the shoes of the crew. But he was so taken with Amélie that he offered me a long pair of new leather boots out of his stock for her. The boots fitted me so well that I made the trade with him.

I had no chance to see much of Singapore while there, but I had a few enjoyable days at Bangkok, below which we lay down river. And also I had shore leave at Haiphong, a French port of Indo-China, where fun was to be had for next to nothing. But to my regret we sailed outside of and past Hong Kong, of whose features and mixtures I had heard so much from other sailors that I wanted to go there. I never did.

On a cold, drizzly evening in December we dropped anchor off Woosung, the outer port of Shanghai, which lies about fifteen miles up the Whampoo River at a tangent from the Yangtze. It was by that time over seven months since we had sailed from New York. That is real travelling. You have time to see things and get the atmospheres into you. No one is the better for flipping around the world in no time — one learns nothing that way — he might as well be back before he starts. I would not be bored with it.

That evening the Chinese shoemaker shifted his belongings down on to a small junk which came alongside. But as the junk was not to cast off until dawn the shoemaker slept as usual on the ship. Amélie, however, went down in a cage, which was put on the high poop deck of

the junk. From there she squealed dismally up at me whenever I would be looking over the rail. Indeed, it was no way to treat a princess who perhaps by some bad fairy had been turned into a little monkey. Amélie wanted to be back on the ship, and she had never known such cold weather. She was left in an uncovered cage, exposed to a raw wind, and that night she died — chilled to death.

When in the morning the shoemaker discovered his loss he was in a rage. He flung the body of Amélie into the muddy waters which are stained far out to sea by the Yangtze, and he came storming at me to give him back the long leather boots. I could not see wherein I was to blame for the death of Amélie, and I made an appropriate answer. He was a quarrelsome man, and he was working himself up into a state where he would be dangerous. The captain said I was quite right, so the shoemaker was rolled over the side to drop into the junk that awaited him.

CHAPTER III

NORTH AND SOUTH AND HONOLULU SIDE

IN the spring of 1888 I was in San Francisco; just a young sea-cook looking for a berth. Strolling one day along the waterfront without seeing much to interest me, but rather enjoying the chill fog which comes steeling into and over that city so often from the sea, I noticed a break toward the west. It was as if the fog had opened to make one great oval window looking on to the bay. Then clear in the centre of that oval upon the oily water I saw a four-masted schooner. Her sails were lowered, but grey wisps of fog were wreathing about her masts, and a yellow shaft from the afternoon sun came through and played all over her.

Right there I told myself that she was my ship come for me; and I decided to be waiting on the wharf when she made fast. She was creeping in slowly under her own steam; a small-power engine. It was not long before I knew that she was the *Jeanette*, of which I had heard men speaking at the Sailors' Home; men who were waiting for her to take them up to a salmon-cannery in Alaska.

From the wharf I studied the *Jeanette*, and soon my eye fell on one whom I took to be the first mate. From where I stood he seemed that day to be full of good nature. I watched my chance, and hailed him as soon as he stepped ashore. When I asked him in what English I had, how about wanting a cook on his ship he looked me over

pleasantly. I may say that already I had picked up quite enough English to be understood by and to understand any American on the waterfront. The mate told me to report to him on board next morning. I did that, and got the job I wanted without any trouble, as the cook they had was leaving. Ten days later we put to sea.

I liked my galley and my quarters. My supplies were good and plentiful. I was given a boy as an assistant. So naturally I did not care much where we would be going. But I was on my way for more than I imagined. It was to be my introduction to the direction where the keenest and longest of my days were to be — my first degree in the life of Alaska, leading thereafter to Siberia, and later to the real Arctic and extreme Canada. But there were to be hot interludes for me before all that.

We had a crew of ten men, not counting myself and the captain and my assistant, and there were thirty other men aboard who, along with the crew, were to work as fishermen at the Orka Cannery, nigh the mouth of the Copper River, which flows into King William Sound about 61 degrees north latitude, just below Cordova in Alaska.

A sea-cook with such a crowd as that to feed has little time at sea to be looking at the scenery. I would be working twelve hours a day, with an extra service of coffee and toast or something else in the way of a snack for the captain and the officers late at night. So I did not notice anything much beyond my galley and what I was cooking until one day we hove to, and I knew that we had arrived.

I had an easy time after that. The captain left the ship, along with the crew and the fishermen, with only myself and the first mate aboard to take charge of it. Right there, where we first anchored, we stayed for five

months. For a time it was daylight nearly all the time, just as I found it when I went on my first voyage to Kotka in Finland. I got along so well with the mate that I left him whenever I felt like it. From our ship to the Orka Cannery was but a short way to row, and there was a small settlement called Eyak not far from Cordova, which was really no place at all in those days. I found it easy to get on good terms with both Eskimos and Indians who were about there, as well as with the mixed lot ranging from Norwegians down to Portuguese who were working at the cannery. Often I went up the Copper River by myself, where our men were busy with gill-net fishing. I would stay at their several camps, and sometimes lend a hand at their work.

There was little to interest me on the Copper River where I went. It ran through a flat country so far as I could see. Yet I did pick up whatever I could about the place, and people, for I wanted right knowledge of the North even then. Why not? It is bred in the bone of every Viking descendant to hanker for the land of the long day and the long night, and to play with its terrors while making it serve him. I think we retain somehow a memory behind a memory of the time when all of the Northland was truly a Greenland of gracious trees, ringed with sparkling seas that were never frozen!

It was October before we returned to San Francisco. I did not care to risk going broke in that town, like other sailors, while waiting for the next spring to sail to the North again, as I had made up my mind to do. So I turned my winter into summer by going to Australia.

I shipped as an able-bodied seaman at Port Townsend, which is in the state of Washington, on a Scotch-owned five-masted barque called the *Australia*. She was

commanded by German officers, but they all spoke English, and the crew were mostly English and Scotch. I knew just what to do, and I could handle sails with the best of them. I got along both with officers and men, and likewise with the cook.

We had one of those long, uneventful, happy voyages in good weather through beautiful seas which were beautifully rough in some parts. Once we sailed close to green islands on which I longed to land. But there was no stopping for us until we had rounded the lower coast of the island which is so big that it is a continent — the continent where the like of elongated Cockneys gambol and gamble and go on strike and go broke. Only they do not make so many jolly jokes about their doings as the stocky Cockneys of London. Yes, Australia is a great country, and others can tell how great it is and how greatly it needs fixing. I mean that a man from the Arctic, where there is so little to win from the ground, and where even the dead are not always wasted, naturally will feel diffident about criticizing a country where the people may have so much from the ground, if they be willing to work for it, and stop oppressing each other with politics. But, of course, all that was forty years ago for me, and I was only ashore for a couple of months, which perhaps was long enough, and it was that long because of strikes. I was made to realize how rich Australia was in strikes in those days, and how difficult to get out of when the ships were detained. In after years I read about Australia in American papers, and I heard soap-box orators from there talking in San Francisco, and even in Nome one could hear Australians talking. So I know now how splendidly Australians have gone over the top in cricket and rowing and music and war and spending — with their splendid country so far behind them.

At first I had no chance to see anything of Sydney except its magnificent harbour. We were only a day in port, the captain having received instructions there to proceed forthwith to Melbourne, and there make delivery of cargo. I was paid off at Melbourne.

I decided that I would see a bit of the country from there back to Sydney, and by this and by that, overland I went, sometimes tramping and sometimes having a ride. I minded my manners, and felt my way carefully, as became a young foreigner disposed for various refreshments, but not sure always of the right words to be used. I admired the lay-out of Melbourne, and I heard some good music there before I left. But from other things I heard I thought it best to keep always within easy reach of the sea. I had no mind for venturing into the monstrous interior of the country, as it was then; for it was, I was told, as big as the belly of the United States. A Irish navy I chummed with for awhile had been around a part of it, and he declared the only good things in it were rabbits and sugar and kangaroos, and that snakes were everywhere. He described queer little blue alligators and horrible spiders living in deserts without water and where the trees went crazy with heat and turned their leaves edge on to the hot sky, which proved they were not so crazy after all. He rather set me against Australia. From others I heard of deserts where men left their bones, trying to get the gold with which the hot sands were sown, and of the approaches to those deserts where horrid birds laughed as they dropped great serpents from their talons while high in air, and then flopped down to eat them as they lay stunned. But, of course, all that is far from the Arctic, so let us be on and say no more about it.

I found Sydney intriguing. There seemed more

colour and spirit in its low life than there was in Melbourne. What money I had left I spent there without any trouble, and without getting into any trouble while doing it. Then I seized the chance that came to ship before the mast on the *Graystone Castle*, a shapely full-rigged British ship which sailed direct to San Francisco.

No sooner was I landed than I wanted to be off again. Luck was with me, and I made two more trips to Australia; going as mess steward on one of the regular mail liners controlled by Charles Spreckles. In that way I came to know a little more of Australia and New Zealand, but not very much more, on account of being kept busy night all the time on board while in port. On the second trip we were tied up for weeks at Sydney on account of local labour troubles. These seem to take the place in Australia of revolutions in South America, but with more of disaster to the people and their business. It seemed easier then to go to Australia than to get out. But maybe nothing of what I have said about the country and its ways applies now. I speak only of hasty and immature impressions made on me forty years ago.

But I did have a good time from time to time in the few golden hours that were given me ashore on the Sandwich Islands. I got into the deep, warm lap of Honolulu, and I took life to the full as I found it. A day there would stand out for me more than a week in the greater lands. Hawaii was a kingdom then where life was free and easy. Hard working efficiency ants — American and Chinese and Japanese — were not there in such numbers — no false show was staged for tourists — and even lepers had their happy hours in their allotted reservation.

Early in June, 1891, I sailed once more from San

Francisco. This time it was as cook on the schooner *Argo*. We were to go fishing in Bering Sea. It was a time of good weather, and we made somewhere close to Norton Sound, the place where Maldonado or another, about three hundred and fifty years ago, thought would be found the Pacific opening of a waterway for ships across the continent to Hudson Bay. But all I knew then, as a sea-cook, was that we were somewhere in Bering Sea, and anchored in about fifty fathoms of water off what were called the Slime Banks by us, where our men went fishing.

We had eighteen small dories on our vessel, and there would be one man go out in each, and each man would do his own rowing, and handle two baited lines. He would be paid according to his catch of cod. Most of the fish on the Slime Banks were cod, and the smallest had to measure twenty-four inches long in order to count as one fish. From that down to eighteen inches it would take two fish to count as one for payment. Under eighteen inches the fish were thrown back into the water.

Altogether, in three months of active fishing, our men caught eighty thousand fish which were accepted for payment. They were cleaned and salted as soon as received on board, and stowed away in the hold. By the end of October we were back in San Francisco.

I met a few odd characters along what was the Barbary Coast of San Francisco in those days. And I went the rounds, as a sailor may do when first ashore after so long a time at sea. But in a few weeks the saloons and resorts of San Francisco lost their charm for me. Something I wanted I did not find in them. All the while I would be remembering Hawaii, and soon the spirit lifted in me to go.

I bought a new outfit, and put a small bit of money

away in a bank, so as to be sure of something when I returned. Then once more I went up to Port Townsend.

Almost at once I found the opening I wanted. I signed on as able-seaman on the barque *Frias S. Thompson*, which was sailing under the Hawaiian flag, with a Scotch crew. Now on certain ships a Scotch crew is desirable, not that the Scotch are better sailors than the Scandinavians or the English, but they are better at keeping their mouths shut when that is very desirable. Customs officers and immigration officers and other such inquiring folk find it hard to get the truth out of them when they do not choose to tell. They are considered very true to their salt.

However, the captain of the *Frias S. Thompson* knew me for a discreet young man just as soon as he looked at me. So on I went.

We took lumber down and sugar back. Those were years when opium was very cheap in the Hawaiian Islands and when the use of it was not too much abused. But even then it had high value in the United States, because of the high tariff against it, and so it was something to be smuggled. Moreover, there were certain men in those islands who wished to get back into the United States, and get landed quietly among their own people, but who found it difficult owing to their physical condition, which was not always apparent except to a qualified medical examiner.

I remember the jolly ways in one bay on one of the islands. It was there that a big man threatened to cut my heart out, and he had reason. I had been too quick in obeying an impulse more befitting a boy than a sober seaman such as I had become by that time. It happened that there was a slim little sloop tied to the wharf alongside

of our ship, and the Kanaka captain who was master of it was sitting on deck with his very fat and quite white American wife late one Sunday afternoon when both were decidedly tight. They were expressing their opinion of each other and of things in general very loudly. I had a bucket of slops from the cook's galley to empty overside, and as I moved decently to do it something not so decent moved within me because of their conversation on the sloop below. I emptied the slops on that sloop just where the master and his fat consort were sitting, and engaged in drinking either a potent pineapple metheglin of some sort, or else that clear gin they called *okoliehow* made from a proper root.

Accustomed as I was to the emphatic English of sailors on occasion yet I was astounded at the uproar of epithets which came from both of the persons below. That Kanaka captain rose in a black rage, bawling to all above that he would twist my head from my neck with his two hands, and then feed my carcass to the fishes. I was so frightened that I immediately laid hold of a marlinspike to repel boarders. Luckily for me that dizzy big Kanaka tripped over a rope on his own deck as he made for climbing up our side, and if it had not been for his wife grabbing him from behind he would have pitched over into the water between his vessel and ours. He was a bit addled by that, and just then our first mate came up to me to see what the trouble was. I reported that the man below and his wife had been fighting. The mate looked over, and when the two below caught sight of him they may have taken him for me again. Anyway they said all that they had said to me and more, and for once that mate learned just what he was. I was pleased. But the mate only listened in grave silence, and then called down to them did they not know that it was the

Sabbath Day, and no fit time for profanity. With that he turned away as if in sorrow, bidding me keep an eye on them. Sometimes for humour extra dry there is no beating a Scotchman!

Next day I contrived to pacify the wife — so much so that she came to have a fancy for me all the rest of the while we were at Kaleakua. She put the blame for the slops on the chief mate of our ship. But her husband, although not quite clear in his head about the affair, looked on me with a suspicious eye, and I could win no smile from him. I kept well out of his reach, for he had huge arms, and was very spry for a big fellow, especially when he was not drunk. This all goes to show how careful a poor sailor should be while in port.

It was on that same voyage, while at Honolulu, that I was adopted one afternoon by some petty officers from a United States gunboat. They were all in an amiable mood. They took me to a very luxuriously appointed saloon, in the best style of San Francisco when it really had style that way, together with tropical adornments and guitars, but no girls. A pleasant retreat for men only. So I was not surprised when in came the king. He was neatly dressed in white linen — loose trousers and the sort of tunic they wear in Singapore — plain mother of pearl buttons instead of brass ones — and the only bit of colour he showed in his dress was a design in green and blue worked on his left sleeve. The king, with his fine head of black hair, scorned a hat. And with great comfort he went barefoot.

I have not travelled so much in parlours as I have in books, and not much in them either, but because of having been around the world in my youth with 'a most knowing eye', like Poe's parakeet, I am quick to distinguish, and to appreciate quality in every guise and

colour. And so, in the matter of the barefoot king all at his ease, I have noted Frenchmen and their conduct in the tropics. Now if a Frenchman be a gentleman he may go to a formal dinner in his pyjamas if need be and climate excuse, and remain a gentleman without concern. If he be any other kind of a Frenchman he will be nonchalant about such a thing in any case. But an Englishman must have the moral support of conventional attire to fit the occasion in order to have self-assurance that he is what he is. So habitually the English used to constrain themselves with starched collars, and black cloth of a weight that is felt through the hot black nights near the Equator. But even a Frenchman cannot go about in a social way barefoot with such ease and dignity as did jolly King Kaleakua at Honolulu in the Gay Nineties — before he lost his throne according to the plan of a Great Power. Certainly we all liked and respected him. He treated us twice, all hands round, but of course, being a king, he would not let us buy for him. He downed two stiff jolts of liquor himself, and he was a man then who could do it without any subsequent show or demand for more. He came in alone; he walked out alone; and we gave three cheers for him as he went strolling quietly back to his palace, after his solitary tour of inspection through his happy city. He displayed dignity with simplicity.

After returning to Port Townsend I went back to San Francisco. It was getting to be a habit with me to go there as a proper place to go away from for something better. So it was not long before I was sailing out of the Bay once more, headed for Bering Sea. I went as cook on the schooner *Hara*. We went into Russian waters, where probably we had no right to fish. But we did fish,

and with great success. Our men used hand lines from dories, just as before when I was cook on the *Argo* in American waters off the Slime Banks near Norton Sound.

One day when the men were all out in the boats I was up on deck when a barque sailed by which had just been involved in what might have been an international incident. She was the *Alexander*, and was under command of Captain Alexander McLean, late of Vancouver — the good man libelled as the Sea Wolf by Jack London.

The *Alexander* passed close to us, and Captain McLean called out:

‘You have not seen me!’

Our skipper answered very heartily:

‘No, we haven’t seen a sign of you, McLean!’

I had spent a pleasant hour with McLean once on an afternoon in a saloon on Sand Point, Alaska, which was a rendezvous and trading post in those days. And besides that I knew him in the passing way of having had a drink with him at the Keystone House on Jackson Street, and other saloons on Pacific Street in San Francisco. And once he took me with him very civilly to visit a respectable Scotch family of his acquaintance from Nova Scotia. McLean was a handsome seaman; medium height but very strongly built, especially about the shoulders, and with his long, reddish brown moustache he looked very much the Viking when he was in command on his own ship.

McLean was intent that day on getting the *Alexander* out of Russian waters as quickly as possible, because of what he had just done to a Russian revenue cutter. He had come upon her suddenly through the fog, and knowing Russian intentions and methods, and what was in store for him if captured and taken to Vladivostok, all because of a previous misunderstanding which led to a clash, McLean on the instant gave orders to ram the

unprepared Russian cutter, and point blank fired his two old brass cannons, loaded with scrap iron, across her deck. Much damage was done; and among other injuries received the cutter lost her smoke-stack in the shock. McLean made no bluff with a showing of two stovepipes through the fog for guns that day, as Kipling wrongly intimated. His guns were as brassy and full to their muzzles as when he had his fight later on with the American cutter, after which affair he never ventured again to enter any American port. Captain Alexander McLean was a skilful sailor and a sociable man, and he died quietly in the water one night in September, 1914, at the port of Vancouver. His ship, the *Alexander*, had originally been a Russian Government vessel, which frequently went to San Francisco for supplies to take to Russian posts on the Siberian coast. When the Russians sold her she was put under the Hawaiian flag, with McLean in command. He turned her to use as a sealer. Later on she became a steam whaler, under command of one of the famous three Tilton brothers — Yankee whaling captains from Bedford. I forget whether it was Captain George Fred, or one or other of the two which a Russian girl of easy wit had nicknamed Bigfoot, and some name like Titus — because of the way each had impressed her. But the last time I saw the *Alexander* she was a wreck lying abandoned nigh the entrance of Franklin Bay, east of Cape Bathurst, and I took from her whatever I thought would be useful to me. That was about ten years later.

One day the captain of the *Hara* thought it was about time the crew had a wash day on shore. So he steered toward the Siberian Coast into a small bay. I do not know whether it was Archangel Gabriel Bay or Dashneff Bay, but anyway there was a river there smaller than the Opuka.

The good captain realized that a sea-cook had enough washing to do with his dishes when on board ship, so I was free to roam about on shore as I pleased, while the other men were put to work. I was glad of the chance to stretch my legs, and I strolled around for about four hours. After that I lay on the edge of a small bluff overlooking the sea, and enjoyed the sunshine.

I must have been dozing, for the first thing I knew of anything doing below me was when I opened my eyes at the sound of snarls. Then I saw such a fight take place as few have seen — all in the open, and in the natural way of business between bears. The carcass of an old walrus had been rolled up on the beach, which was a long stretch of yellow sand, glinting beneath the bluff in the sunlight. Except for myself there seemed to be no living thing in the world around but one big, brown Siberian bear and one sleeker and smaller but longer and more active white bear of the Arctic. Each was busy on his own side of the walrus, eating him with gusto, but growling threats and insults toward each other. I had always heard that bears would only eat of a fresh kill, but these bears this time were like gentlemen of culture who like their game high. There was enough of that walrus to have furnished half a dozen dinners for both those bears. But bears are like brokers — it irks them to see the other fellow getting any. The nose of the white bear came close across the walrus to the nose of the brown bear. Quick as a flash the brown gave a slap at the white. The white jerked back in time to save his head, but a claw of the brown caught him across the bridge of the nose, and that is the most sensitive place for any bear. I saw the trickle of blood on the white hair.

The next moment those two bears were up and at one another. Standing on their hind legs they boxed terri-

fically. The white bear had sharper claws, and he was quicker than the other at dodging and hitting. Again and again he ripped the brown Siberian, leaving great gashes on him from which the blood streamed. The brown could seldom land a blow on the white. The fight went on, however, for about twenty minutes. Then I could see that the brown bear was sinking; weakened from great loss of blood. He began to totter, and the white bear bent to make one finishing stroke and rip open the exposed brown belly. But in the split second of doing that, one mighty paw of the Siberian came down with fearful force on the white neck, and must have broken it. The white bear fell dead.

The Siberian looked down on his fallen foe. He had no more stomach for meat. He walked away a short distance, and began licking some of his wounds, uttering queer, growling moans. Still fascinated I watched him. In about ten minutes he collapsed, and without another move he bled to death.

I climbed down the little bluff, and cautiously approached both bodies. Then I went back and reported to the captain, who was not inclined to believe me, but he took some men with him and I led them to where they could see the proof of my story for themselves.

It was not thought worth while to skin the bears, as their hides were too much ripped and torn. Neither did we take any meat from them, as we had plenty aboard, and the captain was ignorant of the stimulant value of bear meat.

So the brown bear, and the white bear, and the walrus were left where they lay, for all the lesser things to come and eat, till only their bones might remain and crumble slowly. Just as if they had been two great countries at war over what was more than enough for both of them!

THE REAL ARCTIC AT LAST

At San Francisco, toward the end of July, 1893, I signed on the schooner *Emily Schroeder* as cook and steward. She was bound for the Far North on a trading venture. We had a mixed cargo to meet popular demands beyond Bering Strait, ranging from stoves and lanterns to needles and beads and lollipops. Our crew was Scandinavian, fourteen in all; the majority of them being Norwegians, the rest Swedes except for myself and one other Dane.

But also at San Francisco we took on seven peculiar passengers—Portuguese who had been about the Pribilof Islands, and after that for two uninterrupted months and longer in the Arctic whaling ship. Experiences of this sort—too long drawn out for men only—may sometimes have an emasculating effect on those who are not actively engaged mentally, or who are not absorbed in some great desire for gain or revenge or discovery or imposing their social or religious beliefs upon others. They tend to become feeble and worthless. This particular group of seven came to grief in San Francisco. They found themselves stranded. Then to the credit of some others of their own breed, who had money to spare and were sorry for them, they were fitted out to go floor whaling—a simple although risky occupation which at that time was frequently profitable, as I was fated to learn for myself. Passage money was paid for these Portuguese on our schooner for as far north as she would go, unless they asked to be landed elsewhere on the way.

The *Emily Schroeder* was a slow sailing vessel, but we had a fair run through the open to the long string of Aleutian Islands, and then by the Unimak Pass into the Bering Sea, passing the Pribilofs and then St. Lawrence Island, where the United States Government now has a reindeer reservation, but where in those days only foxes and ptarmigan were residents, with seabirds as summer visitors. It is a fine island.

After that we were in the centre of Bering Strait which is distinguished by the two Diomed Islands, with sailing channels on either side, and one between. These islands are half way between Cape Prince of Wales on the extreme western tip of Seward Peninsula, known many centuries ago as Regio Bergi of Regnum Anian, now Alaska, and Cape Dashneff or East Cape the extreme eastern tip of the Land of Magog, now Eastern Siberia. These islands are shown on a map of the Arctic from Davis Strait to Bering Strait, anciently called Freto Davis and Freto de Anian, which was made so long ago as 1589, by Conrad Low of Cologne. Compare a reproduction of that with an ordinary map in an American school geography book. The school map does not show the Diomedes, although it does show St. Lawrence, with an incorrect outline on the south side.

Big Diomedes is in Russian waters, and Little Diomedes in American waters, with the international boundary taken as half way between. We made a landing on Little Diomedes. It is a desolate place where live a few dejected Eskimos. It rises in bare and rocky terraces from the sea. The foxes there have holes and keep well to the top except when they go a-fishing. Apart from fish I do not know what else they find to eat. They get the fish in small pools which are left as the ice lowers and melts away in spring from the shore, and also they trot swiftly along the

shore edge as the tides come in and go out, snapping a fish out here and there with great dexterity. They get fresh water from the snow pools left on the uplands. It must be a hard life, even for Arctic foxes. But I saw some which seemed to be frisking about happily in the distance.

Our Portuguese passengers decided unanimously and immediately that they did not want to get off and live on Little Diomedé. Yet we found a little business to be done, even there. Some while after that there was a German who set up a still there and made a liquor generally known throughout the North as hootch. It is no good — not a drop of it. But he traded so much of it for skins and walrus ivory and whalebone with the local Eskimos that they went crazy from drinking it and killed him and destroyed the still. It was their *angutok*, or medicine man, who advised them to do that.

We managed to do a little business, even there. In exchange for ivory and reindeer skins we gave such of our goods as took the Eskimo fancy. Each side made a profit from its own standpoint, and that is the best kind of trade.

The Eskimos with whom we dealt on Little Diomedé had come over with reindeer skins and ivory from Siberia. They were much like the ones in Alaska and Canada, only they spoke their common language with a different accent and had some different words. Dr. Griggs, an Anglican missionary whom I met soon after at Point Hope, called these Eskimos from Siberia *Mosinkos*, which may have been just his trick Latin for Moskies, or such-like people out of Muskovia.

These *Mosinkos* would paddle in their big skin canoes — which do not seem so big when you are out at sea in them — from the Siberian Coast through Bering Strait into the Arctic Ocean, and across Kotzebue Sound

to get a supply of red fox furs from the Alaskan Eskimos. Red fox furs were much in demand at that time by Cossacks for making the caps they wore. So many reindeer skins for so many fox furs — that was the way of the trade.

There was one tragedy near Little Diomedé of which we had all heard, clearly as to its beginning, vaguely as to its end. I was told that it began one summer night ten years before our arrival. Captain Gillen, a capable but rough and cruel Kanaka, was in command of the American schooner *Silver Wave*, which sailed for the North out of San Francisco on a trading expedition. This schooner was small; a vessel of not more than twenty-seven tons capacity, but she was well handled and well stocked. Nearing Little Diomedé, she was met by a fleet of Eskimo canoes from Siberia. Men and women from the canoes climbed aboard the *Silver Wave*, and there was some trading done, and much talk took place for the understanding of a greater trade the next day. But when the next day came it was noticed by Captain Gillen and his men that all the women stayed off by themselves in canoes, while those approaching the ship were filled with men.

The captain, properly suspicious, made ready for an attack, and rifles were laid out so that the crew might seize them at once. But no sign was given of being suspicious as the Eskimos climbed aboard. Suddenly the mate was stabbed, and then all the other Eskimos drew knives for an attack. A whistle was blown by the captain, and instantly the sailors who were waiting with rifles at hand opened fire. Those of the Eskimos who were not shot were driven in a huddle down into the fore-castle head.

Captain Gillen then stood above with a great boat-hook, and one by one he plunged that into the bodies of

the Eskimos cowering below, and, as he hauled each one up, a sailor with a club stood by and struck each one on the head. Others of the crew then tossed the bodies overboard.

This might have been considered rough justice in those waters if nothing else had been done. But, not content with killing all the men, Captain Gillen then turned on the women in the canoes, which were lying several hundred yards distant. He ran them down, and what between shooting and leaving others to drown as the canoes were overturned there were only a few survivors and one old man who managed to escape by swimming to Little Diomed and hiding among its high rocks.

In some way a curse was laid upon Captain Gillen and his crew, and nearly all of them came to a bad end. It seems strange that Gillen himself should have ventured anywhere near there again. But he did so about three years later, when, being in poverty, it seemed his only chance to make money again. He was last seen on his own ship when it was anchored near Cape Prince of Wales, which is on the coast of Alaska about forty miles west of little Diomed. The story is that he was suddenly covered so that he could make no outcry, and was then taken ashore where he was very slowly and cruelly put to death. I have heard details, but I will not relate them here.

The Canadian Eskimos with whom I dealt, and with whom I dwelt for over thirty years, were sometimes ungrateful and sometimes treacherous, although not one whit more so than the average American or European. But they are not cruel. When they kill, whether it be man or beast, they give a quick death whenever they can. Ethically they are superior to the Mosinkos, if that be any right name for the Eskimos of Siberia. But even the Mosinkos, for what little I saw of them,

seemed an amiable people, considering the conditions in which they must live. I noted that, when over on the Alaskan side from Siberia, they bore no grudge for long when caught stealing, or when beaten at a bargain. Only in such an exceptional case of excessive punishment and brutality as was inflicted upon them by Captain Gillen would their desire for vengeance keep hot for years. There are so many other things to keep busy about just to keep alive in the Arctic that there is little time left either for nursing old grievances or for wailing over one's own sins. Big Charlie said to me that one time the Arctic was no place for the Irish or for missionaries, and I never knew quite what he meant by that. But certainly up there it is easy to forget or forgive and live in the minute as it passes — like a child — unless the hurt be very deep.

On the second morning we drew away from Little Diomedé. We sailed on up through the Bering Strait, which on ancient maps was marked as the Straits of Anian, and entered the ocean which on those same maps was shown as the Hyperborean Gulf. Veering to the east we reached Point Hope, which lies almost on the edge of 70 degrees north latitude. Landing there I knew that at last I was in the real Arctic. I intended to put my teeth in it. But I little realized how deeply, or for how long!

CHAPTER V

ARCTIC SOCIETY

THERE were two stores, or trading posts, at Point Hope in 1893, and there was an Eskimo village containing about 400 inhabitants. The name we know it by must have been given by someone whose hope was about down to vanishing point. It is one of the most dismal, wind-swept, bare, flat sand-spits that projects into the Arctic Ocean. Point Hope is a peninsula, within an ace of being an island by reason of the lagoon which is scooped into it, and it goes about twenty-seven miles westerly into the sea from a high, bleak, treeless bank of stone cliffs, with mountains and more of them back of that. On the north side of it is Marryatt Inlet, into which flows the Kukpuk River. From the inlet one may pass over a sand-bar into the lagoon with a small boat or sloop at certain seasons, and even with a schooner like the *Emily Schroeder*. Our captain did it.

As soon as we were safely inside the lagoon we were kept busy getting ready for the winter which would descend upon us by the end of October. The post to which I was to be attached as cook was built almost on the tip of the Point, close to the beach. The other post was more sheltered, being about eight miles from us on the south side of the peninsula. We called it Blabbertown, because the dozen white men there were always complaining, and being of contrary nationalities they did not understand each other very well, and would be saying the same thing over and over and louder and louder each time so as to

make their meaning clear. Captain Bain put our seven Portuguese passengers out to stay with that lot for a time. Blabbertown!

Both posts were built of thin planks of dressed lumber from San Francisco. The planks made the inside lining for the building, and against that there was banked a thickness of about eight feet of the mossy sod they call tundra, brought from inland, with a thicker rampart of mixed tundra and sand sloping outward so as to bear the pressure from above, and resist any assault of waves from the sea. The post I was in was about thirty feet square, and about eight feet to the ceiling, which had a slight upward curve, following the low dome of the roof. This roof also was built of thin planks, over which several plys of tarred paper were laid, with tundra over that, and all seeming tight and compact.

The post inside was like a cave, stored with various supplies. There was but one door for entry, and there was a skylight in the centre of the roof. We had no windows. There were six cubicles for sleeping quarters, with wooden partitions reaching within a foot of the ceiling. We depended upon kerosene lanterns for light, and we had three iron stoves such as Russians use, in which the driftwood which we gathered would burn all away to a white ash. Apart from the door, the accommodation and lay-out of the post was like an ordinary Eskimo house, or igloo, as it is called. But into an igloo one enters by a tunnel, as a rule, which makes for more warmth and thicker air. Yet igloos have the same ventilating skylight at the top, and the better ones have compartments or cubicles as well.

Captain Bain kept his men busy. After we had put the schooner in as safe quarters as possible for the winter, supplies were taken ashore from her for both posts. We

left her entirely empty, and ready for what new cargo might be had in the spring. The next work was to gather drift wood, and haul it and pile it near to each post. Fortunately there is a great driftage into Bering Sea from the Yukon River, and this is carried up through Bering Strait, and then strewn along shore on Kotzebue Sound, and on up and around Cape Lisburne, for how far I do not know.

Our crew had all signed articles for two years' service. We did not mind being shut off from the rest of the world for that time. If one might believe what they said about each other quite often in Blabbertown they nearly all were lucky not to have been put in a worse place than Point Hope, and for a longer term. After the first month their work was not so onerous for the rest of the winter, and they were well supplied with salted meat and fish, and with flour and canned provisions good enough for them.

There was no telegraphic communication with the outside world at that time from any part of Alaska; not even a cable laid from Dutch Harbour. Only the U.S. revenue cutter *Bear* and a few whaling ships, and at long intervals a little trading schooner like ours, ever called at Point Hope. But I found it pleasant there in September. There were many new things about the North to interest me. At our post, of course, I was cook, and I took it on myself to go out and hunt for fresh meat. I bought a 45-70 Winchester rifle from my wages, and slowly I learned to be a good hunter. I was a good shot from the first, but I had much to learn in the way of creeping up on animals, and keeping to the leeward of them. I was very proud when I shot my first seal and brought it back to the post with me. It was in October, not long before the big storm. I had gone off by myself toward the edge of the ice, and there I sat down with my

back to a hummock of snow close by the water. I had my rifle in position for a quick shot. One must hit a seal fair in the head, for that is all you will see of him, and if you miss the first shot he gives you no chance for a second. I do not know how long I waited, like a cat watching a mouse-hole, but I began to be very stiff and cold when suddenly a sleek, beautiful head popped up quiet as a shadow out of the water, and then I heard a faint purr. The seal was breathing out, and then taking in a breath of fresh air. He looked at me innocently with his great dark eyes, thinking there was no harm in me. Seals are very curious, and I was something new for him to look at as I was aiming carefully. I killed him. He gave just one shudder as the bullet went through his head, and then floated quietly. They do that when they are fat, and this one was both young and fat. I had a fish-line with heavy sinker and hook on it, and I swung this out and over the body and got the hook in it and thus drew it carefully to the edge of the ice. That is the way to do it when they are in the water, or else wait with a poised spear near an ice-hole and wait for one to come up for air. Of course, any one can kill a seal on land, because it is so hard for them to move when out of the water. The crews of men from the sealing-schooners just take their time on the islands when the seals go there to breed. They club them to death, and the seals watch them coming, held as we are sometimes in a nightmare, and cannot escape. But the tender ladies of the cities must have their furs for display, and so there is money in the business, and they make it worth while for the men to go after the seals. One day they will be exterminated, as were the great sea-otters which used to live in the waters about Nootka.

But for one who must live in the Arctic, and take life as it is if he would live, the killing of seals seems a differ-

ent affair. A seal to an Eskimo means food and light and heat and clothing; and every part of the body is put to some use.

I was a good cook, and I was a good sailor, and well I knew it. But after killing my first seal I made up my mind that I was going to be a good hunter likewise. I would, maybe, go out and kill polar bear, and after that a whale, all by myself. Also I would learn how to drive dog-teams properly. And curiously enough all that came to me before it was clear in my mind that I was going to stay the greater part of my lifetime in the Arctic.

I soon began to mix with the young fellows in the Eskimo village, preferring them for their bright and hearty ways to the dull adults for whom I cooked at the trading post, and preferring them very much to the grumpy hellions of Blabbertown. Two of the young Eskimos had come forward and shown me how to cut up and skin and dispose of the first seal which I killed. They were direct and friendly in their ways. If you played with them you would be accepted as one of themselves. And they played whenever they had an excuse and a chance.

The Eskimos had a very simple game of football. The ball would be made of seal-skin, shaped usually like an English rucker ball, but the game was more like soccer without any goal. The fur-side of the ball would be turned out, so that it would be easier on toes covered only with moccasins when a hard kick was made. The game made progress like Chinese music; I mean it could go on and on with no end until it stopped, and it could stop on a kick, or just between kicks all in the air. One would start the game anywhere on the beach with a kick, and then all would run to the ball, in a standing huddle around it trying to kick it clear and get a lead, but never picking it

up. The one who had the most kicks clear for himself had most of the fun, but it was never necessary to declare a winner, as there were no sides chosen and no prizes. But we would go kicking along the beach that way for miles before we would tire of the game.

Another game was tossing each other high in the air from a walrus hide, or a number of them sewn together so as to accommodate many hands all round. There would be handles made around the edge so that one might take a firm grip. It was something like tossing a man in a blanket, but a larger and finer affair than that. The one being tossed was required to keep upright, and come down in the hide always on his feet. When he fell or could not keep his feet then he had to step out, and another from the tossers would take his place. I have seen the girls flung sometimes twenty feet up in the air, and yet, by balancing with their arms extended and swaying their bodies, come down in the hide erect upon their feet. I think they called that game *nila gaw tuk*.

After a hunting party would return with unusual success, and especially if a bear were killed, the occasion would be celebrated with a dance in the big lodge or community hall of the village. It had been built mainly to serve as a dance hall, and every family in the village had a hand in its construction, or else in supplying material. It was built in the form of an octagon, and the dancing floor would easily accommodate a couple of hundred dancers at a time, with plenty of room for each in which to leap and gyrate and make descriptive movements when singing of something he had done. There was no dancing in couples at that time, as the Eskimos did not consider it modest, but the men would dance as vigorously as David before the Lord, and maybe some of the women like Miriam when telling the sorrows of their

hearts, but the young fellows and the girls danced for the sheer delight of flinging themselves about to the rhythm of the drums and tambourines. There was one big tambourine which was made of the intestine of a polar-bear stretched tight over a hoop of green timber fetched from the interior to the south. There was a handle to one side of it, and the player would beat the tambourine skilfully against his uplifted, clenched fist so as to produce a far-reaching, rumbling vibration, and it was this big tambourine which was used for summoning the village folk to the hall for a dance. There were smaller tambourines and drums but no other instruments. The players would chant in unison, however, just as they do in a jazz orchestra of civilized syncopation, and so between the modulated thumping and the chanting, the dancing mood was induced very quickly among the innocent Eskimos, and in the winter they surely did have fun, except when they were starving.

The eight sides of the community hall were built up very slowly of drift logs, the outside thickly banked and covered with tundra, and the logs planed off smoothly on the inside. There was a well joined floor of whip-sawed lumber. There were no windows and no doors, but there was a big ventilating shaft in the centre of the ceiling, with a horizontal screen hung just under it which was made from the diaphragm of a whale. The entrance to the hall was through a trap-door at the end of a forty foot tunnel leading in from the outside and under the floor. In this way the hall was well ventilated to meet Arctic needs, but with never a draught through it. Seal-oil lamps served both to light and heat it. I had some good times in that old lodge, and it was there that I first began to estimate the superior social qualities of the Eskimos in comparison with the men at my own post and

the denizens of Blabbertown. For one thing I noticed their readiness to share whatever of fun or food they had with each other, and their happy-go-lucky ways. Night or day was all the same to them for a frolic, and when the big tambourine would be heard booming through the village, then all the inhabitants knew there was something to celebrate at the town hall, and all who could would go to it. There would be no admission charge, but it was understood, and was a custom faithfully observed, that each would bring such food as he could for the occasion, much or little, from a cooked ptarmigan to a great roast of caribou meat or bear. Even a strip of blubber for one of the oil lamps would be acceptable. As each guest came through the tunnel leading into the hall, and crawled up through the man-hole he would deposit his offering on a big receiving bench placed near it.

Of course, I had a young eye on a number of the girls about the village, but they seemed to have no eye for me, which surprised my conceit of myself. Some of these girls were quite good looking. They all kept themselves very clean, and being so clean and furry when seen outside they seemed like playful kittens to me, and naturally I wanted to play. Most of them had oval faces, and big, clear, dark-brown eyes, with pouting dark red lips over white little teeth. Their cinnamon skin was smooth and soft and natural, and never repellent with greasy mixtures and paints, without which so many white women now seem to think they can no longer be attractive to men. But when those Eskimo girls would be excited with dancing or running or the tossing game their cheeks would glow through the brown with a rich maroon red, like what I used to see on our best russet apples in Denmark.

Eskimo women are independent in their choice of a

man, and in parts of the Arctic, because of there being so many more men than women, the primeval custom of polyandry obtains, as I am told it still does in Tibet; one woman taking several men as husbands. But the proportion between the sexes is becoming more balanced now, as a result of the abandonment of female infanticide, and in the bringing of that about my own daughter Etna has had more influence with her people than missionaries or officials, and this has been acknowledged by the Canadian Government. But I will tell more of that later.

Eskimo girls, while young, are taught all they need to know in order to be good wives and to be able to take care of all domestic needs. They are shown how to make the most of every bit of meat and bone in an animal or a fish, and how to kill or catch them, and how to take pelts off and tan them, and how to make clothes and moccasins and boots and mittens. They also learn how to build snow houses, and make fires, and to do such simple cooking as is done in the Arctic, and how to treat wounds and make the sick as comfortable as possible. And with all that they know their own value; they are shrewd and will not link their fortunes with that of any man who has not first proven that he is a good hunter, or a good provider, as they say in New England. But these things I learned gradually through my first years; certainly they did not all impress me during the first month.

CHAPTER VI

BIG WIND

MID-OCTOBER at Point Hope. The sea had not yet frozen over in front of us. Our post faced south and looked west. The sea is very shallow in those parts, all the way across to Asia. That is why, when Captain Cook was feeling his way about, after having passed through Bering Strait into the Arctic Ocean in September and October of 1779, with his two little ships, seeking a navigable north-west passage easterly toward the Atlantic, he concluded that America and Asia were joined in one land somewhere near the Pole. Maybe so — long ago — but our people say the bridge of land was farther south, and that its broken fragments now constitute the Aleutian Islands. I do not know.

One night the wind blew. It was the big wind of October, 1893, which Dr. Griggs the missionary, and the oldest Eskimos of Tigara, declared afterwards was the worst ever known by them at Point Hope. But it began with pretty preludes — queer whistles of no meaning for any of the crew — unless myself. Soon there were eerie screechings at intervals out of the dark. We were all smoking and talking — telling stories we had heard before — but worth listening to many times up there where we had so little to do of a night. No such magic comfort as radio was ever even dreamed of by the wizards of science in those days — which makes one wonder what more of

such may be released from hiding places not imagined now!

Atop of our skylight a band of wee pipers were trying to learn a tune. They could not play it very well, for all of them had only one note, and it needed more. But for that they played their one note over and over and louder and louder.

It was different when the drums began. Great waves were booming in a slow roll over the shore, and I could hear a rattle as of kettledrums following, as they rasped the shingle back again for the next advance. The others were not minding it at all, but I became more and more silent, for I was being keyed through and through in unison with the storm that was coming. I knew the signs, and I knew when the other things were talking.

We laughed when the first waves came splashing over our roof. We knew how strongly our post was built. The waves then reaching us could barely slide over, with their force broken by the long outward slant of our wall toward the sea. And when the first of the bitter cold salt water came through the skylight and soused Captain Bain, who happened to be just under it, that was a good joke. But gradually the mood of the men changed, as the pounding of the waves became heavier, and there was a shrieking and howling laughter as if demons were riding the air all around us. Then men began to look at each other silently, and when the skylight was smashed in and the crests of the greater waves fell through on us, we all had the notion in a twinkling that our post would be undermined and washed out to destruction. The men were in a panic, too frightened to wait and see what would happen. They opened the door and ran out in the storm just as they were; mad for action, and heading inland. I was afraid even to do that, for I realized how cruel an

Arctic storm might be, and besides that I knew instinctively more than the others about the way of the waves, and what they might and might not do, and how they could not lay hold against a long slant, such as our post had toward them, as they could against an upright wall. So I stayed inside where I was, and made fast the door, and had a good fire going in two of the stoves whose pipes went through the wall on the land side, so that the smoke of them was not driven back by the wind across the sea. The other two stoves had their pipes to seaward, for use when the wind was the other way.

No water was seeping in the house at the floor-edge, and what did come was only as the greater waves rolled over the skylight. Such supplies as were within reach of any drip or splash from above I shoved back against the walls, where the bulk of our goods was stored in good order. Then I got a little of the precious small supply of rum, which was in my charge, as cook. I made me a fine strong toddy, with plenty of brown sugar and a dash from the lime-juice bottle. Then I leaned back comfortably in our one long deck-chair, and I sipped that toddy slowly.

When I began to sing the first thing that came to me in words was a line about 'How firm a foundation'. I had heard it once at a meeting in a Seamen's Mission at San Francisco. After that I got better, and hummed the 'Buy a Broom Waltz' — the one the yellow-haired, fat Swede girl had taught me at Pechow. From that I began to think of the time I had been left all alone on the *Venus* when she had been rammed by the Norwegian barque, and then, of course, I went to Edinburgh again, and I was in the great castle with the red-haired, pale-faced, thin girl who was called Elsie, and who had the kind, brown eyes. All the while my memories were weaving in and out to the music made by the storm — the smashing crescendoes

of the orchestra outside — around me — and overhead. The last I remember, as I fell asleep, I was exulting with the fine men who were my Viking ancestors — and who had circled the Arctic all around from Norway a thousand years ago!

I slept well through the long night, and it was very long, for the dirty grey shivering dawn in October at Point Hope is so late in coming that it might as well be noon. I did not wake of myself, but because of a knocking at the door. I thought it queer that the returning men did not call for admittance, and I could hear no voices. When I unbarred the door there were no men at all, but one lone Eskimo woman, seeming cold and faint. She was smiling at me and was crying at the same time, as I let her in and closed the door again. I saw that she was glad that it was no other than myself that was there, for we had seen each other once when I was playing *nila gaw tuk* on the beach with the others, and had admired her ability to land on her feet in the walrus hide when tossed up in the air.

The great storm continued for nearly four days, and the woman remained with me in the store for three. Then I filled a sack of easy provisions for her — bacon and sea-biscuits and brown sugar — and ventured out with her in the savage wind. We made our way back to the village where she had left her sick husband in the safest house, with a few days' provisions. And this is the way the affair happened.

When the great storm broke over us from Siberia, and the water came rolling into the village, the Eskimos quickly realized that it was beyond ordinary, and threatened destruction. They all ran for high land, the men and the stronger women staying only to carry such belongings

with them as they could. One group of them even managed to carry a whale-boat far inland, and it speaks well for the health of the villagers that all of them were able to get away quickly in the night except one, and that was the husband of the woman who came to me. He had been ill of a fever for weeks, and although recovering was so weak that he could not walk more than a few steps, and could hardly even stand on his feet. The others had gone, leaving him to the care of his wife, and she was frightened that the village would all be washed away into the sea. So she got her husband on her back and toddled on with him till she came to a hut on higher ground. She got him in there and laid him on a bunk built well above the floor, and put water and dried caribou meat near him. Then she went out again into the storm to follow her people. How she failed in doing that, and why she decided afterwards to come wading down through the salt slush to the door of our post I do not know. She had no English, and at that time I had only a very few elemental words of Eskimo.

When we reached the hut where she had left her husband we found that the tunnel which led into it was frozen solid, and as I had only a sheath-knife with me it would have taken a long while to cut a way through it. But the woman was nimble, and full of her own devices. She clambered up over the roof of the hut and broke through the skylight, which was made of translucent bear-gut. Through that she let herself down, and found her husband still alive, and no worse than when she had left him. Presently she climbed out again and got her sack of provisions, and intimated that everything was as it should be, and for me to go back to the post. I did so, and was lonely. There was not a living thing in sight.

The next day Captain Bain and the men returned, and seemed surprised at finding me all so comfortable

as I was. He found everything ship-shape in the store, and none of the goods damaged, except a few sacks of flour which had been wetted with sea-water. It did not take long to repair the skylight, so that it was as good as before.

Captain Bain and his men had experienced difficulty in making the eight miles to Blabbertown through the big wind, but they got there sooner and in better condition than Dr. Griggs, the missionary. His home and school in one was built on the north shore of the sand-spit, just opposite our post on the south shore. The Eskimo village spread along the north shore almost at the western tip of Point Hope. Dr. Griggs's house was badly damaged, and so were many of the houses of the village; some not being so well reinforced as was our post, with ramparts slanting seaward. Dr. Griggs had hastily packed some supplies in a large sheet, making a bag of it on his shoulder, when he set off through the dark storm, but he was blown down so often on his way to Blabbertown that he lost half of what he had in the sheet, part of which was afterwards found and restored by the Eskimos. He had his feet frozen.

No doubt the others were wiser than I — when they ran away. It did seem, when the storm was at its height, as if the entire peninsula would be inundated and swept bare. But I was glad that I had been scared into staying put at my post, because after that the people thought that I knew more than I did. It was the beginning of my reputation for being able to slip through any difficulty in the Arctic.

Our gallant little schooner, *Emily Schroeder*, was wrecked entirely. She had been lifted clean out of the lagoon, and pushed more than half a mile inland on the sands. I would not have believed it, had I not seen her for myself.

WHAT CAME OF SLAYING BEARS

As winter wore on through 1893 and into 1894 we had many bitter storms sweep over us at Point Hope, but none so great as was the big wind of October. There was no longer the danger of great, smashing waves from the sea, for the sea was frozen. The weather, of course, was very cold, but my blood was warm and I had good food and clothing, and so I did not mind that.

I was liking my life in the Arctic. To cook for our few men was no trouble at all, and I had plenty of time on my hands to please myself. I was always welcome when there was a dance in the community hall of the village. Sometimes I would go over and have a talk with Dr. Griggs, and learn from him of things and ways new to me. And Dr. Griggs would get me to talk to him about Sweden and Russia and Edinburgh and Australia, and all about my doings in those places, and at Shanghai. There would be times when he looked wistful, as if he wanted something different in his own life — if only to remember — something maybe more like Honolulu.

I got Dr. Griggs to teach me some proper words in Eskimo, because there was one Eskimo girl in the village who attracted me strongly, and who was beginning to let herself look at me when she thought I was not looking, as I could see very well from the foxy corner of my left eye. As against that, however, there was one Eskimo lad who kept near to her at all the dances, and he was a skilful hunter, by all reports. Besides that, he could

talk to her, and I could not. So a sly look from me, and a shy look from her was all that passed between us, except once when I had a chance to catch and give her a squeeze as she fell from the walrus hide in a game of *nila gaw tuk*. She seemed startled, but I am sure she was pleased, and I had a queer feeling myself.

On day I went out with my Winchester rifle to hunt for seal. I was about a mile off from shore, and began creeping toward a hummock near where the ice had cracked and there was a long lead of clear water. Reaching the hummock I crouched down where it formed like an alcove. I was well concealed, and I waited, intent for a seal to show his head out of the water. Suddenly I saw two polar bears lumbering along the ice-edge, and coming near to where I was. The one in advance was larger than the average. They had not scented me, as the wind was blowing strongly toward me. I began to wish that I had asked one of the Eskimo lads to come along with me, as I took a good rest for my rifle and got my aim on the bigger bear. Slowly it came nearer. Then I could see its black, beady, little eyes. They shone brightly from its white fur as they searched the ice-field and the open water ahead for a sign of something alive. As I got the sight of my rifle fairly on one of those eyes it must have noticed the movement, for it stopped suddenly as if frozen stiff, and looked directly at me where I lay crouched in the snow. At that moment I fired.

The explosion and heavy recoil brought me to my feet. The bear had fallen, and there was not a single tremor of its body. I found afterwards that the bullet had passed through one eye, and being a blunt, soft-lead one, it almost tore out the back of the head. The other bear was trying to locate the noise, and just as it saw me I fired again. I missed, and it started on a loping run to-

ward me. I fired again, and this time I hit it in the shoulder and a red splotch showed on its fur. At that it turned aside and tried to climb over a pressure-ridge in the ice, and I fired two more shots. The big creature stopped, trembled, and tried to claw its way over the ridge. But then it slipped back, and lay in a crumpled heap of blood-stained white at the foot of the ridge, moving no more.

Whatever my urgent need may be of their bodies, I always have a respect somehow for the animals I kill, even for whales. With such a superior weapon as I had there was no great valour in what I had done; not a whit more of courage than shown by those big-game hunters who go into jungles with even better weapons than I had, and a troop of servants to make all easy for them when they feel the call to slaughter, but with no excuse of their own need or livelihood, and of course making no pretence that what they do in the way of killing is for the protection of others more worthy of life.

However, there I was, a young fellow much exhilarated by the kill I had made. Two bears would mean a lot in the way of food and festival in the Eskimo village. I intended to keep the skins for myself, and give a good share of the meat to the men at our post, but for the most part I intended those bears for a dance at the town hall. Plans for wider life in the Arctic were beginning to crystallize in my brain. I intended to go farther, and be a trader on my own, under no command from others.

Cautiously I made sure that both bears were dead. Then I went back to the village as fast as I could to tell the good news. Two lads with a long sled, among the first whom I met, offered to go with me at once and bring home the meat. They knew how to remove the skins to best advantage, and then the carcasses were cut into convenient sections, and all being piled and well secured on the

sled the three of us were not long in hauling it to shore, and so to our post and to the village. I took off so much of the meat as I wanted to cook for the men of our post, and then with the bulk of it, and the skins, went into the village. I intended that these first bear-skins of mine should be properly treated and tanned.

The news had spread that Charlie Urlie had killed two bears out on the ice, and the whole village turned out to welcome us when we arrived. It was decided that the event must be celebrated with a dance at the town hall, and it would be the first really big dance of the season. The cooking of the meat began without any delay, and about three hours later, when all was ready and the dancers had worked their minds into a fine mood of anticipation, the chief ones deciding what great stories they would tell by their leaping and posturing, the big tambourine was heard throbbing in front of the tunnel entrance of the lodge.

The girls came in their best clothes; all made of skins which they had laboured over and sewn during the summer for the winter styles. Of course, the general shape of their garments in the Arctic does not change, but the trimmings and the colour of the ornamental furs and the ways these are attached and the fancy work which goes with them do change quite a bit from winter to winter, and the women seem to know through the summer just what the most fetching mode will be for the next winter. I was made to know somewhat about these things after I began to have daughters in the Arctic coming into their teens and dancing through the season of the long night. One year the girls will be wanting still-born caribou calf that looks like seal but is darker. Another year all their trimmings must be ermine, and the next dark wolf, and the next red fox, and so on, even if their poor fathers must

reach down so far south as Great Slave Lake to get what they want. Skin clothes will take all of a summer to make daintily, what with tanning, and selecting trimmings to match for mukluks and mittens and parka.

Captain Bain and some of the men from our post went with me to that dance. I was greatly elated, but with never a drop of liquor in me. I was the popular young man in all that crowd, and I wanted to leap and sing for the admiration that was being flung my way. I could feel it like rum, but finer and better. Maybe a winning politician, or a great singer being given an ovation, or even a popular actor, may now and then have a taste of the wine that was mine that night. And the little Eskimo girl called Gremnia, who had so taken my fancy when I caught her out of the walrus hide in the *nila gaw tuk* game was looking all the time at me whenever she thought I was not looking at her. There was a wonder look in her eyes as if they were those of a young seal, and her oval brown face looked fetching between two fluffy young white fox tails which hung from her cap, and her lips were pouting and deep coloured like claret, or a ripe cranberry. If she had looked on me with some favour before, it was as if she could do so now with propriety, for I had proven myself a hunter. One must be a meat-getter to be fully qualified as a man in the Arctic. A woman will do all the rest; and sometimes she gets the meat as well.

With whatever fluting music began among the birds, and certain singing insects, there is no doubt that among men it began with regulated thumping. Probably at first there was a timed and time-varied clatter together of sticks or stones. After that dried bladders blown full with air, followed by the grand invention of the tambourine and drum. Rhythm was achieved, and then came chanting, telling how great was the singer and maybe how great

was God for being the singer's champion. I mean to say that an Eskimo orchestra may be very elemental, almost the first thing in simplicity, but in right environment and mood it will release in men and women all that may be released about the hips by the finest American or African jungle jazz. It makes one want to sway back and forth and dance.

Naturally I wanted to dance with Gremnia, but as I said before, dancing in couples was not done in those days among the Eskimos. And I was called upon to dance alone. I was called upon to sing and dance the story of my killing the two bears. Well, although I did not know how and had never tried to do such a thing before, I was somehow keyed up for it and I just let myself go to something inside of me, trusting that it would carry me through. It did. My performance met with great applause, even from Captain Bain and the crew from our post.

That was a very enjoyable party. It lasted all night, and all the next day, and well toward the long delayed dawn of the second day. Some of the bear meat was roasted but most of it was boiled and was carried into the hall from time to time in great steaming pots.

Bear meat in the Arctic, when eaten in quantity by active and healthy persons, induces a peculiar, light form of intoxication which is sometimes sedative in the end, but which usually works off in exhilaration, and with no bad after effects as from alcohol. Also it has a marked aphrodisiac effect on persons of both sexes. It is not so, a missionary told me, if eaten in moderate quantities with other food, and without the activities and incitements of a prolonged Eskimo dance. But I have heard that Indians in the old Hudson's Bay territories, and Africans in Africa, have been observed to show marked symptoms of intoxi-

cation from over indulgence in meat, whether of newly killed deer or a dead hippopotamus.

Several times I was called upon to repeat my bear dance, and each time I did it better, with new and meaningful movements. I did want to grab that little girl Gremnia, and whirl her in a waltz or a gallop, as I had done with others in the dance halls of San Francisco. Once, for less than half a minute, I ventured to do so; straining her body close to mine, and feeling its vibrant warmth through her loose-fitting fur garments. But she broke away, as if frightened, and went out through the tunnel and did not return for more than an hour. After that I went out myself and back to the store, knowing I would have a good credit on the bear-skins. So I took some calico and a box of fancy toilet soap and a bottle of perfume, and returning to the hall with them I found Gremnia and gave her my first present. She smiled but seemed confused and said nothing, and then moved away, and I only caught her looking at me once or twice after that.

On the fourth morning after the big dance I was alone at the trading post, preparing some food. The captain and the others were down working over the wreck of the schooner, salvaging all they could from her. That took them about two months of hard work.

I heard a light knock on the door, and called out for whoever it might be to come in. But no one came, so I went to see who was outside. There stood Gremnia. She had on her best furs, and looked her prettiest, with her cheeks glowing, as she held out to me a parka which she had carried on her arm. It was a very fine one, made by herself, and it was a present to me. I looked into her eyes, which she did not turn away this time. She smiled, but

all she could say was my name as she knew it — Charlie Urlic!

Well, I just threw my arms around her and drew her inside, and I made up my mind then and there that I would not let her go from me any more at all, even if I had to leave her sometimes. That was thirty-seven years ago, and how faithfully she has stayed by me ever since!

I hear talk of cave men who used to club a woman for a wife, and carry her off. But I do not believe it, for rape is not natural, and in primitive marriage the natural way would prevail, even among men, just as it does among birds and lions, whether for one season or for life. But, of course, many women do like to be chased, and to pretend that they are forced, and they know how to arrange for that.

When Captain Bain came back to the post I told him that I was finding my work as cook too heavy, and that I must have an assistant like Gremnia, and that we would prepare quarters of our own. The captain laughed and said I was a wise lad, and he had no objections to make.

Thirty-seven years ago! No ceremony was needed in our case. It was a natural marriage. Together we have camped on every sand-spit and lagoon and island along the Arctic coast of Alaska, and over half of the Canadian Arctic, shore side and interior. We have lived in igloos and tents and on schooners, and have seen them all go in the ups and downs of life. Our babies would come out on the ice when floor whaling in the spring, and at sea in oomiaks, and in snow houses when blizzards were howling around us. I have seen Gremnia sit up through the long nights mending and darning our clothes, and making moccasins and mukluks so that we could continue travelling the next day. I have known her to go without food, pretending that she had eaten, so that the rest of us

might have a few morsels to divide against our big appetites. She has followed the trap lines in winter when she could only be gone from a tent a few hours because of leaving a nursing child in it. And when I have been sick and unable to hunt, and the children too young to do so, she would take a rifle and start out in the morning through weather that would keep an arctic explorer indoors, and after long hours out alone in the hills she would always come back with meat for the family.

I have seen Gremnia going all day at the handle bars of a dog sled, and when at last we would make camp she would keep on working until the entire family had been fed and bedded down for the night. When the children were asleep, as they would be in a twinkling, and after I had gone to sleep myself, she would sit under the flicker of a seal-oil lamp, and mend clothing so that we might travel with less discomfort the next day.

Going in our open whale-boat from Point Barrow to Herschel Island once when the ice had opened for spring, we met with a heavy gale, and Gremnia clung to the tiller for six hours at a stretch while I tended sail. By that time, when the wind died down and it was safe to beach the boat, she was so cold and cramped that I had to lift her out and make camp and cook supper while she recovered. I was glad that I could do that so well as I did, for I was a bit exhausted myself. But now I have a fine house for Gremnia at Rymer Point on Victoria Island, in the part they call Wollaston Land on the maps now, although old-timers speak of the entire island as Victoria Land. Gremnia's house is well furnished, and her children visit her from different parts of the Arctic where they are established, and she is supplied with all that she wants while I am living here with her granddaughters, who are attending school.

We have eight children living, and they have children, and I am proud of every one of them. The boys have prospered as traders, and the girls are well married, two of them having trading posts of their own. But all that, and the grimness and defeats and triumphs of our life in the future lay unguessed by us on that bright morning when Gremnia came to me with a present of a parka, and signified that if I wanted her to stay she would stay!

CHAPTER VIII

FLOOR WHALING

SINCE I had chosen a wife for life in the Arctic I felt that I must make up my mind to settle there, as she likely would not be happy anywhere else. Besides that, the Arctic offered an order of life which attracted me, in spite of its bitter white and grey winter for almost nine months of the year, and its short, bare, brown summer, and its too much sunlight for a while and too much dimness for a longer while. Because of the universal snow, and the occasional shine of the Northern Lights, with the moon and stars to help, there is seldom, however, any such deep darkness of night as in the United States and below. I accepted the challenge to conquer in the Arctic.

Captain Bain treated me well, and wages were sure. Yet I soon realized that being a cook at Point Hope was not much of a career for a man with a wife, and probably a family to come. So I told the captain that I wanted to be off on my own in the Arctic, and he released me without any fuss. It was easy for him to find another cook, although of course, it would not be easy for him to find another like me. But that was his affair.

Soon after the new year 1894, there munched into Point Hope an old Portuguese sailor by name of Antone Bates, with an Eskimo woman who had helped him along all the way down from Point Barrow, which is about seven hundred miles around to the north and east from Point Hope. Antone was a restless survivor from a whale ship which had been crushed in the ice. I was guided to make

his acquaintance. He had a little money and credit at the trading post.

Antone had years of experience in the Arctic as a whaler. It was from him that I first heard of *floor whaling*, and the ways of it. It is so called because it is done when the floor of the sea — the frozen surface you understand — begins to crack in spring. Long narrow channels of clear water — *leads*, we call them, are thus opened. Some think the proper name might be *floe* instead of *floor* whaling — because of it being done from the edges of ice-floes — but it is more often done on the ice-fields, which are larger than the floes. Maybe *floe* and *floor* are twin cousins as words, and it does not matter anyway — we say *floor whaling*.

Bow-head whales come swimming along the leads swallowing great quantities of very small shrimps which swarm there in spring, and which the sailors call sea-lice. I know about those things, and the whale is welcome to them. But once, years after, when I was far and alone on the ice, with no food but a piece of seal meat so putrid that I could not eat it, I tied it to a cord and let it down by a lead. I let it hang down for a few minutes and then pulled it up to find it absolutely covered with the wee shrimps, as I guessed it would be. I repeated this until I had gathered enough shrimps to fill a pot I had. I boiled and ate them, and they sustained me until I came to something better, but I needed a lot of oil to rid me of their crusty remnants. Yes — roughage!

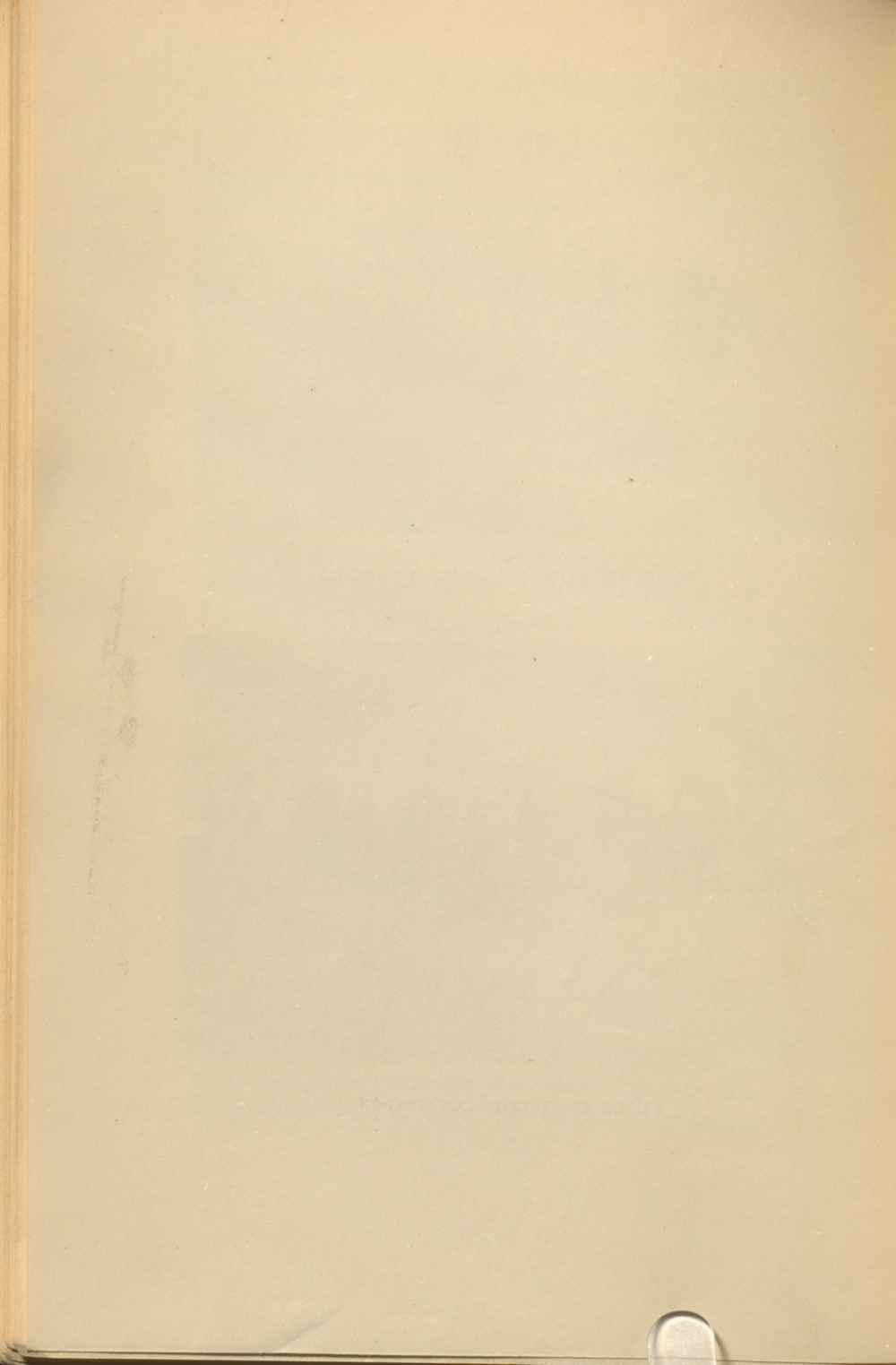
I told Antone that I would like to try my luck with him. He agreed to furnish me with an outfit for floor whaling. He had in mind to send out five parties, but when the time came for operations he was only able to equip three parties. I was put in charge of one, and I was



FLOOR WHALING: RAISING A CARCASS



FLOOR WHALING: CUTTING-IN



to work on a *lay*, by which is meant a share basis according to what luck one has, instead of wages. It is a more manly and inspiring way of employ for those who are willing to work, and like to take chances for more or less. My cod-fishing trips in Bering Sea had proven me to the worth of this plan.

But this business was new to me. So, in order to make my chances more sure, I suggested that I should have a share in whatever might be caught in all of Antone's parties. Now as I was beginning to be considered a useful man with the Eskimos, and as Antone's parties were to be made up entirely of Eskimos, with the exception of himself and me, Antone agreed to my suggestion. So it was settled that I should have a one-fifth interest in all the whales caught by the party of which I would be in charge, and a twenty-fifth interest in whatever would be caught by the other parties.

Naturally I talked the matter over with my wife as much as I could, which was not very much, since I had only picked up a few words and phrases of Eskimo at that time, and she had less of English from me. But for all that we made our few words count for a lot; and thought and understanding flashed more quickly between us than did our words. This floor whaling would be a new venture for me, and I was sure that Gremnia knew more than I about what was to be done. She did, for while I was still the strange venture for her, knowing so little about me, this floor whaling she considered but an ordinary affair; ordinary almost as bringing in the cows would be for one of our country girls.

Soon after she came to me Gremnia had taken me out with her and taught me how to snare ptarmigan. After that, having sold the bear-skins, I bought some traps and she showed me how to set out a trap line to best advantage.

There was not much to be had about Point Hope, the region having been made almost lifeless by too many trappers, but we did manage to get quite a number of foxes and a few lynx. But prices were literally almost nothing as compared with prices to-day. For instance we could only get ninety cents in trade for a white fox skin. For red fox skins and for lynx skins we got two dollars apiece. So there was no money to be made that way then. Floor whaling seemed to be our one chance.

'Charlie Urlie, Gremnia go. Gremnia show you how!'

That settled it. I realized that a man may learn much from the right kind of a woman — a woman like Gremnia. The advice of women may be good, especially when they do not know why they give it. But Gremnia did know about all there was to know about floor whaling, and first treatment of the animal when killed, and the separating and storing and utilizing every last shred of it, just as she knew about seals and bears. I was married to a rare wise little woman.

I told Antone that my wife wanted to go with me and I was surprised that he was not surprised at all. But he said that if she went along as cook, and would mend the clothes of my crew as required, she also would be put on a lay of a one twenty-fifth interest in all the whales caught by the three parties. Gremnia was content, and she started to get me ready at once, as the season was nigh. In my party besides my wife and myself, there were to be two other men and one woman, all Eskimos.

Our first work was to cut a trail through the snow and rough ice from Point Hope out to the edge of open water where we were to be stationed. It was difficult cutting through the many pressure-ridges of ice, which had been formed where the floes had cracked and ground against

each other and had then frozen together again in high, long, glaring scars. But after four days of hard work we had a good sled trail made for a distance of twelve miles out to the lead we selected for headquarters.

No expensive outfit is needed for floor whaling. Any poor man in that region may try it, just as any poor man with a pan may try his hand for placer gold in the gravel on the edge of a creek, and do much better that way sometimes than if he had a steady job working for a company on an expensive hydraulic plant. Whether panning for gold or floor whaling a man risks getting nothing, but always he has the allure of striking something big, and he has the feeling of being free and on his own. So floor whaling for me, if a-whaling I must go, rather than being in a stinking whale ship under hard orders and on hard fare for two or three years at a stretch, as it used to be!

Following instructions, I put in my spare time at target practice against a snow bank with the dart-gun harpoon. Wielding this weapon effectively requires hours of practice, and at nights my arms would ache from the strain of it. In the dart-gun type of harpoon there is a gun barrel fastened to a pole about six feet long, a bit thicker than a cavalry lance, and not tapering. This pole is held in both hands with palms up, and the swing and thrust of it is given standing sideways to the whale. At the muzzle of the gun barrel the detachable dart or harpoon head sticks out like an old style bayonet, but it slants slightly from the muzzle to allow for unimpeded passage of the bomb which is shot out as soon as the dart is thrust into the whale. A little rod runs along the gun barrel, which is about eighteen inches long and of a number eight shot-gun bore. When the dart enters the flesh of the whale there is an immediate pressure on the rod which releases a trigger, and the bomb is fired. It enters near the wound

made by the thrust and explodes inside of the whale, and if it be anywhere near his heart it kills him at once. He may have one or two great convulsions, and then floats quietly. But if he be not killed at once by the bomb he dives below, and stays until he must come up again for air. In going below or swimming he must exert his strength against the pull of the seal-skin *pokes*, as they are called, which are attached to the line which is fastened to the dart. This line is usually about thirty fathoms long, and two floats or pokes are attached to the end of it and one about the middle. The middle one is to act as a drag on the diving whale, and the two at the end may do that, and always indicate the whale's position if he sinks and dies on the bottom. Each of the pokes is made of the entire skin of a seal. As little of the skin is cut as possible, the carcass and bones being scooped and carved out, and the skin then turned inside out and scraped and cleaned and dried, after which it is well painted with seal blood to make it waterproof. When thoroughly dried it is turned back again with the fur outside, and is blown up like a bladder and sealed airtight. It takes a person with good lungs to do this.

The harpoon line is wound around the pokes in such a way that it reels off, turning the pokes as the whale goes down, just like a line on the reel of a trout rod. Once the dart is thrust into the whale it is released with the pull-back of the pole, and at the same time the tip of it which is slanting on a swivel as it goes in is immediately pulled horizontal by the strain on the line, and so cannot slip out again. The ancient bone-headed harpoon used by the Eskimos had this swivel contrivance at its tip, so that once the point was embedded in flesh it went horizontal against any attempt to pull it out, and also from the strain of a line to which pokes were attached

when being dragged down by a whale. From the edge of the ice, or from kyak or oomiak having thrown a harpoon into a whale the Eskimos, before any bombs or European gear was known to them, would follow along the ice-edge or paddle after the whale, throwing in more harpoons as he rose for air, and so eventually, after a long struggle, killing him. My father-in-law, when young, used to go hunting whales in that fashion with bone-headed harpoon from a kyak. It takes courage. But with the white man's weapons, the dart-gun harpoon which is heaved into the whale from both hands, swinging with palms up, and the smaller shoulder-gun which shoots a bomb into the whale without harpoon, as a finishing touch, the business is comparatively safe. Yet only comparatively, and it is very trying.

The opening of the season for floor whaling in the Arctic is celebrated much as is the primeval Spring Festival or Easter in lovelier lands when the flowers and leaves begin to appear. The coming of spring means only longer days and warmer air and a showing of the naked brown ground in the Arctic, except that it does mean that all the strong and active villagers will be released from winter quarters and winter privations to go hunting with better chances again for fresh meat. So the night before we were to set out on our floor whaling expedition there was a dance and as much of a feast as could be provided at the town hall.

Before the dance began Gremnia made a final inspection of all our gear and supplies, so as to be sure that we might start off early in the morning with everything to hand and in right order. Our oomiak, or large skin canoe, was about thirty feet long, with a beam of about six feet. It was made of walrus hides, stretched over a

wooden frame, and fastened with whalebone; just such a type of construction as the boat in which St. Brendan sailed away from Ireland fifteen hundred years ago and had adventures in Iceland and was frightened by a volcano and came back to his monastery after a long time and told queer tales of big fish and crystal chapels in the sea, so that the British Admiralty thirteen hundred years later were still searching for St. Brendan's Isle and Hy-Brazil in the Atlantic.

We put all our supplies in the oomiak, and then lashed that to a dog-sled. We had plenty of warm clothing, but we took no sleeping-bags, as we intended to be awake nigh all the time. Nor did we take much food, as we were confident that we could get it as needed by hunting. I stowed away a few luxuries like salt and sugar and tea. For a stove we had an old coal-oil can, with a couple of bars of iron set in cross-wise about six inches from the top. We had one round pot for boiling meat, and one for making tea, and these in turn could set in the square tin for the six inches down and make a draught and allow for the smoke to come out from the burning blubber hanging on the cross irons. The blubber being fastened to the cross irons drips its hot grease to the bottom of the can, and if you add to that bits of seal bone or such other bone as you have a very hot fire is made, and a very black smoke comes from it which puts an oily soot into your skin and clothes. Besides that we had two big iron forks, and enough tin cups to serve all. It was considered a generous outfit, for one must have no excess baggage when going floor whaling. Of course we had our sheath-knives, and they could serve for many purposes.

Gremnia saw to it that our sled was drawn up near to the tunnel mouth leading into the hall before we all went in to dance the night away. The first boom of the

big tambourine sounded; and within less than an hour nigh all the villagers except the very young and the very old and the sick had gone through the tunnel and up the three-step ladder through the manhole into the hall where the lamps were all lighted and the food arranged on the benches.

I need not describe again how one is worked into the spirit and joy of these dances, once he lets himself go to the regular throbbing from the drum and tambourine orchestra, which loosens something in men and women. But I thought to show a novelty. I had taught my wife a Russian dance which I could do very well, and she learned to do it almost as well herself. We danced it together. The Eskimos seemed to think it was funny, but they could not make any meaning out of our movements, nor did any of them care to try it. They just laughed, as politely as they could, as some of our people do when first they hear Chinese music, not being strung to understand its tones and rhythm.

When the heavier dancing began I watched closely, for I knew that it might be educative. First of all some old hunters who had harpooned whales from kyaks began to go through all the motions indicating a whale hunt, beginning with the cautious stalking along the ice-edge, with harpoon held ready for the fling. While they were doing this others were chanting the story of it. The twist in the kyak, or the leap back, to avoid the convulsions of the stricken beast and the lashing of his fluked tail, were shown repeatedly; and then the hauling in of the vast carcass and cutting off the giant bow-head, and cutting out the bones. I learned a bit from their play.

Thus through the night we danced and feasted and wished each other good luck until down from the sky-

light came a streak of dismal grey dawn to alter the yellow glow of the lamps. Then Gremnia plucked my sleeve while I was trying to talk with my insufficient lingo of Eskimo to another woman. She said it was time for Charlie Urlic to go.

Our sled was ready, and the dogs which had been arranged for were brought up in a few minutes and harnessed. As we had eaten so much during the night there was no delay for any breakfast. With a shout for ourselves and for the dogs we started away on the run. The sled slipped easily over the good trail we had made.

By the time we had covered the first four miles out on the ice we went more slowly, for we were beginning to tire. Then we settled our pace to a steady, swinging walk. Gremnia and I went on ahead of the sled. I was visioning this as the first great step in the fortune we were going to make for each other. She had told me as well as she could what to do. Now it was for me to make good, and I determined that I would.

Late in the short afternoon we arrived in the lee of a pressure-ridge which I had marked near the edge of a lead. There I decided to make our camp. The dogs were released from the sled and fed, and then a woman who had come out with us led them back to the village. I left the others to unload, and taking my rifle said I would go and try to get some fresh meat for supper. And I did that, for I had not been out more than an hour when, just as it was getting dark, I sneaked up on a seal and killed it with my first shot. I went back to camp very proudly with it, but along with my rifle it made quite a burden and I was tired when I came in sight of Gremnia, who had come out to look for me. Getting that seal the very first day was considered an

omen of good luck. I cut it up, and a fire was soon started in the coal-oil can. Gremnia attended to the cooking.

When I was out hunting the other men made a bank of snow to serve as a wind-shield, and to sit and lean against when we needed to drowse and take the forty winks we were going to allow ourselves instead of stretching out for a long sleep. While we were waiting for supper myself and the two other men launched the oomiak, and we had all our gear ready in place for quick handling.

Slowly I paced along the edge of the floe, peering through the dusk over the open water for the sign of a whale. But I saw no sign. The stars came out, and far away down the lead I saw a flicker of flame, and thick black smoke coiling lazily up through the cold air. That was from the camp of the second of Antone's parties, which had reached its chosen station shortly after ours.

When Gremnia called to supper I sent the two Eskimos to it first, keeping on slow sentry-go along the edge of the ice. When out floor whaling at least one of the party must be on the alert all the time for the first sign of a whale, and at the same time must keep a wary eye on the weather, so that the entire party may go into action on the instant after the whale, or to shift camp quickly or to run for life in case the ice you are on goes adrift; making for shore or another ice-field which remains fast to it. In turn the members of the party snatch a bit of sleep sitting with back to the snow-bank, or crouched on the sled, ready to spring up at the first call. One gets up all of an ache from such sleep as that.

But that first night out, tired from the day and from the dance of the night before, our party could sleep in any position, even standing on their feet — all except me. I was too nervous to close my eyes. All through the

night I kept walking slowly back and forth along the edge of the lead, straining eyes and ears for sight or sound of a whale. There was none, although at times, so intent I was, there seemed to be great bodies rolling to the surface out on the water. Just before daybreak the light wind shifted and began to blow strongly from off shore. I knew the danger in that, and in about ten minutes after, I heard the cracking of ice. The floe we were on might go adrift. I gave the alarm, and in an instant the man sleeping in the oomiak and the one crouched on the sled, and the two women sitting asleep against the snow-bank were up and ready for action. We began to get ready for a retreat to shore, but before giving the order I waited hopefully for another half hour, having a feeling that the wind was going to shift again. And it did; it slued almost half way around, so that there was no longer any immediate danger of going adrift. But on the other hand, with the strong wind now blowing from seaward, the lead in front of us began to close, and as it closed a thin fog began drifting over us from the south-west. The closing of the lead made useless our camp site. The question then was whether to start back for shore, and wait until the fog lifted, or whether to work our way cautiously ahead where the lead had closed and find another open lead of open water, maybe miles ahead, with no trail and no team of dogs to haul our sled, heavy with oomiak and supplies.

It was dangerous to venture farther out and take a chance of the ice opening behind us and setting us adrift in the Arctic Ocean. I talked the matter over with the men, immediately after we had hauled the oomiak up out of the closing lead where it would have been quickly crushed. Years of experience on the ice-floes, and instinctive fears bred of generations of forebears who had

risked and knew the dangers of being adrift in the Arctic, naturally made them cautious. They were for going back, and were surprised when I decided to ask Gremnia for her advice. She had been standing near by and had listened to all that was said.

Gremnia must have been a gambler by nature. She certainly went it blind and took a chance on me, the morning she went over to get me with her pretty parka. And so, when I asked for her opinion about returning to shore, she looked up at the foggy sky, and then at the mountains showing dimly back of Point Hope, and then out over the ice stretching away vaguely into an obliterating greyness. Something like this she said to me, using bits of Eskimo talk which I explain, and what she had of English:

'Charlie Urlie, we come catch whale. Whale no like bear; no like seal; no come up on ice. Whale stay in water. We must go to water. Soon no more ice no more chance get whale by ice. If men go back then we go on. You me have all whale!'

That settled it for my part, and I gave orders to go ahead. The two men and the other woman, who had wanted to turn back, said they would go with us. So we packed our sled again as best we could. Without dogs, and with no trail cut, it was hard going. But we all took hold on the lines, and pulled ahead, making hardly more than two miles an hour. At times we would need to stop and cut and hack a passage through some pressure-ridge that we could not get around. The hours passed and darkness came, so that we had to go more slowly and cautiously than ever. Then the sky cleared, and when at last we came in sight of a still black velvet stretch of water I judged from the position of the stars that it must be high midnight.

By that time we were all about dead on our feet, so I decided to stop and rest until morning. Gremnia and the other woman soon had a fire going in the coal-oil can, while we unpacked part of our gear. The first thing made was a pot of strong tea, and that put new life into us. Then we all fell to on a big hot stew of seal meat, which I made myself, and which was one of the best stews I ever tasted. The others thought the same thing.

After the big feed I went so sleepy of a sudden that I could not keep my eyes open, not for more than about three seconds in every half minute, and after that not for any. There was a twinkle of light through the black smoke coming from the blubber burning and dripping from the cross-bars of the coal-oil can, and I had a glimpse of the Eskimo who was to keep watch for the first half of the night. He was sitting down, and his head was nodding. For myself, I was sitting with my back to the sled, and my legs stretched out. Better for all to sleep, I thought. The wind had gone, and there was nothing to hurt us out there, and we were too tired to hurt anything ourselves. If a whale had poked his head up and squirted water on me I might just have made a face at him and gone to sleep again.

But there was one of us who did not think it time yet for sleep. As my head snuggled into my parka and my arms drew back into my loose sleeves I felt someone pulling on my mukluks. It was Gremnia. No matter that she had worked as hard as the rest of us during the day, now that it was over and the others slept, she was minded to have my footgear in best shape for the next day. And she was like that all the time we were out on the ice. Every broken stitch was picked up and made fast. Holes in our fur garments were mended; mukluk toes were chewed and freshly crimped. The Eskimos, having so few tools

and no machinery, made skilled use of their fingers and teeth, and there is nothing to crimp the toe of a mukluk like human teeth. That is why the front teeth of Eskimo women appear worn almost down to the gums by the time they grew old. But for all that, before they contracted the weakness of the Whites and a taste for their commercialized but unsustaining foods, the Eskimos had sound teeth, white and strong as those of a wolf, all their lives.

In the flicker of light I tried to watch Gremnia working, but I fell into a cinema sleep, recalling places where I had been in the tropics. There were great ferns waving over me, and the air was warm. Sometimes, for a minute or so, I would come out of the weaving dreams to realize a world of cold and hardship and fierce hunger of which the happy Kanakas knew nothing. And then I tried in my heart to be like a Christian, and so I asked God for just one whale. I asked Him to be on my side in killing just one, and I would be content even if it were not the biggest one in the ocean, so long as it was a whale. There we were, out on the ice at the mercy of wind and storm and tide, doing our best to better ourselves, and all we needed was a bit of luck and help from the inside-out of things which rearranges the things that are. Something like that.

Well, as to God and what, who knows? But there does seem to be a Guide in every creature great and small; a Guide which is just as prejudiced and unscrupulous on behalf of that one particular creature as a mother is on behalf of her child. Any creature can rouse that Guide for help against all other creatures if by instinct or otherwise it learn the way of approach and appeal; and in the mass the creatures do. Often out by myself in the

wastes of the world I have observed the instances. If that be religion make what you can of it! Anyway, it will work!

Time deepened for me that night, whether I was awake or asleep. I thought of the courage of that little wife of mine, and of her endurance. She was only a girl about sixteen then, which might mean about the same as eighteen among Scotch and Scandinavian girls, and the girls of the Sandwich Islands. I did not know much about any other girls. But I realized that it was her stubborn determination that had kept us going; her advice that had swayed us from turning back; and if it ended in disaster there would be no word of blame to me. More and more the grit of Gremnia was a wonder to me.

The ugly Russian woman who had held me naked across her lap, while the other women took turns in spanking me, down in the hold of the *Venus* amid the wheat, was after me again, and I gave a yell as she grabbed me. It was such a relief when I found that it was only the Eskimo watchman waking me to take my turn that, although stiff from sleeping in a cramped position, I stumbled up on my feet with a happy feeling, and hopeful.

There was a faint breeze coming from off shore, which I thought would go down with the dawn, and I paid little attention to it. The little stars had disappeared, only a few of the larger ones making silver beauty spots on the royal blue of the sky. There was no trace of fog.

Heavily I stamped my feet to get the blood circulating well again, as I walked over to the oomiak and picked up the harpoon, swinging it back and forth to limber up my shoulder muscles. Then I began to pace back and forth along the ice-edge, with eyes fixed on the black

stretch of water in the lead. Just as the first high lights of the day began to streel up the sky from the south-east, I saw the broad back of a whale break through the water about a hundred yards down the lead near to the ice-edge.

Quickly I turned and touched each sleeping figure on the shoulder, not wishing to call to them lest I alarm the whale. They all came to their feet without a sound; all wide awake. The thrill that comes on the chance to kill that for which we have waited through alert and painful hours may have come down from a time long before we were tigers. It is felt by hunters who must live by their hunting far more than by those who make a luxury of it. Gremnia was aglow with it. We whispered our surmises — was the whale feeding — or was it on its way, and merely up to blow?

My plan is to get the game as soon after it shows as possible. Quickly and quietly we launched the oomiak from the edge of the ice where we had placed it all in readiness. I took hold with both hands on the harpoon with bomb attached, while the others dipped their paddles and pushed off smoothly, and I was taking position in the bow with eyes ahead where the whale was when Gremnia, who was sitting just behind gave me a sharp poke in the ribs with her paddle. As I turned in a flash her finger went to her lips from the paddle, and with her free hand she pointed down almost under the oomiak. The silence of it!

There through the milky green sea a great, rounded bulk of shadowy blue was coming to the surface. It was another whale, and a monster, far larger than the first. The huge head broke through the water not more than twelve feet away from us. The body rolled half way round, showing a lighter coloured skin along the belly.

I hurled the harpoon into it, aiming just below the big protruding fin, and my aim was true and the shaft flew with all the power that was in me. The great beast heaved and convulsed as the point sank **into** him. The muffled thud in my ears on that instant told me that the bomb had exploded.

The whale went down with a great splash as his fluked tail hit the surface. The oomiak was rocking, and the harpoon line sang as it reeled out. The seal poke which was tied to the line midway went under. I saw the harpoon shaft floating. It is so fixed to the barb that the explosion of the bomb blows it out of the whale and back on the water, where it is easily seen because of a small poke attached to it. Its recovery can thus be postponed until the whale is secured, or lost, as the case may be.

Just as the two pokes attached to the very end of the line went into the water from the oomiak one of the Eskimos, a mere lad of twelve years, got himself in the way of those pokes, and was knocked overboard. He swam to the edge of the ice, and we paddled in to rescue him. While he was being hauled up on the ice, none the worse except for being miserably soaked with the stinging cold of the sea-water, I went out and got hold of the shaft, which had floated quite near. I loaded the gun on it with another barb and bomb. Dripping, but ready for work, the lad took his place in the oomiak again. This interlude did not last more than three minutes, and we were ready for the next act.

About a hundred yards down the lead I spied the two end pokes dancing on the surface. About two moments more and the midway poke came in sight. This meant the whale was rising straight from below. Our four paddles churned the water as I took my station again in

the bow. By the time we had covered half the distance to the midway poke the whale had come in sight again. There rose and fell from him a fountain of bloody foam, which showed that he was badly shattered inside. I was eager to get another shot in him before he could dive again, lest he get lodged under the ice and die where we might never be able to get at his carcass.

The whale was turned head on toward us. I was afraid to risk a fling at the head from where I was. I might not make a finishing thrust of it. Gremnia seemed to understand without a word from me. She directed the others to work the boat around so as to give me a side shot. In turning to do this the whale partially submerged, and we dashed in to meet him as he rose almost at once again to the surface. He probably did not know what he was doing, because of the pain and disorder inside.

Once more I threw the harpoon point blank into his side from within ten feet of him. He died at once, and floated without a motion.

CHAPTER IX

ANOTHER DANCE AND AWAY

WE had our first whale. No time was lost cutting into him. We all knew that any time a wind might come which would send us adrift, or else a wind which would close the lead in front of us, and so crush the whale and send the body under before we had the good of it. There are many chances in floor whaling, and most of them are against all concerned, even the whale.

First we cut off the head. That is where the bow-head whalebone is located which once was so much in demand. In those days, when women wore corsets, there were no good substitutes, as now, for the elastic stiffening needed in them. So the price of whalebone of the right sort was such as to send thousands of men on ships into the Arctic, all the way from Point Hope to Herschel Island and beyond that a bit. The bone delivered at Point Hope was worth five dollars a pound at the trading posts. The head of a bull whale such as we had killed that day would yield about a ton of bone. Ten thousand dollars at one crack!

It was not difficult for us to tow the body to the edge of the ice, but we had hard work in getting the head of it up and over the edge for cutting. All our gear consisted of two small pulleys and the same kind of line as used for the harpoon. We did the first round of the cutting from the ice on one side and from the oomiak on the other. After laying the head open we began

hacking out the bone as quickly as possibly. We sorted it in piles by the sled.

The young lad was made comfortable again by the women with the dry clothes they put on him. Then he was ordered to hurry back as fast as he could to Point Hope with the news of our kill.

We expected that a party with dogs would come out to meet us, but meanwhile we decided to get the bone off the ice, and leave the meat and blubber for later fetching. So we loaded the bone on the sled, leaving the oomiak and other things where they were. It was a long hard pull, but we were too satisfied to grumble, even although we had no food on the way. We were shareholders in a rich haul; and we were hauling it to safety. Gremnia's father sighted us afar off, and came out to meet us before the lad had reached the village. But soon the news went round among the villagers, and the dogs knew at the same time that a whale had been killed. They have a way of knowing these things, and they bark impatiently, asking to be harnessed and away to where the body lies.

The bone was safely stowed away, and a number of parties started back with us, ready to assist for a share of meat and blubber. Next after getting the bone in those days was the cutting away of the blue-black skin of the whale with about an inch or more of blubber attached. This serves both for fuel and oil, and is even used by the Eskimos in trading with Indians when they go to deal in the interior where the Indians are. Relations between Eskimos and Indians are usually peaceful, except in Canada about the Coppermine, where battles almost to extermination used to take place before the Mounted Police made their power felt for peace and order.

Next thing is to cut out the rest of the blubber in big

hunks which are laid on the ice to harden. Then the beef is carved out. Eskimos waste nothing, but also they share very generously of their surplus food with each other. This morality comes of their original religion, which I fear they will lose as they come more and more under the influence of the Whites and their ways, just as they are losing their white sound teeth to old age and their immunity from consumption and scurvy and worse diseases.

There certainly is a power of beef and blubber on a whale, and the dogs share lavishly in the less choice parts so long as they last. The blackskin strips are kept frozen or are carefully dried, and are relished by the Eskimos as the English relish the crackling on roast sucking-pigs. The large bones of the whale were put to various uses, all the way from needles and spearheads to upright posts for holding the bodies aloft from the foxes in cemeteries where it was difficult to dig graves. I am glad that women no longer wear corsets as once they did, else by now the bow-head whale might have been exterminated by men going into the Arctic to cater for their desires, because if it were not for those same whales the Eskimos and their dogs would have been starved out of their white land long ago. It is the only land they know, and the only land in which they care to live.

Floor whaling, although sometimes it yields food and clothing for a small community for a long while from one kill, is about as cold and hard and dangerous a way as there is to make a living in the Arctic. And of course there no longer is any corset prize package to be had of the head of a bow-head whale, which is the only whale which frequents the Arctic Ocean.

One does not always start floor whaling with the like of my luck at Point Hope. Nor did my luck continue unbroken. Through the years that followed I sometimes waited for the whole six weeks of the spring season along the edge of the most promising leads — waited until the entire school of bow-heads had passed farther north beyond reach — and never came near enough for a thrust at any one of them. Then I would go back disconsolate to an empty igloo and a hungry family. Besides that, in the spring, when the floor of the sea begins to break and the ice starts moving, you never can tell from hour to hour but what you are beginning to drift. If once you are really adrift, especially if you have laid up no stock of meat, you are fortunate if you get ashore before you starve to death, or your floe melts away under your feet into the sea. That is why the sailors on whaling ships up there get very nervous when they are on the ice far from their ships, even in the solid winter weather. Sailors know that so long as they stay aboard they have safe sleeping quarters and plenty of food stored away to last for a year and longer.

Thus floor whaling is hard and risky work, and sometimes very disappointing. But in that, my first round of it off Point Hope, there was the glow of exceptional success. There was fresh meat and blubber in plenty for the whole village, and Gremnia showed her pride in me. The flesh pots were on for a feast, and before long the throbbing of the big tambourine was heard, calling all to the dance. But this did not suit my mood. There was clear, cold, settled weather, and I wanted to make the most of it and try for another whale while it lasted. But I found there was no action possible until the first killing had been properly celebrated. Except for Gremnia none of my party would go back. They had all the meat

they wanted; they would have some luxuries in trade at the post for their share of the bone already secured; so why hunt any more just then? An Eskimo hunts best on an empty stomach. When there is no pressing need to worry about that then of course the natural thing to do is to dance. So I danced and ate and danced, and then slept for one whole round of the clock.

The next day when I awoke I learned that my friend Joe Feraro, in charge of the Antone party which had been next to mine, had also succeeded in killing a whale, and the bone and beef and blubber had been brought into the village. On with the dance! His crew behaved just like mine. He could not induce them to go back to the leads for more whale.

Joe and I put our heads together, and then talked to our wives. That made a party. The women were quite willing to venture out with us, if we were so set on going — in fact if we went they would go also, whether we liked it or not. Very stubborn they can be on occasion.

I was glad to have Joe with me, for he was an experienced old whaler, and Joe was glad to be with me, for already I had gained a reputation for good luck in hunting. So the four of us started from shore, out over the ice once more in face of a bitter wind blowing from the north-east. Cold, that deadening cold as if from something that had never known the sun, and had been born in the lifeless winter night between the icebergs piled around the North Pole! And we had no dogs to help us.

All of a day, without stopping, we tugged and toiled onward with our sled, which was heavily loaded with more gear than we had the first time. We had a trail only part of the way, and it was dark by the time we reached a lead. We were all too exhausted even to build a fire and make tea, so we chewed bits of frozen whale

beef until hunger was satisfied, and all huddled together against the sled, wrapped with our extra clothes, and shivering into a miserable sleep. I have had some very uncomfortable nights in the North, but that one was the worst. I thought of those who were dancing, or sleeping warmly bedded, at Point Hope. Maybe they were wiser than we were; making the best of what they could have while they could have it.

I awoke at dawn with an uneasy feeling. I am in tune with the elements, and often I can guess their moods and tantrums rightly for hours in advance. Yet all seemed fair by the lead, except for a low undertone of cracking and grinding ice elsewhere along the floor far distant from us. We call the sea-ice the *floor* when it is widespread and attached to the shore; we say *ice-field* to indicate a very large sheet of unattached ice; *ice-floe* to indicate a smaller sheet of floating ice; *ice-pack* to indicate a field of drifting ice broken in small pieces which grind together, and sometimes heave aslant of each other and freeze into hummocks and ridges which are difficult to get over.

I awakened the others, and Joe and I unpacked the sled, and got our oomiak over to the lead and launched it, ready to start out on the first sign of a whale. Meanwhile the women made a big pot of tea, not daintily and exactly brewed but boiled as they serve it to sailors and often enough to the passengers on ships. But it was good and stimulating, and they had a big hot stew of whale meat, properly seasoned in the way I had taught Gremnia.

We felt better for several hours after that, but nary a whale came in sight. About noon the ice began to shift, and to our dismay the lead began to close. We had to get our oomiak up on the ice again, and in less than an

hour the lead from which we had hoped so much was closed tight. We had no mind to be beaten that way at the very beginning. We decided to go farther out and find another lead, feeling that the farther out we went the less likely would there be any such quick closing against us. So we packed up quickly, and hauled away again. The strain of it put us all in a sweat, and fortunately the wind had died away. But we had to travel the rest of that day and all through the night till dawn before we came in sight of another lead. Then with the dawn a fog began to drift over us.

All that day we were patrolling the edge of the ice, but most of the time the fog was so thick that we could not see more than thirty and occasionally only ten feet ahead. Toward evening the fog lifted, but the sky remained overcast, and a dark night came on. We kept watch in turn through the night, and my turn came just before dawn. I could not see anything clearly out on the water, but of a sudden there fell on my ear the long slurring sound of a whale blowing when there is no other sound around, not even the splash of the sea. Down I went on my hands and knees, crawling along the edge of the lead. I had crawled for scarce more than a dozen yards when right against the edge of the ice I made out the dark bulk of a whale, and in a flash I guessed him to be bigger than the first one I had killed. He was so near me that I might almost have reached out my hand and touched him in the water. Then with a slow turn of his tail he sank from sight.

I glided quickly back to arouse the others, who were resting against the sled. Joe said that the whale must have been feeding on the wee shrimp the sailors call sea-lice, and that he would come back if not disturbed. The thrill of another great prize so near to be had went

through the whole party, and I was lit with intense but still excitement from the moment I saw the huge, dim, living roundness of it before my eyes.

Moving as quietly as if we were shadows we slipped the oomiak into the water, and the two women took the paddles while Joe and I stationed ourselves at the bow, one on each side, with harpoons gripped for the first chance of a thrust. It was quite possible that the whale would rise right beside us, and of course there was the risk that he might rise under the oomiak and so upset us into the sea and there make an end of us.

Without a sound and slowly the women paddled along the edge of the lead. The little moments became so big with themselves because of the feeling we had in them that I do not know how many minutes passed before I got a poke in the ribs from Gremnia's paddle, and the meaning of that was plain. As I turned Joe turned with me, so excellent alert he was. A whale was breaking the surface near Joe's wife on the starboard side close enough for her to have touched him with her paddle. As he blew the spray of it fell over us, and a scare ran through me, but at a whisper from Joe we acted as one man. With a flirt of a fin the whale rolled over enough to show his belly, and at only six feet from him I hurled my harpoon right into him where his heart was. So did Joe. Being that close, and fear adding to our strength, we both had sunk our harpoons half way up their shanks into that whale. The two bombs exploded deep inside of him.

We were nearly swamped as the whale went down. But the two women knew what to do, and how to do it. They had been in oomiaks since they were babies. By their handling of their bodies and of their paddles they kept us right side up. The line went slithering over the gunwhale, but not so fast as usual. Only the first seal

poke went over into the water, and that just danced along the surface for a couple of minutes. We had barely reached the edge of the lead and stepped on the ice when the whale came in sight again. He was dead.

Then hard work began for us. As there were only four of us no one could be spared to go to Point Hope for help, and on account of the threatening weather we could not risk any delay in getting out the valuable whalebone. We first cut holes in the two flukes of his tail, and passing harpoon lines through them we began to tow the great body to the ice. We managed to turn it so as to cut into one side of the head at a time. It took us four hours to hack out all the bone and pile it on the ice. Not till then did we have anything to eat. We cut out enough blackskin to fill our pot, and as soon as it was cooked we fell to and ate every last scrap out of the pot.

Then it was decided that Gremnia should go back to Point Hope for a dog team to haul in the bone, and for help from all who wanted free blubber and blackskin and whale steaks. I had no fear of Gremnia getting lost, because she could follow the sled tracks which still remained, and even with the fog that was still hanging over us she could take her course by that compass in her head which most of the Eskimos have. So I did not worry about her at first. I was thinking rather how lucky we had been, with the bone of one whale safely stored at Point Hope, and the bone of another all cut and piled on the ice ready for a sled. The two together would mean plenty of ready money for us, and a foundation for getting more.

I kept myself at work, cutting out blackskin and blubber and meat. But generally a depression stole over me. There was nothing to be depressed about, of course, but I was. So I worked harder than ever, and tried not

to think of my wife being off alone and out of sight of everything on the endless white ice with a fog overhead. Before long a breeze started from offshore, and it carried the fog away in long steeling wisps, which took on weird shapes going west. The sun shone slantingly over us from near the horizon, but my spirits did not brighten with the sun.

Finally I became so worried about Gremnia that I could not go on properly with my work. So I decided to follow after her, leaving Joe and his wife to do what remained to be done with the whale. I made my way back in the direction of the camp where we had killed the first whale, and it was there that I began to sense a movement that yet was making no show. Then came the fear that the ice on which I was travelling had gone adrift. As I neared the old camping place I saw that the lead there had opened wider than I had ever seen it before. The offshore wind by this time had become half a gale.

I saw Gremnia coming back. I ran to meet her. She told me that she had come to the open water, and had tried to work her way around the lead, but found it impossible. The offshore wind was driving all the ice out to sea!

The ice parted more and more as we watched. The wind kept increasing. It was blowing us directly out to sea, and the stretch of open water between the two ice-fields was now over half a mile wide at least. There was no chance of getting off by either end to the shore ice, for our field had rounded into an island.

Something in me had known that this was going to happen, and all morning it had been nagging at me, trying in its dumb way to make me realize. Some have

good reception for the occult intimation properly called a *hunch* because of the friendly way it has of nudging at times. A hunch may serve as warning and guide for any nursemaid or navigator or politician or thief or other such person continually on the tenter-hook of attention — provided such person has gumption enough to cultivate receptivity and respect for it. After that time I never tried to shoo a hunch away by kidding myself that all is well, and all must be good, and no evil can come, and piffle like that. The hunch will quit you cold for that, and leave you to the hurt you might have dodged, or let you miss the good thing coming your way. I know from my own testing.

But how I did grouch and talk to myself — but well inside of myself so that the others might not guess how I felt. Just when I had been so well started on the road to success with Gremnia this thing had come upon me for being too venturesome. I had heard tales of whole parties who had been out on the ice when it broke away, and not a single member of them ever seen again! But we take so for granted the bad luck and disaster which we hear of continually for others. When we are hit it seems different — we have been most unfairly singled out, and always at the wrong time!

So I cursed a lot, but all to myself inside, for I did not want Gremnia to see that I was afraid. Silently we went back. I saw at a glance that Joe knew why we had returned, but I said nothing, and neither did Gremnia. Joe's wife, like a true Eskimo woman, just went ahead with her work and said nothing. But then I noticed the women glancing silently at each other, after which Mrs. Joe took a heaving line and, walking over to the edge of the ice, dropped it plumb down into the water. She took three soundings. Then she came back and very calmly said:

'We are adrift!'

We had all known it, of course. But somehow when Mrs. Joe made the definite, deliberate announcement after her soundings with the line, it seemed to clear the atmosphere for us. We would plan now what best to do.

The offshore wind might drive us westward far beyond Point Hope, and then we would be caught in the current flowing toward the North Pole, and there would be none present for our funeral. But right there at our feet we had a pile of whalebone weighing at least half a ton, which if we could get it to Point Hope would be worth well over three thousand dollars cash to us. We would not lose that and ourselves as well if muscle and cunning could prevent it.

We put the boat and all our gear on the sled, and that made so heavy a load that we could not add any of the whalebone and move the sled. It was hard enough work for us all as it was to haul that sled and its load to the first open water toward shore. There we launched the boat, and the two brave little women paddled off for the distant line of ice attached to shore, and which by this time, so much had we drifted, we could barely see. Joe and I knew very well that if they did not make the crossing and bring help our lives were not worth a pound of whalebone. Of course we could have got in the boat with them, with a good chance of being safe on shore that night — but with a slim chance of saving our half ton of whalebone. We had risked and undergone too much to lose that at the last moment — we would take one more risk to save it. We were sure that our women would come back with help if they could — and as quickly as they could. Besides that, if the wind were to veer round, as it often did up there, we would be blown

along up coast around toward Point Barrow, and have a chance of drifting ashore, with our cargo of whalebone intact — if our ice-floe did not split into a bobbing, crushing ice-pack. It would take a long while. But with plenty of blubber and meat on the ice, and our rifle to get a seal or something for a change, we did not worry about food.

In the meantime we knew there was just one thing for us to do. So we dragged back the empty sled to the pile of whalebone. Before we reached it the air turned warmer, and it began to snow. That was good for us as it made it easier to haul the sled, and gave us plenty for fresh water. But we knew the snow-storm would be bad for our wives, as they would have to paddle right in the face of it on their way to shore, and paddling that big oomiak, heavily laden as it was, and against the wind, would have been hard work enough for half a dozen grown men trained to handle a paddle.

A half ton of wet whalebone on a sled takes a mighty straining of legs and arms and neck and back muscles for two men to haul a long distance over rough ice, and if it had not been for the fast falling snow we could not have made that sled slip along very far. As it was we were all night on our way, and again and again we had to wrestle with that sled to shove it up over ice-hummocks that we could not get around. Toward dawn it stopped snowing, and the stars shone down on us from a clear sky. Soon we could see the highest peaks back of Point Hope, and by noting those positions in relation to the stars we could see that we were still drifting in a north-westerly direction.

Not cold, because of our heavy exertions, but wet and hungry we reached the edge of the floe where we had last seen our wives just as the dawn was making the sky

red and the stars were fading from sight. There was nothing to be seen before us but floating blocks of ice in the open water. Too exhausted to care I sank down on the snow and leaned my back against the sled and the whalebone. But Joe began to chew a piece of frozen whale steak, and soon after I did the same. Very fortunately we had plenty of matches and tobacco, and after such a breakfast our pipes were a great comfort. Then, sitting just as I was, I fell into a deep sleep.

CHAPTER X

ADRIFT ON THE ICE

WHEN I awoke I found that Joe had been usefully busy. He had taken his big red bandanna and fastened it securely to a long splinter of whalebone, and then braced it well up on the tallest ridge of pressure-ice near us on our floe.

There was little else to be done, except to take turns pacing up and down the edge of the ice, with eyes fastened on the water in the direction of the shore. Joe would rest against the sled while I was on watch, and then he would relieve me and I would go to the sled. But always one of us would be on the look-out. Sometimes we would vary the walk by climbing up on the ice-ridge in hope of seeing farther. But there was no sign of any life but our own till late in the afternoon a flock of ducks passed overhead, winging their way perhaps from Manchuria or perhaps from Japan. A swirl of wings through loneliness. Then in a few minutes they were out of sight. After that nothing but now and then a distant sea-gull.

I took several soundings. We were still drifting west-by-north into the Arctic. I began to wish I had not been so boneheaded about that one whale. If one be ashore there is always a chance of going out and getting another whale to make up for one lost. But as we were what would it profit us to grab all the whalebone in the Arctic and go down under the ice with it for ever? I twisted that much from my Lutheran Sunday School when I was a

boy, and I grinned now as I did it. Feeling a bit better I lit my pipe again. Joe was looking up at one lone seagull flying toward shore. It seemed so easy for him. And we did seem such foolish creatures in comparison!

Well, we stuck it, as they say about war and marriage in certain cases. There seemed nothing for it but to stick to our ice by our bone and be confident. But the next afternoon, to vary the monotony, I picked up my rifle and strolled off by myself far down the edge of the lead. Maybe it was a hunch I had.

I had walked about a mile when around a pressure-ridge I came on a bear, and he was a big one. He had just killed a seal, and I stood and watched him working with it until he had it out of the water and safely on the ice. Then I fired.

The soft-nosed bullet went tearing and expanding through a vital part. The bear staggered around on the ice for a minute. He did not try to run away. He coughed, and a great splash of blood sprayed out on the new snow. Then he dropped dead.

I began at once to skin the bear, and Joe, who had heard my shot, hastened to find me. When he came in sight he was running, and had a scared look on his face, but it was not till late that night that I realized why. Joe had thought that I had become utterly discouraged, and had gone off and shot myself, leaving him there all alone. There was no good reason for doing such a thing as that just then, especially with all the food that both of us could eat for a long time to come. But we were getting tired of whale meat, and the bear and the seal would be welcome for variety. We skinned both the bear and the seal, and there was plenty of blubber on the seal both for food and fuel. So when we got back to camp I made a fine stew of seal-meat, and we made a bed of the bear-skin, and

then smoked and talked as long as we could keep awake, and did not bother to keep watch that night.

We were not uncomfortable. The wind had died down. There was no fog. And there was not a sound to break the silence that seemed almost heavy, except when a piece of the floe at the edge would break away with a splash, or sometimes when the top of a pressure-ridge would tumble down on the ice. Twice, however, during that night I heard a whale blow; the sound coming like a muffled whistle across the ice. How I would have jumped to attention at such a sound a week earlier. But I was not a bit interested in whales just then. All I wanted was to get ashore — with such bone as we had, if we could — but anyway to get ashore. I was wanting to see Gremnia again, and I was sure that she would be anxious about me. I wondered just what the women did when they reached the solid ice near shore — if they had reached it!

We awoke in a clear, bright, cool, clean, sunny morning such as spreads over the Arctic in the spring of the year. And as the sun shone on us there was really some warmth in it at last.

I cooked a good breakfast; boiling the bear meat and making a strong soup to go with it. We both felt happier and more hopeful after we had that breakfast under our belts. Together we climbed the ridge where our red signal still fluttered, and peered across the water, trying to see a rescue party coming our way. But there was nothing to be seen on the surface of the world but water and snow and ice. Here and there I could make out the different greenish tint of fresh-water ice. This ice had been broken off from some glacier far to the south, and had become attached to our floe after drifting north. I have not heard of any icebergs drifting north on the

Atlantic side, but they do sometimes from the Pacific. Such ice is a reservoir of pure drinking water, and much better than snow when melted.

From such knowledge as Joe and I had of tides and currents, we tried to estimate our position, and the rate at which we were drifting. We concluded, on slim evidence, that we were about thirty miles off shore, but whether swinging in and out with the tide, or whether west-by-north, as we first were in the wind, or east-by-north in a sea current, we could not tell. One is rather helpless in such circumstances, and, failing rescue, can only hope that in the shuttle back and forth, lasting for days and maybe for months, one may finally be borne back to the beach not too far from the original point of departure. There is always the risk of the floe breaking into cakes too small, while one waits.

Joe kept himself busy at scraping and cleaning our whalebone, after which he put it in a neat pile. And it was that he was doing, in the afternoon, just after the sun had dipped below the hopeless horizon, that I saw a black plume rising through the air far to the south. I knew it at once for the smoke from a fire of whale or seal blubber. I called Joe, and he knew, and said Portuguese prayers—he was so glad. We at once built a fire of bear fat, seal blubber, and bones, near to where the red bandanna was flying atop the pressure-ridge. Darkness came. We could no longer see the distant smoke, nor any flare of flame in the south. We cooked our supper on our own signal fire. After eating our fill we lit our pipes and said nothing. I was the first to hear a sound that I knew for the dipping of paddles when the water is smooth and there is no wind. I jumped to my feet and yelled!

We heard human voices far off through the darkness.

Then we dumped more blubber on the fire, and ran down to the edge of the lead and called. There was an answering call. Soon the big skin boat — our oomiak — came in sight, and nosed right up to the edge of the lead where we were — and Gremnia leapt out on to the ice, followed by Mrs. Joe and two Eskimos. For the first time, as I gave Gremnia a hug, I felt the affection of the nose to nose and cheek to cheek touch. And we all began talking at the same time.

The women had paddled to the shore ice, when they set out from us in search of help. But they could not haul the heavy skin boat up on the ice. So Gremnia stood by, while Mrs. Joe walked on to Point Hope. There she gave her story, and it spread through the whole village in a flash. We had a whale — and we were adrift. Two parties immediately organized to find us, but of course the one with Mrs. Joe, not needing to take a sled and boat along with them, found their way to Gremnia before the others came to open water.

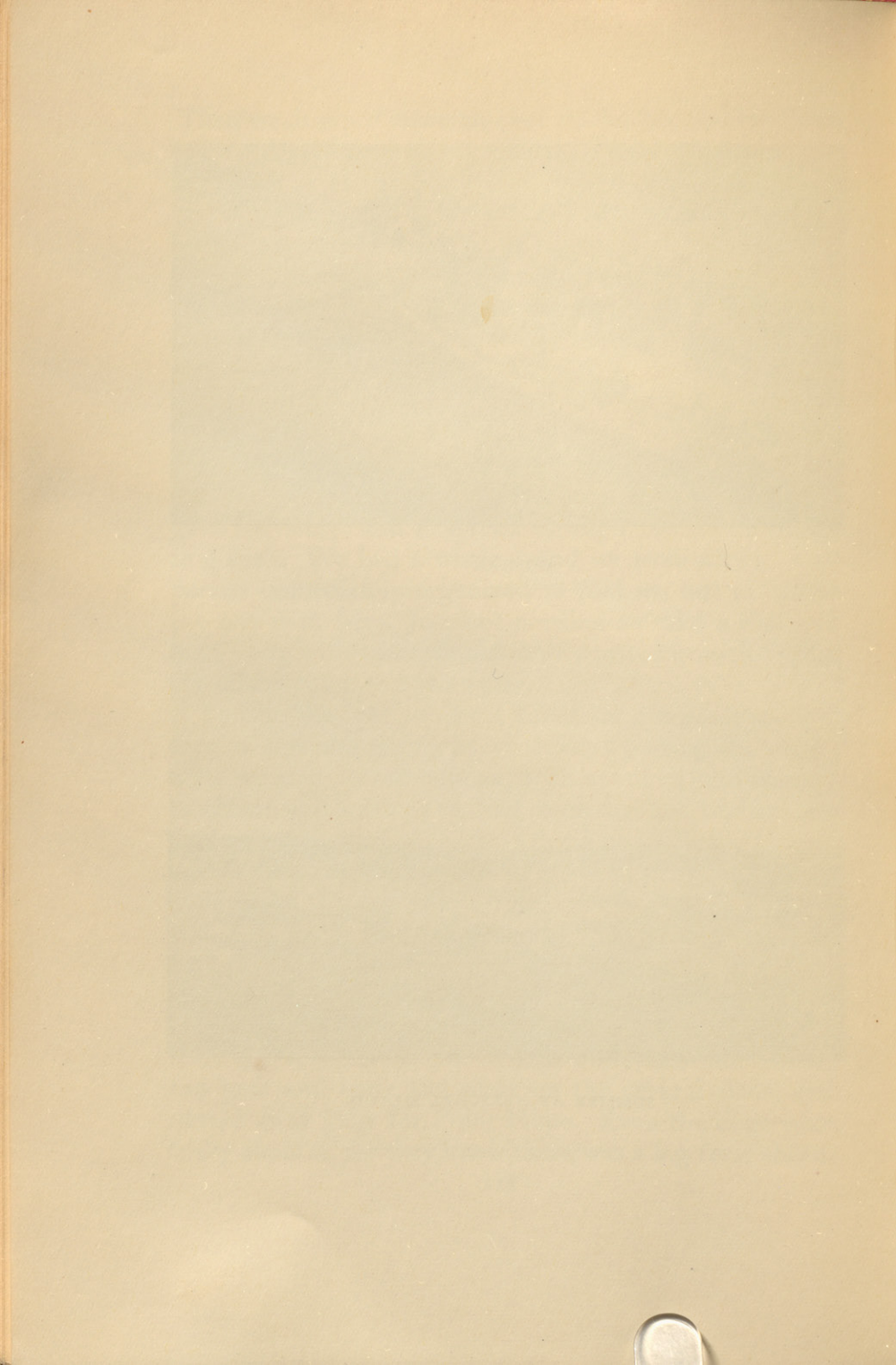
I made the best supper I could for our rescuers, and then all through the night we worked putting the whale-bone securely in the oomiak, with as much blubber and blackskin and steak as we had room for, and besides that we went and got all of the bear that I had killed. Nothing is wasted in the Arctic. Then we talked, and at first streak of dawn we paddled away. There was warmth in the sun, and a light breeze with us, and many new leads had opened. So we made good time on our way back to shore. We met the other party. They had left dog teams in charge of some seal hunters at the place where had been our very first camp. There we loaded our oomiak and gear and bone and meat on the several sleds, and started away gaily for Point Hope. Even the dogs were frisky about it, for they knew there was a big feast ahead.



OOMIAK



SUMMER AT HERSCHEL ISLAND



HERSCHEL ISLAND

Six places are most memorable for me in my Arctic doings: Point Hope, then Herschel Island, then Point Barrow, then Collinson Point, and for best of all Darnley Bay and Rymer Point.

One part of the Arctic looks much like another, as one part of Saskatchewan looks like another, and yet with differences. One learns to distinguish the naked hills and cliffs and sand-spits by the lay and contour of them, coming or going, and to reckon position by mountains in the background.

Although in the Arctic one goes over white for most of the year, except for the treeless wastes of brown through the brief summer, yet the eyes are not left without the comfort of many colours. The land is almost as bare of green things growing as is the sea, but there will descend from the sky a welter of rich yellow and rose and brown lights over all things below at times when the sun is nigh the horizon or just below. When the sky is clear the sea will be blue and black in the leads between the ice-floes, and otherwise green and grey as the sky is overcast.

When days begin to lengthen until they merge in one then the snow disappears from the hills, and a few small flowers, pink and white and yellow, push up through the mossy sod which lies like a thick carpet over rocks which I suppose were cast aside when the great world to the

south was being made new after the last crash. When rivers begin to run in spring then the dwarf willows fight their way into life along the banks, coming quickly to leaf in the long sunshine. They made me feel how eager they were to be green, and how brave they were, along with the berry bushes. In summer there is no shade in the Arctic. From the great flat spread of glassy waters and ice-fields there comes a glare that stabs into the eyes. That is why the eyes of the majority of Eskimos have a habitual half-shut and crinkled look, as if peering shrewdly against the sun at something in the distance. The glare is less from the bare, brown tundra, but it is bad enough. Lying in the moss, as we love to do there in the summer, one may think of the time when geography was different, and great trees covered the land. But dreaming of the pleasant shade they would have made it is well to put a coloured handkerchief or something like that across one's eyes. Not only is there too much brilliant sunlight through the summer, but the air will be shimmering with heat. Even four hundred miles within the Arctic Circle, and with ice in sight as far as the eye can see, the air will be hot.

Of living things that fly north for the summer the first to appear will be sea-gulls, and they are always welcome as the first heralds of spring. After them come Muscovy ducks and Canada wild geese from the other end of the world, maybe Patagonia. The sweet, rumbling note of ptarmigan will be heard very soon after that in the hills where the pretty little hens will be sitting on their nests to hatch the babies, while the faithful little roosters dig and forage about for food to bring to them.

In the hot July of 1894 I was restless to be away and seeing more of the Arctic. Because of our success at

our first spring floor whaling we had a fine line of credit at the trading post, which served as a local bank, and Gremnia and I were a well-equipped couple. But when we both were sure of what was coming I thought that it would be better for her to stay with her family instead of venturing out with me, since this would be her first time for such an event, and she wanted the comfort of her sisters to see her through with it. It was different in the years that followed. Once Gremnia knew a thing she knew it for good, and every twist and turn of it, whether fighting a polar bear single-handed or having a baby.

But as I said, I had that feeling to be off and farther. And my good genius knew the way that would be done before I did. The snow had all melted away from the sand-spit of Point Hope, leaving us dependent for drinking water on a great pond between the village and Blabbertown. This pond was formed by a depression in the sand into which the melting snows drained in spring. Near the pond was the graveyard, where about eight hundred persons were buried by being raised high on cross-pieces of jaw bones and ribs of whales; it being too hard to dig deep there during the greater part of the year, and the Eskimos of that village objecting to the foxes eating their dead, although for myself I had as soon and sooner be eaten by foxes than by worms. But although I knew that the bodies thus elevated to the air of the North soon shrivelled and dried until they were mere mummies, yet I was fussy about any possible drainage from that graveyard into the pond. And so I began fancying a wrong taste to the water. Now every cook properly trained, as I had been, is careful to have clean water for every purpose, and above all for drink and soup. So I mentioned my suspicions to the Episcopal

missionary, who had lived there for so many years. He just laughed, and said:

'Yes, there may be a taste sometimes in summer. Excess of Mosinkos, you see!'

That made me sick. I rather enjoyed the missionary's conversation touching a few things, but I thought his humour was rotten. Because *Mosinkos* was the name he had for Eskimos from Muskovy way, as I think I said before. Maybe he had mixed the proper Moskies somehow with that name which the Aleuts of the Aleutians have for ancient mummies found among the rocks — *Mosexenan* and *Asexenan*. I had this of a wizard or angutkok with whom I talked once on Big Diomedé.

I quit the missionary and walked across to our own post, looking to the South. The graveyard and the big pond were between us. And I looked away to the south!

I saw a ship! And by the feeling that went through me on the instant I knew that something was moving for me again!

The ship that came in was the *Orka*, the most powerful steam whaler that ever entered the Arctic. She was rigged as a brig. Later on she was crushed to bits in the ice at Point Barrow. But the outstanding thing for me that day was that she was in command of Captain Townsend, with whom I had shipped as able-seamen when he had the bark *Frias S. Thompson* out of Port Townsend.

The *Orka*, I soon found, was on her way to Herschel Island, and in a hurry to get there in advance of other whalers. She had a supply of bombs for them, the supply at the Herschel trading post having been exhausted. And to be sure of getting there in advance of those needing the bombs, the *Orka* carried a motor launch, which

was the first of its kind ever in the Arctic. Captain Townsend intended to load the bombs on the launch, after reaching Point Barrow. The launch was then to thread its way through leads and channels where the ship could not sail until a bit later in the season. It was easy for me to make an arrangement with Captain Townsend to go aboard the *Orka*, as a temporary assistant, to Herschel Island. I was delighted to have the chance to be off again, and Gremnia understood as I wanted her to do, and besides that I knew that I was leaving her in the best of care with her own family, and with her own line of credit at the trading post. I told her I would be back in a year, if nothing happened to me, and she seemed to believe me. Quietly she said good-bye to Charlie Urlie.

Captain Townsend did not know how far I had been around the coast from Point Hope to Point Barrow and beyond, and so I did not tell him that I had only been out on the ice a mile or two beyond Point Hope. I did not want him to be uneasy, as he was taking me on as pilot, he himself never before having been in those waters. I knew at least that I knew more than he did about the tricky ways of the ice-floes, and the opening and closing of leads as the wind varied, and I was especially anxious to have charge of the motor launch — I wanted to be the first to steer one with success in the Arctic — and I was. But not until the Captain himself tried it and failed. ✓

The Captain told me that the whaling fleet had been frozen in at Herschel Island the year before, and had sent out word that they were short of bombs. The owners decided to get an additional supply in as quickly as possible, so that there should be no lack when the summer whaling began. A few weeks delay, waiting for more bombs, might mean a loss of profit for the season,

because of it being always so short. So the plan was to push the *Orka* on as far as possible, and then use the launch for swifter travel through channels too shallow or narrow for a ship the size of the *Orka*.

Besides the fur garments which Gremnia had made for me I bought an outfit of additional clothes at the trading post, an extra rifle, plenty of cartridges, and knick-knacks of one sort or another with which I thought I might do a bit of trading on my own account at Herschel Island, if ever we got there. From what I had seen of the trading done at Little Diomedé and at Point Hope I knew how profitable that might be. So when we left Point Hope I was a well set-up and equipped and confident young man.

We made our way safely in the *Orka* up and around Point Barrow so far to the east as Jones Islands and Franklin Return Reef, where the lagoons begin.

Rather unwisely, Captain Townsend decided to take command himself of the launch, leaving me on the *Orka* to follow later. The *Orka* did not follow, and Captain Townsend, having pushed on as far as Flaxman Island, blocked and beset with broken ice from the start at every few hundred yards, decided to quit and return to his ship. When he got back to Franklin Return Reef he found the tendership *Jennie* had just arrived there from the south, loaded with coal and food for Herschel Island. An arrangement was then made to put the launch on the *Jennie*, which was to carry it on through the lagoons until I should give the word to lay it down again in the water. I was to be in command of the launch then for the rest of the way to Herschel Island, and I was given three men under me: Tom Ellis, the mate of the *Jennie*, and a young American from San Francisco (who under-

stood gas engines) for engineer, and an Irish sailor from Chicago who had sailed through the Canadian lakes when the ice would be breaking in spring.

The *Jennie* was a slow ship at best, even in open water, and much slower through the ice-encumbered lagoons. The second day out from Franklin Return Reef I gave the order to put the launch down to the water. We were so loaded with bombs that there was not much room for supplies, and foolishly we started off with only a sack of sea-biscuits and two legs of salt pork, with tea and tobacco to last about ten days. We all had great appetites, and in a few days we were on scant rations.

I had been threading my way successfully through the lagoons, taking advantage of every short cut which appeared, and with an air of knowing all about them which properly fooled and inspired the men under me. But I could not fool or inspire my empty stomach, nor theirs either. So I steered for shore and landed, telling the men to wait for me, and then they could come and carry to the launch what I killed. I showed faith.

This is not a hunting story, and I am not the sort of man who kills for sport. So enough to say here that I had the good luck to kill two caribou and three bears in less than six hours. I soon after had my men out and at work carrying my kill back to the launch, knowing that I would have to hurry lest the foxes took the best of both bear and caribou. I skinned the animals and cut up the meat myself. My men thought I was a great hunter. I was, but also it was a great season up there. For what should I do on my way back to the launch but fall in with a party of Eskimos who had recently killed seventy caribou about there. In the party were about twenty men, and a number of women and children. They had their camp and their kyaks on the shore near

by, around a bend from our launch. The women were busy drying the venison against winter use, and wasting no part whatever of the animals killed. The bones are cracked for their marrow, which is boiled and put away in bladders, tied air-tight.

After a full meal of broiled venison we set forth again. From a map I had with me I located an inside channel from Flaxman Island into Camden Bay, and knew then by the lay of the land when we arrived at Collinson Point. There I went ashore again for a stroll by myself, and I had the luck to find on the bank of one of the streams, flowing in ice-cold purity from the Romanzoff Mountains to the sea, a fish-net made of deer sinews. The foxes had been chewing at it, but it was in good condition for about six fathoms. So I waded out into the stream and set it, and before long I had caught more than a dozen trout and whitefish. Thus was my standing increased in the eyes of my men, and the Irish sailor from Chicago swore that I was the greatest hunter he had ever known. No doubt he was right.

I was keen to beat the *Jennie* to Herschel Island by some time worth while, but I steered prudently through the broken ice, threading my way in and out of narrow channels, and twice, when the ice closed against our passage, pulling the launch up and over an ice-floe and into clear water again. The weather was foggy and cold for that time of year. At last I steered into what I knew was Demarcation Bay, having gone through a channel formed by the mainland and a string of islets from Icy Reef south-east to Demarcation Point, which divides Canada from Alaska. From there on, perhaps because of the current caused by the great Mackenzie River pouring into the sea through its four mouths, or because

of winds or some other reason, we found ourselves in practically open water for the rest of the way to Herschel Island. We beat the *Jennie* by a full week.

It was about the first of August that we arrived, and we received a great welcome from the waiting ships. For we had mail as well as bombs. They were then ready to put to sea, except that they were wanting more coal. As soon as the tender *Jennie* came in they each took a supply from her, and then made off for Beaufort Sea after the whales. Beaufort Sea is the stretch of water in the Arctic lying off the coast of Canada to the north-east between Herschel Island and Banks Island. A number of the ships were short of crews, and took on Eskimos. Because of their natural skill and aptitude they were soon as good as, if not better than, the white sailors for the work that was to be done. Among the ships was the brigantine steam whaler *Mary D. Hume*, whose captain I knew, having sailed under him to Australia. Naturally he was anxious to have me go with him, and of course it suited me very well to go, as I wanted to know more of the country beyond Herschel. As the first man to navigate a motor launch successfully through a long stretch of ice-blocked sea in the Arctic I had acquired practically an officer's standing.

That season was not a very successful one for the whalers, but I had the luck to kill the largest bull whale ever heard of in the Arctic. It yielded over three thousand two hundred pounds of good merchantable whalebone, which at that time was worth at least fifteen thousand dollars on the market. ✓

One day that summer we anchored off Banks Island, and I went ashore to get some fresh meat. Banks Island at that time was reputed to be uninhabited. But while I was away alone on its hills I came across human tracks,

and I judged them to have been made that same summer. The discovery excited me. If there were unknown bands of Eskimo on Banks Island, and if a trader could get into their country with a good supply of trade goods, he might have a chance to get furs cheaper than elsewhere in the Arctic, and become wealthy, if he were not killed. I concluded that if the men who made those tracks did not actually live on Banks Island they would probably be living on other islands yet farther north and farther east. I wanted to know more, and so I kept what I knew to myself. No occasion for me to say anything to the captain about what I had seen, as all he and the crew were concerned for on Banks Island at that time was fresh meat, and that I got for them.

Toward the end of September we started back for Herschel Island. Ice was forming as we arrived. I realized that there would be no chance for me to get back to my wife at Point Hope until the next summer. So putting all that out of mind I planned to make the most out of life for a winter at and around Thetis Bay, where already seventeen whalers were anchored, having a complement in all of about a thousand men. In addition to them there were about a thousand Eskimos, in several camps, shifting about on the island and the delta lands of the Mackenzie.

Herschel Island lies on the Canadian side of the extreme west end of the wide estuary of the Mackenzie River. It is about nine miles long, east and west, and about five miles broad. It has cliffs around it and two good sand-spits, and the interior rolls away to hills, on which are small blue glaciers. There are several small streams running in summer-time, and the usual ponds and tundra and fossil trees and boulders. Against the

mainland it forms Thetis Bay, which affords a good harbour for whaling and trade vessels — quite the best along that stretch of coast. The Pacific Steam Whaling Company had houses and stores on the island when first I was there. In the largest house were well-furnished and comfortable quarters for officers, and there was one good pool table. On Herschel Island I kept my standing as an officer.

During the winter the majority of the men had winter sports, which helped them to keep from worse, there being little work for them to do. But the sailors were of little use off their ships. They would have starved but for the supplies on the ships and in the store-houses, so inefficient were they as hunters. Only a few of them would even try to get fresh meat out over the hills — they would not even fish through an ice-hole. What worse could be said of them is not for me to say, as officers had made it a custom to keep such matters dark. Shortly after the New Year of 1895, however, one English and one American lad did have the pluck to try their luck at hunting. Three nights after they had gone we heard a weird clumping above us on the deck of our ship. In the Arctic all sounds are amplified because of the silence, and become very significant for those who have knowing ears. The English boy's feet had been frozen solid. On a little sled he had brought back the body of the American boy, who had been frozen to death.

The best game the men played on the ice was baseball. I remember how during one of these a fierce blizzard swept suddenly down and over them, so that they had a hard time in making the short distances to their ships. Others made skis, and went for long tramps inland and over the hills. The sea being frozen so solidly, it was all like one land to them, north or south, but of course going

south they had more chance of getting caribou, when they got across to the Buckland Mountains. Few of them, however, had spunk enough to do that. They preferred playing games to hunting game. When it came to the Fourth of July, the snow being gone and the ice loose in the sea so early that year, some old-time English sports were tried — walking a greasy pole over the water for a purse at the end seeming to afford the most fun.

During the long winter many of the men attended the occasional Eskimo dances. They managed to have more than polar bear meat to get drunk on at those dances. But there was little harm in that, and seldom any serious fighting. All the captains and mates did their best to maintain order and decency, but many of their men were blackguards who should have been dropped through a hole in the ice, and some of the Eskimos were as bad. It was agreed that officers should be severe when offences and defiance became too serious, and keep their mouths shut when they went South. So I am not telling all.

Thirty-six years have passed, and whalers go to Herschel no more. If they did they would find themselves under the rule of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. But at first there was no one in authority representing the Crown, unless one lone, big, Anglican missionary. He is a bishop now — Bishop Stringer. Parson Isidore O. Stringer ranged through the Canadian Arctic and the Barrens as he thought fit — or maybe as he was led. He was a fighter who put the fear of the Lord into several who were the better for it — but in one case worse — all because Stringer did not go the limit as he should have done. I was not there — the affair occurring the first year after my visit to Herschel Island, but I heard tell of it this way:

There was a bad Eskimo called Peizer. He was living on Herschel Island. His wife had no baby, and so he adopted one — a little girl. One day Peizer got some rum from a sailor, and drank too much of it at once. Then he beat the poor sailor who had been so kind to him, and went home in an ugly temper. His wife of course noticed his condition, and foolishly began to nag him about it, as some women insist upon doing at the wrong time. At last, as she kept it up, Peizer began to beat her, and she screamed so that the little girl, who was only two years old, began to wail in sympathy. This so angered Peizer that he seized the child by the feet, and dashed her brains out against a block of ice near the door.

Word of this came to Parson Stringer. He should have strung Peizer up by the neck, and so justified his name. But it seems he could not see his way clear to assuming authority for a proper conclusion. He compromised on the side of mercy, and had Peizer stripped and tied and flogged into unconsciousness, whether with his own hand or by that of a sailor my informant would not say for sure. But I certainly would not like to have it on my conscience — the letting loose again of so dangerous an animal as Peizer. Common sense should have told them what would follow.

Peizer went off alone, saying that he was going to Point Barrow. On his way he stopped at Flaxman Island. He did so because of seeing two Eskimos there, and their wives. His evil mind was working fast for more evil. He hailed the two hunters and they made him welcome. Peizer shared their food, but he was too lazy to do his share of the hunting. Thus he wore out his welcome, and when spoken to he became overbearing toward the other men. This led them to take such measures that he

concluded he would rather not be so near them any more. So he made camp for himself a few miles below, on the shore of the lagoon or channel, between the island and the mainland. One of the hunter's wives, however, in her perverse sympathy, began to visit him and take him food.

In the Arctic, during the greater part of the year, it is customary for a man to keep his gun outside his door. This because, when the weather is below zero, if the gun be taken into a warm interior moisture will collect on the barrel and lock, causing rust. Knowing this custom, and counting on it, Peizer crept close up to the outlet of the men's igloo, and as the first man came out at dawn, unarmed, he shot him. The second, hearing the shot, immediately started to come out. He received a bullet through his head so soon as he did so. Then Peizer went in and shot one of the women, sparing the one who had brought him food, so that she could cook for him and mend his clothes. With this woman and two dog teams and a good supply of food and extra clothes Peizer continued on his way to Point Barrow.

Companionate marriage makes for easy exchange in the Arctic, and so no great surprise was felt at his coming to Point Barrow with a known Point Barrow woman. And Peizer felt sure that the murdered hunters would not be missed until the following summer. All would have been well with him for the time being had he not begun to abuse his new wife and bully some of the Point Barrow Eskimo men, as well as threaten to shoot a white man who objected one day to his conduct. Following that he beat his wife so badly that, hearing her cries, a crowd of local women heard and entered his igloo and interfered. To them the beaten second wife confessed what had taken place on Flaxman Island. She also had

the story from Peizer of what had occurred on Herschel Island.

A meeting of the elders was immediately held. Word was sent to Peizer that they wanted to see him. He did not seem to realize why he was summoned until he was put face to face with his wife, and she told publicly of the killing on Flaxman Island. She also told of what he had told her of the affair on Herschel Island. Peizer did not deny, and rather defied the elders, seeming to think that they all would be afraid of him. Relatives of the murdered men, according to custom, were selected as executioners, and the manner of inflicting death was left to them. Peizer was overpowered, bound, and then a rope put round his neck but not tight enough to strangle. The intention was to inflict death by dragging. So by the light of the Arctic moon he was led down to the beach, and there many willing hands laid hold on a long rope, and Peizer was dragged over rough and jagged ice for a long time until he was quite dead. Then they put him under the ice to be eaten by those wee shrimps of which the bow-head whales are so fond. As bait to attract shrimps Peizer would serve to attract whales, of whose blubber the Eskimos are so fond.

CHAPTER XII

BACK TO WIFE AND ANOTHER

DURING my stay on Herschel Island I managed to keep our ship well supplied with fresh meat, and I had enough sometimes to trade for supplies from the other ships, whose men would not and probably could not hunt. Besides that I put out a trap line, and by the time spring came I had a fine big bale of furs.

The ice was late in going out that year, and it was the seventh of July before the ships could leave the harbour. The heaviest ships led the way, breaking through the honeycombed ice, and the lighter ships followed, and than all fanned out into the open water and began their business of looking for whales. I had not shipped on any wage basis on the *Mary D. Hume* but on a lay, and for that I made all the better bargain because I did not take it out in cash but in trade goods and supplies, which were to be landed to my account at Point Hope when the ship would be going South.

I had put a good supply of fresh meat aboard before we started, and as half our crew were Eskimos I killed all the seals I could for them while still the ship was fast in the ice. Also, shortly before leaving, I killed a couple of young polar bears. So, with the regular grub from the South which we had from the tender *Jennie* there was little fear of our going hungry on the coming cruise.

So soon as we were well up in the Beaufort Sea we had two look-out men stationed all the time in the crow's-nest. We were in the one long daylight then, and the

officers found all kinds of tasks to be done, and the same kind of tasks to be done over and over, so as to keep the men continually busy on board in the intervals while waiting for the cry from above — *Blows!*

Then there would be quick action, and every move made to save every moment in getting to the whale. Boats would be lowered and gear thrown down to them. There would be rivalry to see which boat would get away first. If the whale happened to be swimming on the surface we would try and sail to him without using oar or paddle, so as to make as little noise as possible. We would glide up to the glistening, dark bulk of the beast — the men breathless, but with hands on the oars ready to back water on the instant of the strike — the harpooner standing in the bow with the heavy dart poised for the throw. It was necessary to come within twelve feet of the whale in order to be sure of making a fatal thrust.

When a whale is struck with the harpoon he usually dives deep at once, or, as the term is, he *sounds*. When doing this there is great danger of being hit or upset as the mighty fluked tail uplifts and smashes down on the water. It will wreck a whale-boat if it hits it on the side. But sometimes the whale sees the boat as the cause of his hurt, and he will rush at it with open jaws. Then it is a case of each man for himself. It is hard for a man to live long in the icy waters of the Arctic, and if not rescued soon he will go down and stay down. The men on the ship, as well as in the boats, are supposed to be on the watch always against mishap of this sort, but sometimes fog will drift between, and sometimes nothing will ever be seen again of a stricken boat and its crew. But when all goes well, and a kill is made, a signal is hoisted for the ship, and then she comes alongside and the cutting-in begins. With a full and trained crew this does not take

long. So soon as the bone is all gotten out, and such strips of blackskin and whale steak as may be wanted for the mess, the carcass is left to drift. Often it will float ashore or to the edge of an ice-floe, and there provide many dinners for foxes and bears. For the rest the little fishes and the shrimps will have it. Nothing is wasted in the Arctic.

One may read stories about the old whaling days, and the romance and sport and profit which were had of them once. But really it was all a risky, dirty business at best. Hard life, hard work, hard food and usually hard officers! I have known ships to be out on a three-years cruise, and when they came in to their home port they would not have enough bone or oil aboard for the sailors to pay off their slop-chest accounts, let alone have any coin for a compensating spree ashore. Then the owners would hold him, and he would have to sign on again for another cruise in order to clear himself, and have a little advance made to him for a very short time in lousy boarding houses and low bar-rooms and sporting houses of the baser sort before going back to another term of three years' hard work. When whalers are after oil as well as bone a whale-ship is the most stinking ship in the world. I had sooner work on a Chinese nightsoil sampan, for one can always jump from that to a clean shore full of new chances and nicer risks. Perhaps the old slave-ships of the pious New England owners, who took black freight from Africa to the white slave-drivers of the United States, smelt worse of filth and death, but none other. But when ships went out only for the bone of the bow-head whales it was not a stinking business at all, and there was some sport to it, however hard and cold and risky.

We returned to Herschel Island in time for me to transfer to the tender *Jennie*, which was just about ready for its return trip to Point Hope. We had had a fairly successful season on the *Mary D. Hume*, and the result of it, as to my portion, amounted to over two tons of trade goods and supplies at the Point Hope trading post. That laid the foundation for my career as a trader in the Arctic.

I need not say how glad Gremnia and I were to see each other again, and I was much interested in the daughter who had arrived for me during my absence. She led the way to where my daughter lay, snug and warm and brightly awake. And after that I became a great family man as well as a great trapper and hunter and trader.

While I had been away Gremnia had also raised me a fine dog team. During that winter I did a lot of trapping about Point Hope, and in the spring Gremnia went out with me again for another try at floor whaling. We equipped our own party that time, and naturally we had most of the profit. We killed three whales.

I was becoming ambitious, and besides that I had a fancy for seeing once more what the San Francisco waterfront looked like. I thought I might bargain there for a schooner of my own, and with that do Arctic trading on a bigger scale. I explained to Gremnia, and so we got the best of our bone and fur together, and with it I started for the South, leaving her at Point Hope to mind the baby.

ETNA ENTERS THE ARCTIC

IN October, 1896, I found myself on the familiar waterfront of San Francisco, after an absence of three years. First thing I did was to have a shave and a haircut. Then I bought some new clothes. Then I put in three hours pleasantly at a Turkish Bath, where the proprietor and attendants remembered me. I had become much more of a man, and I walked now under my own command and none other.

I took my time in going the rounds of the buyers of furs and whalebone. Finally I disposed of what I had for almost three thousand dollars cash. Then I looked about for a schooner to suit me. I prowled along the San Francisco and Oakland shores, and up to Vallejo and other places where I heard of craft for sale. I saw many fine little schooners, but all were beyond my price. I was getting a bit discouraged when one morning I spied the hull of a dismantled tug. I examined that hull very carefully. The timbers were sound and the lines were good, and although not quite the type of boat I wanted she probably would be well within the price I could afford to pay. So I sat down and imagined about her. I imagined masts and sails, and I imagined a cargo of trade goods in her hold, and I imagined her sailing along the coasts of Siberia and then across into Point Hope. By that time she was looking pretty good to me, and rashly I got in touch immediately with her owners and bought her for less by half than the prime cost of

the timber of which she was built. I mean she was long, and so narrow as to need much ballast, and of about forty-four tons capacity, and I bought her for \$150 just as she lay.

My first enthusiasm cooled, and I began to get glum when I set out to turn her into a bald-headed schooner — that is one without topsails — and found what new masts and spars and sails and rigging was going to cost me, together with the carpentry work and all the equipment necessary before she would be able to go to sea. But then subconsciously something led me along. I was guided right into the shipyard of the Pacific Steam Whaling Company, and there I met two old captains in charge of the Company's stores under whom I had sailed, and who had appreciated my abilities both as a cook and a sailor. The merit thus acquired in their eyes came to fruit, for when they heard of what I had done and what I was about and what I wanted they set themselves to lighten all my troubles. They had a lot of gear which had been discarded from their own fleet. Some of it was much worn, and some of it was obsolete for use on the Company's new ships. So they gave me what I wanted of it for practically nothing. Then, as I could not afford to hire regular ship carpenters and riggers, I did the work myself. It was a long, slow job, but every day in every way that old hulk was getting better and better. In worn lettering I saw the name *Etna* on it, and this I decided to keep, and I repainted it brightly.

I worked every hour on the *Etna* for so long as I could see. I cooked my own meals and slept aboard her. But it was well on in April before I had her ready for sea. I saw that she would need heavy ballast. In her life as a tugboat this had not been necessary, owing to the heavy machinery set deep in her. But I knew how to ballast

her so that she would not topple over in heavy seas. Altogether she had only cost me about \$600, but with what I had spent otherwise, and the necessary provisions to be bought for a six months' cruise, and a stock of the usual trade goods, and the money to have on hand for payment of wages to the crew, I saw that I would not have enough. So I went to the head office of H. Liebes & Company, where my name by that time was known because of reports coming down out of the North from their several trading posts. I explained my situation, and they agreed to fit me out with a stock of goods, with which I was to trade and give them a generous share. I was well satisfied.

Getting a crew was more difficult. Not being in a position to pay good wages I had to find men who would be willing to make a trip to the Arctic for experience rather than money. I found one real sailor in such a mood, and he was a Portuguese who had it in his blood to go on chancy voyages. This man knew two other Portuguese who were milkmen, and who wanted to get out of San Francisco. When I say they were milkmen I do not mean that they could milk a cow, but they could drive milk delivery wagons. My sailor was under suspicion of having been mixed up in a brawl in which a knife had been used, and I did not inquire just what was the matter with the other two men. Enough for me that they were anxious to leave, and I had no fear but what I could train them when I got them out to sea. I took on a heavy load of coal for ballast. It was the third week in June when we cleared the Golden Gate.

Things went better from the start than I had expected. I was elated at having a ship of my own, laden with a fair stock of trade goods, and headed for the North. No

sooner were we out of sight of San Francisco than we were picked up by a favourable wind. The little *Etna* sailed like a yacht, and carried all her canvas well. The sea was smooth, and we sailed fast, heading for Siberia. One man alone like me could handle the *Etna*, but I kept the milkmen busy, while as for the sailor he was so good a worker that he found work for himself. I appreciated this, and so on the Fourth of July I invited him to have a drink with me, he being an American. I had no notion of how light was his capacity for navy rum, and I gave him a good three fingers, as if he were a captain.

Never before had I met a man who could get drunk on so small a drink — I mean really drunk. He must have had what I heard the dentists call an idiosyncrasy for rum. Very economical it would be, as you say, in these days when we are made to pay so much in the way of overhead to profiteering governments and bootleggers. But howsoever, that sailor — after his one drink! He rose — staggered — his head struck the oil lamp which hung over the table, and which was alight. He knocked it over, and it went blazing forward where I had some alcohol stored, and then he collapsed, all in a negligent heap and quite indifferent.

Fortunately we were slipping along in a quiet sea. Quickly I pulled up buckets of water from overside, and soon I had the fire out before it reached the danger spot. Not till then did I find that the two milkmen had lowered our only boat, and had pulled away from the ship. Two milkmen afloat in a small boat with nothing but salt water in sight and no supplies — the fools! It would have served them right if I had sailed away and left them. But I was so glad the fire was out that it put me in a lenient mood. Anyway, I wanted my boat back. So I hove to, and the milkmen came back, looking so sheep-

ish I said nothing to them. What was the use — if I were to have any use of them?

The fire and the water between them had done some damage to my own calicoes, which I intended for trade along the Siberian coast. You may ask, why calicoes in the Arctic? Because Eskimos are very proud of their best clothes, and in the summer time they protect them by covering them with a calico slip, just as some people cover their best upholstered furniture that way in the summer. The Eskimo women will make smocks for their men, and Mother Hubbard gowns for themselves. Speaking of clothes in the Arctic, I may as well mention here that our form of clothing, made of woollen and cotton materials, including socks and underwear, will serve very well in the Arctic during the summer. But in winter the Eskimo skin garments are warmer, lighter, and more comfortable, especially the style of them prevailing in Alaska, Mackenzie River District, and on Victoria Island. Farther to the east the clothing made is more clumsy, and the caribou skins are not so well prepared. Likewise a caribou sleeping-bag with the hair inside is more comfortable and convenient than quilt or blankets from the South.

The schooner on which I had sailed from Point Hope for San Francisco the previous year had made a detour to the Siberian side, there calling in at various villages and trading posts from East Cape down to the Gulf of Anadyr. All these I had noted carefully, and I kept the lay of them in my head. So thus on the *Etna* I knew very well where I was going, notwithstanding that my set of instruments consisted only of a compass, a sextant and a little one-dollar alarm clock. And in that same month, as I was sailing for Siberia content with a prospect

of trading for furs, all the world was buzzing with the news of the great discovery of placer gold in the Far North of Canada, and the rush for the Klondike had begun. Dawson was in the first blaze of its fame, and Nome was as yet unknown.

In just twenty-one days from the time we sailed from San Francisco we anchored off a village on the Gulf of Anadyr, and I began to trade with the Siberiaks, or Mosinkos, or whatever be the right name for the Eskimos there. By that time I had acquired enough of Eskimo talk to make myself understood by them. I do not think they are of so unmixed a strain as are the Eskimos of Alaska and Canada, and especially those on the eastern Arctic islands of Canada. They seemed more distinctly Asiatic in their ways, and that perhaps is because they are born in Asia and are under Russian and Chinese influences. There was plenty of fun in trading with them, and all the more because each side would be sure they had the best of the bargain and would pretend to suffer a loss. Then I sailed across to the Diomedes, and did a little trade between them. But they are gloomy and naked and haunted, and I do not like them. So I sailed back to the Siberian side, and cruised north along it past East Cape, or Dashneff, around which is a village called Inchouin, or we call it Whalen, on a sheltered little bay formed by the north-west hook of Dashneff.

Having hugged the coast for more chances I reached so far as Cape Serdze, and then quit Siberia and took a course south-by-east toward Alaska, and arrived without mishap into what I knew to be the upper part of Norton Sound. Then I decided to hug the shore all the way up to Point Hope on the chance of finding anything good in the way of trade or otherwise. I camped at the mouth

of a small river, about ten leagues west of what I knew aforetime as Port Safety. I took casual note of a long, dreary stretch of sand, with no opening for a harbour. It looked like hundreds of similar barren places on the coast of Alaska, a featureless reach back to the tundra, with hills beyond. If only I had then known what was contained in that sand. In the next year there were thousands of men and many women living in tents and huts on its ugliness. And the place was called Nome!

I sailed on up along the coast, stopping for a few days at Kotzebue, Aneyok and Kivalina for what I could get in the way of trade. At Kivalina I picked up an Eskimo lad to assist me, and he asked me why so many white men had come to Kotzebue and around Cape Blossom that year. From what he told me of them I knew they must be men looking for gold. I explained gold to him as well as I could, showing him a ring I wore, and he laughed and said there was plenty of that stuff in the sand down where he lived when he was at home. He asked me to take him back there, and said he would gather it by the handful for me right on the beach. I thought he was fooling me for a free passage home. So I took him on to Point Hope instead. His home was Nome!

Point Hope once more! I found my wife and daughter well, and another very lively little daughter who had arrived during my absence. They had given her no name yet, but when Gremnia heard the name of my schooner she thought that would be a good name for the new daughter. So she was called Etna. She became a famous girl.

The trading post of H. Liebes & Company at Point Hope was at that time in charge of a man named Nelson. I went to him to turn in the furs and whalebone and

walrus ivory which I had obtained in the way of trade from the two sides of Bering Sea.

My share of the profits was estimated at more than enough to clear the cost of the ship and of the entire voyage, including food and wages. I took the most of my share in trade goods instead of cash, intending to put them on the *Etna* and sail away to Herschel Island and beyond — master of my own ship and trader in my own right!

Luck turned against me. Ice formed unusually early that year. I had cleared smoothly out of Point Hope, had rounded Cape Lisburne, and was well on my way through the open sea, heading for Icy Cape, when the first sheer skim of ice began to form. Soon it became too thick to drive the *Etna* through by going head on against it. I had to manœuvre for clear spaces.

Besides my cargo of trade goods I had Gremnia and the two babies on board with me, thinking that if at last I were to be away for years of trading at Herschel and beyond in the unknown islands they had better be with me. And of course I had my same crew of three Portuguese.

The ice kept getting worse, and stubborn as I was about going forward it was getting more difficult to thread my way through such leads as were open. It was that same time that the whale-ships *Orka* and *Jesse Freeman* were crushed in the ice and lost not far from Point Barrow. Their crews managed to get off the ships and on to the ice with enough provisions to last them till they painfully reached Point Barrow, where they all stayed for the rest of the winter.

My Portuguese were getting nervous, never having had any experience in fighting through the ice of the Arctic. Again and again they were on the point of

mutiny. In the circumstances I had sense enough to try and soothe them rather than fight them. I pointed out that I had my wife and babies as well as my own goods on board my own ship, and that I would not risk loss of all I valued in this world if I thought the danger too great. I would have them convinced for a little while, and then they would fall almost into a panic again. Several times the ship got so caught with the ice that there was nothing to do but drift around with it, but then I would devise many things to do on board so as to keep the Portuguese from worrying.

Gremnia was a great help. She attended to the cooking, and with what furs we had she began to make garments for all hands. My men were still dressed in the same clothes they wore when they left San Francisco in June, and small wonder they shivered and wanted to go home, or down into some banana belt. When they were dressed in what Gremnia made they felt better.

At last the air became so bitter, and the ice so thick and obstructive, that I had to admit myself beaten. As I think of it now I had been very foolhardy in starting out when I did, instead of waiting with all my belongings in safety at Point Hope until the following summer. For all that, I was clever in making my way back around Cape Lisburne without mishap, and on down the bleak coast until I dropped anchor right in front of the lagoon at Point Hope. I kept myself awake, trusting to none other, during the last forty-eight hours of that retreat, taking advantage of the best openings as they appeared ahead of us.

From what I had learned from my first winter in Point Hope I knew that the only safe place for my ship would be inside the lagoon, and even that was not so very safe

all the time, because in the big storm of October, 1893, our schooner the *Emily Schroeder* had been lifted right up out of the lagoon and flung high and dry inland on the sands. There was a bar across the entrance to the lagoon, which at deepest was only seven feet nine inches below the surface. The *Etna* drew eight feet with her hull empty. My problem was how to hurdle that bar with her.

There came a strong steady wind across from Siberia. I tacked the *Etna* backward until I had given her a good distance for a straight charge head on for that bar, with every stitch of her canvas set and drawing to the limit. I knew that I might tear the bottom out of her. But I also knew that she would be lost in any event if I could not get her within the lagoon. With every yard we gained speed as we neared the bar. All hands stood ready to lower sail the moment we got over the bar — if we did. Otherwise we would pile up in a wreck on the other side of the little lagoon.

We were making around fifteen knots an hour when we struck. The shock almost broke my grip on the helm. I saw the mainmast swing. Every timber in the hull groaned — the schooner keeled over — and then she righted herself and bounced like a ball — and slid over the bar into deep water. On the instant of that I shouted an order and the sails came fluttering down to the deck and the anchor was let go. The *Etna* swung round — safe!

Gremnia had braced herself for the shock as we jumped the bar, holding the two babies in her arms. She was as silent and steady and unafraid as the day she gave me a poke in the ribs from her paddle and pointed to the big whale coming up through the green water to blow, and almost under our oomiak. So with no more

than a glance between us I went below to see how the hull of the *Etna* had fared. Not a drop of water was coming in. Every plank was sound. It was well that she had been built strongly to serve as a tug.

Sails were furled and all made snug on board before any of us went ashore. That business was finished. Another was before me. I had to hasten (because the winter had come) and make a house and provide meat.

REINDEER, RASCALS, AND GOLD

THE winter of 1898 was unusually windy and cold, even for the Arctic. As already mentioned, the whale-ships *Orka* and *Jesse Freeman* were crushed in the ice near Point Barrow. When the news went south of the survivors from those wrecks being stranded at Point Barrow, it was very properly assumed by the newspapers that they would be in a starving condition, because of scanty supplies of food in such a remote region. As a matter of fact, however, although the food supply at Point Barrow was rationed carefully that year because of the unexpected refugees, yet there was meat enough laid by, with fresh meat secured from time to time to prevent the camp suffering famine. Nevertheless, the spirit in which relief was sent in as quickly as possible by the United States Government was appreciated.

Herds of reindeer, originally from Lapland, had been brought over from Siberia and placed on reservations on St. Lawrence Island and also at Port Clarence, which is on the west tip of Seward Peninsula. Lieutenant Jarvis of the United States Revenue Service, assisted by Lieutenant Burdoff and Dr. Call — I am not sure of the right spelling of their names, but anyway those were the men — received orders to round up a herd of the reindeer at Port Clarence, and drive it to Point Barrow for the relief of the supposedly starving sailors. The distance, as a wild goose might take it was about six hundred miles, and with twists and turns and ups and

downs walking overland, as the course was taken of necessity by the relief expedition would have been more like a thousand miles.

The reindeer arrived in good condition at Point Barrow that winter, just after New Year. Lieutenant Jarvis, who was in command, received great credit for his work, and he deserved it. But greater credit was due to a missionary by name of Tom Lopp. He knew the country well. Every step of the way he went in the lead as guide, directing the course to be taken, how to weather hard conditions, and when to rest. Lopp Lagoon, on the hook of Cape Prince of Wales, is named in remembrance of this brave and efficient missionary.

The Eskimos of Point Barrow that year had a new experience. Meat on the hoof was driven directly to the cluster of their igloos, instead of their being compelled to go hunt for it. Thanks to Uncle Sam a happy time was had by all.

I could have gone along with that expedition, but I did not seek the chance. I was becoming more and more interested in my family, and preferred spending the winter with them at Point Hope. Besides, I was getting anxious about my little schooner. The water in the lagoon had dropped unusually low, so that the deep hull of the *Etna* was resting on the bottom, to which she was fast frozen. I could do nothing about it at the time. Later, when the water began to increase in the lagoon with the coming of spring, I tried to break the hull loose from the clutch of the ice, but I failed. When she lifted with the rising water the rudder and stern posts stuck in the ice on the bottom until they were torn away. With no proper tools or appliances for repair I realized that I would be navigating the *Etna* no more.

It is harder than you may think to lose a first ship that

is all your own — especially one upon which you have set your heart for going trading — with great expectations!

Spring time! The cursing of ice-packs as they ground against each other off shore! Sea-gulls overhead from the south! Ducks from Muscovy! Geese from Patagonia! But me with no song in my heart!

My schooner being useless, like a proper merchant I tried to sell her as she lay, at a profit. I thought for awhile, and then had a bright idea. I went to the Blabbertown trading post and sold the *Etna* to Manager Nelson of Liebes & Company. I did not suspect at the time that he was having an even brighter idea!

Nelson agreed to give me \$1200 in trade goods for the schooner, just as she lay. But I was not to receive the trade goods until the following autumn, when there would be a full stock on hand. He gave me an order on himself personally for goods to the amount named, and I was well satisfied with that. Then I went down to Kotzebue, thinking there to make a fresh start on the road to fortune. I did that because of stories which had been coming up our way telling of placer gold below us in the Kotzebue Sound country, but just exactly where was uncertain. I got a whale-boat, wide of beam, and loaded it with such goods and furs as I had, and then sailed off by my lone, after leaving reasonable supplies with Gremnia. I was not myself smitten with gold fever at that time, but I sensed a chance to trade with those who were and who would be flocking, as I supposed, to the new diggings.

I might as well tell here about Manager Nelson, and be done with him, as he had done me. He had heard of the gold discoveries. He tried to get the *Etna* over the bar of the lagoon, and of course he failed. Months later

she was carried half a mile inland by the waves in a heavy gale. Eventually she was sawn to bits for firewood. Meanwhile Nelson managed to get another schooner, and he stowed away all the best goods out of Liebes & Company's store in the schooner, and absconded. So my order for \$1200 worth of goods was a scrap of paper and no more. I was very pleased to learn some while later that Nelson got what was coming to him while engaged in trading whisky for whalebone on Big Diomedé. An Eskimo did it.

At various places within Kotzebue Sound, back of Cape Krusenstern and Cape Espenberg, into Hotham Inlet and Selawik Lake where the Kobuk river flows, I met with many parties of new-come Whites, the majority of them from English-speaking countries. The Chinook name for these people in British Columbia and so far north as into Alaska along the coast, was *chechaco*, literally meaning new-come. The name extended into the Yukon after the gold discoveries there in 1897, but is not often heard now. The *chechacos* were hopeful, and had plenty of food at first. But I saw no gold among them, except what had been minted in the United States. However, they were all in need of furs, and I traded off all I had for their food. I did this while sailing around from Keewalik to Good Hope Bay on the south shore of the Sound, into which seven streams flow north, giving promise of placer gold. Then I hoisted sail for the run home, stopping only at Taotut on the tip of Cape Espenberg to trade what was left of my goods with the Eskimos there for more furs. From Taotut, with a good wind, I went into the open.

When about half way to Point Hope I sighted a small schooner, which was going queerly. I altered my course

to inquire. When I hailed her I received no reply. Clearly a derelict. I made fast the whale-boat to her stern, and climbed aboard. I found that all supplies and movable gear had been taken off, and that she certainly was half full of water. A derelict, but worth saving. I found no papers aboard to tell of ownership. So I decided that she belonged to me.

It took a full two days to pump the water out of that schooner, and get her in shape to sail. Fortunately the weather was mild, and a gentle wind was with me. I tied the whale-boat astern, after taking out food and supplies, and sailed my new ship with no trouble at all past Kivalina and right around into the shelter formed by Cape Seppings. There I worked on her for a couple of weeks, and shored her up for greater safety than was afforded by the tricky lagoon at Point Hope, where I had lost the *Etna*. I liked the look of the country behind Cape Seppings, so I decided to return in the whale-boat to Point Hope, and take my family from there back to where my new ship lay. I did that. But while at Point Hope I heard that my brother, Bob Jorgensen, was among the new arrivals at Kotzebue, looking for gold. I wrote him a long letter, telling him among other things of having found a schooner adrift, and of having salvaged her and made her secure for the winter at Cape Seppings.

We were comfortably settled for a winter at Cape Seppings. The Eskimo settlement of Kivalina being near, I managed to do a good trade, and I did trapping as well. But all the while I had it in mind to sail north in my new schooner when spring came. I intended to settle far beyond Herschel Island, taking a stock of trade goods with me, just as I had planned to do when I had the *Etna*.

I was taught once more by the event that a man with a deep scheme or a fine dream had best not say too much until after accomplishment. My letter to my brother Bob, and what he told from it around Kotzebue, cost me the loss of my second ship. There came along with the sea-gulls and the wild geese and queer ducks that spring a ragged lot of *chechacos* to Cape Seppings, asking for my schooner. There were seven of them. I might have made a fight for it, for they were a half-starved, scurvy-stricken, feeble group. They could not shoot fast and straight, as I could; and I had right on my side. That schooner was a derelict when I took her. In any case I was entitled to hold her for salvage, and pay for the work I had done to make her seaworthy. But I saw that these men were far worse off than I was. They had bought the schooner in Puget Sound, and had themselves sailed her up into Kotzebue Sound. At a wild story of gold aplenty up one of the creeks they had anchored the schooner on a short chain while they went crazily forward into the savage land that laughed as it broke them. Others coming after must have stripped her bare as I found her. Swinging on her short chain she broke it, and went adrift out of the Sound and into the ocean where I found her.

I waived my claims. The men had just heard of the great strike at Nome. It was the spring of 1899. More than that, I gave them a couple of sacks of flour and some dried seal meat so that they might eat as they sailed away to make their fortune. Some while after I heard that these men did reach Nome, and that they traded the schooner there for an outfit and supply of food, after which they went inland and staked some claims from which they all made a fair clean-up of gold. Also I heard that the schooner was used on a number of trading trips

across to the Siberian side. But I never saw her again.

Suddenly I was taken with the gold fever. Leaving Gremnia at Cape Seppings with the babies, in a camp with plenty of supplies, I got into my whale-boat with my winter's catch of furs and made off for Kotzebue.

During the winter at Cape Seppings I had come across a young man called Louie Lane. He had left San Francisco the previous summer for Kotzebue about his father's business, which was the getting of gold by mining. He told me that he had brought up with him aboard the ship a small flat-bottom stern-wheel steamboat of twenty-five registered tonnage, with which he intended paddling up and down the many rivers which empty into Kotzebue Sound, establishing camps and trading, as well as prospecting for his father. He had arrived too late to go up the Kobuk River, but he had some men and an engineer waiting at Kotzebue to handle his boat in the spring. Naturally he was interested in what I had to tell him.

When I sailed in to Kotzebue in April, 1899, intent on trading off my furs for a good outfit to go mining, and knowing no more about mining than ninety per cent of the hordes from all over who went to the Yukon and Alaska in those years, the first man I met on landing was Louie Lane. He was all excited about the big find of gold on the beach down at Nome. At first I could not believe it, because I had camped on that beach myself only two years before that and I saw no gold there, nor had I heard of any except from the Eskimo who, I thought had tried to fool me into giving him a passage down to his home there from Kotzebue. But when Louie asked me to be captain of his little flat-bottom stern-wheeler, and take her out into the open ocean down to Nome, *then* I believed. Faith kindles faith, and besides that I

told myself that I could handle any kind of craft in any kind of water, and I liked being captain.

We had a rough time almost from the start. The weather was worse when we got past Cape Espenberg, and by the time we were off Cape Prince of Wales we had not power enough to go ahead properly or to turn and go back. So I went ahead, and it was well I did, for along came the steamship *Townsend*, which was a powerful boat, and which belonged to Louie's father. We were towed by the *Townsend* into Port Clarence, a safe shelter and rather a lively place at that time.

While at Port Clarence I heard of an old shipmate, Andrew Osterberg, who had been at sea with me when I was a boy. He had just been murdered, along with a companion called Captain Jenks, while they were making an overland trip from Port Clarence to Kotzebue with a sled loaded with grain alcohol. An Eskimo, knowing what goods they had, followed and shot them both. Later, with that alcohol, he made himself so obnoxious among his own people that they appointed a man to kill him. When this was done they hauled his body back to the place where the bodies of Jenks and Osterberg were, and left it between them for the foxes.

When I did reach Nome there were about fifteen thousand excited persons on the beach there, most of them men, but with quite a colourful showing of women among them. About a dozen ships were lying off shore, awkwardly discharging passengers and cargo along a front of three or four miles. The beach for all that length was littered with packing boxes, lumber, groceries, machinery, and all the gear that men think they need when they go placer-mining for the first time.

There were no streets then at Nome, although there

was an effort to parallel the shore line when the first buildings were erected. These were made of scantlings covered with canvas, and most of them had wooden floors. Behind that line was a dirtier mess than ever I had seen in any Eskimo encampment — far more so — because the Eskimos always move on into new snow. Farther back, where the tundra was reached, there were better camps made up of clusters of tents. Everywhere along the beach were saloons and dance halls, and they all did a great business, both night and day. Games of chance, in which there was very little chance for the players, were going every night, and there the gold which was rocked from the sand on the beach by hard working men went very easily to others. What the gamblers did not get went over the bars and to the women. Yet some men, even honest ones and miners, went rich from Nome after a year or two.

It did not test and try a man's soul to get to Nome as it did to win through into the Yukon in those days. It was easy for all; just going aboard a ship at San Francisco or some other Pacific port, and nothing more to do until a few weeks later came the landing on the ugly beach where the gold was. For miles along that beach men were rocking out gold. On account of the uncertain mining laws prevailing there, under which no man could be sure of title, and could only hold what ground he was actually working and was able to hold by force from those who would jump it, there would be groups working every claim, and the work would be going on for two shifts, and sometimes four, every day. According to the richness of the ground a clean-up would be made from the rockers every few hours, and in any case every night, and the gold put in the buckskin pokes which most of us carried by way of purse.

Some of the scum of America went to Nome at first, along with the decenter sort of gold diggers. This was because it was so easy to get to Nome, and there was so much easy money to be skimmed there in the way the scum like to skim it. After the first summer, however, the better classes took hold of the camp, and before long Nome was made almost as clean and almost as orderly as Dawson in the Yukon or Fairbanks in Alaska.

The *Townsend* had taken on a load of coal for Nome at Port Clarence, getting it from a large schooner there which had come up from the south. I followed in the wake of the *Townsend* with the stern-wheeler, and arrived at Nome soon after the *Townsend*, and without any mishap. But I was glad to sign off. Then with a supply of food and enough money for what outfit I thought I would need, I pitched a tent for myself on a vacant spot on the beach.

That evening, so soon as I lit my fire and started to cook, I had visitors. With most of them it was a case of wanting something to eat. Some of them, I felt quite sure, would steal whatever they could get their hands on, if there were a chance of getting away with it safely. Following the staking of mining claims, the staking of town lots had begun. And through that summer claim-jumping and lot-jumping occurred much too often. Organized bands of ruffians would run any timid holder off a piece of ground which he had properly located and then hold it as their own.

Early next morning I was up, and preparing something inside my tent for breakfast, when I heard three men outside by the flap talking loudly to each other. I sensed that they were merely making a pretence of arguing with each other. But I just kept on with what I was doing;

listening at the same time to every word. Then one of the men poked his head into the tent and said that I had jumped his lot, and ordered me to get to hell out of there, and to be quick about it.

I was quick. And it was a long knife I had in my right hand. Just how frightened I looked, or how wild, I do not know, but I let out a war-whoop as I started for those three lot-jumpers with knife uplifted, and the old Viking blood was ablaze in me. Two of the men turned and ran, but the other put his hand to his hip, drawing a pistol. Then, before I could reach within striking distance, and before he got his pistol up, a big man had flashed around the tent corner and struck that claim-jumper so hard on the jaw with his fist that he dropped, and in dropping turned twice I think before he lay still on the sand.

Big George Mathieson it was who did that good thing for me. We had been friends at Point Hope. It was the yell I gave which started him on the run around the tent, and quick as a wink he took in the situation and went into action. We laughed to see how the other two jumpers kept on running, as we dragged the third one down to the water edge and soused his head. After a time he sat up in a dazed way, holding his jaw in both hands. Then without a word he got to his feet and staggered off up the beach. It was a good pistol I took from him.

I had no trouble at all in Nome after that. But I got no gold. The rich ground on the beach was all staked, and for miles back where there was any yellow colour of promise one could hardly edge in between the claims. Finally, as the season began to slip away, I sought employment. Wages were high for carpenters, and there

were no unions in Nome then to hinder a man's freedom, but I had no tools, so I took the first job offered, which was to be watchman in a warehouse owned by a man named Kimball. My friend Mathieson had no better luck than myself at the time, and he went north to Port Clarence, where I was to meet him later.

I soon became restive in my position as watchman. It was not good enough for a man of my character and capacity, except as a foothold for a leap to something else and better. I craved action under my own orders, and I kept an eye open for something beyond Kimball's warehouse.

Nome was full of rumours about new finds of gold farther north. From the gravel of rivers like Deering and Candle and Kobuk flowing into Kotzebue Sound, and all the way up and around the Alaskan coast to Colville River, which is about one hundred and fifty miles east of Point Barrow, one heard of gold to be panned in quantity by hand. The farther away, and the more unlikely, the more seemed to be the allure of the prospect, especially for the born adventurers who had gathered with a worse lot at Nome. Among these I noted a keen Englishman by name of Girling, as near as I can remember it. I took a good way to meet him, and he was not the sort of Englishman to fuss about references. He could tell whether a man was right or not for this or that by the look of him, just as I can myself most of the time. So naturally he took to me at once.

Girling had acquired some good claims at Nome on behalf of a London syndicate, and he was doing well with them. But he was not confined to Nome, and had listened to the talk of more mines farther north. When he learned that I was familiar with the northern coasts clear around to Canada at Herschel Island and beyond

he began to think of sending out a prospecting party under me. I may have suggested the idea to him. For I had been laying my eye on a trim little schooner from Seattle, idle and anchored off shore, called the *Helen*. I fancied myself sailing her.

Girling bought that schooner, and he put her under my name, as I had by that time acquired American citizenship. I was to be captain of the *Helen* on a prospecting cruise beyond Point Barrow so far at least as Colville River, of which we had heard and knew nothing.

I picked up one good sailor on the beach by name of Albert Bernard. I knew by the look of him that he would do. And Girling engaged an experienced prospector called George Paisley, instructing him to examine the most likely bars and creeks as he came to them, and to stake in the name of the syndicate, or in other names for it.

On the way north I sailed into Cape Seppings, where Gremnia had been wearying for my return. Both she and the two babies were well, and there was another one soon to arrive. It did not take long to get the family aboard, with their few belongings.

All went well with us until we began to round Cape Prince of Wales. Then came heavy head winds, against which we tacked our way slowly until we came within sight of Point Barrow. Then the wind increased so much that we were driven back nearly to Icy Cape. I had managed, however, to make several stops at mouths of rivers known to me before the worst weather began. Paisley found nothing at any of them to interest him.

By the time we did finally reach Point Barrow it was too late in the season to venture farther. So I made the *Helen* as safe as possible there for the winter. We had to cut a way for the *Helen* with axes through the young ice

that was forming, before we could get her safely into the lagoon. It was decided that we should take her on to Colville River in the spring, and meanwhile through the winter each should busy himself as he thought best.

Bernard went on to Dease Inlet, about fifty miles south-easterly from Point Barrow, and into which several rivers flow, while Paisley went out on some work for Liebes & Company. I made my own headquarters at Barrow, and from there did the best I could in the way of trapping and hunting.

Patsy, my eldest son, was born at Barrow. And he was born on board the *Helen* just as we had finished cutting the passage through the ice into the lagoon. He grew to be a great hunter by the time he was fourteen years old, and he is now a prosperous man of the Arctic, doing a great business in furs. This very spring he flew out of the Arctic in an airplane and down into Alberta for a change. Then for more change he came to Vancouver, and has been taking a short business course at one of the schools, so that he may be the more fitted to conduct his expanding affairs when he returns to Victoria Island.

FOUR WHALES IN A DAY

WHEN I was a child in Denmark I heard a story from my mother about a brave tailor who had killed seven at a blow, and who went abroad proclaiming the fact. On his great reputation so gained he was able to go far, and in due course he arrived as a successful politician. And the people never suspected that the seven he had killed at a blow were only flies. But the people at Point Barrow did know that the four I killed in a day were whales!

In the spring of 1900 at Point Barrow the ice began to crack and the leads to open out at sea toward the end of March. It was far too soon for me to meddle with the *Helen* where I had her, but my blood began to stir for another go at floor whaling. Whalebone was still bringing a good price, and I welcomed the chance to make some real money before going mining for gold up the Colville River. So I got together the gear required, and engaged a crew of Eskimos on the usual terms. Having explained in a previous chapter the procedure for floor whaling there will be no need of again relating details. Floor whaling one time is much like another time — except for the luck of it.

White men living in the Far North for a long while become sometimes unreasonably irritable, or jealous or suspicious of their fellows. Even so far south as the Klondike this has been noted through the long loneliness and pent-up conditions, and even between friends the

more generous feelings seem to freeze. It is not so among the Eskimos; they develop no malevolence from too much ice and blubber. But explorers and traders and missionaries from whom you might least expect it become queer that way at times, as I found to my cost more than once. I was never that way myself, always having the ability to adapt myself to environment as happily as may be — I mean that I have the knack of going native anywhere between the Poles, accommodating myself to whatever life is open, and having the fun of it, without bothering others more than I must to live.

The agent for Liebes & Company at Point Barrow was a fine chap for his job, and I still count him as a friend. There was never any proper cause for ill-feeling between us. But through the winter much gossip was repeated to me about this agent and the mean things he had said touching my character. I did not believe what I heard. The gossip was only a form of relaxation; something to make the gossipers feel better by saying others were worse than they were. Even if the agent had said such things of me I could put it down to snow fever or something else as passing as that — meaning no more offence than the mutterings of a malamute while asleep. However, just before I was ready to go out on the ice with my crew, an old Eskimo, a good friend of mine with whom I had gone hunting several times, came to me saying that the agent had gone to another Eskimo who was the leader of other whaling parties, and upon whom the agent depended for his chief supply of bone, and that this man had been bribed to seduce all the members of my crew. He was to get them to obstruct or desert me if I got a whale, and he was to promise them just as much money for so doing as if they killed many whales.

I realized that the situation might be serious. Out

floor whaling, unless the leader can count on the loyalty of each member of his crew, he is to that extent handicapped, and if the majority of his crew be untrustworthy then his prospect is almost hopeless. I knew the old man was sincere in what he told me. So I engaged him to come along with me, so that at least I would have one upon whom I might rely. There was no time to get a new crew ready, as seven crews had just gone out in advance of me. I had to take a chance on what I had. Yet when I considered each man of my crew, and questioned some of them, there did not seem to be one who was not loyal to me. I made up my mind that at the first sign of treachery, or even of slackness, I would make an example of the offender.

Early the next morning I led the way eastward from Point Barrow, and we travelled till evening. Then we sighted a lead, along which several parties were spread. Just as we were getting our gear out to the edge of it the agent himself killed a whale. It was not a big one, but for all that it was a whale of value, and it gave him prestige with the Eskimos, who already had entered into the spirit of a contest in which the agent and I were rivals. First blood for the agent!

I let all but one of my men sleep that night. So soon as it was light next morning I took the dart gun and began patrolling the edge of the lead, peering down into the water for the first sign of any disturbance showing that a whale was coming up for air. I was wishing then that Gremnia were with me, because of her sharp eyes, and sense of heavy things coming. Maybe she tuned in with me, and sent me something keen, for I had not gone fifty feet beyond where I had some of my men with the oomiak balanced for instant launching before I saw a whale coming right up under me where I stood. He had

been following a pressure-ridge under the water, and as he rose I fired. I should have waited several seconds longer, for the instant he felt the harpoon he dived down again, and although I heard the muffled explosion of the bomb he died and lay just under the ice. However, he was so near the edge of the ice that I knew it would not be difficult to get him up, especially after the gas started by the bomb would begin to work in his body. As a matter of fact I did not retrieve that whale, and it was the agent who had the bone of him from Eskimos who got it towards the end of that season. So, like Queen Catharine's favourite soldier, we will not count that one.

But others counted it. The news sped quickly along the ice to the other parties that already, so early in the morning, I had killed a whale. I had evened the score with the agent. Within the next hour I had killed another, and, as the bomb had exploded in his heart, he died at once on the surface, and so floated. I may explain here that I did not hurl the harpoon into those two whales, with bomb attached, as I had done when first out floor whaling at Point Hope, but fired it from a heavy brass shoulder gun which had come into use, and the recoil of which would often knock me down.

I soon had the whale into position for the crew to cut into him, and while they were all busy at that I kept on patrolling and had the luck to kill yet another whale with a perfect shot to the heart. So then I went to work myself at cutting into this second whale, and kept at it until noon. Then while the others were still working I shoved off in the oomiak with the old man to paddle slowly down the lead. I was munching a bit of boiled whale beef in the bow when up came another whale. I shot that one also directly in the heart, so that he died with scarcely a flip of his tail, and floated.

Three whales secured, and at ice-edge for the cutting! This was making money fast. I could no longer mistrust my crew, having demonstrated what a remarkable whaler I was. I could see the admiration shining in their eyes – and I had a quiet grin to myself about my rival. Thus ignorant was I of the subtle cunning of trained business men!

Of a sudden I was very tired, and decided to take a short nap while my men went on working. I went asleep so soon as I closed my eyes. Then I had one of my silly dreams. A girl of the South Seas, wearing a red hibiscus in her hair because she had nothing else to wear, brought me a coco-nut. Having nothing with which to open it properly I asked her to get me a stone. Then in a twinkling, as I looked at her, she changed into Gremnia, dressed in her best furs, but seeming very frightened about something. She caught me by the shoulder, and then pointed to a long snake wearing a brown fur hood, and hissing at both of us angrily. A snake – and there had been no such thing at all in the Arctic for so very long a time – before, perhaps, the Elder Gods pushed Ireland up out of the bed of the sea!

I opened my eyes. The old Eskimo was shaking me by the shoulder. He said that while I had been asleep the bad leader of the other crews had gone swiftly among my crew, where they were cutting into the whales, and by threatening that their scanty winter supplies would be withheld by the trading company unless they left me at once, he had so upset and dismayed them that they had all quit work and gone away with him.

So that was the snake they were trying to give me warning about, just when I was switching off into the South Seas! I knew that brown fur hood!

I was thankful to have with me that one fine old Eskimo. He worked as hard and deftly as I did, and late that evening the two of us had most of the bone out of the heads of the three whales, and had it piled properly on the ice, ready for taking ashore. Then as we rested and ate some meat I saw a whale come to the surface just out of reach of the dart gun. Very quietly we launched the oomiak, and this time, as I took position in the bow, I had a regular harpoon for hurling by hand, with a bomb attached. The old man was worth two ordinary men, the way he could handle a paddle, making no sound and scarce a ripple. He put me clear up to the whale's forward quarter, and I hurled the harpoon for the water line, just back of the fin, so as to get him in the heart. I did that, and I heard the bomb explode as he went down. He came up in less than a minute, and died. We made the body

4/5 ✓
fast to the ice not far from the other three.

Four whales in a day! Me! Champion whaler of the Arctic! For years after I was known as that. Whether it really were the agent who had plotted against me, or whether merely the jealous Eskimo leader of the other crews, did not matter then to me. I was too pleased with myself to care. And the next morning I had my pick of the best men who came forward to help me — all of them proud to have a hand in any work of mine.

When all my bone had been hauled to Point Barrow and safely stored, I gave a party, and invited everybody to come. They did, including the agent and such other white men there as were inclined, and everybody danced. It was the outstanding social event of the season.

Among those present at my party was Albert Bernard. He had come up to Barrow from Smith Bay, lying about a hundred miles to the east, and not to be confused with

Cape Smyth, the trading post lying a few miles to the west of Barrow. From Smith Bay Bernard said that he had ventured inland so far as Tazekpuk, which was not very far but far enough for a sailor in such a region, without ever a sign or rumour of gold. Probably no gold in quantity worth while will ever be found along the shore of the Arctic Ocean, nor in the gravel beds of the rivers that flow into it. Yet one can never tell, as Solomon said and Nome proved. It was a solemn joke he made, but it is a bright fact as well, that gold is where you find it.

After our celebration over blubber and bone had been carried on till everyone was satisfied, Bernard helped me divide portions of the bone among the Eskimo crew which had deserted me. Of course, they did not deserve a scrap of it, with the exception of the old fellow who had been so faithful, but I thought better to treat them as children who had been misled by the bad man, and so I left a good feeling among them.

We soon had the *Helen* in shape for going to sea again, and when we sailed we had almost a full cargo of bone on board. Having heard nothing of Paisley I could only hope that he was safe somewhere inland, making ready for a summer of prospecting. Later on I heard a rumour that he had been seen down in the Mackenzie River Delta, and that was all. I never saw him again. I decided to go back to Nome and report, and perhaps get more supplies and prospectors, and that suited Bernard very well. So leaving my family at Barrow I set off in the *Helen* once more for the south.

I first made Port Clarence, where I succeeded in selling my bone at a good price, and where I had some amusing adventures with my friend George Mathieson, but none of them being much out of ordinary, or particularly pinned to the north, I will not tell of them here. Then I

went on down to Nome. Arriving there, my first business, of course, was to inquire for Girling. I was told that early in the preceding winter, on the last outgoing ship, he had sailed for San Francisco, but that he had died at the outset of the voyage, and was buried on Unalaska in the Aleutians, when the ship called at Dutch Harbour.

I found another representative of the London syndicate, but he seemed to know nothing of what had been undertaken as between Girling and myself touching gold prospects in the Arctic. His attention was concentrated on the syndicate's claims at Nome, and he was really too busy to bother with me. The *Helen* remained in my own name.

Bernard left me at Nome. But as he did I fell in with one good man by name of Carter. He was a prospector of much experience, and he agreed to try his luck with me at Colville River, or any other place in the Arctic which might appear promising. Then I found another sort of man, who seemed about ready to turn his hand to anything. He agreed to join Carter as a partner. His name was Marsh, and, as I afterwards discovered, he was quite versatile, and quick at devising strategems to spoil the schemes of better men. About the best I can remember of him is that he had a neat wrist for flipping flapjacks, and that he could mix and fry his batter very well. One day he criticized those which were made by Carter so much that Carter lost his temper, and if I had not interfered I think he would have strangled him. But Carter did make vile flapjacks, and after that unpleasantness it was agreed that Marsh should do all the cooking. This relieved him of other work which he did not do so well, and we were all satisfied.

A few years after that Marsh did his best to have me hanged, and a quarter of a century after that he tried to

borrow money from me in Seattle. I enjoyed the latter occasion more than he did. Marsh was a man who in his gold-prospecting ventures was much befriended by Senator Sulzer, one time Governor of New York, and subsequently impeached and deposed. But all that was in the future when Marsh went aboard the *Helen* with me at Nome. He is not to be confused with another Marsh who was a mixture of missionary and physician at Point Barrow in those days.

With the help of Carter and Marsh I was having no trouble at all in handling the *Helen* on the way back to the Arctic. On reaching Point Barrow I stopped just long enough to take my family on board. The wind was right, the weather was warm, and the babies were happy little passengers. Gremnia lent a hand as a sailor whenever she was not busy being a mother.

Colville River is about two hundred miles beyond Point Barrow. But when we arrived off shore there we all felt so content on the *Helen* that we decided to keep on going. Where all is so equally unknown one is apt to think that the farther away the better the chances for whatever it is one wants.

Carter and Marsh would be prospecting in due time — meanwhile I was exploring. After sailing on for another two hundred miles, passing Flaxman Island and entering Camden Bay, I judged best for us to land at Collinson Point. Seven small creeks flow into the sea about there from the Romanzoff Mountains, and in any one of them colours of gold are to be found. Altogether it seems a more likely region than Colville River and its back country.

But Carter's good prospecting sense prompted him to go inland around the range of the Franklin and Romanzoff Mountains, and after landing at Collinson Point,

and getting supplies in order, he and Marsh set off to do that. As for myself I had decided to establish headquarters at the Point and spend the winter there, in order to trap, and do what trading I could with the Eskimos coming and going about there. I do not know just when Carter and Marsh parted company, but Carter did work his way inland until he came across the East Fork of the Chandalar River, which flows along the southern base of the great chain of mountains known as Brooks Range. The Chandalar, with its two branches, meets the Christian River on the north shore of the Yukon River, about twenty miles west of Fort Yukon and about three hundred miles north of Fairbanks. Carter eventually established a trading post on the Chandalar, and had two Japanese associated with him, one of whom I met on Flaxman Island some six years later. But I never saw Carter again.

By the end of September I had the *Helen* in as safe a little bay as I could find around Collinson Point. But there, before any ice had formed, a heavy gale so battered her that the oakum became loose in her seams, and she filled and sank. With Gremnia's aid I did manage to raise her, but after that, while busy ashore getting some drift-wood for repairs and for shoring, there came another gale worse than the first, and my third ship of hope was lost to me. Blown to sea. *Helen* gone!

Fortunately I had landed most of the little vessel's stores, and part of her gear. She was never seen again, so far as I ever could learn, and she probably was crushed in the ice, and the best of her taken to the bottom.

As I was putting things to rights as well as I could after that loss, which occurred shortly after Carter and Marsh had gone, who should turn up at Point Collinson but the first prospector, Paisley! I was indeed glad to see

him, and I gave him all the news I had. He was looking well, and he had joined himself to an Eskimo family. He talked as if he knew where gold was in that region, but would not tell exactly where. However, as I did not believe him I did not care. With more interest I saw that he had gotten for himself a fine lot of furs. He said that he was on his way to Point Barrow to dispose of them.

Paisley set great store by a large canvas canoe which he had brought up with him on the *Helen* from Nome the year before, and which had served him well. I warned him not to attempt to go from Point Collinson to Point Barrow in it so soon before the first ice was due to form. But he was a stubborn Scotchman, although trained in the United States, and he would not listen to me. The Eskimo girl and her parents had great confidence in him and his canoe, so they went along with him. As they were almost within sight of Point Barrow the young ice formed over the sea, and it cut the canoe to ribbons, scraps of which were found the following spring, about the time that Paisley's body was washed ashore. Dr. Marsh of Point Barrow identified it.

The next summer I wanted to be away again myself. I decided to go to Point Barrow, leaving my family in care of my brother-in-law, who had then settled at Point Collinson. There had also come there a Norwegian sailor called Kris, a good, faithful man, after whom I called my best dog the next year.

Kris and I set out in a dinghy nineteen feet long, and having a great spread of sail. The distance we had to make was about 420 miles as we sailed.

Exactly thirty-two hours after casting off at Collinson Point I climbed aboard the Revenue cutter *Bear* at Point

Barrow. I admired myself as a sailor that time, and all the more so when Captain Tuttle of the *Bear* refused to believe me, and I was able to confute him with evidence. It was this way:

At Flaxman Island we had stopped for breakfast. Flaxman Island is about fifty miles west of Point Collinson. Very seldom does one meet with a Japanese in the Arctic. But that morning there was a Japanese on Flaxman Island, and he told me a bit of news about Carter, and also asked me to take to Point Barrow a letter addressed to Charlie Brower, agent for Liebes & Company there at that time. After sealing the letter this unusual Japanese, who could both speak and write English well, wrote on the envelope the exact hour and minute of the day he gave it to me. Now it happened that when I went aboard the *Bear* Big Charlie Brower was there, and so I gave him the letter. When he opened it and looked at the handwriting and then at the handwriting of the date note on the envelope, he went to Captain Tuttle and showed him the proof that what I said was true. And the captain said:

'Little Charlie, you deserve a drink for that. Come down into my cabin!'

So I had two, and Kris had, too. I often wonder since then how we made that trip so swiftly and yet so safely through the blocks of ice, which everywhere dotted the the sea. Once, the heavy nor'-easter behind us being so strong, Kris wanted to put a reef in the mainsail, but I said no, and did the opposite by flinging my jib sail out to the limit. We flew through the water!

CHAPTER XVI

MUSHING WITH THE BARROW MAILS

AFTER my young son, Collinson, whom I named after Collinson Point, where he was born, had been drowned there, I was out of humour with the place. Apart from that bereavement there were other reasons. Trapping had been poor, and there was not population enough for the carrying on of much trade. So in September of 1902 I took my family to Barrow. I was out of almost everything needful, except a few furs to exchange for a winter outfit.

The Eskimo village at Barrow had a population of about three hundred that year. It lies just to the south-west of Point Barrow, and is known simply as Barrow. Farther to the south-west was the Liebes & Company trading post known as Cape Smyth, where lived a few Whites, among them Charlie Brower, Tom Gordon, Fred Hobson, Dr. Marsh, Parson Sprague, and a number of stranded sailors.

I preferred to have my family at Barrow, because I sensed hard times ahead, and Eskimos are more ready than Whites to be communal in the Arctic, and share their meat with each other when there is little to be had for any. The villagers at Barrow were in a poor way. There had been almost complete failure in floor whaling during the preceding spring; summer hunting had been little better; fur was scarce; and there was little meat laid away. The winter began with blizzards which lasted

longer without a break than any I had known till then. Naturally I was anxious for my young family, and they required so much of their mother's attention that she was not able to go out and hunt and trap with me as usual. But I felt my chances would be better at Barrow.

Did ever you notice a hungry sea-gull swinging high? Of course! But did ever you notice the way he will act when he spies a bit of food below? He will not swoop down quietly on it all for himself, as will the more human and business-like crow. He will first give the food call. Thus he informs all his fellows within hearing, and they all have a chance from where they are to descend and eat. At the same time the way is left open for the alert or the lucky to get most of the food, thus stimulating a plucky individualism of each for himself, and combining that polity with a wing to wing and sporting sort of communism. The morality of sea-gulls is to be admired! And there is more showing of such among Eskimos than among the average Whites who trade or hunt or preach or explore through the Arctic.

Uncle Sam had decided to play Santa Claus at Christmas with a sleighful of letters, drawn by reindeer for persons in most remote Alaska who were not expecting any such thing until summer, if ever. Reindeer, it was thought, would be most suitable for this service, because of the success made in driving a herd of them to Point Barrow in winter for the relief of stranded sailors, as I told you before. Two mails were intended every winter to and from Point Barrow and Kotzebue.

Parson Sprague was given the mail contract for Point Barrow. He undertook to drive a reindeer team, constituted of the reindeer still remaining around Cape Smyth, down to Kotzebue and back. The Parson was brave, but

I do not think that he quite realized the difficulties and the hardships which he would have to face, especially going down. Each way was about seven hundred miles, but by time measurement it was much shorter returning than going.

There was no trail to follow. I do not know what route Parson Sprague took with his reindeer, but I know that the best course to take was by the seashore, so far as possible. I knew the chief landmarks after leaving Cape Smyth would be Franklin Point, Icy Cape, Point Ley, Cape Beaufort, Cape Sabine, Cape Lisburne, Point Hope, Kivalina and Cape Krusenstern. Near Cape Sabine there are two coal-mines – Corwin Coal Mine and Thetis Coal Mine. All in all it is as bleak a prospect along that shore as any letter-carrier would care to travel. In parts one cannot follow the shore, but must climb over high cliffs and go inland; and that is forlorn and laborious going for a sailor.

Parson Sprague started out hopefully in November from Cape Smyth, driving a team of reindeer, and he was assisted by three Eskimos. All of us who could write, and others for whom we did the writing, gave him letters to take to Kotzebue, when most of them would go to the south. Going South! Except for explorers who came along once in a while, enamoured of some fancied Pole, we were so far north that we only considered east and west as directions in carrying on our affairs. But finally going South – that was the intent of all but the Eskimos. Some of us referred to the great world of the South as the Outside, although for a fact it was we who were all shut on the outside, topside of the world.

Parson Sprague returned to Point Barrow toward the end of January with four sorry-looking reindeer, and his three Eskimos and himself more sorry than those. They

had poor luck at hunting game, and had eaten four of their reindeer. Four others they left at Icy Cape, the extreme Alaskan point of exploration made in August 1778 by Captain James Cook.

Parson Sprague described his trip in terms of what awaits evil doers after death. He declared that what he had contracted to do – that is, the making of two round trips during the winter with reindeer – could not be done. Reindeer were out of the running, by his tumtum. Yet he did not want to fail in making delivery of the mails, and so lose entirely the benefit of his official contract. In his wisdom he came to see me.

Faced with conditions and obligations such as they were for me that winter, I was ready to turn my hand to anything lawful, if there were a chance for maintenance from it. So for once I became a letter-carrier for Uncle Sam in the Arctic. Once was enough.

I had a team of five good dogs. I was not familiar with the route to be taken, but I was better qualified than any other man then at Point Barrow for undertaking such a job. I could always find myself; I knew the winds; I knew directions; I knew how to get the best out of dogs; and I could live and work hard on little to eat. If I succeeded in making the round trip in the terms of the contract I would get enough cash at least to buy an outfit for floor whaling in the spring, when I got back to Barrow. It seemed my best prospect.

The Parson made a sub-contract, in the terms of which he was to supply four dogs to be added to my team of five, and an expert assistant for me, whom he would pay \$100 for the round trip, and also he would supply a sled in good condition. I was to supply food for myself and the dogs and the assistant. And if I returned from Kotzebue with the mail for Barrow I was to be paid

\$250 without any deduction. It was a mean contract — it was a Post Office contract!

The sled furnished me was of a heavy, awkward Point Barrow type. It was made of drift-wood, and the body of it was about seven feet long by a bit more than two feet wide. It was finished to curve upward like the prow of a canoe. The runners were about eight inches high, and shod with walrus ivory. It had strong handle-bars, and all necessary thongs and traces.

I had seen a better type in use down and about Nome — a light basket body on high open runners as for a fancy sleigh or cutter drawn by horses. It was not till some years later that I saw in use the heavy sled having runners of frozen mud, shod with ice. They are used along the coasts of Coronation Gulf and on the Arctic Islands.

I soon came to the best of terms with the four dogs supplied by the Parson. They recognized me as a superior person so soon as they left him and came under my command and talked with my own five dogs.

These excellent dogs of the Far North are different in their dispositions and their physical qualifications; almost as much so as men are. On the whole they are not so mean with each other as are competing traders and even explorers, when faced with conditions calling for team play and pack loyalty. I called my best dog *Kris*, after myself and the Norwegian mate who made the risky trip with me in the dinghy to Barrow. *Kris* was as reliable and restrained and able to take care of himself in an emergency as we were. He was my leader.

Usually, where I was throughout the Far North, I drove my dogs single file with double traces. But sometimes I had them on a single towline. Other times I would have them more or less abreast, each on his own

single line. About Nome I saw the dogs driven in pairs, and they could make fast time with the light basket sleigh in use there. I would not say that there is any best way, for so much depends upon the character of the country you traverse. At Nome they used to have races with dog teams, driving them in couples with one ahead, called the *spike leader*. Behind him would be a *gee leader* and a *haw leader*, and behind them in couples were the *swing dogs*, the *wheel dogs* and the *pointers*. But, of course, all that was for sport, and not for men and dogs bent on ordinary business with sleds.

Apart from an odd dog now and then brought up from the South, the dogs of the Arctic and the Far North in general are divided in two main classes as *huskies* and *malamutes*. The husky is a large and strong dog, bred originally of the Canadian timber wolves in Mackenzie River regions away from the Arctic Coast which are crossed with English boarhounds and Scotch collies. Whether the boarhounds and collies came with the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, or escaped from early English explorers in the Arctic, I have not heard. But they came to terms with the wolves, and the completion of their understanding was fruitful. Some dogs, like some men, revert to the wilderness and the primitive life when they get the chance. That Englishman of whose life and death they talk to-day in Canada – Hornby of the Barrens – the Snow Man – was one such. I never met him, but my old friend Hank Cole fell in with him at intervals. Hank was a confirmed prospector for placer gold far and wide through the Barrens – but Hornby got himself out of England to live like a Stone Age man, leaving his gold behind him.

A malamute is a small Arctic wolf, descended from wild cubs caught while very young by Eskimo hunters, and



SIBERIAN HUSKY



ARCTIC HUSKY

trained to their ways of life. In the extreme Arctic and on the frozen floor of the sea he is better than the husky, who thrives best farther to the south where the trees begin to flourish. The malamutes I knew were mostly black, with touches of grey and white, but I am told that in Ungava and Labrador they are entirely white. Occasionally a malamute, straying a bit to the south, will run away for a season and seek the company of its heathen cousins. If cordially received, and if the malamute be of the right sex, she will return home and give birth to a litter of pups in which the wild strain is fortified. In Alaska I have seen what they said was the Siberian malamute — a smaller type of dog — and some assert there is an obvious strain of fox in such, but this to me sounds foolish. However, there are various cross-breeds, some of which excel the pure-breeds for both intelligence and endurance for special occasions, just as a well-made cocktail may excel a whisky straight. A thoroughbred mongrel is more fitted to be a ruler among them, and on the long trail he usually makes the best leader.

My dog Kris was a Canadian timber wolf on his father's side, by repute and appearance, and Scotch collie on his mother's side by certain knowledge of his birth. His mother had run a bit wild in her youth through the Coppermine River District, between the Dismal Lake and Great Bear Lake, according to reports. Kris was a wonderful character, and he displayed much savvy — what you call *intuition* — as well as all the common directive instinct, and as much common sense along with same as most men have. I often felt what a pity it was I could not talk with him. He was a person who knew what to do in a dilemma, and even in some conditions entirely new, I am sure, so far as touched any life of his own or his ancestors.

For use in the Arctic above the Barrens I preferred a

team of pure malamutes, but often our teams would be composed of several breeds. Dogs with long legs and comparatively short hair serve best in timber country and soft snow, hauling light toboggans. But along the coasts of the Arctic, and over its islands, the malamutes, with their broad chests and thick short legs, and their hair covering them thickly like fur, will give best service for travel over ice and hard snow. They pull heavy sleds and heavy loads. In the Barrens the dogs prefer fish for food, and, unless very hungry, they will turn up their noses at seal meat when first they come to it. But malamutes prefer seal meat to anything else in the way of chow. That reminds me that in appearance the pure malamute much resembles the chow dog of China, but he is larger and huskier.

All my dogs were good dogs. They became so after they had been with me awhile, even if they had not been before. So I was well satisfied with my dogs for the trip from Barrow to Kotzebue. But my assistant — the one selected for me by Parson Sprague . . . ! The Parson thought to make him Christian, and he christened him Joe. Some while after we left Point Barrow I was convinced that if it had been left to me to put water on his head I would have splintered it from a long thick icicle, descending as from high above and very forcefully. Then I would have called him what he was.

But when the Parson first brought Joe to me how was I to know? Joe told me what a good man he was over the snow. He assured me that he knew every foot of the way around by the coast to Kotzebue. He was just one homesick son of Kotzebue, straining to get there, and he made me feel how lucky I was to have him!

It was the first week in February when we pulled away

from Point Barrow, having the mail strapped securely to our sled. There was a blizzard blowing in our faces from the south-west. The thermometer at Point Smyth showed twenty degrees below zero Fahrenheit, which is about the worst weather one can have in the face of a damp blizzard. Gremnia seemed more sorry to see me go that time than ever before. My one comfort was that I was leaving wife and babies with her own people. I learned afterwards that while I was away the Whites at Point Smyth killed and ate the reindeer there, but never one piece of meat did they send down to my little family at Barrow.

As we got well out on the ice the wind became too strong for us to stand against it. We had to crawl. The dogs kept their heads low down as they could while they stretched the traces in their efforts to haul the sled. There was about six hours of shivery twilight that day. The spectral white sun peeped up over the horizon and gazed upon the waste of the world for about half an hour, and then sank discouraged, with no farewell glow for remembrance. In the region of Point Barrow the sun disappears entirely for two months, from about the 22nd November to the 22nd January. So, of course, not much is to be expected of it during the first days of February.

There was no appearance of the moon, nor for several days was there any shine from the Northern Lights. We travelled most of the time in dark grey dusk. The second day was worse than the first. We did not travel that day. But from the third day on, and all the way to Kotzebue, except for the brief stop-over at Point Hope I never missed making as much mileage as I could force out of Joe and the dogs. By the end of the third day, making all allowances, I could no longer doubt that Joe was one lazy Eskimo — a sort almost as rare among regular

Eskimos as a white crow. Laziness has been bred out of the most of them because of their conditions for living. If they are lazy they die, sometimes assisted by others and sometimes just because.

Joe proved useless in going ahead of the dogs as a guide, and when I would leave him at the handle-bars and go foraging forward for sight of something to kill and eat I found that just so soon as he thought I was out of sight he would get on the sled and make the dogs pull him. Twice I handled him roughly for that, and when I failed to get anything by hunting I threatened to take him for a fox instead, and feed him to the dogs. This would improve his going for a few hours, and sometimes a whole day. Then he would lapse and become a backslider, which would call for further chastening.

Long before that trip was over I concluded that Joe was just an affliction wished on me by Parson Sprague, so I exercised my soul in patience and long suffering except once when I came back and found him beating the dogs. The dogs all expressed approval of what I did to Joe for that. But really when you are all muffled up in furs and the other man is likewise muffled it is hard to hurt him as hard as he should be hurt, unless you use a weapon, and I did not care to do that. One thing, however, I will say to the credit of Joe: he was an adept at building a snow house quickly, and he did not care much about eating his fill like other Eskimos so long as he could get his fill of sleep. As a most efficient way of getting him up in the morning when it was time to move I used to knock the snow house down on top of him. Not exactly a setting up exercise, but it did limber me nicely for the day's work without irritation.

We were ten days out from Barrow before we reached Icy Cape. There is a small village there. The Eskimos

in it were starving and they had no reserve supply of meat. And yet, so strange is the morality of men at times, they would not go out and kill any of the four reindeer which had been left at Icy Cape by the herders returning with Parson Sprague and his mail sled. They seemed to be in great fear of touching Government property, and I would say it did little credit to the action of officials or the teaching of missionaries that such a fear should have been implanted in them. I ended that nonsense. By way of example, and for food, I went out and killed two of the reindeer. I gave one to the villagers, telling them to get the other two when necessary, and then pushed along with a good supply of fresh venison on my sled.

The blizzard continued. We were relieved from necessity of finding game for a time, which was fortunate, for there seemed to be no trace of any in the region where we were. From Icy Cape south-west to the little bay formed by the mouth of the Kukpowruk River there is one long, narrow lagoon between the like of a sausage-shaped string of islands and the flat shores of the mainland. Point Ley is half way down that coast. From the mouth of the Kukpowruk there is a chain of mountains running directly inland and also looping around and following the coast south-west past Cape Beaufort and almost to Cape Sabine, where the Thetis Coal Mine now is. But at that time there was only the Corwin Coal Mine, nigh the village of Initkilly, on the coast between Cape Sabine and the great turning point of Cape Lisburne.

When the mountains came in sight as we were nearing Kukpowruk River I took to the open sea, heading as well as I could over the ice for Cape Sabine. The second day out after that Joe had a bad fall on the ice, and wrenched his knee. I examined it, and it did not look so bad to me,

but of course, it was not my knee, so I could not tell how much it hurt. Because of it Joe refused to take his turn ahead to break trail for the dogs when I wanted relief. So I would mush on ahead slowly, but slow as I would be, the sled would soon be out of sight, and when I would go back I would find Joe lying on the sled, and the poor, half-starved dogs so weak from being on short rations that they could not pull the sled any farther with his added weight upon it. So very properly they would quit straining themselves uselessly, and would lie down.

Although we had eaten sparingly after leaving Icy Cape yet the venison was all gone, and for two days we had been without food. I could find nothing to kill.

Reflecting the wan winter sunlight one afternoon I saw the bluff over which I knew was the Corwin Coal Mine. I felt sure there would be one or two Americans there and some Eskimos. So I headed in directly for that bluff. The blizzard was howling again, after having gone to sleep for one day. We reached the shore and built a snowhouse close against the base of the bluff for shelter. I did not think it possible to force the dogs up over the bluff that evening. It grew dark. I had no seal-blubber left for my lamp, and so, after making the dogs fast, we crawled into our bags and shivered ourselves to sleep.

Sometimes, in the sleep of utter innocence, or of utter animal exhaustion, one may go so deep down or so far out as to bring nothing back by way of dream dramas to consciousness. Babies sleep that way, as I know from watching my own. But that night, after I do not know how long – and anyway, we have no grip on the click of dream or of dream time speed – I came brightly to myself, thinking of somewhere in the islands of the South Sea. And with that I was there.

I would know that woman again, if I saw her. She was as fetching for me as was the kind, white, American wife of the Kanaka captain over whose clean sloop I spilled the slops when I was young. But she was darker, and better looking.

The woman beckoned me to go ashore from the little boat in which I was floating idly. So I soon managed that, and presently found myself in a thicket of trees and flowers. But — I could not find the woman. Probably she was hiding close by, just to tease me, but I was not going to play that way. Besides — I saw a melon-tree — papaya, I think they call it — with one fine ripe melon hanging under its fronds. So I decided to let the woman wait until she was more ready. I began to climb the tree after the melon. Just then I seemed to want it more than I did her — but I would keep that to myself — for it would anger any woman. I was climbing very well — I was very near the top of the tree — then — I felt a whack on my head. Looking up, I saw a huge land-crab, sitting right over the melon. It had struck me with its heavy claw. I saw its queer eyes pop in and out at me. Then it began to howl as no crab should do. It howled so fearfully that I wakened with the like of a click into myself, and I howled in response. Joe slept on and never budged.

I heard a howl in answer to mine, and I knew it for the voice of Kris. Quickly I went outside to see what was wrong. Four of the dogs had managed to slip their harness, and were gone. Kris was quiet as soon as he saw me. The other four dogs seemed too weak to stir. I detached Kris, and held him on leash so that he would guide me.

After a long walk and a climb and a crawl we came to where the other dogs were. They had found an Eskimo cemetery.

Some of the bodies were aloft on whalebone posts, as I have already described those at Point Hope. Others were laid under piles of stone which it would have been almost impossible for foxes to dislodge. But such bodies as were blown down by blizzards from their bony upholding were reckoned in the line of a windfall by the foxes, and they were that night by my dogs.

To persons safe, sheltered and well fed in the favoured lands below the Arctic it may seem gruesome, almost ghoulish in fact, on my part not to have interfered with the dogs at their feed. After all, we eat dogs in our need, when hunger-driven, and these bodies were as firm of flesh as those of the great beasts of ages past which have been found encased in ice over the remote northerly reaches of Siberia. Mastodon flesh of long ago has been eaten by men and dogs alike of to-day, and I have heard there was good flesh remaining on the giant whahoodle or lizard or whatever it was found last year in a glacier near Cordova, Alaska, where it had lain for how many millenniums no one knows. Besides that, I might have lost control of my dogs had I attempted to deprive them at that time of what by their own wit they had found. So I strolled beyond them, keen for the sight of a fox which might chance to be lured that way – so far reaching is their scent for food. I could have eaten the fox.

But I got no fox that night. I strolled on, but had not gone very far away from the corpse pile before Kris came after me with a question in his eyes. He caught the edge of my parka lightly between his teeth, and gave a tug, as if to pull me back. Evidently he thought my conduct not quite regular – wandering off by myself with no object so far as he could smell or see. Plainly Kris was anxious about me. So I turned back with him to where he had left his companions.

The saliva of the dogs had frozen on the bones, as bits of them were left on the snow when meatier portions were being sought. Those crunched bones twinkled in the white Witch Lights shimmering up the northern sky.

I picked up one untouched leg and an arm — thinking to put them back under the rock pile. But then common sense led me to do better than that. My four dogs which were still held fast in their harness at the snow house — too weak to move for lack of food — were more to me than any footling opinions or abstract questions concerning proper disposal of the dead. So for my other four dogs I carried back that leg and that arm.

A queer thing about the Aurora Borealis is that the nearer you get toward the North Pole — or maybe the Auroral Pole — the clearer and whiter and stiller is the shine. And you never can tell what moves it to come or go. But, although so far north, yet Aurora did her bit that night with variations for me to see, as I trudged back with my satisfied dogs. She spread rumpling curtains of blue-white across the sky, through which continually flickered upright lancings of pink and green.

I fancy the reason for the coloured show was because of air pockets, and the advent also of warmer and denser strata of atmosphere between the place where we were and Aurora at her place of sending. And that must be why the farther south the oftener are seen the rose-coloured fires of Aurora, mingling with light blue and green, and paling to white.

For a change, and to rest my mind, I kept thinking on my way back about a fat girl, three-quarter naked, and spicy as she was brown. I visualized her singing to the thrummed chords of a little jumping flea of a ukelele,

while I sat beside her on a grass mat in the moonlight by a warm and purple sea. And I asked myself then what the hell I was doing in the Arctic? I heard soon after a hoarse whispering in the air near me, and it was the voice of an old Viking, saying that I had made my own free choice. So I had. And I answered that I would stay fast with it, and be glad if I could do so to a proper end. That put him to sleep again. It is my belief that something may come to bloom elsewhere from going finely through this ugliness. The weird night was over!

Having knocked the snow house down on Joe, as usual, to waken the poor boy to reality, I put the dogs to the sled again, and we were off. Perhaps saying we were off is misleading, if it makes you think of anything gay or speedy. We were crawling — ourselves and the dogs all crawling and hauling together to get the sled up over the top of the bluff. When finally we made it we found it so whipped of by the wind that every bit of snow had been blown away, and its surface was bare stone thinly covered with ice.

Kris was in the lead. Tying one end of a line to his collar and the other around my body I slid and skated on ahead to spy out a good way for descent inland. Joe was supporting himself by clinging to the handle-bars of the sled. Then the wind behind us grew stronger, and pushed us all forward too fast for our liking. We all crouched and gripped at the slippery surface as best we could to stay our descent. I managed to direct my course toward a hollow in the rock, and as I was tumbling in I set my heels against the far wall of it, and the dogs and Joe arrived in a moment all atop of me. There we rested and regained our breath.

I would not again go forward with the line tied

around me, for fear of being pulled over a cliff if the sled went scooting forward beyond control. But I took the end of the line between my teeth and crawled out of the hollow, going slowly forward on all fours. Joe was crying, because of his wrenched knee, and I did not blame him. I told him to stay where he was until I pulled on the line, and I assured him that I would find a safe way down to the mine.

The air had become very noticeably warmer, and I was all in a sweat with my labour. But the wind became more pushful from behind, and it was so filled with sleet that I could not see clearly more than a dozen yards ahead. Inch by inch, and belly down to the ice, I went my careful way. It seemed as if I must have covered miles, but as a fact it was little more than two hundred yards until I found an easy slope leading below, and sheltered from the wind. My line had gone taut more than a hundred yards back, and I had jerked on it then as a signal to Joe to follow. Just as I stood up, in the shelter of the slope from the wind, along came the dogs and the sled – but no Joe!

From the nook where I stood I could see smoke curling from the chimney of a little house at the Corwin Mine. Kris and the other dogs saw it, and acclaimed it with yelps of excitement – for they knew it gave promise of food and rest and comfortable shelter. I was thinking of a cup of tea! Strong tea – and a big pot full of it – fancying that more than any other drink I could think of just then – believe it or not!

But that Joe! If he were too hurt or helpless to hold the handle-bars of the sled, as I had told him to do, and if he had just lain down, as was likely – well, he would soon freeze to death, and good riddance for me. I think I was a bit light-headed for lack of food, and the long

fight with the biting wind. So I talked to Kris for a minute or two, and then we agreed on what to do.

I loosed Kris from the team, after making fast the other dogs, and, taking hold of his collar to steady myself, we started back over the bluff to find Joe.

It was more risky going back than going with the gale, for it got a better hold on us in its game of trying to hurl us over some steep edge, where it would howl gladly when it had us broken.

We found Joe back in the crevasse. He had not even started. I got him on his feet, and tied him fast to myself with a line, and then crouching low, with a good hold on the collar of Kris, we pulled Joe along and got back straight and safe along our tracks to where the team was barking for us. Hitching Kris to the sled again as leader, we made our way slowly to the cabin that was in sight, and I almost dropped against its door from exhaustion. A man known as Bill Starr was living there alone. He made us welcome, but said that he had been so stormbound for the past three weeks that he had been unable to go out and hunt for any fresh meat. But he had a few supplies from the south in the cabin — tinned beef and sea-biscuits and molasses. And he did brew a wonderful big pot of strong tea for us, and he gave me some scraps of dried seal skin which I boiled for the dogs.

It was little enough that Bill Starr had to give us, but it saved us, and it was given with a good heart. After a long night of deep sleep we started on. I knew that we would have another hard struggle in getting over and around Cape Lisburne, and we did. But it was not so bad as going over the bluff at the Corwin Mines. The heavy gales had blown all the shore ice out to sea, and that is why we had to climb Cape Lisburne. We had to help the dogs drag the sled over the rough surface of

splintered rock and gravel. From Cape Lisburne we headed straight down to Point Hope, almost due south at a distance of fifty miles.

When finally we arrived at Point Hope our sled was almost a wreck, and my dogs were so leg-weary and starved and their paws were so sore from long travel over salt-water ice and rocks and gravel, that they just whined and lay down, asking me to have enough common sense to lay off for a long spell and give them a rest. So I arranged to borrow another team and sled from a man named Jim Allen who was at the trading post where I had been the cook. Jim said he would treat my dogs well, and get them in good condition against my return.

I got enough meat to last us to Kotzebue, which lies about two hundred miles south to the east of Point Hope. And I had the luxuries of sugar and tea and tobacco in plenty. Just the same, it was hard going. There would come streaks of warm air over us and the snow would turn to slush, and then, all rumbled up, it would freeze into a rough and cutting footway again. Joe acted better, and was in every way more helpful, after we left Point Hope. He began to be like a horse nearing home, with a prospect of a good feed of oats awaiting him. One day he amazed me. A polar bear came into view. Also three Eskimos who were after it. Joe forget all about his sore knee, and started after that bear. He put the first shot into it, although he was quite a bit farther away from it than the others. A few seconds later the others fired three shots, and the bear fell over dead. Joe claimed half that bear, and he stormed so about it that his claim to half was conceded. I stood aside all the while, watching to see how the affair would terminate, and I was careful not in any way whatever to back up Joe's claim. Thus we see how a streak of that ability which eventually

may confer nobility is to be discovered sometimes in a lout who on the surface seems to be utterly devoid of it.

Just forty-five days from the time I left Point Barrow I staggered into Kotzebue. I delivered the mail to the postal authorities there, and found that the bags had already been made up for taking to Point Barrow.

Joe was so happy I told him to stay where he was, as I did not want to be bothered with him on the way back. He was more than satisfied, because at the same time I gave him an order for one hundred dollars, which was cashed for him at Kotzebue as against Parson Sprague's contract.

By that time the long continued succession of gales had ceased, and what was left of the wind came up from the south, and helped me along. At Point Hope I found my dogs all well and in fine condition, and every mother's son of them delighted to see me. Kris had a lot that he wanted to say to me. My sled had been very well repaired.

Although the trip down from Point Barrow to Kotzebue had taken a month and a half, yet I made the return trip alone with my dogs in thirteen days. Weather conditions were so much better. Besides that, I knew every turn of the way back, and the dogs and I fed well every day.

There was a surprised group of men at Cape Smyth when I came gaily in with the mail. Some of them were so doubtful of my having made the round trip to Kotzebue that they would not believe until they had seen the Kotzebue postmarks on the letters, some of them just fourteen days old.

I received my little fee of \$250, as agreed, from Parson Sprague, and if ever a man earned Government money for postal service I earned it that time. I bought myself a first-class floor whaling outfit. The season soon would open. I must to work again.

CHAPTER XVII

TROUBLE FOR ALL ON THE *OLGA*

IN the spring of 1904 I did some profitable floor whaling at Point Barrow, and Gremnia helped me as well as she could, although she was expecting, and her time was near. I had a tent set up for her out on the ice, well banked about with snow.

On May 17th, a blizzard came on suddenly, and I hastened from the ice-edge back to the tent. It collapsed as I neared it, down to the low rampart of snow around it, and from within its folds I heard a new cry. My son Andrew was born.

After that we prospered for a year and more, and in the autumn of 1905 I was of a mind to spend another winter at Point Barrow. Then something happened which did not seem much at the time, but which was of great consequence. Captain McKenna of the schooner *Charles Hansen* engaged me to take charge of goods and supplies including a large quantity of petrol, which he was leaving at Point Barrow while he went to San Francisco, and which he would take on his ship again when he returned in the spring. I gladly agreed to take the job, not so much for the immediate money in it as for the promise which to me was the chief consideration.

Captain McKenna told me that he had a schooner called the *Olga*. He said that she was lying in Dutch Harbour on Unalaska, where she was being refitted with a petrol engine. He said he would make me captain of her

when he came back, and moreover would stock her with trade goods, so that at the close of the whaling season I might do a winter business with the Eskimos. Just what I wanted!

Captain McKenna promised to let me take the *Olga* so far as Victoria Island and do a business in furs with the Eskimos there. I was to choose my own place for putting the vessel in winter quarters. This was the very thing I had been dreaming of for so long — ever since 1894 when I made my first trip to Herschel Island. I spent practically the whole winter at Barrow making preparations for the great trading trip.

When spring came I was on the alert for the first sign of coming ships. One day an Eskimo boy came in from the west with news that he had sighted the masts of three schooners near Icy Cape. I was so impatient that I hitched up my dog team and headed down the coast to meet them. I saw them. They were working a slow passage along through the ice. As there was no chance of my going aboard I turned my team around and beat the ships back to Barrow. They anchored off the Point early in the morning. There were the *Olga* and the *Charles Hansen* and another schooner whose name I forget now. The *Olga* was to be my schooner eventually.

Captain McKenna came ashore as soon as possible, and we began putting aboard the schooners the petrol and other stores of which I had been in charge all winter. McKenna wanted to make Herschel Island as quickly as he could, and then be off eastward for the whaling at the start of the season. I took Gremnia and the two girls and the little boy Patsy on board with me.

I was disappointed when McKenna told me that I could not take immediate command of the *Olga*. But this was right and proper on his part, as he had engaged a

captain to take her from Dutch Harbour to Herschel Island. So as McKenna and I had many things to talk about, I went on his ship, the *Charles Hansen*, as far as Herschel Island. On the way, among other things, McKenna told me that he had been having trouble with his chief engineer, an American by name of Jackson, and that when we started whaling he intended transferring him to the *Olga*, as he thought I might be better able to get along with him peaceably, or otherwise handle him as circumstances required. This did not bother me at all, as I felt that I would be able to work smoothly with almost any kind of a man because of experiences already had and because of my accommodating disposition.

It was an easy trip we made to Herschel Island. There we took on more stores, and started right out after the whales. But all that season we did not get a single whale. At the end of it I headed for Baillie Island, used as a rendezvous, just off Cape Bathurst. I was crestfallen, and thought myself the most disappointed captain in all the Arctic. When I fell in with Captain McKenna off Cape Bathurst, as arranged, it was poor comfort to hear that neither of the other ships had secured even one whale.

Naturally McKenna was in no happy mood. And he had turned sour on the proposition of sending me to Victoria Island to do trading. He ordered me to start at once for Herschel Island, and to put the *Olga* in winter quarters there. This greatly added to my grief. For I had reckoned on balancing a bad summer of whaling with a good winter of trapping and trading. I pointed out to McKenna that the trading venture was part of the consideration in our agreement of the year before. All he would say at first was that he had changed his mind. When I pressed him to say plainly if he had any fault to find

with me, or with my handling of the *Olga*, he said that he had not, but that he did not trust my crew, and he did not care to risk leaving the ship and the stock of goods so far away beyond any control.

Orders being orders I said no more, except good-bye. I went back to the *Olga*, and soon had her headed westerly for Herschel Island. We had hardly got under weigh, however, before a strong wind came out of the north-west, blowing me back into Franklin Bay, which is situate between Cape Bathurst on the west and Cape Parry on the east. We had about two months' supply of food on board, but we were almost out of fresh water. So I kept an eye open for a field of fresh-water ice to replenish our supply. I sighted one, and having put the crew to work cutting out blocks of ice and stowing it aboard, I took advantage of a lull in the wind and went hunting to get some fresh meat for all of us. I had the good luck to locate and kill a huge bull walrus, and it was the only one ever found in that section of the Arctic so far as I know. I saved every portion of the meat, and also the bones for soup. The hide and tusks were for myself.

✓
Walrus meat is quite good when one is hungry and is suitable for sailors, as it gives them something to chew on besides tobacco and their grievances. So we were all happy until bad weather set in again. The gale was against us for three days, and we had trouble in keeping free and unhurt through the ice packs. We lost an anchor. On the third day I steered into a small bay within the larger Franklin Bay—I think it is called Langton Bay. There we were storm-bound for eight days. During that time we ran out of fuel, and I took part of the crew ashore to gather drift-wood. There was little to be had, but I did find an abandoned warehouse which had been built three years before by the

Pacific Steam Whaling Company. I ordered the men to tear it down, and to put the timbers on the *Olga* for firewood. It seemed the best thing to do at the time.

When I judged it safe to venture out again I set sail for Langton Bay, feeling better. I thought the big blow was over. Yet I had no more than worked out of Franklin Bay, heading west, than a heavy wind from the north-west began to blow again. It broke the ice-packs against me. I could not make any headway through them, as any navigator of those waters would know. Moreover I knew that Franklin Bay would be a bad place in which to establish winter quarters, if that should become necessary. So I manœuvred northerly and then easterly with the wind around Cape Parry. I did that to get clear of the ice, which in that same storm closed around every other whaler that year in the Arctic. Maybe Captain McKenna got nearer to Herschel Island that year than any of the rest of us, having been driven into Kittigazuit Channel, where the ice held him until early the next summer, at a distance of about two hundred miles from Herschel Island for an airplane and three hundred for a ship.

I would not have anchored for the winter at Cape Parry, even if I could have done so. The wind kept driving me east and farther east. Cape Parry in any case would have been no fit place for winter quarters, exposed as it was, and without game, which I knew we must have before the winter would be over, and without drift-wood. The ice kept massing behind me. But the *Olga* was a good ship, and easily handled, so I kept easily away from the ice. I did it by going east. I mention this because, in view of what happened afterwards, a malicious story was circulated about me to the effect that I took my opportunity to run away with the *Olga* to Victoria

Island because I had already determined to trade there. I went there not of my own will that time, but, as the lawyers and insurance companies say, by an act of God.

Finally I found myself down in a clear stretch of Dolphin and Union Strait, in sight of a small bay along the south shore of that part of Victoria Island called Wollaston Land. It was perhaps a hundred miles east of the place where I established a permanent trading post about twelve years later, which is now known as Rymer Point. I headed into that bay, liking the lay of it, and fancying it as a good place in which to winter, if that became necessary, and if I found after landing that we could get game and firewood.

I went ashore and walked the beach alone for miles in both directions, and found that, although much scattered, there was a fair amount of drift-wood to be had. It would be work for the men to gather it, and have it conveniently piled for use before the snow came. I did not deem it safe to venture out again on such a coast when the winter was closing in around us. I would have taken the *Olga* back to Herschel Island if there had seemed anything like a fair chance of doing so in the few weeks remaining before the sea was frozen over solidly for the winter. Even at that I decided, in the circumstances, to do what a captain should seldom or never do — I decided to consult the crew. I called all hands together, told them that in my judgment, born of years of experience in the Arctic, the attempt should not be made, but at the same time told them that we had little more than a month's provisions in the ship, and that it would be necessary for us to go hunting for our meat all winter, and that it would be necessary for all to turn out and gather drift-wood along the beach before it was covered from sight by the snow that would come.

Yet if they were willing to take the risk of being crushed in the ice on the way back to Herschel Island, knowing what that would mean, I said I would do my best to get there. All except one half-caste Kanaka by name of Ben Whitney said they would prefer to stay where they were for the winter. So with that we put the *Olga* in winter quarters.

All went well for the first ten days or so. Everybody worked happily, gathering drift-wood, hauling it along the beach to where the ship lay, and piling it. Then I noticed sure signs of discontent. A good captain is sensitive to these things. And certain members of the crew would have their heads together in a huddle, as if arguing over some plan, and when I would draw near they would all become silent. I tried to be always cheerful and smiling, and to pass a joke with them now and then, but they found nothing funny in what I had to say. Every day they became more glum.

Among the crew there was one German named Hermann. He had signed on before the mast aboard the *Charles Hansen*, but Captain McKenna had promoted him to be assistant engineer. But when McKenna made a division of the crews at Herschel Island he put Hermann on the *Olga*, and he put him there before the mast instead of assistant engineer. As already mentioned he had also transferred his chief engineer, Jackson, to the *Olga*, and had given Jackson his choice of another man as assistant engineer. Jackson chose an American ex-soldier whom we knew as Walter from the Philippines. There was bad feeling between Jackson and Walter on the one side and Hermann on the other. Our cook was a negro and our cabin boy a Swede, and they formed a faction of their own, being more favourable, however,

to the engineers than they were to Hermann and his mates.

I had three Eskimo families on board, who had been engaged for their knowledge of whaling and to make themselves generally useful. These I now sent ashore, assigning them three different directions in which they were to go hunting and to spread trap lines. These Eskimos were all good friends of mine, and I felt I could trust them.

I kept the crew as busy as I could, putting the ship to rights for the long winter ahead. I had anchored her where I judged she would be safe from tide rips and ground currents and ice pressure. Then, before the hull was frozen solidly into the ice, I put ashore fifteen tons of pig iron which served as ballast, and all our supplies, so that she might lift high in the water. As soon as the ice had solidly encased the hull, however, I put the ballast and the supplies all back, thus giving the hull weight to settle down properly through the winter. Because in this way the ice acts as a cradle, with no strain on keel or rudder, and when the ice cracks and goes out in spring then the hull settles down into the water without straining any part. After that I hauled the anchors up and lashed them on deck. That was the last to be done for safety of the vessel.

The dull, cold days, made of night for the most part, passed slowly. I did all I could to keep the men so hard at work with this and that on board and on shore that they would be too tired to do more than sleep when their sleeping time came. But the wrangling among the sailors continued in their own quarters, and I could not stop it. The monotony of an Arctic winter, and the confinement of it for men of their sort, put their hearts in a sour ferment, and filled them with evil imaginings. I was

anxious about my family whenever I was out of sight on shore. Another child was coming, Patsy was still a baby, and my two little girls were nine and eleven years of age. Naturally they would be wanting to play everywhere about the ship, but I did not like the way the mate and the cook looked at them.

I had to ration the food we had from the south, and so the men were kept almost entirely on a diet of fresh meat with a few sea-biscuits and tea. As the weather grew colder, and the cutting winds whipped around us, the different cliques among the men would go into a huddle, and talk and talk and talk — against each other and against the ship and against me — blaming me for not having returned them to Herschel Island. I did my best at hunting so as to provide fresh meat for them, and the Eskimo families which I had sent ashore also brought us meat in fair quantity from time to time. No one was going hungry.

Then I tried to interest some of the more likely men in trapping, and told them of the extra money they might make that way for themselves. It was of no use. They preferred to grouch over their hard fate and do nothing. So long as they saw plenty of meat on board they would not go hunting. They even grew tired of playing at cards and dice and checkers, after many quarrels had arisen out of them.

After weeks and weeks of extreme cold and strong winds there came a finer stretch of weather. It was warm by comparison, and there was not a breath of air stirring. Our smoke went straight up into the sky. Then came Hermann to me and asked for a shot-gun and some shells. He said he wanted to go ashore and hunt for birds or rabbits or whatever small game he could find. I gave him the shot-gun. Then Walter, the assistant engineer,

said he would go ashore with him, and Walter had a rifle. I knew that there was no friendly feeling between Hermann and Walter, but I thought nothing much of them going hunting together until I saw Jackson, the chief engineer, with a rifle, and preparing to go ashore with them. I did not like the look of it. Up there in the solitudes, and when the nerves of all have been stretched until they make you feel as if something were going to snap in you like a fiddle string, there seems an ominous significance about every move out of the ordinary.

Hermann came back on board and asked to exchange the shot-gun for a rifle. Although I thought a rifle would be of more use to him ashore than a shot-gun, I had only one rifle left, and this I would not give him. I mistrusted some of the men on board too much to be without the one weapon I could use better than any of them, if it became necessary.

Hermann slowly went ashore again, muttering to himself, and joined the two engineers. I could hear their voices, but could not make out what they were saying. Hermann seemed undecided whether to go off with them or not, but finally he did. I watched them tramp away down the beach, and then turn into the hills. I was anxious about Hermann, knowing how the others felt toward him, and how he felt toward them, and knowing that the engineers with their rifles could kill him from a distance which he could not reach with his shot-gun. Right there I said to myself that if they came back without Hermann they would never come aboard the *Olga* alive if I could help it. The thought being so strong in me I must have said it out loud. The big negro cook and the Swede cabin boy, who had been watching me near at hand, must have heard what I said. I knew that from their faces.

I went below to think matters over. The day wore on, and there was a silence over the ship. The children slept. Then the cook came to me and announced dinner. I went into the little cabin which served as an officers' mess-room, just off the cook's galley, and sat down alone to meat. The cook appeared to have something on his mind, and I heard him whispering to the cabin boy. Then I heard that young Swede go over the side. Soon I heard voices of men approaching the ship, and next I heard the crunch of their mukluks on the snow-covered deck. I strained my ears to tell whether or no all three of the hunters had returned. I could not be sure, nor could I tell what was being said.

Suddenly the door of the little cabin was opened wide, and there stood the Chief Engineer with rifle lifted and pointed straight at my head. I did not move. But I looked Jackson straight in the eye. He cursed and raved at me, and I knew that he was trying to work himself up into a passion to kill. I knew also that the cabin boy had slipped around behind me, coming from the door into the cook's galley, and that he had a sharp knife in his hand such as we used for skinning animals. Jackson kept on raving, and while he was doing so the two boat-steerers, who ranked as mates, and then Walter and Hermann came in through the galley door, and seated themselves at their usual places.

It was plain that the cook and the cabin boy had told Jackson what I had said to myself when I was so anxious about Hermann. Then I thought best to go on with my dinner, as if Jackson were not there, and as if I was hearing nothing. This served somehow to dampen his flaming mood. He could not nerve himself to shoot me as I went on plying my knife and fork, taking no further notice of him. He wavered, and then, putting the

rifle by the door, he crossed the cabin and seated himself at the table with the others.

The cabin boy slouched back into the galley, and it was the cook who came in to serve Jackson and the others for the rest of the meal. Jackson kept his head down as he ate, and did not speak again. Evidently the others were waiting for me to take action. I did not feel that I could trust one of them, not even Hermann, for whom I had been so anxious.

All went on eating in silence, and when I had finished my dinner I went up on deck. I realized that I must show my authority as captain, not only over Jackson and his immediate friends, but over every member of the ship's company.

The night was still, clear, and intensely cold. There was not a sign of life on deck or on shore. But no solution came to me quickly there — no saving thought — as so often had been the case before in life when my affairs were critical. Then I went down to my bunk, and lay awake for hours, finally going to sleep without deciding what to do.

I did not go ashore the next morning to hunt, as had been my custom, but busied myself with other matters on board, and acted before the crew as if the incident of the day before had not happened. About noon I had been with Gremnia, talking cheerfully about little affairs to keep her in good humour, because her time of delivery was at hand. Then, going out on deck, I noticed a peculiar smell. My senses were sharp, and I was sure that it was coming from the engine room. Now the engine room had been locked for weeks, and no one had access to it except myself and the two engineers.

I entered the engine room. There I found Jackson,

fussing with a coal-oil stove and a contraption that I knew for a liquor still. It was obvious what he was doing, but I asked him. He answered me straight and unconcerned, saying that he was making whisky. Then he added sullenly that men in such a position as we were needed something stronger than tea when they came in from a hard day in the cold, and that he knew how to make what would cheer the crew.

Something within me stirred in sympathy with his sentiments. I have never been averse to the use of good liquor as I use it, and as advised in the Bible and other sacred writings of the great religions, excepting only the Koran. I have witnessed how strong drink may stay a man's spirit through an ordeal if wisely taken, and I know how it can make him forget his poverty very hopefully, when there is nothing else to do about it. And of course it increases the glow of any joyful occasion such as a marriage feast or a noble victory. But once, when I was young, I heard a learned Lutheran bishop from Norway blessing the making of the brandy in my native isle of Funen. He warned the people against making it except in manner permitted by the authorities, and he warned them especially against the dangers of drinking that which was distilled of wrong elements or was immature. He explained the scripture about not looking upon the wine when it was red as meaning when it was raw and still working of its own ferment, but not when it had accomplished itself in the final red, because that was the best colour, intended for it by God in order to typify the blood of Jesus, shed so freely and redly for our sins. But imbibing the unfinished was unclean, and the aftermath was venomous, as the scripture declared. This sermon made a deep impression on my young mind, so that in later years I always had a scunner against green whisky,

as it is called, the same not being green but immature.

If you think these things do not come flashing back through a man while facing an emergency in the Arctic then you know neither the influence of the Arctic nor the mentality of the man. Having a horror of hooch, I was not going to have any made on my ship while I was in command. Yet so as to be nice about it I told Jackson that our store of dried prunes and sugar had run too low to allow of any being put to such a use as he proposed. I told him that he must not go on with his hooch-making any more.

Point blank Jackson refused to obey. He went on with the making of his brew, and told me where to go for all he cared. Lying handy was a short crow-bar, for use when the engine was to be started. With two hefty blows I smashed Jackson's still to smithereens. He made a rush for me, catching both my arms in his grasp, but with my body and shoulder muscles I slammed him against the wall and, jerking loose my right arm, I lifted the crow-bar. He shrank away. Then I told him to clean up the mess, and not to try anything like that again. Leaving him there I went to my room, where I kept a loaded rifle. Unfortunately I had no pistol.

All was quiet on the ship, and I did not see anything more of Jackson that afternoon. I had no irons, and I was hardly in position to put any one in irons on that ship even if I had. I concluded that Jackson would not make any more trouble for awhile, and foolishly confident I went to dinner. I was served by the cabin boy, and was just starting to eat when Jackson did his act over again. He pushed open the door and covered me with his rifle, cursing and calling me more foul names than any sailor would care to hear. He said that he was through with taking orders from me, and that so were all the others of

the crew. For emphasis he said that if I ever ordered him to do anything again he would shoot me so full of holes I would do for a sieve. I realized that he was the sort of person that must first work himself up into a passion before shooting. Or if he had been able to take one long drink of the stuff he had been brewing, and which I spilt, he would probably have shot me then and there.

The other four men at table, Walter, Hermann and the two boat-steerers, kept their seats, making no protest to Jackson, and watching me to see how I would take his tongue lashing. It began to have the appearance of general mutiny. I visualized what they had in mind. Having killed me they could put Gremnia and Patsy ashore to perish, take my two girls, and sail away with the ship for their own when the spring came.

Once more I was nonchalant outwardly, although raging within. I went on with my dinner as if Jackson were not there, and I was hearing nothing. The other men also went on eating, tense but utterly silent. Then Jackson sat down and began to eat, without another word out of him to anybody. I walked out and went to my cabin.

I was up early the next morning. There had been but a light fall of snow so far, although the weather had been very cold. It was still possible to gather the drift-wood, and I had kept all hands except the cook at work doing that, myself included when I was not out hunting. I knew that we would need a lot of fire before spring came, and that when the deep snow lay over the beach we would not be able to locate the wood. So after breakfast I ordered all hands ashore for the gathering. They all went, seemingly obedient as usual, except the cabin boy. He came to me and said that he thought he should be excused from such work, the same as the cook. But I

told him to go and do his bit with the rest of the crew and he did, but very sullenly.

I did not go ashore myself that morning, and when the men came back for their midday meal they seemed excited. Soon I heard them saying that Jackson and Walter and the cabin boy were not going out after any more wood. The engineers contended that their job was to keep the engines going, and that was all.

I did not let on that I had heard anything, and at table talked casually to the men, as if all was going well. After the meal was over Jackson and Walter withdrew, and they did not appear at the side to go over for the work of the afternoon. Hermann and the two boat-pullers and the rest of the crew approached me as a delegation, and Hermann was their spokesman. He said that the engineers would not go out after more wood, but that he and his mates felt that as there was no work to be done on the engines until spring, and as the wood was for the benefit of all, this was not fair. He said that if Jackson and Walter and the cabin boy would not help to bring in more wood then neither would they.

So thus it came to a show down. I could no longer doubt that I must face open mutiny. And I think those men saw in my eye that I was not afraid, and that I was going to be their captain or die. I told them to go ashore and go to work at once, and that I would make the engineers follow. They went. Then I went — to my cabin. I took my rifle, knowing that Jackson had both a rifle and pistol. Going to his room I flung open the door. He had heard me coming — he was probably expecting a visit. He was lying in his bunk with his rifle in position for firing.

'Jackson,' I said, 'the crew has gone ashore to gather wood. You and Walter must go with them!'

He half sat up in his bunk, looking me straight in the eye.

'I'm not going ashore to get any more wood! I'm through with that stuff! So is Walter! If you want wood go pick it up yourself!'

From his position in the bunk Jackson was below me, and his rifle was aimed up at my heart. In the split second before he pulled the trigger I knocked the barrel of his gun upward with my own. The roar as he fired was deafening in the small cabin. His bullet passed through my cap, searing my scalp, and I got a bit of the flame in my face. He crouched flat as he jerked the lever of his Winchester to throw in a fresh cartridge.

I fired, and, as I knew afterward, my bullet grazed his chest. But his rifle was lifted at me again. I again knocked the barrel aside, but downward this time, so that his bullet passed through the skirt of my parka and streaked my leg enough to draw blood. I fired then point blank into the pit of his stomach, and his rifle clattered to the floor as he fell back in his bunk, his hand clutching at the wound. I backed out of the cabin.

It was a culpable oversight on my part that I did not stay to take Jackson's rifle and pistol with me. I went at once to the medicine chest, and taking out a small flask of brandy and some bandages and iodine I called Frank Miller, the senior boat-steerer to go and see what he could do for Jackson. I think he called Walter to assist him, after I went to my cabin to write an account of the affair in the ship's log. After I had finished this I found that all the men ashore had come aboard, having heard the firing. I called them together. I told them that I regretted the shooting of their chief engineer, but that it had been necessary in self-defence when he refused to obey orders, attempting at the same time to kill me. They knew the

law of the sea in such case; that I was their captain, and that they must obey my orders until I could take the ship back to Herschel Island, which I would do just as soon as possible. I then read the account of the affair which I had written in the ship's log, and I told them all to sign it, or make their mark to it. This they all did, after having it read again slowly, and taking into consideration every word. Then I invited anyone who felt that he had a grievance to step forward and say so. Not one of them did; not a word was said; and in sullen silence they left me.

There was a new note of respect in the voices of the men when they spoke to me after that, but as every hour passed I felt that they were more resentful, and that the factions were combining against me. I did not trust one of them. I moved my family into the cabin forward for safety, although there was little room there.

That night my wife gave birth to her second son, and I called him Jorgen, after my father. I held her in my arms, with my rifle within reach, and did what I could to soothe her until her pains were over. Then I stepped out on deck into the cold, clear night, and the stars seemed clustered close around the mastheads, with the North Star almost straight above me.

The next few days passed quietly enough, but with a thick, suppressed atmosphere of emotion over us all. The men obeyed orders, and kept on dragging such drift-wood as they could find for the big piles near the ship. I left it to Walter to look after Jackson. He always reported to me that Jackson was recovering, and would be ready to come out on deck soon. This I did not believe, but with the men sullen as they were I thought better not to take any direct hand in giving him medicine, lest I might be suspected of giving it with evil intent. Whatever

I did send I sent openly by Miller. Just at that time my mind was on nursing my wife and making her safe and comfortable as might be rather than on the mutineer who had tried to kill me.

Then one night there came a gale. The *Olga* had not quite been frozen in solidly at the time, and the force of the wind was such as to make her break the lighter ice about her. She started to swing. I ordered the anchors let go, with forty fathom of chain, so as to give plenty of riding room.

Walter was on duty as watchman for the first part of the night. I had turned in, leaving him in charge, and was just getting asleep when he came excitedly to the cabin and told me that a large iceberg was drifting down on us. When I went out on deck I saw in a twinkling that it was the other way about — we were drifting to seal I took a look at the anchor chain, and saw at once that my orders had not been obeyed. Only a few feet of chain had been let out. Before I could let it all go out we struck hard against a projecting sand-spit. We were aground!

I called Walter to account, and asked him why he had not obeyed orders. From the evasive way in which he answered I saw through the scheme. He and his friends would wreck the ship! There was a custom recognized for whaling ships in the Arctic by which the boat-steerer in charge of a boat should have it for his own in case of shipwreck, together with all gear and supplies salvaged. My foolish crew had reckoned on shipwreck and living ashore with the Eskimos, and then working their way back to Herschel through the spring and summer to report everything lost except what they had with them. They would not have had one chance in a hundred of surviving, so unfit they were to meet conditions when on land in the Arctic.

I called all hands on deck. Quick work had to be done to get the *Olga* off the beach before she was frozen on it solidly. I rigged an anchor, and making it fast to the mainmast I heeled the vessel over, trying to warp her clear. On shore as well as on board I had the men working, and I was trying to keep an eye on every move. Suddenly I was pushed from behind by Hermann, and thrown to one side. Whirling to see what he meant by it, he pointed without a word to the port hole in the chief engineer's cabin. I looked just in time to see the muzzle of a rifle being drawn back inside. If Hermann had not given me the strong push just when he did there is no doubt I would have been shot in the back.

It was impossible for me to direct the operations for getting the ship off the beach if I were in danger of being shot in the back any minute. I called Frank Miller and told him to go to Jackson's cabin at once and disarm him, bringing me his rifle and pistol. Miller refused, saying that he was afraid to go inside that cabin, and he would not risk trying to take Jackson's guns away from him.

Saying no more I went and got my own rifle. Then I went to Jackson's cabin and opened the door, at the same time leaping aside. No sound or movement followed. Then with rifle lifted in position to fire I entered. Jackson was lying on his bunk, with his rifle beside him. In the dim light I fancied I saw his arm come up. I know now that it could not have been so, but the moment was so critical, and my ship and my family in so perilous a condition, that I took no chances of a pistol shot from Jackson. I fired, and the bullet struck him in the neck, just below the ear. I waited, but again no sound or movement followed. Then I went forward to examine him, and saw that there were only two drops of pink

water oozing from the wound in the neck. I had shot a dead man!

It had not been Jackson who had levelled the rifle at me through the porthole of the cabin. Who then? Either the Swede cabin boy, or the assistant engineer, Walter, because, at the time Hermann had pushed me aside, all the others, including the big negro cook, had been in sight either on deck or ashore.

The sound of my shot had done much to dissipate the unreadiness of my men to obey. Discipline was restored — for the time being. I kept all hands at work until I had the *O/ga* once more afloat. Then I ordered Miller, Walter, the cabin boy and the cook to carry the body of Jackson ashore for burial, and the others to follow and dig a grave. It was but a shallow grave they could scoop and hack out of the frozen tundra, but when the body was laid in I had it snugly covered and then atop of that such heavy stones as could be rolled on to make it secure from foxes.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WINTER OF OUR
DISCONTENT

THE day after Jackson was buried there came another sudden gale, but we rode it out safely, anchored on ninety fathom of chain. The bay was crowded with slush ice. A stretch of still and fairly mild weather followed. I spent much of my time ashore, venturing inland a bit, and getting what small game I could to lay away for the long, cold time ahead of us, when we would be frozen in solidly.

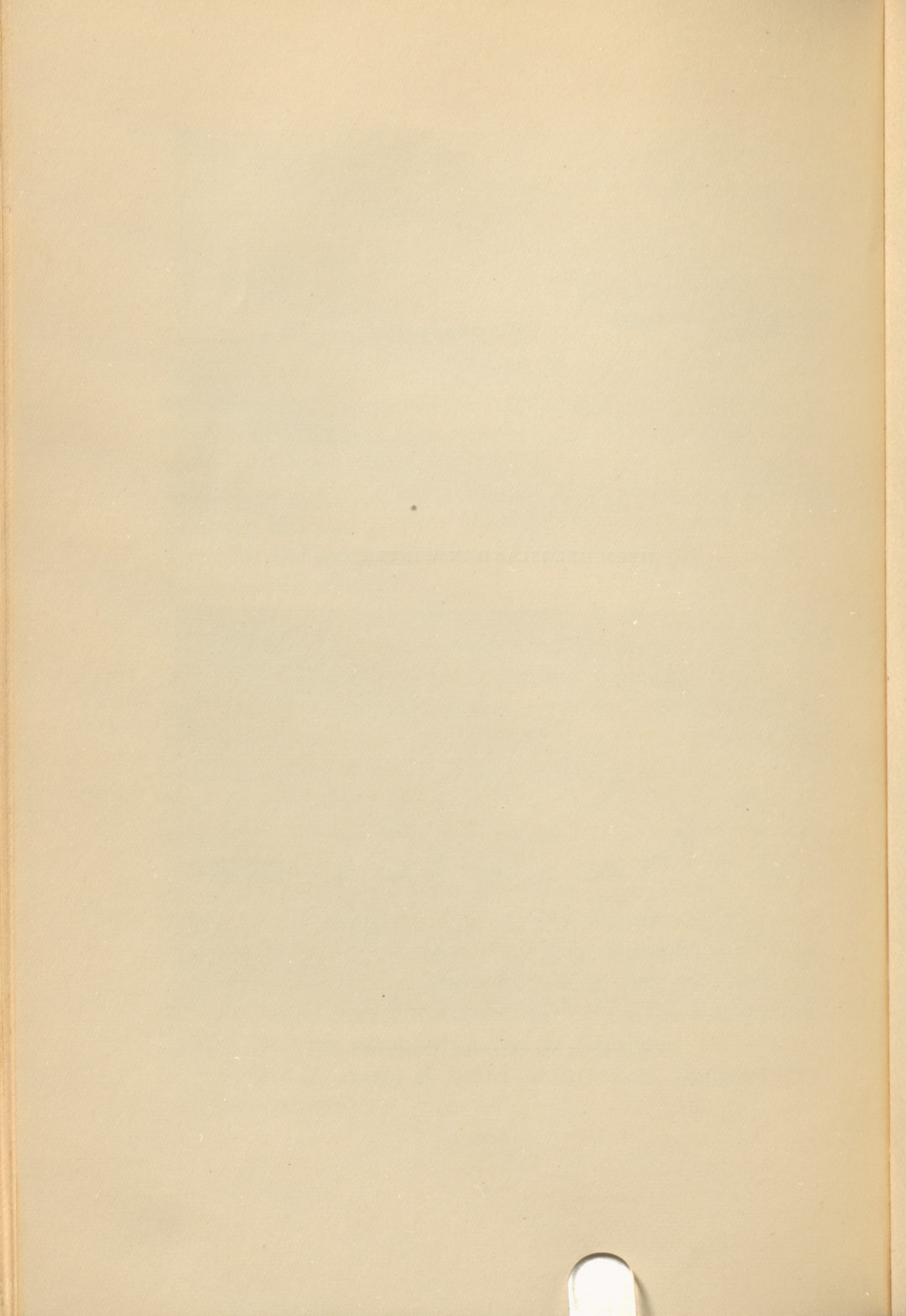
Few of my crew were of any use at the hunting. But they did seem to appreciate the fresh meat I provided for them. One morning I took out our dog team, and along with me went Hermann and Walter and an Eskimo called Kalikut. I was bent on getting into the hills, and finding some caribou. The ice was jammed just hard enough in the bay to cross from ship to shore safely, if one were careful. We had supplies on our sled to last us several days. I took an easterly direction along the shore, intending to turn inland to certain hills which I saw in the distance. But on the second morning out we had the good luck to sight a herd of caribou. I think they must have been adrift on an ice-floe, and were so hungry when they got ashore and up on the tundra that they paid little attention to us at first, and I crept up quite close to them. I killed seven. And the next day I killed two more.



HERSCHEL ISLAND IN WINTER



BACK FROM WINTER HUNTING



Having skinned them and cut them up, I decided to send Hermann and Walter back to the ship with the dogs and a full sled load of meat, after delivering which they were to come back to me, and I said I would have more for them. I decided to keep Kalikut with me. It was growing colder, and a strong wind was setting in from the north-east. I reckoned that it would blow the loose ice out of the bay where the *Olga* was anchored, and I warned Hermann and Walter not to attempt to cross on the broken floes, but to go around the head of the bay, where there would be shorter crossings by a chain of small islets to the ship. They seemed rather to resent my giving them advice, saying they had both been long enough in the Arctic to know what to do that way. They reminded me that they were not children, and could take care of themselves. So off they went, and Kalikut and I took to the hills.

Six days passed, and there was no sign of Hermann or Walter returning. They were overdue. So I made a cache of what meat I had, and Kalikut and I trudged back to the ship, following the sled racks. When we arrived at the bay the sled tracks led us right to the water's edge — open water!

We then went around the head of the bay, and so reached the ship on the ice that lay between the islets. My fears had been well founded. Neither Hermann nor Walter had returned, nor had anything been seen or heard of the dogs. I immediately organized search parties, and spread out over the beach in both directions for miles. Neither Hermann nor Walter were ever seen again. The dogs may have escaped into the wilds and joined the wolves. Some while later I heard a rumour that the following year at Cape Parry a sailor who had been on the *Olga* shot two of them, mistaking them for

wolves, and recognizing them afterwards. I do not know.

The loss of the dogs was serious. It was necessary that we have a team of them if possible for the ship. I arranged with three Eskimo families that each should give me two dogs, and so I soon had a team of six again, but it was not so good as the team we had lost. I took the cabin boy in hand and tried to make a dog musher of him, but he had no love for the dogs, and no proper spirit in him at all for such work. It takes a good heart and a good head, as well as strength and endurance and skill to make a good dog musher in the Arctic. Besides that he had wrong ideas of his own superiority, and of the way to deal with Eskimos, so that I was in a constant worry lest they should knock him on the head or drop him through a hole in the ice. Time and again I had to interfere to save him.

The Eskimos were doing right by me. They brought in a fair supply of game, and a really excellent lot of furs. I showed some of the best of these to the crew; telling how much money they would be worth the next spring at Herschel Island; trying to arouse them into going out and trapping for themselves. I showed them all that was necessary to be done. But I could not enthuse them. They said it was too cold, and the chances of trapping too uncertain. They were sailors, and the ship was good enough for them. I did get a few to go out hunting, but they made no success of it, and wasted much ammunition.

The Devil has an easy time of it finding mischief for idle hands aboard a ship that is frozen in the ice for all winter, with very few of the routine jobs to be done, and no work or play to the liking of the crew over the ice or the snow.

The men were beginning to grumble again, and to find fault with their position. They seemed to think I was responsible for keeping them in it. I went on with my hunting and trapping as if I had not one trouble in the world, but all the while I could sense the feeling of unrest. I had to watch my every step, and I kept my eye on every member of the crew. Finally I took to hunting entirely alone, and I never would return by the same way that I went out, fearing an ambush. Springtime was drawing nigh.

One morning I went off with the dogs and stayed four days in the interior. I returned with the sled loaded to the limit with caribou meat and skins, and so heavy it was I had to help the dogs along every step of the way back. When I climbed aboard I was astonished to find every member of the crew gone except the cook. He appeared relieved at seeing me, and said that he was beginning to be lonesome for something to do. He said that the same morning I had gone away the cabin boy had led all the rest of the crew off to the nearest Eskimo camp, and he had seen no sign of them since then. It did not seem reasonable to me that they would leave their warm and comfortable quarters aboard the *Olga* for the snow houses and poor food of the Eskimo camp — and certainly not reasonable that they should stay away so long without some very definite purpose. I knew they were not hunting. I knew they could not have all gone mad enough to try and walk over the ice for nigh a thousand miles to try and reach Herschel Island, equipped as they were. Naturally I concluded that their absence boded no good for me.

I slept on board that night, and the next morning I told the cook that I was going out to bring the crew back. The Eskimo camp where he said they had

gone was distant about fifty miles from the ship. I was not afraid to leave Gremnia alone on board with the children, for she was quick with her rifle and very accurate, and she could handle her knife as needed.

I gave the negro cook enough extra work to keep him busy while I was away, and he was so lonely and leery of he did not know what in the frozen Arctic silence that the more he had to do and the more clatter he made about it the less his mind bothered him.

The dogs and I made fast time over the ice. It was almost clear, smooth surface for a wonder, the pressure-ridges just there being few and far between, and they were little ones at that. My rifle, a sleeping bag, and some meat on the sled constituted the only load.

When I arrived at the edge of the ice-field, over which the slow crew had made their way, I saw that it had receded so far from shore that there was no way of getting around on it to the Eskimo camp. But I found a kyak on the ice ready to be launched, all as if provided for me by some good fairy. I secured the dogs comfortably, giving them a feed, and then paddled away down the lead for about a mile, taking with me only my rifle. I sighted the cluster of snow houses at the base of a high, projecting cliff, which afforded shelter. But I could see no stir of life there. I landed. As I stooped to fasten the kyak to a boulder my danger-sense — or whatever the right name be — flashed warning through me. I straightened and whirled about — and looked straight in the face of an Eskimo crouching behind another boulder, and holding a rifle levelled to take me in the stomach. I recognized him as Kolmak, a native of Baillie Island. I had known him slightly for several years.

Being afraid to move, lest it nerve him to fire, I stood and stared at him without a sound, but boring deep into him through his squinty eyes. Motionless I did that until I saw the muzzle of his rifle begin to waver. Then with empty hands hanging loose and open I began to walk slowly but confidently toward him. While I was yet a few feet distant he lowered his rifle, and stood up from behind the rock. He muttered something about not being able to kill me. My medicine, as you might say, or my mesmeric eye, or the influence that protected me — anyway, something — did the trick of staying his trigger finger.

I asked Kolmak why he wanted to kill me. He said that he did not, but that the White men in the camp had asked him to kill me. I told him to pick up his rifle and to take me to those men, and that he was to be my son and do what I told him. I took my own rifle from the kyak.

Inside the largest snow-house I found the crew. They were waiting out of sight for a report. I told them what had happened, and of what I had been told by Kolmak. They all denied having had anything to do with Kolmak's action. He must have misunderstood them. They had only told him to go down and meet me, my approach having been seen, and to bring me into camp. All they wanted was a change, and a chance for a good time with other people.

Quite so. I ordered them to have a good time at once in walking back along shore to the ship, with nothing but some seal meat to eat on the way. They went!

MY ENTRY ON VICTORIA ISLAND

AFTER I had watched my disgruntled crew well on their way in the direction which would take them back to the *Olga* I decided to sleep at the Eskimo village, and get from the men there as much truth of the affair as I could. I found that they had been told I was planning to maroon my crew, and to sail away farther to the east with the *Olga*, and doing so I would take all the furs with me, so that no one but myself would have any profit of them. Believing the story, as told by my crew, Kolmak was chosen by the Eskimos to shoot me. So, when I was reported paddling down the lead toward their village he hid behind the rock for that purpose.

That night a young hunter by name of Anujak came in with a tale of having seen seven strange men out on the ice. He said they were Eskimos by their talk and appearance, and yet different from any he had seen before. They made friendly motions to him, but he felt none too sure of them, and so kept at a safe distance, calling back and forth with them. But of one thing he was sure: these wild men had no guns. They had spears and bows and knives. Then up spoke an old man among the listeners. He told of how long ago he had heard from his father of two communities of wild men, some of them having red hair and beards, who dwelt widely apart from each other on Victoria Land. He said they had no dealings with whalers or traders or even with Eskimos of the south shore, but lived always as their

fathers had lived since the time the first snow fell from the sky.

Hearing this fine tale, Kolmak, who seemed anxious to show he liked me now, since the bad white men had gone back to the ship at my command, asked me to lead him and a number of their strongest men to find the wild people, and trade with them, and take their furs. I appreciated his innocence, but I had other notions as to what I should do. There was a period of silence, while the others waited for me to speak.

I asked the old man to tell more of what he had heard from his father about those of the wild people who had red hair and beards. He said their hair was the colour of the fur of a red fox. I did not believe the story then, nor very much of it even now.

Certain journalists of the Sunday papers, clever and reliable as usual, attributed to Vilhjalmur Stefansson the statement that he had found blond and blue-eyed Eskimos on Victoria Island. I think maybe Stefansson was a bit green-eyed when he found that I had beaten him in getting to the interior of Victoria Island, and had come out with primitive copper weapons and soapstone flesh-pots and bone curios and musk-ox bows from there. Amundsen was a bit touched that way himself. Sometimes these explorers are more jealous of each other than musicians, and as for Stefansson he is both a poet and an explorer, although much more of the one than the other. Just the same, Stefansson did not find blond Eskimos any more than I did, and he probably has done far less in the way of founding them for the future.

Yet in fairness to Stefansson I would say this: When I was a boy I heard from my mother, or from the teacher at school, or maybe from both, that hundreds of years before the time of Columbus there were wandering parties

of Vikings going west from Great Greenland on their way around the polar cap of the world, and if this be true then it is practically certain that in an amiable way a strain of their blood would have appeared among the Eskimos of that time. And of course there are always a few adventurers who will be off by their lone where men are not so crowded, and who occasionally do this sort of thing. But, in fact, there are no blond Eskimos.

For hours that night I thought over what had been said, and I thought of Kolmak's wish to have me lead him to the wild people. If what was said were true then Victoria Island was indeed the place of which I had long dreamed for trade of the sort that I was qualified to do. I would find out for myself.

After sleeping on the question I decided to leave Kolmak behind for another occasion, but to take with me Anujak, the young hunter who had talked with the seven wild men. So I wakened him early the next morning, and told the others that it was necessary for me to go back to the ship and give my crew some good work to do, but that then I would take Anujak with me and go out and find the wild people, and he would come back and tell them all he knew. That seemed reasonable, so they went to sleep again, and Anujak started off with me to the ship. We soon paddled to where I had left the dogs, and they were glad to see me, being tired of inaction and hungry, and they yelped a welcoming chorus at me as they smelt the new meat I was bringing for them.

Having been well fed, the dogs set off at a fine pace and kept it up so well that I was back on the *Olga* before the foot-sore and hungry men of my crew arrived. My being on board to receive them was a surprise in itself

which had a subduing effect on them, and when they learned from the cook that I had ordered him to prepare the best meal he could for them from the ship's stores and the fresh meat I had brought, to be topped off with a huge prune pudding, then they experienced a change of heart toward me.

With Jackson and Walter and Hermann out of the way for good there were no others to make factions among the men. They became easier to handle, looking forward to a lawful release from my command at Herschel Island I suppose, for there were increasing signs that the ice would soon break, and the leads open wide enough for navigation. The spirit of hellery toward me died down for the time, as I appeared to be the best hope in sight of their safe return to where they wanted to be, and with a good rating for those of them who survived and obeyed. I had no more trouble except with one of them, a big fellow called George, of what breed I was not sure, but he hailed from San Francisco. He entered my cabin and stole Jackson's pistol which I kept there. One day he refused to obey an order, and put his hand to his pocket as if to draw. He never did again. Gremnia carried the pistol after that.

I did my best to make a good man of the Swede cabin boy, telling him of the profit to be had from trapping, and taking him out with me for practical instruction. But he was perverse, and disposed to be idle at all times except when concocting mischief. I saw the last of him at Herschel Island. His mother was Irish, and he was born in Milwaukee.

Assured of no further trouble on the *Olga* for a while I made ready to go inland to see what was to be seen. I packed some tinware, iron frying-pans, empty tin

cans, and a few knives as the prize articles from my store of trade goods. All these I lashed firmly, with a bit of food and extra clothing, upon the sled. Then with Anujak, and a few Eskimo men and women who wanted to go along with us, we started away on a bright spring morning early in June. There was a crust on the snow which was strong enough to bear our weight, and so we had easy going. I took a northerly direction, and slanted inland. We must have made fifty miles during that day and the next. On the third day we came to a long slope, down which we slid easily to Cape Baring.

I had been on the look-out all the while for signs of men, but I saw none; nor yet of animals. But as we rounded the bluff of Cape Baring I did see something in the distance which made my heart beat faster. There was the like of a couple of hundred caribou standing on their hind legs and doing a ghost dance in the snow, with copper horns which glistened in the sunlight. They were the wild people!

Men, women and children — all were dressed in clothes of caribou skin, but cut after a fashion differing a bit from any which I had seen before. The skins had been tanned, as usual, with head and ears attached, so as to have hoods like those on a parka or the cowl on a monk's robe. The men held copper snow-knives aloft in both hands, and kept thrusting them straight up and down above their heads. Incredible as it may seem, they did not stop their dance as they sighted us, but formed into an advancing half-moon, as if to encircle us, and this they did without a break, as perfectly as if they were chorus girls drilled for such an evolution, and obeying a word from a director. The only difference was that, instead of the decorous, upright, jog-trot of the ghost dance, they jerked up and down, with legs and arms

working like those of toy men on a string, the knees and elbows akimbo. Only the knives kept thrusting straight up and down by the ears of their hoods. I afterwards learned that this was a friendly manner of approach — a gesture of goodwill — but at the time I was much in doubt and those with me were frightened. Our dogs, however, were not a bit dismayed. With friendly yelps they started full tilt toward the new people, seeing other dogs like themselves in their midst.

The Eskimos behind me turned and ran. Anujak, who was on the sled, rolled off and buried himself in the snow. I rode the brake, to check the speed of the dogs, but could not do so because of the smooth slope down which we slid. I could hear the rustling of about four hundred mukluks over the dry crust of the snow as the new people parted their semi-circle in the middle to let my sled through, and then they closed around me as the dogs halted, their traces having been clutched to bring them to a standstill.

I rose from the sled. The new people looked at me, and I could see that they were not hostile but full of curiosity. One very old woman, crippled and bent, and with white hair streaming from under her fur cap, drew near and began to hop in a funny way around me. I could understand the drift of her talk. She was telling the others to stand back, and that I was a dangerous person. Hearing that, I lifted both my hands high in the air and laughed, and then, just as the old woman was near me I suddenly grabbed her about the waist, and said something in Eskimo which is the equivalent of asking for a kiss, and I drew her close and rubbed noses with her.

At that the entire crowd began to laugh like children, and the old woman herself laughed and seemed quite

pleased. They saw that I had no weapon on me, not even a knife. I began to talk as well as I could in Eskimo, and I saw that they understood most of what I was saying. I pointed to the south, telling them that I was a man from very far away who had come to make trade with them if they had anything to trade. They all drew near, many talking at once as they looked into my face and examined my clothes. Then one who seemed to be their leader said that they had heard of men like me, but had never seen one before.

By this time the young hunter was over his fright, and he drew near and began to talk to the new people, and after him came my other Eskimos. They explained better than I could who I was and what I wanted in this land of the new people, and told about the big ship of which I was the father.

These people were true Stone Age men on the bare edge of the Bronze Age. Their knives, spear-heads and arrow-heads were all hammered out of native copper. And as I found afterwards, their lamps and cooking utensils were of soapstone, most of them being in the form of narrow troughs, some of which were riveted with copper. We became good friends.

Then from my sled I unpacked tin cans and iron frying-pans and knives. This was wealth indeed, and at once they were anxious to trade. They were startled and delighted when I lit some matches, and then gave them some and showed them how to use them, and warned them that they must be kept dry.

One of them showed me with great pride a knife which he had, and which was different from the copper knives. I examined it closely, and found that it was made from the blade of a hand-saw. It was worn very thin. I asked him where he had got it, or where it came

from, but he could not tell. He said that it had been handed down from father to son in his family for many generations. It was the only bit of that kind of metal they ever had, or had ever seen until I had come with knives.

They were so innocent a people of so long ago that I had not the heart to take much advantage of them in trade, so all I took was most of their clothes and stone cooking pots and copper snow-knives and ice-picks for steel knives and frying-pans and a supply of matches. They had no raw furs with them, but their garments would be useful for my family and some of my rascally crew. So after the trade, when everyone was feeling satisfied, we started a celebration. The new people had plenty of meat, and while some of the women were cooking it in the flesh-pots the rest of us began to dance in the snow. When the meat was cooked we all ate our fill and then began to sing.

Before we parted, going in opposite directions, the head man of the new people told me to get more iron and knives and then to come to their settlements in the interior. He gave me directions by which I might find them. He said he would see to it that next time I would be able to get plenty of furs without taking their pants away from them. Then we all laughed and said good things, and the new people went their way toward the interior and we went our way back to the ship.

On the *Olga* was a large water cask which had been stove in so as to be useless. There were eight heavy iron hoops on it. These hoops I detached, and straightened them out with a hammer, and then with a chisel cut them into lengths of from eight to twelve inches, as material from which knives might be made. I put with

them all the knives I could spare from the ship, and what pans I had left in my original stock of trade goods. In the hold of the ship I also found an old eight-foot cross-cut saw, knowing that good steel knives might be made from it. With all this I loaded two sleds, and put on as well a supply of groceries.

I had decided to make a visit inland and find the new people, but not to take anyone with me except my oldest girl, who was then in her thirteenth year. She knew the Eskimo language, with its variations, better than I did.

Within a couple of days we had picked up the trail of the new people, and for two days after that we followed their trail. It was in the morning, after we had been travelling for a few hours, that we came suddenly in sight of a village of about thirty houses, with smaller communities scattered around within a radius of a few miles. We had a good view as we came down toward them. And of course we were sighted immediately. A great crowd came out to meet us. They made me welcome, but were surprised to see that I had brought a daughter with me instead of a son. I told them that where I came from daughters were considered equal to sons, and sometimes more so. It gave them a new idea.

Very readily they helped me set up a large tent which I had brought, although that also was something to which they were not accustomed. They served best by building a high snow rampart about the tent, as a wind brake and as a protection against prowling dogs.

The day before I had killed a fine caribou. As soon as I could get a fire lighted I began to cook a dinner, and to serve the foremost of my visitors. With the exception of the meat my food was strange to them. I had set out some of my groceries — flour, salt, sugar, and a little red pepper, with which I liked to season my

own meat. One too inquisitive and pushing a young fellow dipped into my flour, but did not think much of the taste of it in his mouth. I was questioned about it, and showed him how it was cooked into bannocks, a few of which I had with me. Asked what it came from I tried to explain that it was gathered from a tall kind of moss that grew in the South. This young fellow did not care for the salt, but the sugar was very much to his liking. Then on the sly, and attracted by its colour, he put a generous pinch of my red pepper in his mouth. The moment it bit into his tongue he let out a yell, darted out through the door of the tent, over the rampart and into a drift beyond, where he pushed handfuls of the snow into his mouth.

My guests became alarmed, and looked at me with suspicion. They asked me if the young man had eaten fire, and if it would kill him. I told them very gravely that the young man had taken into his mouth what had not been offered to him, and had taken it without my permission, but that it would not kill him, and that if he truly repented the pain would soon pass. I knew that he was truly repenting, and I knew that the pain would pass. So when it did all the others felt more at ease, and laughed at him and were pleased with me. After that they touched nothing in my tent which I did not offer to them.

I laid out my stock of goods for their inspection. I was disappointed in finding that they had so few fox furs. But I did get from them a fine collection of caribou skin garments, soapstone cooking-pots, and various copper implements including needles. We made three good days of it, and by that time I was out of more than half my trade goods, and had all the curios and caribou garments I could take back with me. Then I began to pack up, preparatory to returning to the ship.

That evening, when I was alone with my daughter, an old man who had been most friendly to me from the beginning, came to my tent. Making sure that none were outside listening, he told me that some of the men were determined to take the steel runners of my sleds with which to make more knives. He said there was a dispute going on between two factions, one of which wanted to kill me and take my daughter, and the other wanted merely to take the sleds and all my possessions, and then turn us out into the snow, stripped of all our possessions, to make our way back to the ship if we could, and if we could not then it would be our funeral and the foxes would undertake to put us out of sight.

This friendly elder told me that already the schemers had sent runners back on our trail to see if any of our friends were coming who might help me in a fight, or exact vengeance if I were killed. If the runners reported no one in sight then the chances were that I would be killed without further delay.

Well, it seemed good politics, as I had learned about politics in America. It even seemed commendable from a patriotic standpoint. These simple snow men of no particular time, in a lesser and less repellant way, would act just as a civilized nation acts toward another civilized nation of which it is convinced it can take an immediate advantage by reason of numbers and weapons. But now it was my move.

The schemers had no realization of what a rifle was. They thought I carried a long club — nothing like so effective as one of their spears. I felt sure that I could kill or wound at least half a dozen of them. But after the first surprise they probably would charge and mangle me to death. I thanked my friend and told him that I knew how to escape. Then I soothed my daughter, and

she, being a child, was soon asleep, trusting in me to take care of her. Then I lay still in my sleeping bag to open my mind, so that there might come to me guidance.

I had about decided to start back as quietly as possible, and fight the runners on my trail, shooting them from a distance if they came too near. Having thus decided I was just getting out of my bag when I heard voices of men approaching the village. They were the three runners who had been sent out and were now returning. Their hail was answered as they drew near. I made a peep-hole through the snow rampart, and saw them being met by about a dozen others. Then they all withdrew into a large igloo.

I did not go out through the entrance to my enclosure, but pushed out enough snow to make a sallyport at the rear, through which I crept, and then scurried quietly toward the igloo which served as a council chamber. I got in near enough to listen and be unobserved. I heard the voices which rose and fell in gutturals, and I caught the drift of what was being said. The runners had been back on my trail for a distance of two sleeps, and they had seen no sign of anyone coming after me. They urged that I be killed at once. One of them said he would take my daughter for a wife. Both pointed out that the killing of me would be easy, as I had no spear or arrows — nothing but a club and a knife.

Then an argument started. All agreed that the steel strips on my sled runners must be taken off for making into big knives. But the majority of that council were easy-going, live-and-let-live fellows. They were quite in favour of robbing me somewhat of my goods for entering their territory with them — sort of high tariff measure — but having done that they would leave me

enough to go back with as I had come. Finally it was decided to defer a decision until they had all had a sleep on it.

I knew enough of Eskimos' procedure to feel confident that there would be no reversal of policy pending another meeting of the council. So when it became evident that they were about to leave the parliament house I hurried back to my own place. Weena had not wakened. I crept into my sleeping bag to open my mind once more. But no sooner was I settled than a man came to the entrance of the tent to say that he was there to watch me, and that no harm would happen me or my daughter so long as we did not go outside of our enclosure.

I acted as if suddenly awakened, and answered him sleepily, as if I only half comprehended and were concerned more to get back to sleep again than anything else. Then I really did go to sleep for a few hours, because it had come to me what I was to do, and with that my mind was at ease.

Just at sun-up I wakened Weena, and gave her the orders of the day. Then I enlarged the sallyport through which I had passed during the night. The watchman at the front entrance of our enclosure was nodding, half asleep, but I knew very well, from watching their conduct when out floor whaling, how Eskimos could be all awake and alert in an instant.

Quietly I took what was left of my pans and cans and put them in a pile outside the sallyport. Then in my best voice of command I gave the assembly call, which I knew very well. This had an almost immediate effect. First the watchman came running around to where I stood, but keeping himself at a distance, and apparently much surprised. Then dozens of others, men, women

and children, emerged from the igloos, and came crisply over the snow toward me.

I stood quietly looking at them until there was a crowd grouping themselves about twenty feet in front of me. Then I addressed them, saying what good people I had found them to be, and how for that I was going to give presents to those who could catch them first as I threw them. I suppose a scramble for presents is one of the oldest ways for a social celebration in the open, next after feasting and dancing and bragging of one's own deeds. Anyway, I flung out to the crowd what was left of my pans and cans, hesitating and making feints as to direction each time I threw one, so as to keep all on the alert and give a chance all round. Then I called to a few old men and women who sat in the background watching the game, not being active enough to take part in such a scramble. For each of these I had a knife — the most valuable of presents. It was important to win their goodwill, knowing as I did that often the younger men would be restrained or directed by their advice. Then I took a long and strong extra trace which I had for my dog team, and I explained a new game to the elders — the tug of war. I suggested that they select some of their strongest young men to pull against each other, and the prize was to be the strip of steel which was the cross-cut saw which I had taken from the ship. All entered into the spirit of this new game, and they leaped and shouted with excitement when the tug began.

Weena had followed my instructions exactly. She had taken the tent down, and the sled was packed and the dogs were in their traces. I had slipped back through the sallyport unnoticed, or perhaps it was thought I was going to my tent for more presents. I put Weena on the

sled, and with a low whistling sound like wind, which was a signal to my well-trained dogs, they set off at a run from the front entrance straight back in the direction we had come from the ship.

I glanced back several times where the tug of war game was continuing. I saw a few men detach themselves from the crowd and begin to run after us. But my dogs were going at a fast pace, and we soon were out of sight of any pursuers. We kept going all that day and far into the night. After a few hours rest we were off again before dawn. And the next night we got back to the *Olga*. Some of the crew saw us coming and went out to meet us. It was the first time the men ever seemed really glad to see me. I feared no further trouble from them until we should get back to Herschel Island.

I had found a land and a people where I could be the first to trade, and I made up my mind that eventually I would have my own ship and my own goods and go back with my family to Victoria Island and found a permanent trading post. I did!

SUFFICIENTLY TRIED

RETURNING to the *Olga*, well and enthusiastic, and Weena in high spirits because of the adventures she had been through and the curios which she had to show, I found that there had been no trouble during our absence. The men were very quiet, wanting only to get back to Herschel Island as soon as possible. They looked indifferently at the furs which I had brought back with me for scraps of old metal, and would not hear of it when I suggested we spend another season there, and try and get a shipload of furs from Victoria Island, so making the voyage a great gain for themselves and the owners as well, instead of a dead loss, as it would otherwise be. In that matter they had their rights; they had signed on to go whaling in the *Olga*, not fur trading.

So just as soon as weather and ice conditions allowed I cast off for Herschel Island. While going through Amundsen Gulf we sighted many whales, and we could have killed a number of them easily, had my white crew not been so sullen, and unwilling for anything but getting back to Herschel. I could not handle the ship and get whales at the same time, with them in the mood they were. Once I literally ran a whale down. But there was no going after it.

I headed first for Baillie Island, and there paid off my Eskimo crew, and put them ashore. They thought well of me, and turned over to me the furs they had, asking that I sell or trade them for supplies at Herschel

Island or Point Barrow, and return later in the season, when they would go back with me to Victoria Island, and there trap and trade together.

From Baillie Island to Herschel Island was easy sailing. As soon as I dropped anchor I called the crew formally together, and turned over command to the mate, explaining that I had only been engaged to take the *Olga* on a share and wage basis, and then bring her back to Herschel Island. I was not on the ship's articles, while the mate was. Moreover, I intended reporting the circumstances of the shooting of Engineer Jackson to the Royal Mounted Canadian Police stationed then at Herschel Island, and I did not know but what I might be detained. On that was built the story that I had deserted my ship in the Arctic. Feeling was so high that not a single captain of the other ships then in harbour would take me and my family down to Barrow as passengers, the custom, which was as good as law among them, being that no help was ever to be given to any man who deserted a ship. Well, I did not worry at all about that; my conscience was clear, and I wanted to see the police.

The commanding officer at the Post was called, I think, Major Howard. I gave a complete account of all that happened on the *Olga* which led to the killing of Jackson. I also told of subsequent happenings, and of the disappearance of Hermann and Walter. I was told to consider myself under arrest, but I was not confined. The next week an inquiry was made, and it was so formal that I, in my ignorance of Canadian laws, thought it was a trial, and that I was accused of the murder of Jackson. Every member of my crew was summoned to give testimony and questioned closely by the Commanding Officer. I submitted my ship's log, and the Major took a long

time over it. I am not a good writer, and you know what my English is like, but I had written as full and true an account as I could. The Major questioned the members of the crew about every statement in the log, and without exception they confirmed all that was written there. The Major took about a week making the inquiry, and then, apparently satisfied that I had acted in self-defence he let me go, and I was, as I then thought, acquitted. I did not know that he had no final authority to try me.

When I was free I found that no whaling captain then at Herschel Island would give me passage to Point Barrow. Some of them, who were my friends, said they were sorry, but that they dared not break the custom established by the others.

I owned an old whale-boat, and had left it at Herschel Island the previous year, when I went out on the *Oлга*. I found it, and after working on it a few days I put my family and my dogs and all my stock of furs and curios in it, along with what I thought would be enough meat and water to last us to Point Barrow. I knew that I could get more fresh water on the way through the sea from icebergs or ashore, and game as well if that became necessary. But I was prepared to go on short rations to save time. Before leaving Herschel Island both Amundsen and Stefansson came to me, wanting to buy my copper and soapstone curios and the short musk-ox bows which I had obtained in the interior of Victoria Island. But I was in no mood to oblige them, even although my boat was overloaded. So I did not.

We had a strong wind with us when we set sail, and the sky was low and heavy over us. After a few hours the wind increased to a gale, and we were lashed with rain. The children were whimpering and the dogs were

uneasy, and Gremnia had her own work to do in quieting them and giving them a little to eat now and then, between times of assisting me in handling that overloaded boat and keeping her headed right through the seas, and avoiding detached blocks of ice. The next day was colder, and then came fog and snow. It was a terrible trip, all crowded as we were in that whale-boat, but I held on through the thick and thin of it, for the wind was with me.

Several of the whaling ships set sail for Point Barrow the same day that I did. And I beat them all in getting there! I beached the whale-boat right in front of my own igloo!

When we got all our stores into the house, and had exchanged gossip with the neighbours and refreshed ourselves as best we could, we went to sleep. The next morning I was unpleasantly awakened. The U.S. Revenue Cutter *Thetis* was in port. And news of the troubles on the *Olga* had reached the commanding officer, Captain Hamlet, both the *Olga* and the *Charles Hansen* having reached Point Barrow a few hours after my arrival the previous day.

I was summoned on board the *Thetis*. Captain Hamlet seemed to think that because the shooting had occurred on an American schooner, even although in Canadian waters, he should make an inquiry. The entire crew of both the *Olga* and the *Charles Hansen* went aboard the *Thetis* to give testimony. Captain Hamlet went into the whole affair much as had Major Howard of the Canadian Mounted Police. He took just as long a time about it, and then came to the same conclusion. I had shot and killed in self-defence.

That, I thought, was an end of the matter, and I was elated, and considered myself in position at last to do

big business as a fur trader. I knew where to go. But, as usual, Old Man Trouble came along to spoil my pretty prospects. Captain McKenna laid claim to my stock of furs. He filed a plaint against me on the *Thetis* before Captain Hamlet. He had only engaged me to work for him at whaling during the whaling season. After the season was over my only duty was to take care of the ship, and get her back to Herschel Island. What I did with my time apart from that during the off season, and what I might get of furs or other things, was no proper concern of his, as I viewed it. But Captain Hamlet took another view. He allotted half of the furs to Captain McKenna.

It was a hard blow. I realized that it would be impossible to explain to the Eskimos who had entrusted me with their furs that it was not my fault that they had been seized and given to another man. It would be necessary for me to make good to them for all their share represented — or lose their confidence utterly. With the reduced stock in hand it would not pay me to go to Nome with them for trade. The summer was going fast. I must provide for my family against the winter. Gremnia was with child again. In the name of the law I had been robbed of half of what I had, and the half which I did have did not belong to me. Clearly it was necessary for me to take chances again, and devise something new.

Well, I had my whale-boat. And the idea came to me that in it I might hunt whales right off shore, while the summer was ending. It had never been done before — neither Whites nor Eskimos ever having attempted it. The Eskimos laughed at me when I put the proposition to them, and so did the few whalers of the Whites who were at Point Barrow that year. But I was never one to be put off a new plan or a pet idea by conservative opinion.

I got a dart gun and a supply of bombs, and persuaded five husky young Eskimos to go out with me — four at the oars, one to steer, and me in the bow with the dart gun.

The second day out I killed a whale, and we made the carcass fast and towed it to the beach. I got nine hundred pounds of bone out of that whale, which, at the time in Point Barrow, was worth three dollars and a half a pound.

There was great change of opinion when I landed that whale. Point Barrow went wild with excitement, as if there had been a new find of placer gold on the beach. Every available boat was soon manned, and out after whales. I got one more while the good weather lasted, and three other whales were killed by the dozen other boats which went out. Thus I had made my family secure for the winter, and I was very content.

Having both cash and credit from the two whales, I busied myself all winter at trapping and trading. It was an uneventful winter, full only with happiness for me and all my family and near friends. All the while I was planning for the years to come. I would go floor whaling in the spring so soon as weather and ice would permit, and after that I would go to Baillie Island and make settlement with my Eskimo friends there, and then go on farther and establish the first of a chain of trading posts under my own control on Victoria Island and about Coronation Gulf.

Mail was coming in that winter from Kotzebue to Point Barrow. And as spring was breaking I received a letter from a friend of mine then in San Francisco; a whaling captain who had been at Herschel Island when I arrived there with the *Olga* the previous summer. He enclosed a newspaper clipping, containing the news

that I had been indicted by the Grand Jury in the State of California for the murder of Engineer Jackson. Afterwards I learned that the matter had been arranged through political trickery of enemies at Washington, who had there secured a Federal warrant for my arrest.

What to do? Just as my future was looking so bright it darkened suddenly, and for a few minutes my heart almost died in me. If I left Point Barrow in a hurry and got away off into lone Canada then I would just become quarry for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who would track me down eventually, for they make a game of that sort of thing, whether on their own account or for extradition to another country.

Very soon the news that Little Charlie was in trouble again with the law went from one to another in Point Barrow. Others had received mail, telling, among other things that a marshall would arrive on the first boat in from the South and take me down to San Francisco for trial. I was heartened by the conduct of my Eskimo friends. That night a group of them came to my house to ask if the stories being told about me were true — that I was to be taken away to the South to be put in prison. When they heard from my own lips that the stories were true, then they said they would take me back into the hills to such places as the Whites knew nothing about, and where they would never be able to find me. I believed that. I was sure that I could live away by myself, and be joined by my family, without any officers from the South being able to lay a hand on me. But in such case what about all my plans for becoming a great and free trader on my own, untrammelled by any company, and coming and going as I saw fit?

I thought the matter over carefully. Twice, as I understood it, I had been tried for the killing of Engineer

Jackson, and had been released when the evidence showed that I had acted in self-defence. I could not understand. I knew nothing then of the machinations of Marsh, nor of the hostility of Sulzer, but I did know that I was one Dane for whom something was rotten in the State of California. I told Gremnia what I was going to do, and she accepted it as of fate. I would wait for no officer to come to arrest me. I would go south alone and in my own boat, and give myself up at Nome, and let the law take its course. I had no money to retain great lawyers and buy evidence and stage a drama for the newspapers and the people addicted to all the details of murder trials. But being innocent was something in my favour, I thought, and for the rest there should be at least an even chance for me, because of the evidence already on record that I had acted in self-defence.

Early in June I said good-bye to my family, leaving with them as much as I could. But in my whale-boat I put enough whalebone to ballast it well, and this I intended to sell at Nome. I also took some of the curios which I had gathered on Victoria Island. For food I only took one tin of sea-biscuits, some dried seal meat, and one brick of tea and a bit of sugar. For what else would be needed I depended upon my rifle.

So far as known at that time I was the first who ever started out of Point Barrow for the South so early in June. My boat sailed well, but I had a hard time at the start. An ocean current was setting in toward wherever the North Pole may be, and I suppose it must be somewhere nearly under the North Star or to one side of it. But anyhow, that current was flowing the way I did not want it, and at a rate I believe of about four miles an hour. I had a good manila line, with block and tackle, and when I would be sailing down a lead and the ice started to

close on me I would step out on to it, and make the line fast to a lump or ridge, or if the ice were all smooth I would chop the like of a jug handle into it, deep enough to hold the line. Then I would haul the whaleboat out of the water before it could be crushed, as the lead closed.

The weather was cold, with that damp cold that gets into one's bones, and although I had on my best skin garments, which Gremnia had trimmed with the prettiest furs she could find, thinking, poor girl, to have me looking my best and bravest when I came before the Judge in San Francisco, I shivered as I sat holding the sheet, running before the wind. Among the last words said to me when I left Point Barrow the ones that stuck in my memory then were those of a missionary, who wanted me to give him my daughter Weena as a nursemaid, saying that he would educate her as a Christian in return for her service to him. I had quite another notion about that, and about him, and I refused in a way that he knew I meant what I said.

And so he came down to the shore as I was casting off, and I heard his words as if he were intoning a funeral service:

'Christian Klengenber, you are no Christian! And you are going to the Hangman!'

I called back in proper sailor talk something to the effect that he was a real Christian, and that he was going to Hell. Doing that I heard Gremnia direct some Eskimo words at that missionary, which meant that she would kill him, and feed him to the foxes. So my last message to her had to be a bit harsh, and a command that she guard the children and do nothing to bring more trouble for them.

One gets queer fancies when all alone in an open boat

in an Arctic sea full of threatening ice-floes, especially when his voyage takes many days, and he sees a Hangman at the end of it with whom he must try conclusions and defeat if possible. But if Engineer Jackson had been there I would have shot him again, and a dozen others like him, who only make trouble all the time for better men. I was hot against his ghost, and it did not bother me. I had too much to do with solid ice and ice-stiffened sails and the bitter wind.

After the second day out the weather cleared, but the wind increased. I took a reef in my sail, and then a second reef, and ran for Blossom Shoals. There I stopped, and went out on the ice and killed a fine young polar bear. I cut off the hams and put them in the whale-boat, and then on the ice I lit my stove and put on a pot of water and filled it with bear meat. Making sure that I had enough water in the pot, I set my alarm clock to ring four hours later, and then crawled into my sleeping bag and went to sleep. Four hours of sleep — dreamless sleep! When the bell wakened me I found the meat well cooked. Putting it and the stove back in the boat I started off again, sailing with one hand and eating meat with the other.

Then I saw the water clear ahead of me, and the wind grew stronger behind me, and with all my canvas set I sailed about one hundred and sixty miles that day. Early the next day I raised Cape Lisburne, and as I straightened my course for the Cape I saw the biggest bull walrus I had ever seen, and I never saw another so big in my life again. He had a wonderful head. Knowing there would be many men in Nome with money to buy just such a head, and tell of how they had shot the great bull, I sailed as close to him as was safe, and then, slacking my sail, I lifted my rifle and aimed just about

three inches back of the base of the tusk, which is the most fatal spot for a walrus.

I made a perfect shot. The great animal shivered and rolled over on one side, stone dead. I towed the carcass to the ice near shore, intending to cut off the head with my axe. Such a surprise I did get! As I stepped out of the boat on the ice, and was heaving on the line, with my head toward shore, I felt a lively tug of resistance. Turning in a flash I saw that walrus upright on his flippers right behind me, and full of fight. I jumped just in time as he struck. The walrus slipped back into the water. There came a puff of wind. My boat went adrift. I jumped toward it from the ice-edge, and missed, and went under the water. As I came to the surface I made a few frantic, fast strokes and overtook the boat. Clutching at the gunwale I hauled myself up and into it — and just in time. The wounded walrus was going down with the line still fast to his tusk, the slack of the line rapidly shortening, and the other end tied to the boat. I snatched at the axe, and severed the line just as the boat started to go under. I never could understand how that walrus came to life again, but he certainly was very much alive when he left me, and the chances are that in time he rid himself of the line around his tusk.

Fortunately I had a complete extra set of clothes on board, and awhile after getting into them I was comfortable once more. Late in the afternoon I came upon another walrus, and I shot it. Although much smaller than the first one I made quite sure that it was dead before I started to cut it on the ice. Putting the meat in my boat I then headed for the Corwin Coal Mines. When I arrived I was glad to find Bill Starr still there, and a number of new men. They gave me a hearty welcome, and Bill told them of how I had gone back on

my trail to rescue Eskimo Joe when I first came in sight of his cabin, and was stumbling myself with hunger. It was good to be remembered that way. I gave them the walrus meat and we all had a dinner, and I went to sleep and forgot my troubles.

The wind had begun to die down as I entered the lagoon leading to the Corwin Mine, and the next morning there was no wind at all. But I was anxious to get on, and so I sculled my boat the whole distance of about forty-five miles to Cape Lisburne, which I had sighted two days before. It was slow, hard work, and when I came near to the turning point I saw that the sea outside was packed tight with ice. There was an inshore passage open, however, which I thought would lead to open water again. When I reached the other end of the passage I saw that it was barred by a sand-spit, and that it would be necessary to haul the boat a distance of about three hundred feet across it to get to open water again. This was something which I could not do alone. And if I turned back to try and work my way around and through such channels as might open in the outer ice it would mean about another hundred miles of weary sculling for me. It was disheartening.

I found a permanent Eskimo village. I think it is called Wevok. There was a missionary there by name of McIntosh, or McIntyre — I am not just sure now — but he certainly was a missionary. I introduced myself to him, and told him that I needed assistance to get my boat over the sand-spit.

The man seemed startled when I mentioned my name, and his manner was very distant. He said that he would speak to his flock. Flock! He must have taken me for a wolf! Afterwards I understood. He had re-

ceived news of the indictment against me in San Francisco. He warned the Eskimos that they were not to give me any assistance, or they themselves would be in bad trouble with the United States Government. Not one of them that I approached would lend me a hand.

I had about decided to turn back when I sighted an Eskimo with whom I had been on good terms at Point Barrow some years before. He was coming toward the village, carrying a young seal which he had just killed. He was very cordial, and asked me to have a meal with him. I explained my trouble about the boat. He said for me to enter and eat, and that he would then see what he could do for me about the boat. So I did that, and he was in and out quite a bit getting a dinner for me while I rested.

So soon as the meal was over I went outside. My boat was gone! But when I heard my friend laugh, and say that he must help me to find it, I felt reassured. It was his way of fun. He had passed the word to some of his Eskimo friends to move the boat across the sand-spit while I was having dinner, and they had done that very expeditiously; taking out the cargo of whalebone and putting it back again just as I had it after they put the boat in the water on the other side.

When the missionary came out of his schoolhouse, and saw what had happened, he changed his tactics. He asked me to take a letter for him down to a brother missionary living at Kivalina River. I read his intention as plainly in his eyes as if he had put it in words. He was going to tell who I was, so that the other missionary could inform the authorities at Kivalina, and get whatever reward there might be for my capture. The situation was humorous, seeing that I was going down to surrender myself, but it was better than that. I had profit of it,

for the missionary said that his fellow at Kivalina did more than preaching and teaching — that he did a business also of buying and selling whalebone and furs, and he wrote a separate letter of introduction for me, and in it mentioned what choice whalebone I had with me in my boat.

I had a queer feeling as I sailed on down past Point Hope, where I had first made acquaintance of Arctic life fourteen years gone by, and where I learned to hunt and dance and got in with Gremnia as the result of that. And what was I doing in that boat but going to ask that a prison door open for me — and maybe a trap-door for all I knew? It was lonely! But when I reached Kivalina it cheered me, the way I sold that whalebone to the missionary. I gave him both letters, and after he opened and read the sealed letter he was so anxious to get in touch with the United States Marshal down at Candle that he lost his cunning as a trader. He took the whalebone just as it was at \$3.25 a pound, and that was too much, because it was very wet and weighed more than it would in proper condition. However, it was his price and his weighing, and I made no objection to either. He gave me a written acceptance, but said that he did not have enough money with him at Kivalina, and that he would like to go down to Candle where he had money. He asked me to take him there. Of course I knew what he had in his mind to do, but it suited me very well to have another man in the boat to help me, and I wanted his money.

Candle was a little town on the inside of Kotzebue Sound, up the Keewalik River. The Marshal there was a fine man by name of J. C. Tolman. In after years he was a good friend of mine. Just so soon as we landed at Candle I slipped away from the missionary and went

directly to the office of the Marshal and told him who I was, and that I had come to surrender, as I had heard there was an indictment against me for murder. The Marshal said that he had no instructions whatever concerning me, and he would not take me into custody. I suggested that he telegraph to Nome for instructions. While waiting for the reply who should come in to see the Marshal but the missionary. He was a very surprised man at seeing me there, and he immediately asked the Marshal if he knew who I was, and of the charge which had been laid against me in San Francisco. The Marshal replied that he had just heard of it — through me!

It was then, in presence of the Marshal, that I thought well to make demand for my money from that missionary for the whalebone which he had bought of me at Kivalina, and I showed the Marshal the paper on which the amount owing was acknowledged. The missionary sputtered a bit — he may have had the notion that a man under indictment for murder could not press a civil claim for moneys due him — such odd ideas some people have of law. But after glancing at the paper the Marshal looked him in the eye, and said just two just words: 'Pay up!' Within ten minutes after that I had the money in my pocket, and I wished the missionary good luck of his bargain. But with him it was pay up and shut up — he did not speak to me again.

A telegram came from Nome to Marshal Tolman, saying that the authorities there had no use for me. I then suggested that the Nome authorities be asked to get in touch with San Francisco and Washington. This was done, and the next day the Marshal received instructions to hold me without warrant, pending further developments.

Marshal Tolman asked me to remain with him as his guest, and I did that, and we had a good time for about a week. Then came the SS. *Umatilla* into Kotzebue Sound, and on her were orders for me to be taken down to Nome. Marshal Tolman then told me to go by myself and not bother him about it, I suppose, having already come so far to give myself up it was not likely I would miss going the rest of the way.

Arriving at Nome as a passenger at large instead of a prisoner, I hastened to report at once to United States Marshal Cader Powell. He was quiet but friendly in his manner, and I could not have asked for better treatment or more consideration than I had from him. I think Tolman had told him about me by wire. He had orders to take me to San Francisco, but while we were waiting for a boat he gave me every opportunity to attend to any business I might have. I only had with me a small stock of furs, and these I sold.

The next thing to be thought of was getting supplies up to my family at Point Barrow. The officers of the Revenue Service said they would have them forwarded in due course for me, free of charge. Then I did the foolish thing. A boat came in sooner than expected, and was to leave at once for San Francisco. The Marshal told me to get ready. Instead of leaving money with the Revenue Service to be used for supplies consigned to my wife, I gave four hundred dollars to a young man whom I had always thought of as a friend I could trust, and who was a member of a prominent American political family. He told me that he was going on to Point Barrow, and that he would buy and deliver supplies for me to my family. So with that off my mind I went aboard with the Marshal, bound for San Francisco. It was not until a year later that I learned how I had been betrayed. The

young man lost all my money by gambling, and he never went any farther north than where he was. That next winter my family was in sore distress, and would have starved had it not been for the kindness of their Eskimo neighbours. Many years passed before I again saw that young man, and it was well for him that my anger had cooled, and almost passed to pity, as I saw his condition, and realized my own prosperity in spite of years of mishaps. He broke down, and because I gave him a stiff drink of some real Demerara rum just in from Canada for old time's sake, he soon wanted to tell me his whole story, and tell me all about the woman who led him to his first crooked step at Nome. I did not want to hear it. I knew that woman when all her charms were gone, but I can well believe that in her hey-day she did right well understand how to make a man go wrong.

In San Francisco I went to jail, and stayed there until my trial. I did not have very long to wait, as these things go, and I was well treated while detained. To pass the time, and so that my lawyer would know what to say, I wrote out for him as detailed an account as I could of all the trouble from first to last on the *Olga* while I was in charge of her. But I was so weary of the whole affair — having been called to account three times in three different places about it with the same result each time — that as soon as it was over for good I let it all slip from my memory as much as I could. I was arraigned before Judge Van Fleet. The jury acquitted me on grounds of self-defence.

San Francisco, September, 1907, and me walking the waterfront once more, broke and looking for a job. Times were bad in the United States that year. American banks were issuing scrip in place of money, while up in

Vancouver one could turn Canadian bills into gold as much as he pleased — a thing that he cannot do to-day in any country. It is a queer game the bankers play!

By odd chance, as if some imp were enjoying a joke, what should I do but get a job as watchman for board and fifty dollars a month on the *Charles Hansen* lying there — Captain McKenna's whaling schooner from which I had taken command of the *Olga*! I held that job until May, 1908, and then quit to go back to the Arctic.

Although I had no money to buy a large stock of trade goods, yet I was willing to take my chances on getting meat in the Arctic. Rather than being broke and looking for a square meal on the waterfront of San Francisco. Behind all that, of course, was the desire to be with my family again at any cost.

H. Liebes & Company were about to send their schooner *Ivy* with a cargo of trade goods to their Arctic posts, ending at Point Barrow. Just for the passage, and no pay, I went on that ship as an experienced pilot. They had no one else available at the time who knew the Arctic currents, and how to navigate through ice-channels. I agreed to take charge as soon as we came within sight of floating ice. It was a hard trip, setting out so late in the season, but we made fast time as the wind was with us all the way. Fortunately the winter did not set in that season until very late — almost the middle of November. I brought the schooner safely in to Point Barrow, and dropped anchor opposite the company's trading post. The cargo was all discharged there, except a little lumber and some supplies which I had bargained for in San Francisco with what I had in hand of my winter's wages.

Something happened. The captain said that he would

take charge, and sail the *Ivy* down opposite the place where my home was, and there land my lumber and supplies. Then he was going to sail right back to San Francisco. A wrong order must have been given — or perhaps an unlooked for tide-rip caught the *Ivy*. Because, just after my lumber and supplies had been safely landed — and me ashore — the schooner swung around and drove up on the beach — right before my home! I delayed going to my family so as to give what assistance I could in getting the schooner off the sands. Finally the captain gave up the attempt to free her. The port bow had been badly smashed when she drove against a small boulder on the beach. The captain declared her a total loss. He knew that the last ships for the South were due to leave in a few days, and he was anxious to get back to San Francisco and report. So he made out notices at once, calling for bids on the wreck.

A woe-begone Gremnia and children came to me just as I took some of the notices from the captain to carry down to Cape Smyth. I knew at once that they had been having a hard time, but I assured them that everything would be right again since I had returned, but that I must hurry off on the business of the schooner for a few days. They understood, and were glad again.

Having done the formal part, by posting the notices at the official place, I hurried back so as to be in time for the sale, which was to be right where the schooner lay. The captain was in a hurry. He must get away on the last outgoing ship. At the hour of the sale, apart from the captain and the crew, no one was present except myself and an old whaler, who was living near there, known as Captain Petersen. He had no money. I still had a little left of the savings from my San Francisco wages. When bids were called for I offered my

fifty dollars. There was no other bid. The wreck was mine.

Just about half an hour later a party of seven Whites and three Eskimos arrived for the auction. They had been delayed. The hour fixed in the notices had been noon. They were so angry when they found that the sale was over that I could not get them to help me on a scheme I had to get the schooner loose. They all went away. Only then did I have time for a long talk with Gremnia and the children and the neighbours who came around to welcome me back.

I had several ideas come to me about getting the *Ivy* back into the water, but none of them were so bright as they seemed at first when it came to making them work. For one thing, with my family to help me, I tried the plan of digging ditches in from the water around the hull. But the tides and the waves would spoil my ditches before they were of any use, and cancel the depth of them with drifting sand. When it came to trying to loosen the hull from the clutch of the sand by levers I found the weight too great. Apparently there was no power in the Arctic which I could harness to pull the *Ivy* out of danger. I knew that if she lay on the beach all winter she would be crushed almost to kindling wood by the ice movements along shore.

That night I walked the beach, and I was deep in thought. But thought seemed a very limited thing. So I turned in and went to sleep. The next morning I was moved to go on board. It was no tour of inspection; I just stood and gazed idly over the rail out at sea. Then in a flash I saw my power!

The first icebergs and ice-cakes of the season were slowly going by the sand-spit on which the *Ivy* lay.

They were in the current which sets in toward the North Pole. There was a good supply of cable aboard the *Ivy*. I made one end of the longest fast to the stern, which lay toward the sea, and then, putting the coil in my whale-boat, I started for an ice-floe which was just coming in sight. Reaching it I stepped out of the boat and chopped out two deep and thick jug-handles on the ice surface, and I passed the cable through and made it fast. Then I waited for results.

Slowly the slack of the cable was straightened, and then it began to tighten and strain. My jug-handles held in the ice, and the cable was a strong one. The *Ivy* shivered, straightened herself, and slid off from the beach like a toy boat pulled by a child — but slowly. She was afloat!

I cut the line loose at the ice-edge, and then hastened aboard my schooner. I sounded the pumps, and found that she had made some water, but I soon had her dry enough, and I sailed her safely into a near-by lagoon known to me. There, with help from Gremnia and the children and a neighbour we put the *Ivy* into winter quarters. A one-hundred-and-fifty-ton schooner, completely equipped, for fifty dollars!

The *Ivy* was so snug and comfortable that we moved into her for winter quarters. She served us well, and we had a happy and uneventful time until well on in June of the following year, 1908. We never lacked for food, and we obtained quite a fine stock of furs that winter.

Then I thought of sailing the *Ivy* down to Herschel Island. But when I had her out of winter quarters, and was working her into open water outside the lagoon, and was engaged in tightening the mainsail, she took a luff and struck a small submerged iceberg, port bow again, and just where I had repaired her. She started to

leak badly, and I took her to the beach, where I intended to repair her so soon as the weather improved.

I had arranged with the former captain of the *Ivy*, when I bought her, that he would take an order down to San Francisco for some supplies and trade goods to be shipped on the *Karluk*, and delivered for me at Herschel Island. I had been reliably informed that the *Karluk* had arrived not far south of Cape Smyth, and was waiting there for the ice conditions to improve before going on to Herschel Island. So I went down to Cape Smyth, and got out to the *Karluk*, and made satisfactory arrangements for the landing of my goods at Point Barrow.

While I was away from home a great storm came, and it was at its worst down east of Point Barrow along on the outside of Doctor Island, Cooper Island and Tangent Point. The *Ivy* filled, and sank in the mud. Gremnia barely got the family ashore in time during the night, and no sooner had she done so than a daughter was born to her. That wife of mine certainly has had a strenuous and changeful life, what between me and calamities, but she stands up bravely against whatever comes, and she makes the best of the little good times as they arrive.

When the weather got better I pumped the water out of the *Ivy*, made temporary repairs, put my family and dogs and belongings back on board, and then sailed her safely to Point Barrow. As the next winter was coming on I put her in a lagoon for safety, but a storm from the north-east blew all the new-formed ice out of the lagoon, and the *Ivy* went adrift with it. I could not get her back. All that winter of 1908-1909 she drifted back and forth in front of Barrow, frozen tight in the ice-pack. Toward spring, while I was away trapping, some of my enemies made their way out to the *Ivy*, looted her, and

then set her afire. Although I felt certain of their identity I could not prove it to the satisfaction of United States officials, and I found no opportunity for exacting private vengeance. So then I just let the *Ivy* go to the ups and downs of life, and felt better about it. Anyway, I had made fair use of her, and she had not cost me much.

I think it was about the first week in July, 1909, that the old whale-boat went into service again, carrying me and mine down to Herschel Island. On the way down I stopped at Flaxman Island, and there I picked up Storker T. Storkersen, a Norwegian with a better knowledge of ocean currents and the conduct of the ice than any other man whom ever I met in the Arctic.

But what did my eldest daughter do but fall in love with him! So when we got to Herschel Island Weena married him. I did not quite like the way, after that, she would side with her husband instead of me, her own father, when differences would arise between us. Just the same, Storkersen proved himself a great man. He had been on the *Duchess of Bedford* with the Leffingwell Expedition, and later he was in command of the *Karluk* under Stefansson. The hardships and anxieties which Storkersen endured in saving the lives of the Stefansson crew by his own wit and courage and endurance were such that he collapsed afterwards, and he is now being treated at an institution in Norway.

So it was that three years after leaving Herschel Island I was back with a final acquittal of murder, a new daughter whom we called Lena, my first son-in-law, Storker T. Storkersen, my good wife Gremnia and the rest of the family sound and healthy, and my old whale-boat, with a small dinghy attached. Not so bad! But still I was a poor man, depending upon rifle and harpoon and traps for meat and clothing!

OVER THE HARD TIME HILLS

ALL very fine for some explorers to tell of 'the friendly Arctic' when safe back home — with plaudits of Press and premiers and presidents in their ears — or when happily reminiscent over a glass of rum!

One may have keen adventures of the Arctic when well equipped for a tramp there in summer-time, or when frozen in for a winter on a comfortable ship specially built for such purpose, with plenty of good food from the South, and plenty of ammunition and fuel, and a camp not too far away where the crew may go and enjoy themselves with the Eskimos when they would be jolly that way. And none so isolated now as they were, all because of having radio to make the Arctic silence quiver with news and music of the world from every direction down South. It is true that in the Arctic there is no muck and venom of overcrowded life such as dwellers in the steaming green hells of Malaya must endure — or worse in India — nor is there ever any of that heart-withering lack of water such as in Australian deserts, and other hot regions of sand. But how the Arctic can bite! And emprison you! And starve you!

Take it from me, this talk about 'the friendly Arctic' is sheer blather! Whalers, trappers, traders, prospectors, missionaries, constables of the Royal Mounted — they know!

I went through thirty-three years in the Arctic, living with Eskimos as the Eskimos live. All of my years were

strenuous. And although there was a great sameness about them, yet each was coloured with a drama of its own. I could tell of twice as many as I already have, but it would make this book too long. Navigating and tramping as a trapper and trader, with only the intent and outlook of such, I did nevertheless try to make accurate observations, and remember them. But geography seems to change in the Arctic more quickly than elsewhere. Recorded places appear and disappear, to the annoyance of map-makers; places like Plover Land and Borden Land and Clerk Island. Why, even the names change! And as touching sea-currents, one is liable to find them in different mood and direction almost every year. A navigator rounding Point Barrow for the East in July will encounter the lay-out of the ice, and the leads through it, and the drifts, all in different combination from when he faced them last. And this may be even so soon as he rounds Cape Lisburne, and then he will find the pack laid out in a new deal for him to play if he delays his return to the South until the end of September. Entering the Arctic Ocean through Davis Strait or Hudson Strait from the Atlantic I dare say it will be the same, but I know nothing of navigation east of Victoria Island.

If there be no fogs to obscure the sun in summer then the weather may be quite warm for what will be practically one long day of two months. I have known it to be at least eighty degrees Fahrenheit, when lying ashore on the tundra any time from the middle of July to the middle of August, and seldom less than seventy through all of those two months so long as the sun be shining. But before and after that time the air is often dismal with fog or rain for weeks at a stretch. Then through a winter of nine months one never can tell when the blizzards will

be let loose to rage for days. Blizzards or no blizzards, the cold through that time never quits trying to get you. The cold is there against all life, unless it be that of the fish in the sea.

Speaking of fish: there will always be plenty in the Arctic to eat each other, and to be eaten of such human inhabitants as may choose to live there. But oil and fat and red meat are needed, and, since the Eskimos now have rifles instead of the arrows and spears of former generations, the game is beginning to fail. Reindeer herds, fostered by the Government, may take the place of caribou; and more and more of clothing and food and luxuries will be imported from the South. But even so, in a few generations I think that men themselves will become far fewer than now in the Arctic — unless new uses be found to which the Arctic may be put — or treasures of metal or whatnot else be uncovered there — and safer and cheaper air travel make all the Arctic accessible in a way that none ever dreamed it could be when I went there first as a sea-cook. As to that chance and those uses I may tell you more later.

When I was on my way to Herschel Island from Point Barrow with my family in my old whale-boat, after my final acquittal in San Francisco, I fell in with the *Duchess of Bedford*, of the Leffingwell Arctic Expedition. She was frozen in the ice. I went aboard, and traded some furs for a couple of rifles, a supply of ammunition, food from the South, and four cases of kerosene for a Primus stove I had bought. It was all very satisfactory. But when we arrived at Herschel Island the Mounted Police were acting up there again — acting as Customs Officers. And that was a new trouble for me.

I had never heard of such a thing as collection of

customs duties from poor men at Herschel Island. And I think it was a new job for the police. But they had a lot of rules to go by, and they were taking no chances by trying to make reasonable those Ottawa regulations. Apparently they were there to make it hard for any trader trying to enter the Canadian Arctic who was not a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company. They certainly made it hard for me!

My meagre outfit was appraised at a topnotch price — boat, gear, everything. The police happened to be out of kerosene, and they wanted my four cases. I would not sell them, as without them my Primus stove was of no value to me. We wrangled, and when they saw that I would not sell, they charged me so much duty on everything I had that it took almost every cent of ready cash I had to satisfy them.

I had hoped, with what money I had when I left Point Barrow, to buy a good supply of food at Herschel Island, so that my family would be safe for a while, and then go on toward the East. That was now out of the question, since Canada had taken my money. But a scow had come down the Mackenzie River, loaded with supplies, which were being distributed from where the scow lay between Halkett Island and a smaller island west of it in the western mouth of the river. So I heard, and I went down there to see for myself.

I found the scow. It had been built out of whip-sawed timber up the river. Its planks were about one inch thick, and it was stayed with hand-hewn timber framework. It was forty-two feet long, with a beam of about twelve feet, narrowing to eight feet across its flat bottom, which was double-decked. The scow was a scow, of course, shovel-nosed. Its seams were caulked with pitch.

I looked it over, and thought that if I could get it for nothing I might try to make it seaworthy. The owners really had no further use for it; no one would find it worth while to tow it back up river; no one would venture into the open with it. I had a twelve-foot dinghy, astern of my whale-boat, and we made a trade with that, as the scow owners could use the dinghy and could find no further use for the scow.

I fixed a good rudder on the stern of the scow, and I took the mast from my whale-boat, and set it up strongly to the fore. I fortified the bottom with additional thick planks, and I put sideboards on as further protection from floating ice. It took me most of the summer before I completed the job to my satisfaction. By the first week in September I had a boat in which I was willing to venture with my family, even so late in the season. My navigating scow had a large carrying capacity, for its size.

We started, all happy, for Baillie Island, which lies off Cape Bathurst nigh the eastern shore of Liverpool Bay. We sailed along slowly and peacefully through the channel which lies between Richards Island and the Mackenzie Delta mainland, and on the second day we were well out into Beaufort Sea. Then we had it rough — and rougher — and much too rough for any such craft as ours. There came on one of the worst autumnal gales which I had ever known in the Arctic since the time of the big wind at Point Hope.

For three days and nights Gremnia and I battled to save our scow in that gale. We had our old whale-boat on a towline behind, but the line parted after some of its strands had been worn through, and where my whale-boat went after that I never knew. Our whole time had to be given to keeping the scow right with the wind

and the waves. Patsy and Etna assisted, and the other children just crouched down with the dogs and instinctively kept out of the way, and were quiet. Weena, of course, was not with us — being off somewhere with Storkersen.

Suddenly the wind dropped down to a faint breath, and in a few hours later the sea was almost unruffled. This was sooner than usual, and lucky for us our scow had been blown around into a small bay and we were near a long, smooth beach which seemed littered with drift-wood. I made up my mind to put in there for the winter, and soon we were all ashore, and busy making preparations for the winter which was due to descend upon us within the next month. While we were landing and doing all that, there flashed through my mind the good story of the Swiss Family Robinson, and how I wished then that I had been cast away with my own family on some so kindly a shore as were those Switzers. But neither Gremnia nor her children knew anything of the like of that, and maybe would have preferred the bleakness of their own world. I do not know.

It was a hard winter we had there. Game was scarce, and I had to be out after it all the time. I did manage to get a good bundle of furs, however, and from some Eskimos who passed our way I learned that about twenty miles to the east of where we were a ship was frozen in the ice. I went out to find her, with my five dogs pulling the little sled on which were the furs.

I had a pleasant visit with the captain and crew of the schooner *Rosie H*, and I traded my furs for ammunition and as many supplies as I could pile on the sled and the dogs could pull, and me pulling with them.

The next spring I put the scow in order, and about

the first week of July launched it. We worked our way on and around into Liverpool Bay, at the eastern entrance of which lies Baillie Island, just off Cape Bathurst. It was not a happy move. The winter which followed was worse than the previous one, and we had much difficulty in getting enough to eat. There were days when Gremnia and I went without a scrap to eat that the children might share a little. But at that we did not lose one of our dogs. They knew our plight, and for lack of better they chewed contentedly on the strips of seal skin I boiled for them. The friendly Arctic!

Once more spring — such as it is in the Arctic — and once more I would be elsewhere.

How in June, slowly navigating through channels of danger, where ice might close on us like enormous hostile jaws, we made our way past Baillie Island and around Cape Bathurst and across toward Cape Parry, at the eastern entrance of Franklin Bay — a distance of about two hundred miles from where we had been — I wonder at it even to this day! But we did it! And we did it because I knew of an old steam-whaler, the *Alexander*, which had been wrecked and abandoned. I was guided so nicely to her that I beached the scow right alongside.

With timbers from the *Alexander* I reinforced my scow. I built a good cabin on it; I decked it fore and aft, and I stepped a second mast into it. I found a big oil drum on the *Alexander*, and, among other convenient things, a keyhole saw. With this I cut the drum in two halves, using the saw under water so as to prevent the friction heat from spoiling the temper of it. I beat one half into shape for a centre-board, and of the other half I contrived a stove, and I made use of it for long years after that.

With all that, and schooner rig for my two masts, the

gender of my scow changed — no longer *it* but *her*, like any other vessel that sailed — and she sailed well. She would slip fast over the water with a fair wind behind; she would sail close to the wind; and with my centre-board I could bring her around on the turn of a cart-wheel. That good she was!

I took whatever I could find of any use to me on the *Alexander*. Also, as the green whipsawed timber in the hull of my craft had shrunk a bit I took old sailcloth from the *Alexander* and caulked the seams, after first soaking the sailcloth in seal blood which I had boiled down almost to a thick gum. With that I had her tight as a drum.

By the time the transformation of the scow into a schooner of sorts was completed the summer had passed. Putting all aboard again, I directed my course to Booth Island, lying just off Cape Parry, a bit to the west. On that island we had a winter no better than the bad one on the shore of Liverpool Bay. By the following spring I realized that I must locate some region where there would be more game, and more Eskimos coming and going with whom I could trade. So next I tried Banks Island; crossing Amundsen Gulf to Nelson Head, which is the south tip of Banks Island, and then sailing around north-east into De Salis Bay. But even in there I could not make a landing, because of ice conditions and exasperating weather. It was the worst summer I ever spent in the Arctic. Drifting, thick blankets of fog alternated with high winds and torrents of rain, and the sun was obscured till it was almost time for it to hibernate below the horizon.

The children were getting thinner and thinner. For weeks we lived on tom-cod and frost-fish and snow-water — nothing else. From De Salis Bay I sailed south-east toward Victoria Island, and skirted the shore of it

across the mouth of Walker Bay and Minto Inlet to Cape Wollaston, but baffled and discouraged because of ice conditions which kept me far off shore. At last I gave up, and turned my course, heading south-west for Cape Lyons, at the eastern entrance of Darnley Bay. Our clothes were in tatters, and our only food was what was left of a young seal I had killed, the skin of which went to the dogs.

Around Cape Lyon I found that the wind had so jammed the ice-pack that a landing was impossible. Then I headed north-west for Cape Parry. Gremnia was ill, and I had to handle my scow-schooner alone, except for the turns young Etna would take at the wheel while I would be tending the sails. Reaching Cape Parry I tied up to the ice-edge, and then went off alone to get meat. I shot five geese, and might have got more had not a sudden strong wind from off shore frightened me back. It was a break in the ice — a break indeed for me. Soon a lead opened toward the south-east. Then a fog came over us, the off-shore wind having dropped to nothing, and followed by a faint breeze from the north. It drifted the fog so thickly over us that from the wheel I could barely see the mast next to me. I tied up to the slowly drifting ice. Gremnia began to prepare a couple of geese for dinner; Etna took command; and I went below and lay dead as a log with sleep.

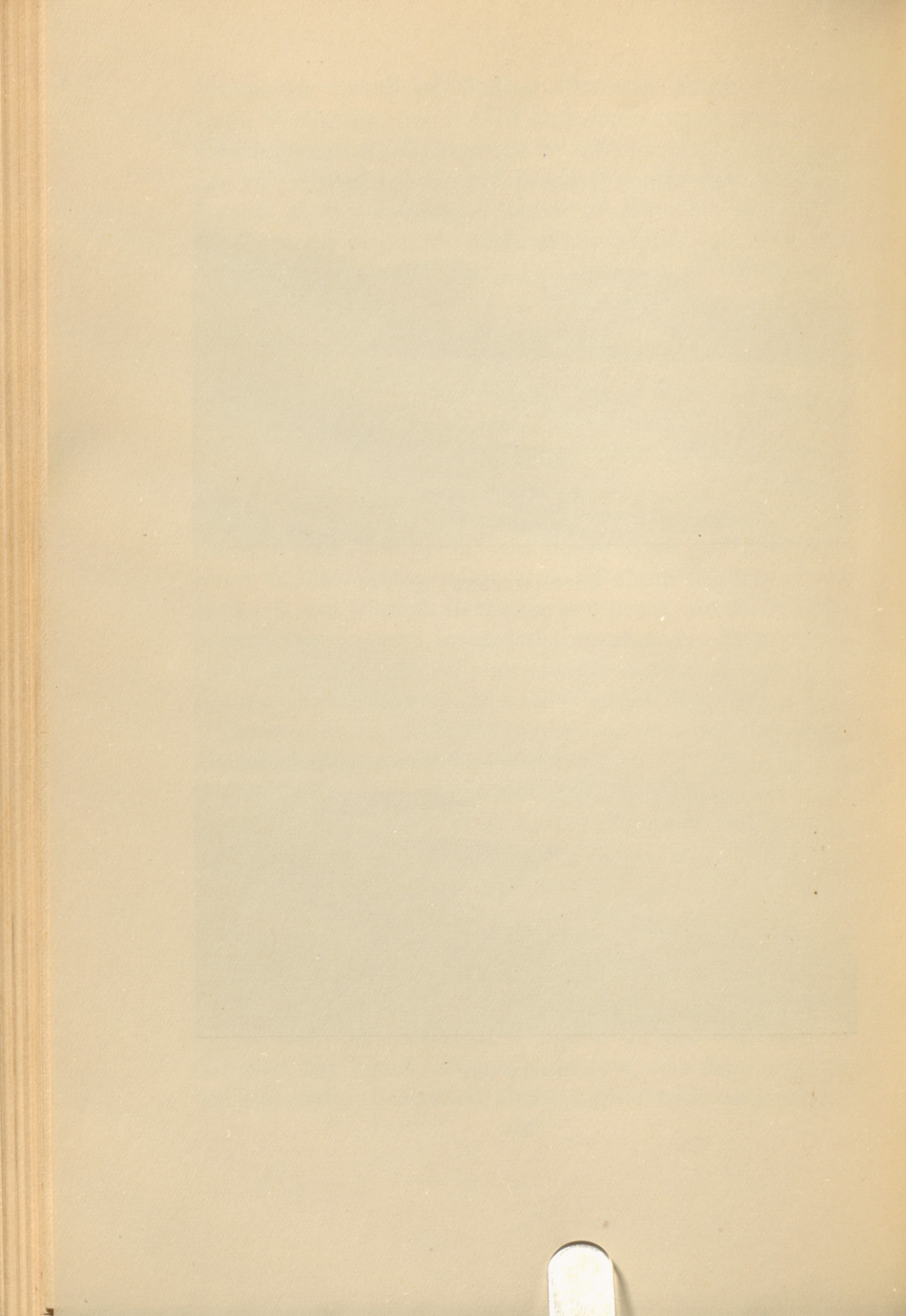
I came back from nowhere that I can remember. Etna was shaking me by the shoulder. She told me that she had cast off, that the fog was gone, and that she could see a good place ahead for landing. I found that we were at the mouth of a lagoon on the east side of Darnley Bay which, although shallow, was deep enough for our craft. It seemed about a mile wide and maybe



CAPE LISBURNE



DARNLEY BAY



a league long. I soon spied a smooth stretch of beach, free from the usual small boulders and slabs of dolomite. That place I decided would do.

I enjoyed the goose broth and the stewed goose which Gremnia had ready for us soon after that. Then I got my rifle and Patsy got his shot-gun. We started off for a sloping hill in the distance to kill whatever came our way that we could eat.

Our luck had turned. Not more than half a mile back from the beach I sighted three caribou. I told Patsy to head off for himself in another direction, and I began to stalk the caribou. I succeeded in killing two of them. While I was skinning and cutting them I heard the reports of Patsy's shot-gun. I felt sure that he was getting ptarmigan.

Hearing my shots all the family, except Gremnia and the youngest, went out to find me. And the dogs went with them, assured at last of plenty of good meat. I was carrying as much of the meat as I could, and Etna, with the sled and the dogs, went back on my trail and brought in the remainder of the two carcasses, having first fed the dogs until they were satisfied. Patsy came back soon after I did, and he had eight ptarmigan. We were a happy family that night at Darnley Bay.

I got the vessel well up on the beach the next day, and this was not so difficult, because of the easy slant and smoothness of the sand. Every pound of the caribou meat we dried and partly smoked. What did not dry well, because of the unusual damp weather that summer, we put through a big meat-grinder which I had found on the *Alexander*. Another good thing I had found on that ship was a large sack of salt, after searching in vain for tea and sugar and oil.

The meat, after grinding, was salted and pressed compactly into sealskin pokes, and boiling seal blubber poured on top of it, after which the pokes were tied very tightly, and then hung away for use as wanted. I suppose it would be something like the buffalo pemmican, once so much depended upon over the Canadian prairies before they were settled with wheat growers.

For the rest of that summer Gremnia kept the children busy hunting for duck eggs, goose eggs and sea-gull eggs, and they gathered great quantities of them, all but Patsy, who, being then in his twelfth year, went hunting for ptarmigan and other birds every day with his shot-gun. The eggs we would boil hard, and then, taking the shells off, put them in pokes with boiling seal blubber, and they kept very well in that condition. The ducks and geese and ptarmigan which Patsy shot or snared were cleaned and dried, and then hung up much as I saw them in Shanghai when I was there. They also kept in good condition.

When the egg-laying season was over the children gathered cranberries and salmon-berries and blueberries. Having no sugar we managed to dry them, as the Indians used to do in British Columbia, but we did not spread them in flat cakes. Gremnia put them in pokes with hot seal blubber, same as the meat and eggs, and they had a good taste for us through the winter that followed. And great armfuls of native root vegetables, of which I will tell you more later, were poked away for winter with seal blubber, same as the meat and eggs and berries. Moreover, we had a fashion of haggis that would fash a Scot maybe, but we found it good in the winter, and a vegetarian might eat it. It came to us this way: Caribou about there were feeding largely on moss and a kind of sourdock and tender willow shoots. Whenever

I would kill a caribou I would take the stomach out whole, and tie up the intestines leading in and out of it. Then Gremnia would wash the thing carefully and poke it entire in boiling seal blubber. In winter, frozen solid as a rock, I would chop it into small morsels, and serve it with chopped berries and oil by way of desert. It tasted quite good, having an acid flavour. We also dried and salted a quantity of salmon and trout, but we were not so busy at that for we knew that we could catch fresh fish all winter through the ice. In some of the lakes back in among the hills I caught some salmon-trout that I think must have weighed fifty pounds each. Anyway, they were big fish. We made fish-nets out of sinews — not large ones of course — but they served to catch many fish.

One hears much talk these days in the South about the need for a 'balanced ration' — especially from orange-juice and tomato-juice doctors who probably are in the pay of planters, and themselves eat their fill of beef steaks and puddings, out of sight of their patients. Seems to me the human body can get along very well on almost any kind of food, if taken raw or properly cooked, and outdoor work and common sense to back it. Scurvy is not caused by meat diet. It is caused by too much salt and laziness and by men being shut up too much with each other in small confines. Eskimos, in my time, never had scurvy; many of them will not touch salt; many of them scarce ever nibble at a vegetable or taste a berry for nine months at a stretch.

For two years or so we lived there on the west side of Darnley Bay. And we lived entirely off the land! With a wife and six of my children everything we had to eat and wear came from the land we were in — a land where explorers wonderfully equipped have again and

again died of scurvy or starvation. Realizing my limitations I would not brag — and I know that without Gremnia I might not have survived as I did — but — just the same — !

I put my scow-schooner into good condition for winter residence. I had in mind to name her properly, so soon as I might lay hand on a bottle of wine from some passing ship — but I never did — or I drank it all if I did. But I thought of my scow-schooner as the *Homely Hippopotamus*, because of the great river on which she first swam for far less than she was destined to be and to go. She served us that winter very sufficiently as an igloo. We piled thick walls of tundra all around her. And alongside we put great piles of drift-wood for fuel. Her hold was filled with meat and fish and oil and furs. But I did not tell her real name to the others, for they had no understanding of a horse, let alone a river horse, and if I had tried to explain they would only have thought I meant a big walrus.

Gremnia and Etna busied themselves for long hours with preparation of caribou skins, and the making of them into winter garments trimmed very modishly with varied scraps of fur. And when winter came? Well, it was the most comfortable winter I had so far spent in the Arctic. No trouble from men, and no weather I could not face. I was happy — my family was happy — my dogs trusted me!

In the spring of 1915 a patrol of the Canadian Arctic Expedition came down our way at Darnley Bay from Herschel Island, intending to examine the coast all along to Bathurst Inlet. Two of the men were learned in geology — able to survey land with accuracy — able to

tell what metals if any were in a rock by looking at it. One was Dr. K. G. Chipman and the other was Dr. J. J. O'Neill, and in command of them later I think was Dr. R. M. Anderson. The expedition had split into two parties, the larger one being under Vilhjalmur Stefansson, who had led it on into Victoria Island. He would find out if what I had told about the island were true, and find a lot more maybe about those sequestered Eskimos there who were still in the culture of the Stone Age, edged with copper; and about the big slabs of native copper far inside the island; and bits of more valuable stuff with it in a place I know.

When these men came to the *Homely Hippopotamus*, and saw me and my family, and what a smart boy was Patsy, they naturally wanted to arrange for his services as an interpreter and guide about those parts and farther to the east along the mainland. I was delighted at the chance offered him for a bit of practical schooling. And so it was arranged, and he went off with them for a season. Dr. Chipman made him speak English all the time, and I had difficulty in doing that. For the custom established by Gremnia and the children in our family was that I should speak to them in English and they would answer me in Eskimo. Dr. Chipman gave Patsy his first lessons in reading and writing, and keeping tally with Arabic numerals. And Dr. Anderson, who was making a collection of the different kinds of birds in the Arctic, taught Patsy how to mount them properly, and this gave him some good, practical notions about treating and keeping furs.

After Patsy went away with the men of the expedition, I decided to go trade some furs for more supplies. I could not let Gremnia strain herself at that time, but with what little aid I had from the others, and my own ingenuity,

I pushed the *Homely Hippopotamus* back into the water, and we sailed to the west and landed at Baillie Island. I had one hundred and fifty good furs with me. With these I secured an excellent new outfit, and plenty of supplies. But, as by the time my business was completed it was drawing to the end of September, I decided to leave my scow-schooner at Baillie Island, against the collateral of her borrowing a good whale-boat, and in that we sailed for Langton Bay in Darnley Bay, about a league off from the foot of the Melville Hills. I did that because I heard that there was an abandoned cabin there which had been built years before by whalers, who had used it as a store-house.

I found the cabin. It was empty, except for a large pile of old American magazines. I stuffed the leaves of these into all the chinks between the boards of the cabin, and then banked it well up with earth all around on the outside. In October my youngest son, Bob, was born in that cabin.

I had a very successful winter at Langton Bay; and the following spring, from so far east I think as Arctic Sound, the exploring patrol returned our way, and Patsy was with them looking wonderfully well, and full of new notions and knowledge. There was a likely looking young Eskimo with that detachment who was Patsy's chum. His name was Ikey Bolt. The trouble with him was that Etna began almost at once to think more of him than I expected. In her fashion she stole him away from Patsy, and I saw that I was going to lose my accomplished and useful daughter just as I had lost Weena to Storker T. Storkersen.

And then who should come wandering around there for the love of God but a Roman priest. I cannot now recall his name rightly — something like Father Frabsole,

or Fraisolet maybe, but not quite either. Anyway, he was one fine Frenchman, and I think he had started a mission somewhere down by Great Slave Lake. He was pleased with Baby Bob, and wanted to baptize him, and I could see no harm in that, and so it was done. And Etna and Ikey wanted to be married. We made as great a feast as we could in our restricted way, with scanty supplies. But we had a plenty of good meat, cooked in every way I could think of cooking it.

In that spring of 1916, after the baptism and the wedding that followed, I put my family and belongings back into the whale-boat, and sailed for Baillie Island. There I found my scow-schooner in practically as good condition as when I had left her. But I gave her a good overhauling, and then loaded her with supplies and trade goods, intending to go trading toward the east, perhaps so far as Bathurst Inlet, where Patsy had been, and of which Ikey told me a lot. Etna, you see, had decided that she would not go off right away after her marriage, as Weena had done with Storkersen, but would keep Ikey and stay with me. So my family was increased.

Just as we were ready to sail, in came to Baillie Island a Hudson's Bay schooner, the *McPherson*, in command of Captain Henderson. The Captain told me that he was on his way to establish a new post at a place he indicated on a very inadequate chart which he had. Ikey said the place was *Ugyksiorvik*, and I said he could have it that way, but I would undertake to pilot the *McPherson* over to it. Captain Henderson said that it was going to be called *Bernard Harbour*, after the trading captain, Joe Bernard, who had spent a winter there two years before, in his schooner the *Teddy Bear*. He had reported it as having a good outer and inner harbour, formed by

islands, and capable of accommodating any ship that sailed in the Arctic.

Captain Henderson was glad when I agreed to pilot the *McPherson* to Bernard Harbour. His schooner had a good petrol engine, and I anticipated no trouble. So I put the *Homely Hippopotamus* in charge of Patsy and Ikey, and the rest of the family and the dogs on board with them, and they sailed along in the wake of the *McPherson*, of which I had taken charge.

There came one of the sudden Arctic gales. My poor old scow-schooner was caught in a drift of ice, and soon after that was blown out of sight. Anxious as I was, I had no right alternative but to go on and make Bernard Harbour. This I did, and immediately left the *McPherson* and hurried west on foot along the shore, thinking to keep on so far as Stapylton Bay, into which my family might have been blown.

Imagine my relief when after being out about an hour I caught sight of Patsy. He was hurrying toward Bernard Harbour for help. He told me that he had managed to beach our vessel, and get all the family and belongings ashore, but that he feared the old scow-schooner would sail no more. He took her to be a total loss. We hurried on back to the family, and finding them all in good condition I lost no time in examining the wreck. It was no wreck for me! I knew how to patch her with what I had right there, and three days later I sailed her safely around into Bernard Harbour.

At Bernard Harbour I completed repairs, and took on additional supplies and trade goods, which Captain Henderson gave me on very liberal terms, for he knew how right I was, and then I sailed over toward the mouth of the Coppermine River, and located a trading post a little to the south of Cape Kendall.

After that I moved variously before establishing Rymer Point, and I had a man's full share of troubles and rough experiences, but — I began to make money — and the more I made the easier I made it. The *Homely Hippopotamus* went back on the land for keeps — that is to say, I turned her into a godown, and a very good warehouse she was. Alongside I built a good cabin of drift-wood, big enough for cubicles and pantries, and a big living room in which I put the stove which I had made from the half of the old oil-tank which I took from the *Alexander*. And of course I had a good layer of tundra outside around the walls.

The Coppermine Eskimos were all away over the hills to the south when I arrived, and they did not return until I had everything in order at the cabin and godown, with all trade goods well under cover. A good thing for me, because I found those natives of the Coppermine would bear watching at all hours. They were not like the honest Eskimos with whom I had mostly consorted beforetime. I think they roamed too far and too often among the Indians and the Whites down South around Great Bear Lake for their moral health. They are expert thieves. And not very far south of where I had established my new post, and three years before doing so, they had killed two good priests of the Oblate Order, Father Le Roux and Father Rouvier, nigh the mouth of the Coppermine.

Those Eskimos began to visit us. And after every visit I would miss a few small things from the cabin; knives, ammunition, even needles and such like loose odds and ends would disappear. I tried to catch them at it, but their sleight of hand was too fine for my eye. Finally I went to see some of their aldermen and make complaint to them, but either they would not or could

not help me. Probably they were just aldermen, and received their little share of whatever little was taken.

I was not afraid of those bad Eskimos any more than ever I was afraid of bad sailors, but I did not care to cure their conduct by going to extremes with a gun if I could reasonably avoid doing so, because I felt in those days that for some unfounded reason the Mounted Police were prejudiced against me. I had never learned how to do true magic, but I could do a trick and pretend. So I managed to assemble the leading Coppermine men around me, and I told them that unless all my goods were returned to me at once I would let loose devils on all the guilty ones and make them sick, and I assured them that I knew how to do it, and that many devils were my friends. This was confirmed by two natives of Baillie Island who had been out with the Arctic Expedition, and who had heard of me and were on good terms with Ikey and Patsy.

The news spread. Presently some Eskimos began to feel uneasy, and a few really became sick, and luckily for me they were the ones who had taken the most. Bit by bit my stolen goods were dropped in front of my cabin door by stealth, until practically all had been returned. But some of the sick ones remained sick; the devils obstinately continuing to afflict their stomachs. Now it happened that among my stores I had something labelled *ipomæa purga*, but which on shipboard every sea-cook knows as jalap. I made a jam of some berries which Gremnia had in a seal poke, and with that jam I mixed a quantity of jalap such as I considered must be very effective. It was. The sick men who took it from me assured their friends, when they were feeling better, that I had put something in their stomachs which no devil could stand. And so the trouble passed. And although

other troubles came in most troublesome ways I knew better after that how to meet them, and more and more I depended upon being guided by what I could neither feel nor see, but which is too real and fine for any name I know. And with that I was over and beyond the Hard Time Hills!

BLUFFING A BEAR FROM HIS
MEAT

LIVING my way, and for so long, in the Arctic one must have much to do with bears. Polar bears are quicker and craftier than the greater brown bears of Siberia, but they are easier to kill with one well-placed bullet. They are not so likely to go out of their way looking for a fight as the Siberian or the Grizzly. The polar bear prefers to stick strictly to business — and his business is the getting of fresh meat. The polar bear may be fierce in attack when slightly wounded, but even then he may think better to turn his rump to the aggressor and make off for neutral territory and more peaceful hunting. But one can never be sure. Bears differ in disposition just as men do.

If a polar bear is quite hungry, and there is nothing in sight better to his taste than a man, he may stalk that man cleverly. Sometimes he will do this successfully when the man thinks he is stalking the bear. In such case if a bear spies a man on the ice he may creep around ahead of him, and calculate just where he is likely to crawl over or through a pressure-ridge. These ridges frequently are thirty feet high, and occasionally there occur archways or tunnels from one side to the other, which will be ample for passage by a man crawling or crouching or even walking erect. The strategy of the bear is to get in position for action at the exit, and with one blow to break the man's neck or back as he comes

through. The bear will be as patient and quick as when he waits at an ice-hole for a seal to rise in it, and he will wait at that motionless as long as will an Eskimo, which, to my own knowledge will often be six to eight hours or even ten at a stretch. The seal, like the whale and the walrus and other such sea animals, must come to the surface for air to breathe, and the seal usually will arrange to have a dozen or more ice-holes when he is fishing in a region under ice. So likewise the bear will wait at the exit of an ice-ridge tunnel for a man to come through just as he will wait at an ice-hole for a seal to come up. There were several instances of a bear getting his dinner that way in my time where I was. Remnants found on the ice by the ridge exit would bear witness to the fate of a man.

Polar bears are very playful when young, but as they grow older the cares of life make them grouchy. I have watched a mother-bear watching for a seal at an ice-hole, and her children tumbling and scampering around after each other, uttering little squeals of fun when one could upset the other. And I have seen the mother turn her face toward them, exasperated because of the noise they were making, which might reach to a seal under the ice. I have seen her look just like the comic cross bear in the comic pictures — so human was her expression. And it would be enough to quieten the cubs — for a few minutes. Even the black tip of her nose on her white face would look droll.

I never saw a polar bear with a white-tipped nose. But I have heard of such. It is a vampire bear, or the like of a loup garou, which probably is a werewolf, but the human spirit operating it is always that of a bad white man. If killed, then the spirit tries to get into a young cub, and if it succeeds then the tip of the nose gradually turns white. But if such a bear die naturally or of the

belly-ache then the white man in it is blown away to where he properly belongs, and can find no by-path into the body of another bear. So I have heard. And for all you know you do not know that such things may not be.

Once, while living below one of the capes called Kendall, nigh the mouth of the Coppermine River — the other Kendall being on the east side of Victoria Island straight south from Cape Baring — my son Patsy went out with me to get a bear. At intervals in the Arctic I would hanker for the rich, strong taste of polar bear meat; fancying its rejuvenating effect. When rightly broiled or roasted, so as to keep the juices in, and not overdone, this meat is very satisfying. Even boiled it is good, but some of its best elements will be lost that way, unless the water be kept for soup.

Patsy at that time was a sturdy lad, still growing. Very carefully we were making our way along a narrow ledge more than half way up the face of the cliff. It slanted almost sheer down for about a thousand feet to the sea. Overhead from the ledge was better, but it would have bothered a goat to climb it.

Around corners we followed the ledge until we came to where it narrowed to nothing. We then moved back to a place where we had noticed a passable gap through the rock, crossing our path almost at right angles, and at an easy slant down to an outjutting bastion of the cliff. We decided to go down there for a rest and a survey of our position. We leaned our rifles against the face of the rock, and went out to the edge of the projection, a distance of about eight feet. Patsy was ahead of me. For about five minutes we rested; leaning over and peering down the cliff wall. We were in a great silence. Then I heard the fall of a small loose bit of rock. Turning my

head I saw coming down the incline toward us a fully grown polar bear.

Because of the direction of the wind I do not think that he could have scented us. Probably he was merely exploring a way around the cliff, as we were. But he was between us and our rifles!

Thought and action must be instant in such cases, or there is likely to be no salvation. I stood, and then crouched, and we were almost nose to nose. The bear was in an awkward position for rising on his haunches, or make any usual movement for attack, and evidently he realized it. He ruffled the fur on his neck, and growled. I jumped on his back, and in an instant I had gone over it and jumped to Patsy's rifle, which lay first to hand. Just as the bear had managed to turn and was advancing on me I shot him through the head at a distance of no more than one yard. He subsided just where he was — all in a lifeless heap. In a flash Patsy was beside me. He grabbed the other rifle, and with it shot two younger bears which were just coming down through the gap after the big one.

We cut and took away what we could, and later Patsy and two others went back and recovered all that remained. My taste for bear meat was satisfied that time, and there was much to spare for our friends.

Another time in that same region I went out to bring home a bear. But that time I went out on the ice, and I went alone, and all I brought home was an experience — a very Neanderthal one, such as I might have had in some Glacial Age of long ago.

I started away over the frozen sea at first glimmer of dawn, and I walked in a cold, dead world of white and grey with never a sign of life until about noon. Then

I saw the tracks of two bears. They would be out seal-hunting. So I just followed those tracks till I came in sight of the two of them, sitting like huge figures in carved ivory a short distance from each other at an ice-hole. The wind was blowing from them toward me. I crept very carefully until I was within thirty yards of one of them, and then with one shot I killed him. The other I wounded, and he made off at high speed around a hummock of ice, and then in and out for a long distance among a series of pressure-ridges. It was easy trailing him by the splashes of blood on the snow, but he led me round for a difficult half mile or more in a circle almost back to the ice-hole, and there I killed him.

I lost no time then in skinning the two bears, because in the cold weather unless this be done before the hide freezes to the carcass it makes the work very difficult. Also, unless the animal be opened before freezing the flavour of the meat is liable to become much too strong.

By the time I had the two bears skinned and quartered it began to grow dark, and there came a strong wind with snow. It was too late for me to try and get back home that day, all in the dark as it soon would be against that thick and bitter storm. So I built a snow house, and when it was complete I put the two bear-skins inside. I had no sleeping bag, as I had not expected to be out over night, but I did have slung across my back a bear-skin hunting bag, with extra ammunition, a packet of needles and thread, an extra pair of mukluks and a pipe and tobacco. These hunting bags are made with a large flap. They may serve as a quarter-way sleeping bag, at a pinch, in this way. Sit on the flap and put your feet in the bag, then draw your arms out of your parka sleeves and wrap the sleeves around your neck, and then lie down with knees drawn up and your head in the parka

hood. In this case I had a bear-skin under me and over me, and so I was not bitten by the cold. Besides that, I had on a double suit of skin clothes. So, after eating some of the bear meat raw, and smoking my pipe for awhile, I went to sleep, intending to be up and off for home in the morning with as much meat as I could carry, counting on the storm to blow itself out by that time. I had unhappy dreams.

I woke at dawn, only to find the storm had increased during the night. It was a blinding blizzard when I put my head out of the snow house. And the wind was blowing from off shore, which was cause for dismay. I ate some raw meat and then started toward shore for a survey. Just as I had suspected — the wind had broken the ice-field from the beach — there was already a gap of nigh half a mile between me and a safe walk home. I was adrift — moving out to sea — but I comforted myself with the thought that the wind was liable any time to veer around and blow my floating island back somewhere between Cape Kendall and the mouth of the Coppermine — and no more worry.

To occupy myself while waiting for the storm to abate and the wind to change I carried all my meat and the two bear skins about a half a mile farther back on the ice-field, away from its edge. There I built myself a better snow house. Toward evening I shot a seal when it came up through an ice-hole. Having skinned it at once I packed all its meat and blubber to my house, and then I scooped out a hollow trough on the ice floor, after which I split a bit from the seal skin and pressed it down into the trough. As I did so the seal oil exuded from the blubber and formed a little pool in the trough. I sliced a little slip from the tail of my snowshirt to serve

as a wick, and soon I had of that a hot flame. I broiled some meat, and I melted snow in the big tin cup which was in my hunting bag. And again I smoked, and again I went to sleep, hoping to waken to better weather. I did not!

For eighteen days after that the blizzard continued, and the wind then was blowing from so many directions I no longer could be sure where I was except just there, nor how far into Coronation Gulf I had been blown. Only, although I had no glimpse of the sun in all that time, I felt sure that I was going toward the east. I kept count of the dawns by putting a knot in a sinew string for each one of them as it came. The morning that I tied the eighteenth knot the wind suddenly ceased, and the air grew much colder.

I decided to try and locate myself. I cut off some of the bear skin to wrap around my feet and save wear and tear on mukluks. I put all the meat I could carry in my hunting bag and I started to walk east along the ice-field, keeping my course by the sun in the day and the stars in the night — the sky having become cloudless. For three days and nights, with short rests, I kept on travelling toward the east, and then I came to open water, and saw a true shore about three hundred yards across it. I knew by the sun that it must be the mainland shore, but whether I was still in Coronation Gulf or in Dease Strait or down in Bathurst Sound I could not know by any sign.

There were pieces of new ice floating in the lead, and some adhering to the edge of the field where I was. My only possible material for a raft to get across to the shore was that new ice. I tried to break off a piece big enough to carry me, chipping into it with my heavy copper ice-pick. Failing in that I had a happy thought, and with

my rifle I reached out and touched a floating ice-cake, and slowly tended it toward me. I got three ice-cakes close together that way. I slid my body carefully on the biggest one, and then with a leg on each of the other two I floated. Using the butt of my rifle I clumsily paddled my way toward shore, and because of what I had under me for a raft and the position I was in and only a rifle for a paddle, I doubt if any man ever had a slower and harder bit of paddling to do. However, I had gotten more than half way across the channel, and was encouraged, when a wind of a sudden began to blow from off shore against me, and it was hard to make headway against it. I did at last reach the edge of the shore-ice. I knew the water was too deep for wading; and from the three pieces of ice my crawling would need to be nice for every last inch of it if I were to make a safe landing. If I slipped into the water and sank there was danger of a current dragging me under the projecting ice shelf. To ease myself I foolishly flung my rifle toward shore when about three yards distant, intending to paddle for a landing with my hands. I miscalculated. The butt hit the edge of the ice — and glanced off. My rifle disappeared in the sea! And with that, as if an imp were in the business, there came a strong puff of wind against me, and I was blown back into the channel. Finally I was blown back very near to the place from which I had started. There, with great difficulty, and much depressed, I crawled slowly back on to the ice-field.

Fortunately I still had my hunting-bag. No meat was in it. But other things were there, including the ice-pick, thread and needles and safety-pins. Also I had my snow-knife and hunting-knife at my belt.

My clothes were soaking wet in places, from lying on

the ice-cakes, and my matches were wet. I set to work and built a snow house as quickly as possible, for I saw that another blizzard was coming. And in that — cold, hungry, weary and almost discouraged — I slept!

For two days and nights the storm continued. On the morning of the second day I broke through my snow house. I knew that I must soon eat or die. I had contrived a hook from the safety-pin, and I had twisted thread for a fishing-line, which I thought would be strong enough to hold a small fish.

Soon from the edge of the lead I was catching frost-fish. They were smaller than tom-cod. Frost-fish will bite at anything bright and jigging, so the first ones I caught without bait. So soon as I caught them I would throw them on the ice to freeze stiff, and then, drawing them through my mitten to get the salt-water ice off from them, I would eat them. Frozen fish taste, while still frozen that way, almost as if they were cooked. They make a cold bellyfull that way in the Arctic, but yet they appeased my hunger.

On the third day I started off, as any other animal might, in search of prey. I wanted meat and oil, but practically I was without a weapon. I had not gone far, and by that time not realizing why I was going in any particular direction, when I saw a big bear by an ice-hole. I kept still and watched him for about half an hour. Bitterly I bemoaned the loss of my rifle.

Suddenly there was a flash of the bear's paw. The claws entered into a seal, and with a curve and a heave jerked it clean out of the hole. The bear was on it in a moment, and with one blow broke its neck. Then with no delay he began to eat.

That bear was not in good condition, but he would easily have weighed a thousand pounds just as he was.

He evidently was very hungry, and the longer I watched him eating the hungrier I got myself for a bite of that seal meat. Somehow I must get some of it. Having no weapon, I was guided into guile and pretence, by whatever it is that guides one like me.

I started for that bear, making a swaying approach on tiptoe, as if I were going to spring upon him. He raised his head and growled at me. When he did that I stopped, but looking him in the eye I growled right back at him — and I scarce realized that I was growling — it came from me so naturally. I think we must have passed a full minute in growling and snarling at each other, and me going up and down on my tiptoes all the time. Then the bear rose from his crouching position, keeping one paw on the seal. Then I started toward him, making short jumps, and holding my hunting knife in my left hand and my long cropper ice-pick in the right. The bear swung his head from side to side as I got nearer, and growled the more. He would not retreat, and I was wondering just how near I might safely go when he rushed at me. I turned and ran. My first object was to get away, and my second was to draw him away from the seal. But he was not so crazy as that. He turned and went back to his meat. Immediately I turned and followed him back. He gave one snarl and came at me again, and again I had to run, but not so far as the first time, and when he turned I turned also, and came on him so swiftly that I was able to drive the ice-pick into his rump deeply, and pull it out. I tried for his backbone, but missed.

The bear jumped forward with a roar. He went clear over the seal, and I went bellowing after him, and then, stopping with one foot on the seal, I waved the bloody ice-pick at him. He growled at me, as if he were going

to advance again, and then the wound in his rump must have stung him, for he turned to lick it. I made a threat at him, and he backed from me. I continued the demonstration, and slowly he retreated, facing me. Then he turned and walked away, looking at me over his shoulder, and moving very slowly. He stopped and licked his wound again. Then he climbed over an ice-ridge and disappeared.

I lost no time then in putting my hunting-knife to use in cutting up that seal, but even while I was doing it the reasonable part of me could hardly credit what had taken place. It was like a dream of being a Stone Age man again, and using the cunning such men must have used in order to conquer and outlast the greater animals with which they had to fight for food. But that seal liver was no dream, as I ate it raw. I had not done it before, but I had noticed that the Eskimos always eat seal liver raw so soon as they kill a seal — if they are hungry. I cut the blubber into strips, and laid them out on the snow to cool off and stiffen while I built a new snow house. By the time I had the house finished the night was come, and after eating more of the meat I went to sleep inside.

The sun was shining brightly in the morning, and there was no wind. Once more, carrying the meat with me, I started walking toward the East. There was no incident, and at night I built another snow house and slept. The next day was the same. On the third morning I ate the last of my seal meat, but toward evening I succeeded in catching nine frost-fish. One can keep alive on them, but they are not very satisfying, especially after one has lived on nothing but red and raw meat.

On the fourth day I saw many seals, but it was im-

possible for me to get them in the water with my knife or ice-pick. Late in the afternoon I saw two bears. They were eating a seal amiably between them, but neither seemed hungry. They tore out strips of blubber, and choice morsels of meat, and then moved on. I went to the remnants of their kill, and found that nearly all the meat was left. I made a good meal, and then stowed the rest away in my hunting bag. As my second pair of mukluks were the worse for wear I tied strips of the seal skin over the soles, and then resumed my march toward the east.

Just as the dusk was coming on I sighted a place where the ice-field had jammed against the shore-ice. I knew the true south shore because of some low hills in the distance. So glad I was when I left the ice-field that I went straight inland for about half a mile to be sure, and then I started to walk toward the west. I walked until I was almost exhausted, when I came to a clump of willows by a frozen stream. I built a makeshift snow house, and when I was taking some seal meat out of my bag I came upon three matches in it which seemed dry and good. I gathered twigs of willows, and carefully tried one match. It lit! And I was able to broil some of the meat for a change, and after that I had a bit of good tobacco for my pipe. I had a very luxurious and consoling smoke, and then I slept.

At the first grey streak of dawn I was on my way again. I followed the shore toward the west, and in about three hours I came upon tracks — human tracks — in the snow. I examined them carefully, and knew them for Kogmolik mukluks, the fashion of footgear worn by the Eskimos about the Coppermine and Mackenzie river outlets. It was easy for me to follow those tracks. I knew that the maker of them had been setting a trap

line. Toward the afternoon I came upon a steel trap, which I felt sure was one which I had given to an Eskimo who was with us that winter at Cape Kendall. There was a white fox in it.

I killed the fox and skinned it, and then followed the tracks until I came in sight of certain rocks and hills by which I knew that I was then about thirty miles from home. A flood of good feeling swept through me at that, and strengthened me. It seemed as if home were only next door from nowhere, and I walked briskly on until the night came. The next morning, as I rose determined to be with my family in time for supper, I tied the last knot in the little string of sinew which I had been carrying — a knot for every day since I had gone adrift — and there were twenty-eight of them!

That night as I reached home I did realize how much my family meant to me, and how much I meant to them!

MEAT, MEDICINE AND RELIGION

‘And what will your children do for Bread?’

‘Let them eat each other!’ the Dark Fool said.

Rhymes of a Rounder.

FROM childhood I have been interested in food. When first I went to sea I was a cook, as I told you. Sailing here and there, and into foreign parts, I have found many kinds of food — good, bad and worse — but I have never found any food anywhere which had not been alive in some way before it was eaten. Even babies and mosquitoes must suck living food from the living to keep alive.

All food being organized of its own life, we find our upkeep at bottom a bloody dirty affair, from the Tropics to the Poles, both ways and back. Clearly the sin of origin is not ours, and like enough it is but the sad, haphazard outcome of conditions without design. But, if otherwise, then the bones of it stand out more starkly from continual encampments of ice and snow, where no greenery is. In the Arctic one may not screen God’s skeleton with vegetables.

Thus between one kill and another, when there is nothing else to do but wait for the next thing to do, a man of my sort is made to think in spite of himself — and apart from himself.

Yet for all that, and by way of coaxing a man to go on, though it may seem but one step more to his last,

there is the like of an inside receiver of hope always open for something other and better beyond every horizon, if one be still and tune in for the news and the promises. Yes, that is exactly what I mean! And who are you, gouching so cleverly down here in comfort, to say that one like me may not moralize and be an optimist in the Arctic? I have made the radio in my head work better than a drink — where there was no drink to be had. And while, of course, I spent more than thirty of my short summers and long winters with the Eskimos as a trader, and for the fun of it, yet I had eyes and ears for more than anybody's business in particular. I followed that which led me, although never with intent to uplift or depress other people into believing what I myself believe about what none of us can ever really know much for sure.

So you see I was never minded to be a religionist, nor even a scientist. I never did any exploring just for the sake of exploring. But in 1915 I was very glad to get my son Patsy attached to the Canadian Arctic Expedition, which, most of the time between 1914 and 1918, was roaming about my territory, bent on knowing all about it. They were a decent and kindly lot of Canadians engaged in that expedition, and Patsy I knew would be useful to them as a guide and interpreter, and because of the knack and gumption that was born with him for the ways of the North. Besides that, I wanted him to learn to understand and speak such English as I could not give him. He did that in a short time, and now he can read almost as well as me, and he can write better.

I mention these things to show that I had no baggage much in the way of creed or scientific ambition to bother me when I went to the Arctic. Nor did I develop any desire to be esteemed the first to go where one may go,

or to tell what may be told. Therefore such items about Eskimos and their customs and beliefs as did happen to impress me may be taken entirely for what they are worth, and no recognition asked, even by a college. I mean to say that I took notice of irrelevant things quite purely and without purpose, just as a walrus in his hours of leisure may blink and wonder at the stars, taking them for eyes watching him.

We have as it were a natural reciprocity with the foxes in the Arctic. When we are dead and laid away in cold storage on top of the ground the foxes come and eat us. It is not so long-drawn-out an affair as being eaten by worms, and there is more accommodation of it. For then our children catch the foxes so nourished, and eat them and wear their skins. As you please, but this order of things was not arranged by me nor by any of us!

Eskimos depend more upon seals than upon any other animal for their most staying food, apart from fish. The meat is dark, and the thick fat, or blubber as called, serves as butter. Seal blubber, however, also provides light and fuel for the Eskimos. It is so used in soap-stone lamps.

Walrus meat is lighter coloured than seal, and is very good, although not so rich in fat. Walrus are scarce in Coronation Gulf, being more inclined for the Pacific and Atlantic ends of the Arctic.

The walrus has a very keen sense of hearing, and can distinguish the slightest variation of similar sounds, just as a painter can the tints of the same colour. For instance, the sheerest rub of a paddle on a kyak, although so similar to the lisp of water on ice-edge, will cause a walrus to slip off from a cake of ice immediately into the sea, and he will dive far away from what is approaching,

as he can tell very accurately the direction from which sounds come.

✓ The walrus has one odd way of formal fighting — a way, I think, which was copied by original Eskimos as being proper. Walrus are very agile in mounting flat cakes of ice. They slip their heavy bodies up over the edge from the sea by use of their comparatively small flippers. Now I have sometimes watched a group of male walrus together on the ice, while the females would be elsewhere, attending to family affairs. And several times I have seen a duel take place, all as if a challenge had been given and accepted. One walrus would serve as assistant or second for both fighters, and he would do that by lying flat on the ice while they faced each other over his prostrate body, upon which they drew themselves up, looking into each other's eyes until seemingly a signal was given. Then one would strike with his tusk at the tusk of the other. Then the other would strike back, and this would continue in measured fashion as if they were duellists exchanging alternate shots by arrangement. The object is for one to break off the tusk of the other. If he does the duel is over, and the outlook is bad for the one who suffers the broken tusk, because thereafter he will have a hard time digging clams from the bed of the sea. Sometimes they strike at each other until both are exhausted, and seem little the worse for it. The clash of tusk on tusk is very stimulating in the still cold air. One can hear much grunting from the prostrate second when the duellists press hard upon him and the contest is prolonged. I never shot at a walrus when any such fight was going on, as it did not seem a sporting thing to do unless one were badly in need of meat.

When I first became intimately acquainted with the Eskimos on Victoria Island I found that they would

fight sometimes in the same stupidly formal way as the walrus, as if constrained by a code. One would stand while the other dealt him a blow. Then the striker in turn would receive a blow. This would continue until one or both were knocked down so often as to be incapable of further fighting. Too conventional and ordered to be natural!

Bear meat is more red, and in its texture it is half way between beef and pork. I have already told of its stimulating effects for festive occasions. In cooking bear meat, just as when cooking the stronger tasting fox meat, I would first parboil it with a little salt, or a touch of baking soda when I had any, and then roast or braise it.

Caribou meat is the staple meat of the Eskimos, just as beef is of the peoples of the South. Caribou, as I said before, are so similar to reindeer that there is no difference other than that they are too wild to harness. Reindeer will be on the increase through the Canadian Barrens and the Arctic as the years pass, and it will be a blessing for the Indians and the Eskimos. Andrew Bahr, the Laplander who brought the first reindeer from Siberia to Alaska for the United States Government, should have a place in the Chapel of Fame at Ottawa when he dies. Reindeer skin serves as well as caribou skin for clothing.

In the Arctic we get wild hares weighing as much as fifteen pounds. They are good eating, for a change. Among the birds the ptarmigan are the most choice, and also the most easily snared or shot. And there is the occasional owl. I have heard Americans speak of a person being 'as drunk as a boiled owl,' but I never could see why. Maybe because of a bald owl, or almost any owl, being somewhat incapacitated and glassy-eyed in sunshine. But every such bird is alert in moonshine, and anyway I never saw one that was bald. The person who

first made the comparison must have been mixed. Yet a boiled owl in the Arctic does call for jaw work and much chaw, however well tasted it be. The sea-gull is much better. He arrives in spring, well ahead of the Canada wild goose and the eider duck. The geese — white, black and blue — come high up over the continent from so far south, I am told, as Patagonia. I know that the ducks come around Point Barrow from Siberia.

No need to tell much about whale meat, and the fine steaks one may have of it. These may be had now and then at seaside restaurants along both Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the United States. That will be about all in the way of usual meat in the Arctic, except for such tinned beef and salt pork as may be brought to the trading posts on ships.

In many parts the Eskimos depend more upon fish than they do upon meat. Good salmon and trout and whitefish are to be had in lakes and rivers. The little frost-fish and tom-cod are to be had in abundance from the sea, and other fish, but no shell-fish, unless one count the wee shrimps, called by the whalers sea-lice, of which I have already spoken. They are not eaten except in extremity, as when one will eat his dog or a fox that has died without killing.

In the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic one may gather blueberries from a dwarf bush, and there are patches of red berries like the cranberry to be found on marsh lands. Yellow salmonberries like those of British Columbia are to be had from small bushes growing around lakes. Such are the only fruits native to the Arctic so far as I know. They might be improved by cultivation. Wild strawberries of fair size and fine flavour are to be found farther south in Alaska and the Yukon, and probably over toward Hudson Bay, where I have never been.

In the way of vegetables there are only a few small roots growing wild, something like parsnips and carrots. The name of the best of them, as near as I can say it in Eskimo or you can spell it is *maho*. It usually has three prongs, and is the size of a very small carrot. Its meat is white and sweet. *Ashangmikda* has a single prong. It is about the same size as the *maho*, and tastes well, although not sweet. The *eiruk* has several prongs wide apart, and very near the surface. It has a yellowish colour, and tastes between a parsnip and a Jerusalem artichoke. I think all three of these vegetables might be plentifully cultivated throughout the Arctic if the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa thought worth while to take the lead and conduct experiments around the Police Barracks. There is a green leaf which grows up like sourdock, and which the Eskimos call *okok*. It makes a good salad, being eaten raw with a dressing of seal-oil.

I suppose that men who treated wounds and stomach ache and men who were wise of dreams and of the dark, were the first to stand as a class apart from the hunters and chiefs among primitive men. One person would combine both lines, just as a country doctor must be both physician and surgeon. Then the oldest profession for men split as between the healer and the priest.

Our conventional name for the aboriginal healer and priest in one is *medicine-man*. The Eskimos have medicine men. The general Eskimo name for a medicine-man, as I heard it, was either *angatuk* or *anatuk*, but I am not sure, as the way I heard it for so many years in and around Victoria Island, Baillie Island and Banks Island was *toonah*.

A toonah will be trained by an elder toonah, and there is the like of an ordained succession of them. A toonah

takes a pupil much as a lawyer takes a student-at-law. But there is neither gain nor power over the people in being a toonah, so that I often wondered what it could be that led any to undertake the trouble and privation and fasting and silent, hidden meditation required for being a toonah. All that is asked is a meagre living, and the toonah seldom has any fun of hunting. Yet he advises as to hunting. Every spring in the council-house the people will assemble for advice from the toonah, who goes into a trance, and then sees far and wide in all directions and so can tell where the most game has located, and what kind, and what direction it is taking.

So far as concerns healing the toonah's system seems to be what you call suggestive therapeutics and new thoughts for old and psycho-analysis and christian-science and that sort of thing, a thread here and a thread there from the ancient garments of Egyptian and Indian teachings. The toonah will without compunction tell his patient that he does not have what he very well knows he does have in the way of ache and stiffness. It works for awhile, and maybe longer. The toonah also gives absent treatment, but not until after he has first made contact by taking a cord or strip of whatever may be worn by the patient next to his skin, and which is thus charged with his vital outflow or radiation. This enables the toonah to have a line of influence with the patient although out of sight or sound of him, and along that line healing thoughts are flashed. A toonah of renown may wear many cords about his waist, or hanging from his shoulders, like a doctor's degrees, thus telling all and sundry the number of patients he has on the string. But I fear that since the medical missionaries have come the Eskimos will take to pills.

The toonah acts as an undertaker, and likewise as a liaison officer, when conditions are proper and all are in accord, with the dead. He is a medium, in that he sometimes allows his body to be possessed by the spirit of one who has recently died, and who has some last message or directions for the friends who inquire. It is known to the Eskimos, in some subconscious fashion, that for a short while after a man dies the double or dream body, which he used while asleep, may linger about his old haunts, and that in certain cases the spirit animating it may be full of rage about conditions, or may be full of malice against enemies still living. So the toonah has a way of going out in a trance and trying to thwart what the dead man would do, or, if he be friendly or lonesome, lending his body for him to speak or feel through in communion with his friends.

Now in civilized communities all this necromancy, real or pretended, opens a way for what I have heard called the occult racket. But as a matter of fact the toonah never exacts more than a bit of fur or a piece of meat for his services, and often neither asks for nor gets anything—taking what is given without demand or thanks, like a Buddhist bonze. Indeed, I never could see why a toonah wanted to be a toonah. I think they believe all they tell the people, just as do the preachers in city churches.

Besides acting as a healer and a medium, the toonah is also the undertaker for the Eskimos. He prepares the body for laying away. Sometimes the toonah may be able to indicate where the dead man wishes his body to be laid away on the ground—whether near where he died or on a far hill or near to where he was born. But when no direction is received it is assumed that he is in the white sleep, and in no way concerned as to the disposal of his body. In the white sleep one goes clear of all

awareness and every desire, and nothing else is known about it except that it must be happy.

Usually the body is wrapped in a fur, with the face covered, unless for the eyes and mouth. Generally three days, which are days of quiet and mourning, elapse before the body of a man is laid away, and four days in the case of a woman or child. I do not know why this distinction is made. Please understand that in all this I am speaking only of the Eskimos of Victoria Island, where the dead are laid away on the surface of the empty wastes of snow and sand, and never elevated as they were in Alaska, or buried under cairns.

Sometimes the toonah finds it advisable to break a dead man's sled and his spear and his bow and arrows, and leave the pieces where the body is laid. This is done lest we have the double of them for inflicting injury on the living who have offended him—the opportunity being supposed when the living are asleep and adrift in dream bodies. But it is not believed that such things are possible for long after a man has died. He has business elsewhere.

Small copper knives and fish-hooks are sometimes left by the body for what they may suggest of temporary use or comfort of the dead man. Because of a few familiar things at first it is thought he may come to himself and get on better. I have known of a circle of stones to be put around a body where it is laid, but often, because of weather and place, this is difficult to do. I have also known of some old people who would lay dung around a body with the notion that in some way this would deflect evil spirits from plaguing the spirit when it was collecting itself after death. But I never knew of a toonah to approve of this procedure, although of course they would not interfere. They thought it of no avail—what

you might call a superstitious practice. I do not know.

So far as I could find out the spirit goes eventually to a bright land aloft or into a very dreary land, according to character. After a time it may be born again — a man as a man and a fox as a fox — unremembering, but retaining the cunning and skill acquired from past experiences. I knew one old woman who died, and some years later her name was given to a girl baby that was born, and she was taken as being the same person back again for another round.

The Eskimos are changing, and those among them who retain remnants of traditional beliefs concerning the fate of the dead and the ways of spirits will pretend not to understand, or will laugh aside any inquirer from the South, if they think he would ridicule or condemn their beliefs. But among the primitive Eskimos of Victoria Island, as I first knew them, all that happened was taken as all in a lifetime, and a lifetime was all the time — whether here or there or awake or asleep.

Just because it is a fact that he now exists, it never entered into the head of a Victoria Island Eskimo, nor of others whom I met about there who lived in the old way, that he ever was not, or that he never will be hereafter. Without bothering about it he would realize how tricky everything is, always wanting to be running away with itself into something else. They would see a snowflake come and go. And they were quite ready to believe me when I told them that such a snowflake might have been a drop of dew on a flower ten thousand miles to the south of where it was now falling, and ten thousand years ago, and that in its every particle it might fall again in the very same snowflake shape from the sky next winter. They found nothing incredible about that — it did not

seem so queer to them as it did to me. They were not so conceited as to think that it would be quite too much to expect of the universe, and its capacity for endurance, that they should be as lasting and reconditioning as snowflakes.

And so, naturally assuming the immortality of all, the primitive Eskimo found no essential difference as between himself and any other animal. All were weaving in and out of the dark and through the white sleep. He would say that here and now the particular thing for you is to eat before you are eaten. Therefore I would very respectfully submit that missionaries from the crowded lands of the South are not needed to convince the primitive Eskimo that he will live hereafter. Neither can any missionary truly convince him of sin in any satisfactory theological sense. He may pretend, and assent politely to what the strange teacher tells him, but the Puritan or priestly meaning of it will never sink under his skin. If ever it did it would only mean his mental ruin for that part of the world in which he must live. It would be as bad, from the first start in the apple tree, as if Buddhist missionaries from Ceylon went to the Arctic and convinced him that he must live entirely on vegetables, or else expiate his blood-guilt for ages in Hell.

But if missionaries would only confine themselves to lovely stories like those about Santa Claus and the Little Match Girl and Baldur the Beautiful, and all the colours and implications of astronomy, and what may be hidden behind everything, why — that would be different. But the black sin inherited from apple-stealing ancestors, and the necessity of payment in the finest and most innocent blood for that, and the general hell-fire policy of Protestants, never will be accepted by decent-minded Eskimos,

unless all so camouflaged as to be no more recognized for what such teachings are.

Except in the way of a man meeting a man in the wilds I had little intercourse with any missionary, after my first few months at Point Hope, and my bit of bone trading at Kivalina with Parson Forester. A couple of the Anglicans were excellent men, however, and of the Roman missionaries there were a few hairy and saintly old fellows of whom I grew fond, and whose combined innocence and benevolence was around them like a light almost. Those Roman fathers managed to make the human seem spiritual, and were rightly childlike with the Eskimos, both the Irish and the French among them realizing the nearness of saints and angels and evil spirits in our affairs, and the brooding over all of a Great Mother. But it was an Anglican whom I surprised with my knowledge of Latin — just a scrap left in memory from my Lutheran days in Denmark, when the bishop was telling us of the martyrdom of John Huss, and what he had said when he saw a little child carrying faggots to the pile to burn him — a scrap of Latin I never forgot. One day I was travelling with my Anglican friend from Bloody Falls on the Coppermine River, on our way for a joint purpose to Scented Grass Hill, when he instructed me concerning the different classes of society, and the need for keeping the lines. The occasion being appropriate I replied that when it came to answering calls of Nature all classes seem to be much of the same caste.

'Sancta simplicitas!' said the Anglican.

'Quite so, Padre, but I am not very sancta, and long ago I lost most of my simplicitas!'

That Anglican had the humour of the situation, and he looked at me and grinned. We got along very well together after that until at the Scented Grass Hills we

parted to follow our separate affairs. But except for the choice ones among the Romans and the Anglicans, and for one Scot who would have been fine of any religion, the most practical teachers through the Barrrens and in the Arctic are the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, taking them generally, and allowing for exceptions. They inculcate duty and fair play for all, and they often give fine examples of rescue work. Their barracks serve as stations of relief and communication for those in distress. I say this in all sincerity, realizing well that many of them still nurse a grudge against me. Police are liable to get peculiar through over-development of some of their best qualities — especially when they are too long by themselves — or when they have for long been thwarted in proving that which cannot be proven.

CLASH OF OLD CUSTOMS AND
NEW LAWS

CUSTOMS and laws are more showy among groups, when imposed by the groups on their individual members, although of course one may live by his lone all his life in the wilds, and bind himself by his own habits. But I talk now of groups. All groups arrange some fashion of dwelling, even if only of snow for a night.

Igloo is the Eskimo word for any sort of cover from the open. Whites may think of it only as a snow house, and usually it is that, but the same word serves for a house of ice or sod or wood or stone. The stone houses, of which one may come across ruins in Alaska, were probably built by the Russians so far back as three hundred years ago, for Russians were there then, in spite of what the lighter sort of official or collegiate historian may say.

The Eskimos of the western and north-western shores of Alaska established more or less permanent villages, but the Eskimos of Canada were always, I think, nomadic. For the most part they still are. Their shifting encampments, whether out on the ice-fields or along the mainland shore, or inland on the islands, seldom consist of anything more permanent than snow houses. These will be occupied usually for a week — sometimes only for a night — seldom for more than a month. It is so much easier to put up a clean front and have a clean back yard by moving on into clean new snow, and there

rebuilding. In a way it is no more trouble than one might have in moving from one table to a clean one during courses of a meal, instead of waiting for the same table to be cleared. Anyhow, when your dinner is alive, and keeps you on the jump to follow and catch it, a settled habitation is not convenient.

No question of trespass ever troubles the Eskimos. Their numbers are so few, and their wide, white world is so free of all bounds except the sea. Through more than half the year there is no restriction even of the sea, for it is frozen to a vast floor of ice.

Along the Alaskan shores of the Arctic there is a better supply of drift-wood to be had than along the Canadian territories. Huts are built of it, supplemented with chunks of sod, and reinforced sometimes with ribs and jaw bones of whales. But now, even on the Canadian side, there are a few small settlements of Eskimos clustering around police barracks or trading posts, and they have houses built of imported lumber. These can be made safer and warmer by buttresses and outer layers of sod.

Just as the Eskimos had a thin but sufficient religion which worked well enough without God to give them assurance of the continuity of all life in the face of Death, even so they had a way of government which worked well enough without a Governor against disorder. So far as they were concerned undue aggression was restrained by their polity quite as much as crime is restrained in Canada by the Criminal Code. More so, I would say, because of the simple lives they led, and the absence of any great desire for individual accumulation of all the goods in sight. They maintained fair domestic relations.

might
turing
table
e, and
ettled

imos.
world
more
e sea,

is a
y the
ented
ribs
dian
imos
and
can
yers

gion
nem
e of
ich
der.
was
is
so,
the
ion
tic



VICTORIA LAND ESKIMO
(TARTAR TYPE)



VICTORIA LAND ESKIMOS

Because of being so few in number over the area they occupied — living from hand to mouth, and roving as hunters in search of prey through regions of blankness everywhere, emphasized by occasional other animals engaged as they were — the foundational polity which is based loosely on natural authority of parents in a family, and of elders in a community, served well for the Eskimos.

On Victoria Island I found a people who were plainly Tartars who long ago went too far ever to come back. If, as you now tell me, John Cabot and Martin Frobisher, navigators out of England to the Arctic some four hundred years or so gone by, said what I say about these people in the Hyperborean Gulf being Tartars, then that proves that they really did see them, and that they knew a lot more in those days than some of our teachers now think they did. Well, I found these people living according to a pleasant tradition of individualism, tempered only by family responsibility. The Eskimos, as I knew them, accommodated themselves very happily to a blend of personal liberty and family welfare. But the welfare of the family was always put first by the best of them — family welfare rather than personal indulgence. All in all I found the Eskimos of Victoria Island superior to others, and this possibly because for so many centuries they had been free from the contaminating presence of civilized Whites from the South.

From what little I saw of the Eskimos in Siberia they did not seem so clean in their habits as were those of Alaska, nor those of Alaska as were those of Victoria Island. Toward Greenland, however, from what I have heard, I should think the Eskimos probably as shiftless and unclean as those of Siberia. However, I have not seen, never having sailed farther east of Victoria Island than Victoria Strait, with only a distant glimpse of King

William Land and Boothia Land where Canada keeps the Magnetic Pole. Anyway, the Eskimos in the snows, where I lived happily with them, were as clean as cats.

If anything happen or threaten which calls for unusual communal action then an informal council is held of the recognized elders and the best hunters. Sometimes a woman will be included in the council, but not often, and still less often will the medicine-man be present.

Each family recognizes its own head, and without any form of election the general authority and position of these heads will be recognized just as the authority and position of social leaders will be recognized in the sets and classes of more populous parts of the world whenever the occasion arises. But among the Eskimos there are not only no ruling chiefs, but there are no tribes, such as are found among American Indians. There are only different communities.

American Indians differ from each other in language and customs just as much as Swedes differ from Spaniards. But all around the polar cap the Eskimos are one people, having one language, similar domestic customs, and similar methods of hunting and fishing, so far as I know, and I know very well from Bering Sea on both sides up north and around east to Victoria Island.

There will be found, however, distinct differences in pronunciation and accent of the one Eskimo language, just as one may find between speech of the natives of Yorkshire and those of Cornwall, or in a lesser way say between citizens of Glasgow and citizens of San Francisco.

'The order that is ordered is not the natural order!'

Tau Teh King of the Old Boy

Anarchy, or non-government, is the best polity for

reasonable people of goodwill and few in numbers, for instance the Eskimos, so long as there be no danger of incursions of strong, regulating persons who break in to upset natural conditions and curb natural freedom. I found anarchy, tempered by proper family traditions, accommodating enough for me during my earlier years in the Arctic, especially where the Whites did not intrude to debauch and cheat and disease, or else, almost equally annoying, to reform others into being what they do not want to be. A taste for such freedom, and plenty of elbow-room, grows on a man of free disposition. But of course the natural order came to an end with the expansion of Canada.

In 1869 Canada bought from the Hudson's Bay Company all its recognized right, title and interest in the way of territory and jurisdiction west of Ontario and east of British Columbia above the United States border, and so far north as was anybody's business. Slowly after that Canadian control by police patrol was pushed up through and over the Barrens and into the naked Arctic. The Union Jack began to be seen as a sign of authority and order among the icebergs.

‘ . . . and the red police of Canada beside:
For they keep tab on everything clear down to the
Arctic tide!’

Lonesome Bar

Canada thus acquired the best of the Arctic. No doubt her procedure has been in accordance with international usage, as recognized now by all the more powerful nations. No doubt also Canadian domination will be just as just as the best, and for the best. But the intrusion of customary Whites in unusual numbers, whether good or bad, because of their wrong food and frequently

diseased touch, spells the doom of those free and healthy Tartars whom we know as Eskimos. And note this down right here: there was always plenty of game to meet the needs of the Eskimos so long as they had to go after it with their ancient weapons. But repeating rifles and cheap ammunition have led them to an excess of slaughter, and in another generation the bears and caribou will be almost extinct — and perhaps even the foxes — if the South does not breed enough below to satisfy those who demand fox-hides for ornament of their necks in summer-time. A century hence there may be no greater population of the Arctic than there is to-day, and probably less of any race, unless some queer things happen and new adaptations become popular.

I had relinquished my Danish citizenship to become an American citizen so that I might have an American ship under my own name. But in 1925 I was strongly advised from influential and official quarters to become a Canadian citizen. So, in the interests of my family, I did that. I was given to understand that such proceeding on my part would be substantially appreciated later on by the Canadian Government, just as it intended at the proper time to do for a Norwegian navigator who settled in the Arctic, and explored certain islands, now known as the Sverdrup Group, and took occupation of them. Canada wanted a quit claim from him of the Sverdrup Group, comprising Axel Heiberg, Ellef Ringnes, Amund Ringnes and King Christian. So Captain Otto Sverdrup gave a quit claim to Canada of all such occupational rights as he had acquired. So did I — for what it was worth — and I left that to Canada to say. I am still waiting hopefully for something in the way of consideration. Captain Sverdrup got his — after he was dead.

Maybe the Canadian Government considered that the proper time. But also I heard from my son-in-law Storker T. Storkersen, who knows of these affairs, that Roald Amundsen, being jealous of Sverdrup, opposed any recognition of him during his lifetime. Early last November, however, the Canadian Government paid \$67,000 to the heirs of Otto Sverdrup for services rendered by him in the way of explorations and discoveries in the Arctic Islands claimed by Canada. At the same time the Norwegian Government formally recognized the Canadian claim to the Sverdrup Group, and the Canadian Government promised to let Norwegians go there fishing whenever they felt like it.

If titles be resorted to in Canada to make politicians seem better than they are, and give formal distinction to a few who really merit it, I should not care much about having bestowed upon me the Order of the Snow Bank, or such like for honour, but I would like a definite grant of land to myself and my heirs on Victoria Island, where I shall return when my time here is over. Because my proper and continuous occupation helped to confirm Canadian title to what may provide valuable stations for the new air routes across the top of the world. And likewise to new bases for minerals and fishing.

I never had any desire to go to Greenland, having heard that it is now a ghastly region, damned by the cold from all the beauty it had long ago. I never met its Eskimos, nor those of the dreary places of the Arctic east of Victoria Island. And I only made slight contact with Eskimos of Siberia. As to the degenerate community on the Diomedes it has nothing of the nomadic spirit. The Diomedans cling to their awful islands; a confined and opinionated lot of islanders lacking the free and

kindly temper of the Eskimos in Alaska and Canada. Their superstitions are neither wistful nor amusing. They seem to be based on the menaces of the recently dead, manifesting through the night, and able to hurt such living persons as may drift away out of their bodies during sleep. So what little I tell of the Eskimos will be about the Eskimos I know as intimately as I know Danes and Americans and Russians.

The Eskimos had lived in undisputed nomadic possession of the Arctic lands and islands of Canada from time immemorial, and without any foreign interference with their accepted customs. They never organized for war, nor went on marauding expeditions, except as seemed advisable at long intervals against the Indians of the Coppermine River regions. There were, of course, occasional family or communal feuds, but these were not lasting, as they interfered too much with the proper business of life, which was hunting. Eskimos did not eat Eskimos.

From what little in the way of history before history that I have had a chance to read, I would say that the Eskimos of Victoria Island and vicinity constitute the finest race surviving in Stone Age culture which long ago barely touched and stopped on the rim of the Bronze Age. These Eskimos make an elementary use of copper; hammering it to shape. I have seen lumps of native copper in possession of Eskimos, and these lumps would vary from ten to thirty pounds in weight. And I heard of slabs of pure copper which were too heavy for any man to lift. Naturally the wandering Eskimos, having no fixed abode, did not care to lug heavy weights along with them. Knowing where the big lumps were they would go and break pieces from them for making spear-heads, knives, ice-picks and such simple implements as they used for preparing or eating food.

Very cheerfully the Eskimos meet the stark conditions of life as they are born, and conform as best they can. They never exhibit any inordinate cling to life at cost of being a mere burden to those with whom they are linked by natural ties of affection and association. They seem to have an instinctive assurance of an after-death continuance in conditions somewhat similar at first to those already known to them. They do not worry about it any more than they worry about whether or not spring will follow winter.

It is hard for Eskimos to realize any time but the present, which they think is all the time. They certainly are born with the notion that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Which is all very fine, so far as it goes and if you know what it means, but just the same, as a safeguard against too much of that doctrine, the Eskimos waste nothing, especially in the line of food. One might say that they have the same practical sense of the future and care for the morrow which is shown by squirrels and bees in the South, but always it is in a free-and-easy family way instead of being an individual accumulation.

Laziness is a serious social sin among the Eskimos. If one of them become a confirmed shirker his conduct will be noted, and he will be warned by his friends. After a time, if he do not reform, he will be refused admittance to any community. Thus left alone, with help or company from none, he will at last need to do more than his share of work — or die.

If one thus exiled dare to return unbidden into the community from which he was expelled he is liable to be killed quickly. Likewise he may be killed if caught stealing, and this is a law by common custom similar to the former American custom of hanging horse-thieves. But no man would be thus exiled except after long pro-

vocation, and a conference of the elders of the community to which he belonged.

The barbarous neglect of the aged in civilized countries is giving place, thanks to the example of Germany, to recognition of their right to pensions when no longer able to work. Such is the rule now in Canada. Well, for long there has been a belief abroad that the Eskimo substitute for an old-age pension was a knock on the head from a club in the hands of a good friend selected for the last kindly office. But as to any such happy despatch being customary I wish now to state that in my almost unbroken stretch of thirty-two years living with Eskimos, from Little Diomedé Island to Victoria Island, I never witnessed one single instance of such procedure. Of course certain things may have been concealed from me. But, as a rule, family affection is too strongly developed among the Eskimos known to me to permit of such a thing being looked upon casually or as a matter of course, even if it were on occasion desirable, as when one of our better class of physicians will assist the death of a patient in hopeless agony, by administering a sufficient dose of morphine. Such cases do occur, at the request of the patient, and with feelings of the utmost goodwill and tenderness, among our own people here in the South. More harsh are all the ways of the Arctic, but love and devotion may be felt there as warmly as in the more favoured lands.

In a few cases I have known of abandonment of the aged or infirm, but the circumstances were extenuating. Remember that the Eskimos had no fixed abodes; they were always on the march. The exigencies of seasons, and the obtaining of fresh meat, would make it necessary for a community to move along — any such community

seldom including more than a dozen families. Those too old or infirm to move on with the others would be left in a snow house, with a supply of food to last them for awhile. Thus they would pass into and through the white sleep. They would die.

Recently I saw a display of headlines in the three newspapers of Vancouver, calling attention to the death of an old Norwegian in the Caribou District of British Columbia. He had been abandoned by the community to starve. As an old-timer he had lived alone for many years in a cabin, looking after himself. But finally his physical powers failed, and he could hunt no more. He was helpless as an old Eskimo. His extreme indigence was known. Kind-hearted cooks and porters from a passing train used to save and fling off to him scraps of food at a point near his cabin. But finally he could no longer creep out to get those scraps, and when nothing had been seen of him for days the authorities were moved to take action. They found him still alive. He was then taken to a hospital, where he died from the effects of prolonged starvation; effects which it was too late to counteract by any nursing or medical treatment.

But why was that any occasion for heavy headlines in the newspapers? Why had that old Norwegian pauper suddenly become worthy of capital letters on the front page? Well, it certainly was not the fact that in a Canadian Province abounding in food an old resident had been left to starve to death. It was the cablegram from Norway which he received at the hospital shortly before he died to the effect that a relative of his there had just died and left him a legacy estimated at \$30,000 cash. The Vancouver newspapers were properly unanimous in expressing the opinion that the old Norwegian settler should be given a fine funeral and a costly gravestone. The Government

also became interested immediately, for the Finance Minister is much put to it to find money these days in British Columbia, and in the event of there being no heirs he knew what could be done with that \$30,000.

So I say that among the Eskimos there is no heartless abandonment of the aged any more than there is of parents and worn-out employees in other parts of Canada and the lands below. It occurs — but not as a custom.

I do recall one instance, however, which came to my attention in 1903 near Point Barrow. An old man, who for long had been a leading elder in his community, apparently had come to the days when he could move along with the others no more. He had accumulated goods and chattels of some value in the eyes of other community members, and he had no immediate living relatives. He was put in a snow house with a little food. It was expected that he would soon breathe his last. By his colleagues an amicable division was made of all the property he had.

I happened to hear of the affair through some women who came in to gossip with Gremnia. Out of curiosity, and not liking that sort of thing, although wise enough not to interfere much anywhere anytime with local customs, I went out to see the old man. I pushed in through his snow house, where he was sealed to die. He was too weak to shift for himself, or to take what little food was left for him. He was quite resigned, however, as I found after a little talk with him, and merely curious in a sleepy way as to what the outcome might be after death.

Just for luck I put a strong mustard plaster on the tough hide of his old chest. He did not seem to notice it. I said I would come back in the morning to see if

he had gone into the white sleep. He smiled and said nothing as I left.

I happened to have a bottle of olive-oil, and I put it in my pocket when I went over the next morning to see if the old man had died. Well, he was by no means dead. But he had suffered, and he had bestirred himself. I took the twisted plaster off his chest, and applied the olive-oil as easily as I could. Also I got him to drink about as much of it as would be half a teacup full. It was an amusing case.

Three days later the old man walked out of his snow house, and came to find and thank me. His honest neighbours were amazed. They returned to him all his goods intact. He lived for several years after that, and during the following summer, while I was far away from my family, that old man shot a number of ducks, and took them to my wife in token of his gratitude.

From one, however, whom I would believe in all things as I would believe my own eyes and ears, I did hear of two cases in which the gift of death was requested at the hands of friends. And in each case the friends complied, and death was given before the eyes of the one who told me. There were a number of Whites almost within call at the time, but they never knew nor suspected. In one case it was an old man, and in the other an old woman. It was no longer possible for either of them to follow their own people when the time came to break camp and be off. Yet in neither case were they assisted in their death until after they had made a recognized formal demand, and until after there had been a conference of those who cared most for them. Death in each case was easily inflicted; not by a knock on the head, but with the patient lying prone on the back, and pressure on the windpipe from the shaft of a spear, quickly

stopping the breath, and with no agony such as too often afflicts those who die in our hospitals.

The practice of infanticide did prevail in Eskimo communities when hard beset by famine, and almost as much as abortion prevails among our own people, the only difference being that no attempt was ever made to conceal it, and in the majority of instances the victim would be a female.

My daughter Etna has done more than anyone else to turn Eskimo parents against any further continuance of this sad practice. She grieved so much over the death of her own first daughter that in memory of her she determined to urge all parents to adopt the best ways of guarding their children, putting their welfare always before that of themselves, and turning their faces for ever against infanticide.

Etna, being a very pleasing girl and eloquent of the Eskimo language, had a measure of success from the start of her crusade. This success became practically complete after her journey to Ottawa to interview the Canadian Government. As a result of her representations it was arranged that when any Eskimo family presented a newborn female child at any Mounted Police Barracks, the officer in charge would give a present of factory goods, cloth, thread, needles and whatnot, or sometimes bacon for choice, to the worthy parents; the value being about fifteen dollars factory cost price, and the Government assuming all cost of freight. This happy practice has tended to make for the popularity of every girl baby in an Eskimo family.

When first the Eskimos began to feel the iron of Canadian jurisdiction over them there was sullen but

hopeless resentment, even although their pristine freedom of action was affected in only a few ways. But now they are beginning to recognize that the severe, tireless, far-reaching, implacable but usually just, and sometimes helpful and kindly rule of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police tends to reduce the risks and add somewhat to the jollity of life in ordinary throughout the Barrens and the Arctic and its islands. From now on there will be little complaint from the Eskimos against the rule under which they live, although naturally now and then some complaint may be made against specific acts of officials who administer that rule.

No treaties were ever made between the Canadian Government and the Eskimos, as they were made between that Government and the Indians. This because there were no Eskimo nations or tribes or chiefs with which to negotiate a treaty. So the Eskimos have simply been assumed by Canada. And what about it? Well, this about it:

Eskimos born in the Canadian Arctic are now ordinary Canadian citizens. They have all the ordinary rights of Canadian citizens with whom no special arrangements have been made such as were made with Indians and Doukhobors, and against whom there are no electoral disqualifications such as still obtain against Canadians of Japanese, Chinese and East Indian origin in British Columbia. Therefore they have the rights of liquor and elections, and also of participation in the benefits of the Canadian system of old age pensions. Short of a special Act of Parliament depriving them of such rights they may assert them. Of course there are a miserable lot of politicians and natural-born prohibitors who are always on the alert to deprive whom they can of all rights and liberties unless they belong to their own party or cult,

but so far they have had more meat nearer home, and have not intruded into the Arctic to bother the Eskimos. However, as I said before, the Eskimos will probably be civilized out of existence before this century ends, so it does not matter much.

There can never properly be Eskimo reservations as there are Indian reservations. Treaties with various nations of Indians, carefully designated as nations and allies, and never as tribes, were made between them and the British sovereign in the right of Canada, under articles of which there were certain territories and tracts of land delimited for exclusive occupation by the particular Indian nation concerned. Practically a tribal tenure, or communal feudal title on terms of military service when called upon, was admitted and confirmed. Thus Indians were differentiated from other Canadians by solemn treaties never broken. In return for surrendering certain rights given other Canadian citizens, the Indians are given protection from any trespass or intrusion on their reservations, and regular payments are made to them of maintenance money, subject only to a methodistical superintendence of their morals, and deprivation of alcoholic drink except for religious celebration on the part of such as become Protestant Christians, and deprivation of Parliamentary representation and electoral franchise, unless specially and individually released from treaty obligations and privileges. There is nothing like that binding Eskimos.

It may be that as a pure race, with distinctive traits of character, although of Tartar origin, the Eskimos will disappear before some of the more prosperous Indian nations do. Eskimos may be modified very much in generations to come, but I think there will always be that in their blood which will tend to keep them to the Arctic.

The supplanting of old customs for new laws, enforced by powerful police, under directions from Ottawa permitting of little discretion in the exercise of their powers, led at first to misunderstandings which resulted miserably sometimes for the Eskimos. I would tell now of one case in which I vainly tried to intercede.

There was a feud between two factions living east of Bathurst Inlet on Kent Peninsula. While half a dozen men of one faction were away hunting in the interior of the mainland, those remaining in camp were attacked by four men of the other faction. A fight took place. Two of the attackers were killed, but all in the camp, two men and several women and children, were also killed. The two surviving attackers returned to their own faction. One of them was a boy of sixteen, and the other was a middle aged man who bore a bad reputation, but who had an elder brother who was acclaimed by all as just and generous.

The absent hunters returned to their camp and found what had taken place. According to established usage only two honourable courses lay open to them. They must retaliate with a raid, doing as much or more damage to their enemies — or else formally demand the execution of the two surviving offenders by his own family. Among these Eskimos each family was held ultimately accountable for the conduct of its individual members, just as in Semitic and Chinese and other primeval systems of law. Thus it devolved upon the elder brother to be judge and executioner of his offending brother, the murderer. There was no doubt or denial at any time of the facts of the case.

The lad of sixteen ran away from his own community, but the other criminal remained to take the consequences of his act. The elder brother knew what duty demanded

of him, but, as was his right by common law of his people, he deputed his youngest son, then only thirteen, to carry out the sentence of death. So the murderer stood to be killed, and he was, with one shot through the heart, fired from a rifle in the hands of the boy. The incident was considered closed. There was peace and quiet for a time, and the feud was a thing of the past.

Now this boy was just as innocent and proper in his conduct, in his part of the world, as any judge or sheriff or executioner is when discharging his duty among ourselves, in accordance with powers and directions given him by law for general protection of the public. But, before long, word of the affair got to the ears of the Mounted Police, and they thought otherwise—or rather they did not think at all, but did as they were instructed to do. A corporal in charge of the nearest police post arrested the boy. There was no jail in which to confine him. So through the long winter the boy lived with the corporal at his post, near to which there was also a Hudson's Bay Company store. His trial was to take place the next summer at Herschel Island.

Naturally the Eskimos considered the action of the corporal to be improper and oppressive. They did not know, however, how to formulate their protests, or how to call the attention of the Department of Justice at Ottawa to the merits of the case, or ask for an exercise of executive clemency. All the Eskimos, including those who had been engaged in the feud, declared that the action of the boy was correct, and justified by their communal law, which never before had been disputed.

Spring came. The boy's friends were all away to the hills for the hunting. Naturally the boy had the seasonal stir in his blood. He seems to have thought that

once safely out of sight of the police post he could go farther and farther away, and perhaps find new people, and be free and happy again in lands where there would be no police. Just what a boy like him would think!

To the orderly mind of the corporal, however, it apparently never occurred that a boy would disobey a police order, or imagine that he could get beyond reach of the police. And so it happened that one afternoon in the spring sunlight the corporal lay on his cot in barracks, after a hard bit of work he had been doing. The boy was left to attend to certain small duties, being treated as a trusty. The corporal fell asleep.

With the spring urge in his heart, as it had been in the hearts of his fathers for unnumbered generations, the boy took a rifle, intending to slip away to the hills with it. But the corporal kept one ear awake, even while he was asleep, and he roused at the slight sound made when the rifle was taken. Fear was on the boy of what might be done to him. So on the instant, before the corporal could spring from the cot, the boy shot him, and he died at once.

Unfortunately at that moment a trader from the Hudson's Bay Company store was passing the barracks. Hearing the shot he looked through an open window, and saw the dead corporal. In that same moment the boy fired at this witness of his deed, wounding him fatally. He fell in his tracks at the window. Then the boy ran away.

Soon the news spread. Another constable of the Mounted Police, who was out with the Eskimos, heard of the two killings. The Eskimos, in great doubt and distress as between old customs and new laws, thought better, after a conference of elders, to conform with the wishes of the police. So they secured the boy and

delivered him over for trial. After that they found the younger aggressor who had escaped at the time of the feud, and they delivered him also into custody of the police.

The trial of the two boys took place at Herschel Island, where a jury consisting entirely of white men was empanelled. The facts of the killings from the beginning of the feud were admitted. The two boys were found guilty by that jury, which was apparently as unwilling as incapable of taking into consideration former customs and methods of justice prevailing among the Eskimos before the advent of the Mounted Police. Their attention was not even called to that aspect of the case. There was no recommendation to mercy. The two boys were sentenced to be hanged.

I had intended leaving Victoria Land the end of that same year, 1923, with a valuable cargo of fox furs for the outside market. I proposed to take the overland route. I did so, and will tell of that later. But I left sooner than I had intended, and earlier than was safe for crossing the ice, so that I might reach a telegraph station as soon as possible, and put through a plea to the Minister of Justice at Ottawa for clemency in this case. I felt so sure of what the verdict would be, knowing the rigour with which the prosecution would be conducted, and the feeling toward the Eskimos among those who would constitute the jury, that I left before the trial took place, so as to gain time and get action taken if possible to stop the hanging. But even while I was hastening out by the overland route I passed the judge and his party in the night who were going to Herschel for the trial. And the hangman was with the judge!

I reached a mission station conducted by an American

branch of the Church of England. I made as clear as I could to the ministers there the tragedy of misunderstanding which was leading to further tragedy. But the good people at the station were Americans who could not seem to understand what Canada was. They could not see Ottawa in the picture, because I suppose of what they had been taught in their schools. But they meant well. So they did send a long despatch to the King at London. However, this did not make for much delay, after all, as when their despatch did reach London it was at once transmitted to the King in Ottawa, who, to real purpose in this case was of course the Minister of Justice.

My plea would have failed in any event. There was no such thing in those days through the Arctic as radio or Marconi stations, and the hanging of the two boys took place too soon after sentence to have gotten any reprieve through in time to save them. The hangman, as I said, went along with the judge, and both were in a mood for despatch. The elder of the condemned had come nineteen years of age when hanged, and the younger sixteen. The elder, of course, had been guilty of contemplated and deliberate murder, and deserved his fate. But the younger had only obeyed a command of his father in the first instance — a command given by the father in a judicial capacity, according to Eskimo common law, acknowledged valid by all Eskimos from time immemorial. The subsequent shooting of the corporal and the trader was more in the way of manslaughter induced by sudden fear, rather than deliberate murder.

However, these executions served usefully to make known the implacable law of Canada throughout the Arctic, where there is neither semi-criminal sentimentality nor legal subtlety to shield murderers, nor even political influence — so far.

As a last noble example of the ancient code of propriety, the good father of the younger boy, who never would have sacrificed his son to satisfy himself, or at command of another, however highly seated, did sacrifice himself for his son. His purpose was to go in advance and be prepared to receive him in the immediate next world into which he was to be thrown, and where ways and places might be strange. As a father he would help him. And to be in accord with tradition he obtained an old-style copper knife. With that he stabbed himself to death three days before his son was hanged.

MY LAST TROUBLES IN THE
ARCTIC

THROUGH years of frustration many an old prospector will keep on hunting for gold in the wilds. And doing that he often may have more fun in the near hope of finding than from the find when made. For myself, I continued to believe that money could be made in the fur trade. Whalebone indeed had gone from the market, along with the Victorian corset. Still, many a vanity remained by the South, and still the Stone Age desire for unnecessary furs kindled in the continuing feminine of the warmer lands, where they go as bare as they please. I counted on that.

I was well equipped. I knew how — I knew where — and I had established independent connections with Pacific Coast markets. I would not be bound by the great trading corporations doing business in the Far North. Naturally the officers of these corporations turned a sour eye on me, even as they did on each other in rival employ. But eventually I came to a friendly understanding with the Hudson's Bay Company, and this was welcome after I began to grow tired, feeling the years heavy upon me. I sold that Company two of my ships and several trading posts. As for the American companies after I quit Point Barrow I could snap my fingers at them. But it took a bit of doing — doing all that!

Rymer Point, as a permanent trading post, was founded

by me in 1919, although I had been there off and on and roundabout through earlier years before deciding to replace a snow house with a wooden house, and another and another after that as I prospered enough to pay for dressed lumber fetched on ships from the South.

Rymer Point lies by Simpson Bay on the south-west shore of Wollaston Land Division of Victoria Island. Rymer Point roughly is about seven hundred miles from Herschel Island. It has the Colville Hills for a background, and swift streams run to the sea from these. It is a bit north-west of Bernard Harbour across Dolphin and Union Strait, at a distance of about thirty miles. When I settled at Rymer Point I was very pleased to hear of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police establishing a barracks at Bernard Harbour, for it is convenient to have those police as neighbours at just about that distance.

Early in 1919, while putting things to rights at Rymer Point, I gave an order through a proper official for a new boat like a whale-boat, with some special features which I had devised, and equipped with a petrol engine. It was to be built up the Mackenzie River, and to be delivered to me in the late spring of 1920 at Aklavik, which is situate about 125 miles from the mouth of the west branch of the Mackenzie. By that time I had accumulated many furs, and I was anxious to get them to market.

So the last week in February, 1920, I made ready for a seven hundred mile trip over the ice to Herschel Island. My son Patsy accompanied me and an Eskimo lad called Kohar, and we had good dogs and three sleds packed high with furs of the best quality. We reached Herschel Island without mishap, just before the leads were due to open dangerously. There we waited until

we knew the ice would be out of the Mackenzie, and then we engaged a whale-boat, and made a clear and easy trip up river south to Aklavik. There was another wait there until the first boats came down the river. Hoping against hope until every boat was accounted for I had to be content at last with the fact that the boat I had ordered had not been built. Either the proper official had not been efficient — or he forgot on purpose!

But I had to have a boat. So, as there was a good market right at Aklavik that year for furs, I sold my entire lot. Then I bought a power-boat which was for sale there, paying \$3200 for it, and I considered it cheap at that, for it was a strongly-built boat, with a good engine, and forty feet long. I filled it with such trade goods as I could buy at Aklavik, and a store of good food from the South, and went from there direct to Baillie Island, where I found my friend Captain Petersen, with a cargo of supplies in his schooner. I added to my own lot what I thought was needed from his own, and I placed with him a written order for \$40,000 worth of trade goods, as specified, to be delivered to me at Rymer Point the next summer from San Francisco. I paid Captain Petersen \$6000 cash down; balance to be paid in cash or furs on delivery. It was the largest order I had ever been able to give, and I felt proud and went back to Rymer Point.

About the end of July, 1920, I put Etna and her husband, Ikey Bolt, in charge of my store at Rymer Point, and with Patsy I headed away in my new boat for Arctic Sound on Bathurst Inlet, where I had never been, but which Patsy knew well because of having been there with one party of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, some five years before that.

Bathurst Inlet is a big bite out of the mainland shore on the south side of Coronation Gulf, and on the extreme east of it, looping in between Kent Peninsula and Musk Ox Land is Melville Sound, and on the west between Lewis Island and Barry Islands is Arctic Sound, and south of Barry Islands there is an intrust of Bathurst Inlet farther than I know, and without any name unless it be Gordon Bay or Kilusiktok, which is polite Eskimo for *posterior*.

Into Arctic Sound we sailed, and there hauled our boat ashore, intending to use it as a warehouse. Alongside we pitched a skin tent, and banked it all about with earth. In that we lived for almost a year, and we did a great trade, for we had with us an ample store of goods in demand, and the Eskimos about there that year had much good hunting and trapping. With what I had of them I was on my way to a fortune. And in the following June, when we returned to Rymer Point, I found that Ikey Bolt also had accumulated a fine lot of furs. We had more than enough by far to pay the balance of \$34,000 which would be owing for the goods to be brought to me by Captain Petersen. Well content, I waited.

As soon as the weather cleared in July we began to watch for a ship. I had made all necessary preparations for reception of my new goods. I offered prizes for those who should first sight the ship and bring me the news.

Summer dragged along, and nary a sign of any ship. We were wealthy with fur. But it was of no more use to us than so much gold would have been. For we were almost out of provisions. Let the bankers bark as they will, the thing of final value is food, and no metal has yellowness, nor is any skin so pecuniary as to rank beyond what the stomach cries for when it comes to the

low down of reality in the Arctic — or even in the South.

I waited until it was too late to venture across the sea to Herschel Island. I was afraid in any case that I might miss Captain Petersen on the way. At nights we kept fires burning nigh the shore as a guide for him. But he did not come, and at last I realized that it was too late for any ship that year.

On account of expecting a ship and supplies we had very foolishly neglected making the usual store of dried and poked meat and other food against the coming winter. We had given all our time to accumulating and packing furs. We were very busy persons after that—man, woman, and child—with no thought but meat and firewood in our hearts. Off shore we went for seals, and got an unusual good lot just about the centre of Dolphin and Union Strait. Gremnia took charge of that. Patsy and Ikey went hunting caribou back over the Colville Hills, which are about a thousand feet high, and fifteen miles wide, and I do not know how long, but there is rolling country beyond them. They had great success.

I started out alone in my boat, across to Bernard Harbour. I took some furs with me, and traded them at the Hudson's Bay Store for food, but the manager drove a hard bargain with me, and I did not get as much as I wanted. Maybe, of course, he had to be somewhat sparing, because of the winter that was coming.

From Bernard Harbour I ventured all the way down to Baillie Island, a distance of about four hundred miles. I wanted to know. And I found to my great vexation that Captain Petersen had been there, having all my supplies with him, but that owing to the lateness of his arrival, and the threatening ice conditions, he decided not to proceed to Rymer Point to make delivery, and he would not leave them for me at Herschel Island. So they all

went back with him to San Francisco. I had missed him by three weeks!

On my way back from Herschel Island to Rymer Point my engine got out of order, and I could not repair it. However, I managed with a sail. I could not make good with the Eskimos who had supplied me with furs, and who were depending upon me for supplies in return. Fortunately, however, I had plenty of ammunition. We did not go on short rations. And, although having so little left in the way of trade goods, I got together many more bales of furs that winter.

Another spring and summer passed, and no ship came to Rymer Point. It was enough to make a man suspicious. My furs were being kept from the market. So, toward the middle of September, I loaded my boat with my best bales, and took aboard with me my two sons Andrew and Jorgen, three dog-teams, five dogs to each team, and two toboggans and one Victoria Land sled which, although clumsy looking as a Dutch galiot, will hold a great load, and slips along very easily over snow that has a hard-enough crust on it to bear the weight of a man. This because of its easily renewable frozen mud and ice runners. Toboggans are better where one is likely to travel over soft snow. My engine, as I said, was out of order, but I hoisted sail with no fear but that I would reach Herschel Island long before the freeze-up began. I can sail a large ship anywhere through the Arctic Ocean from Bathurst Inlet westward to Bering Strait during the months of August and September, and sometimes a little before and a little after those two open months.

When we arrived at Herschel Island I found a very fine officer of the Mounted Police in charge there —

Inspector Woods. He was there as a custodian, as well as a protector and keeper of the King's peace. On request of wandering traders, Inspector Woods was willing to take charge of gold and furs. He was better than a bank, for he charged no fee and he had the Government behind him. So I left part of my furs with him. With the balance on the sled and the toboggans we crossed over to the Mackenzie Delta at the first freezing of the sea. This was a foolish thing to do, but I took that risk, as explained in the preceding chapter, in a vain attempt to reach a telegraph office in time to make such representations to the Minister of Justice at Ottawa as might influence him to stay the hanging of the two Eskimo boys, or at least the younger of them, because of their ill-considered and impulsive killings. Just as we got on the thick fresh-water ice of the west branch of the Mackenzie River the frozen floor of the sea behind us undulated and shivered and cracked into small cakes, and that would have been the end of us had we been on it.

About 125 miles from the sea the Mackenzie River divides into three main channels for the making of a great delta, and these channels subdivide, and provide many islands with sloughs through them, and having large ponds on them which should be good for ducks. This delta puts up a front to the sea about one hundred miles long. I know I should not go into such detail about a mere delta here, when I have an experience to tell, and when it is certain that within a year or two more we shall have accurate maps of all this region, made from the air, and giving exact distances and the true names for places. But it was a habit I had to observe and remember the lay of land and water, and every detail was considered of value in my Arctic years. It will all be so

easy soon. I learned somewhat of the Mackenzie Delta, and its tricky and shallow channels, for myself. But also I had knowledge from Captain James McKenna, the one whom I thought did not do right by me after my troubles on the *Olga*. But whether or no, it was when I was frozen in at Victoria Island on the *Olga* that McKenna on the *Charles Hansen* wintered in the East Channel of the Delta.

Snow was falling. We mushed quickly up the West Channel to Aklavik. Once you get about thirty miles back from the Arctic coast you are out of the familiar for me, and into the awful Barrens, a region so vast as to be continental, and constituting the bulk of interior Canada. But some day men may have greater use for it than now, because of adaptation and swift communication and what may be found there. Thirty miles back from the Arctic coast, instead of scant findings of scrub willows and alders and the like, one comes to great reaches and thickets of spruce and poplar and birch between the naked granite hills.

Aklavik is about fifty miles from the mouth of the West Channel of the Mackenzie, on the projecting west shore opposite the south end of Halkett Island. As a trading post and distributing centre it may grow. I disposed of my sled there, and piled all my furs on the two toboggans, with the extra dogs to help pull them. But this made such a load on each toboggan that it was impossible to add a supply of food, either for ourselves or the dogs. However, I was confident that we would be able to live off the country, as we made our way to Fairbanks in Alaska. I had only one very blank bad little map, and it showed scarce any streams or mountains. I may not now trace exactly the course we took,

except that we went more or less west-west-by-south, with a turn now and then to the north. We followed the wiggling rivers when we had no other trail.

I hired two Indians as guides for the first part of our journey, as I had heard of one pass through which I must go, and maybe another; neither of which were shown on my map. I agreed to pay those Indians twenty dollars each per day. The price for their services was high, but that was because I was taking them at the time of year which was best for their trapping and hunting. Anyway, they proved themselves worthy of their hire.

Out from Aklavik we pulled south, down along the Husky Channel to one of the rivers called Rat, the other being in Alaska, where it runs into the Porcupine. Then we followed the course of the Canadian Rat through a pass to the Bell River. I do not know the name of the pass, nor did I notice it much, being bent on going forward as quickly as possible. After that it must have been the Porcupine we were on till we came to where a small stream entered from the north. I think that junction is called Driftwood. Anyway, that is where our Indians quit. They told us to follow the river we were on until we came to another and larger river entering from the north, and that would be the Old Crow. There they said we would find a trading post and a good man who would direct us farther on our way.

We had been twelve days out from Aklavik, so I paid each of our guides \$240, and they were pleased and left us. All things considered we had made good progress, but after that we found no trails nor human trace. We continued along the river, and I am not sure if it really were the Porcupine at first. Our going seemed like keeping company with a glaring, cold nightmare on the road to nowhere. Often we would be obstructed with

big log jams frozen in across the stream, and constituting formidable barricades over which it was hard to get our toboggans. Through the ice at times came overflows of water. Then of a sudden the weather grew very much colder, and there were no more overflows.

One of us had to be always far ahead hunting for fresh meat. A kill had to be made almost every day to keep ourselves and our dogs in travelling condition. Fortunately there were wild sheep, goats, caribou and an occasional moose to be had. But one had to be very cunning in order to get within sure shooting distance of any animal, because even the scrape of a moccasin on the snow in the utter silence of fifty degrees Fahrenheit below zero could be heard nigh a mile away by alert ears. And the animals there can distinguish sounds as we distinguish colours.

So many of our dogs got sore feet that I had to make camp for a couple of days while they rested and were well fed from a caribou I had killed. I had a good mollifying and astringent ointment with me which I applied carefully to their feet, and it was too bitter for them to lick away before its healing work was done.

I had seen the caribou standing in some brush. After I fired and it fell, and I had gone forward to bleed it, I found that it had been caught in a snare. From that I knew there must be Indians or some White hermit in the vicinity, although we had seen no trace of a human being other than ourselves from the time we left Aklavik.

Just as we were breaking camp to be on our way, along came an old Indian and his wife to see if they had caught anything in their snare. I gave them a box of cartridges and five dollars, and they were well content with that. We could not understand each other's language, but we parted with smiles.

In that country, when the thermometer goes down to sixty below or more, there is a curious dusk through the clear air, as if in sunshine you were looking through smoked glasses. It densifies almost to a black fog at times, so that except for a hundred yards ahead the landscape obscures, even against eyesight as keen as mine. And how one can hear the silence then, and every snap of a twig that shatters it!

I was proud of Andrew and Jorgen because of the way they handled themselves — it being their first experience in the deep forests. But on the night that my alcohol thermometer showed sixty-two below zero Jorgen made a mistake. He went to cut a tree for fire-wood — a birch tree — and he swung the blade with such force into the base of it at his first blow that the steel of the axe itself was shattered. This because of the intense cold, which made the metal brittle. I reproved him, and then made some shavings with my hunting knife to start the fire — and my knife snapped in two!

After that we were careful always to tear off enough birch bark or get enough dry twigs to light a small fire, and by that take the chill out of our only remaining axe before using it. And so we went on for days, and my two boys, who had been as fat as seals when we left Herschel Island, began to look gaunt as a wolf. But there was never a word of complaint from them. Blizzard after blizzard delayed us, but they took it all as a matter of course, and they were very careful to keep the feet of the dogs free of lumps of snow or ice which might freeze them or make them sore.

Suddenly our river seemed to turn and run into a better river, and maybe that was the true Porcupine. On it we found a regular trail, and it was recent. We followed, and later I learned that it had been made by

Indians and their dogs who were off for a good time during the Winter Festival at Rampart House or else at Fort Yukon. Before long we came to Old Crow, and there is a river and a mountain and a trading post of that name, and at that post we found an excellent Scotch trader by name of MacDonald, and he made us all very welcome. He had no Scotch or rum, but he chanced to have some Bourbon, and it seemed very appropriate, and clearly indicated for me. We had a good rest there for three days, and I hired two Indians to guide us on to Rampart House, and their dogs were hitched to the two toboggans so that our own dogs could further recuperate. They enjoyed that episode, and trotted along beside us, making remarks sometimes to the dogs in harness which irritated them, and delighted ours.

At Rampart House, which is a post on the north side of the Porcupine, on the Canadian side at the Alaskan boundary, we rested for a day. Then we proceeded to Fort Yukon, our first resting place after entering Alaska. It is situate on the east shore of the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon rivers.

It was New Year's Eve when we pulled into Fort Yukon, and what a gay place it seemed! My two boys had never seen the like. Hundreds of Indians had gathered from hundreds of miles around for a potlatch — and it was an unusually lavish one. The potlatch is an excellent fashion of feast, lasting for days, when rich Indians distribute presents of blankets and other useful articles to their poorer brethren. Thereby they acquire noble rank, just as when a rich brewer or maker of pills endows a college, or gives a lot of money to his party or his church, and is made a lord for doing so. But nowadays, both in Canada and Alaska, the missionaries are averse

to seeing Indian wealth thus donated, unless under their direction, and they have had sufficient political influence to persuade the authorities to forbid the potlatch. So now it can only be done under cover and at great risk. This is a meddling shame, and the outcome is only to render the life of the Indian less social and more drab and dismal than it need be. Likewise, because of the same ecclesiastical influence, Indians in British Columbia who hold séances with traditional ceremonies in order to induce occult reactions from the dead or whatsoever else unseen may join in the game, have been spied upon through keyholes by the Mounted Police, and then arrested and charged with witchcraft. The same black-and-white influence in the background would, with as much or as little reason, interfere with spiritualistic séances held by the Whites at their meeting places in the cities — if it dared! But the Indians have no votes!

It was like old times for me to see the dancing every night, and I contributed handsomely to the potlatch fund. The dancing was quite different from that of the Eskimos. It was not postured so as to tell a story, but seemed aimed entirely at creating an exhilaration of spirit.

We met at Fort Yukon a number of Coppermine Indians whom we had known some years before, and who had wandered down that way. Also we met one elderly Eskimo woman from Herschel Island. One of her names was Alice. She was managing a road-house at Fort Yukon — a primitive inn of the old days in Europe — but with little more accommodation than a caravan-serai. Travellers were expected to supply much of their own accommodation in the way of bedding and utensils. Our hostess we used to call Happy Alice, because of her fat and smiling ways. She was very pleased with

Andrew and Jorgen, and had long talks with them in Eskimo.

Through Happy Alice I was introduced to the favourable attention of Chief Moses. He was a man of quality, and I was greatly taken with him. He knew no Eskimo but his English was almost as good as my own for all we needed to say to each other, and although he was up in years I went around with him for several nights while the potlatch was in progress. I know that he liked me. I had heard stories of fur buyers coming into that section of country, and then, after their money had been spent and they had their furs packed and on the way out to market, of their disappearing — dogs, sleds, furs and all — and the mystery remaining unsolved. Of course, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had no jurisdiction there, Fort Yukon and the land around it being in Alaska more than two hundred miles from the Canadian border. Otherwise there might have been doings and hangings and security for peaceful citizens.

I was not afraid of the Indians. Andrew and Jorgen were handy with their weapons, and I knew what I could do. I did not know, however, until long after, that before the potlatch had ended Chief Moses had sent his own son on ahead along the route we were to take, with instructions to warn all Indians that we were in no way whatever to be molested, or even approached. The warning was effective.

We made fast time down to Circle, and there we turned west for Miller House, and from there to Eagle Creek and on to Twelve Mile House. Good trails, and comfortable road houses every night, made travelling a pleasure, after what we had been through. When we reached Twelve Mile House I knew that we were getting near civilization, and into a white man's country. For

I asked the proprietor if my toboggans would be safe if left outside for the night. He asked me what they were loaded with, and when I told him of the load of furs I had with me out of the Arctic he exploded with:

'Hell no, man! You've got to learn to be civilized here! You lock your outfit up in my shed, and after this the nearer you get to the States the less chances you take!'

It was at Chatinika on the Chatinika River, near Eldorado, that Andrew and Jorgen saw a horse for the first time in their lives. In their Eskimo they called it a big dog, and regarded it as a very remarkable animal. And then they saw the Iron Horse! For already at Chatinika there was a locomotive and a train of cars, all running on a well-built track. Of course I had explained beforehand to them all about railways, but just at first they seemed a bit nervous about getting aboard a car for the ride south to Fairbanks. And that at last was a city for them to see! Electric lights, picture-shows, telephones, wonderful lavatories, and restaurants where everything was so easy, and food was prepared in new ways which even I had not prepared for them in the Arctic! In the shops they bought candy, and sampled fruits of which they had never heard. I let them stroll about and have their fill of whatever they wanted for three days. Then we took the train to Seward, and so once again saw the sea, after having travelled for about twenty-five hundred miles, round and about from Rymer Point, the way we had to go.

First-class passage on a fine ship from Seward to Seattle — it was heavenly travelling for us, after all we had gone through — and with no trouble of going out to kill and cook and clean-up, and then feed the dogs

and pull — push — pull — day after day when the alcohol would be wanting to go solid for a rest in the thermometer!

The fur market was good in Seattle that year. I sold my lot to the Seattle Fur Exchange, and its manager — his name I think was Joseph Agnew — after examining every skin carefully, told me that I had the finest lot of furs which ever had been landed in Seattle. I accepted the first offer he made me without any argument. When a trapper like me does that you may know that he is more than satisfied with the price.

But that business done, we had no time for gallivanting around Seattle, which in those days was a free city to suit a man, and at that far safer than it is to-day. For the first time in my life I had plenty of money, and could pay cash for whatever took my eye.

First I bought the *Maid of Orleans*, a trim little schooner with good cargo capacity, and at the same time with lines like a yacht. Some while later, when I sold her to the Hudson's Bay Company, her name was changed to *Old Maid Number Two*. Next I bought lumber and other building material for the making of two trading posts which I had in view, and also enough for the building of a school-house at Rymer Point. I consulted a respectable school-teacher, and he went with me as an adviser while I bought a lot of elementary and more advanced school-books covering history and geography and the way to write and to calculate with figures.

After that I bought dried figs and prunes and raisins, some real medicines like jalap and castor oil and quinine and rum, and a great quantity of the trade goods which I knew how to exchange profitably for choice furs on Victoria Island and along Coronation Gulf. And besides

all that I bought more guns, ammunition, traps, kerosene, petrol, tools, and nails.

The *Maid of Orleans* was carefully overhauled, and given extra protection on the outside for going through ice-packs. Before all was ready as I wanted it we were into June, and it was time to be off without further delay. It was a bright day, that 10th of June, when the *Maid of Orleans* with me in command sailed out of Puget Sound and into the Straits of Juan de Fuca. Snow still tipped the peaks of the blue Olympians along the west shore of the Straits, and pretty Victoria glimmered in the distance from the south end of Vancouver Island. But our thoughts were all on making Herschel Island early in August, and after that Victoria Island for home and happiness and the building of a great trade into the future. I had over four hundred tons of trade goods in the hold, all paid for, and I had plenty of cash beside with which to pay whatever duties would be demanded of me by the Mounted Police on arrival at Herschel Island. I was not going to be caught short by them another time, as I had been about twelve years earlier when I had but a few goods and family supplies in a whale-boat.

We called in at Unalaska, and then at Nome, but it was not until we reached Port Clarence that I trimmed cargo so as to be in readiness to battle such Arctic gales as might come too soon. We did not stop at Point Barrow, and soon after we passed it on our easterly way we had a spell of splendid weather.

I gave myself a pat on the back. For indeed I had done well. It had been a hard struggle through the years, but now I was in position to reap my reward. I had my plans made to the last detail for the new trading posts which I would establish — the persons I would put in charge —

the supplies I would leave with each. A man may be asleep in a pleasant dream — and then some hellion may sneak up and dash a bucket of ice-water over him. It is not funny!

I dropped anchor at Herschel Island. The Acting Customs Officer of the Mounted Police came on board. He told me that since I had left Seattle there had been a new Canadian regulation made, which was in effect through the Canadian Arctic, by which no ship of American register would be allowed to trade coastwise in Canadian waters. My ship and cargo was held by the police. They would not allow me to trade there, or to go on to Victoria Island.

I protested. I sent despatches through to Ottawa, explaining my situation, and how I had sailed in ignorance of any such new law to be made. It got me nothing. Ottawa was obdurate as usual. The old Viking blood began to boil in me, but I kept my mouth shut.

Finally some word came through to the police. I was told that I would be permitted to go on to Victoria Island, but with only enough supplies to be landed to serve for the immediate use of my own family. I was not to put a single pound ashore for trading purposes, nor could I even land the building material which I had for the proposed new trading posts and the school-house. I began to suspect that I was being thwarted by the influence of some strong trading corporation, but maybe I was wrong. Maybe it was only customary official stupidity in enforcing reasonable regulations unreasonably. There was nothing for me to do but sail on!

They put Constable Macdonald aboard the *Maid of Orleans* when she sailed, to see that their orders were obeyed to the last ounce. He was a fine big fellow, and

sociable, but he certainly did watch closely everything to items so little as needles which I tried to put ashore at Rymer Point. He allowed only the barest necessities for my family to be landed. Then I was ordered to take my schooner and all her cargo apart from that back to Herschel Island, there to be held pending further instructions from Ottawa.

On the return trip Constable Macdonald disappeared. He must have fallen overboard, but none of the crew saw the accident happen. I was asleep in my bunk when his disappearance was reported to me. We were just about one day's sail from Rymer Point at the time, and I immediately gave orders to turn back and cruise about in hope of finding some trace of him. Nothing was ever seen of him again. He was a good officer, and was as fair to me as his orders would permit him to be.

After a vain search for about thirty hours I turned and proceeded to Herschel Island. I reported the loss of Constable Macdonald, and an inquiry was held, and all members of my crew as well as myself were closely questioned. No more could be done at the time, and the inquiry was adjourned.

Following the inquiry I made a plea, not only for myself and my family, but for the many Eskimos to the north and the east who were depending for the next winter upon the supplies I had brought from Seattle. I offered to pay the duties, whatever they might be, and leave the rest of my money with them by way of bail for return when wanted, if only they would permit me to go forward in the meantime and trade as originally intended. I was told that under the new law I would not be allowed to trade with them in Canadian waters. All that was left for me to do then was to sail back with my cargo into American waters. I did not want to do that.

September was half spent already. There is no place between Herschel Island and Point Barrow known to me where I cared to risk anchoring with such a ship and cargo as I had, having already lost the *Helen* and the *Ivy* on that stretch of coast. So reluctantly I hoisted sails and headed away for Point Barrow, where I expected no friendly reception or profitable stay. Then came a strong head wind out of the west, and good navigator as I was I battled for fifteen days in a vain attempt to make Point Barrow. An immense ice-pack had taken position directly in my path. Finally I gave up the fight, and sailed back to Herschel Island. I at once reported to the Mounted Police, and explained conditions, and they knew that I spoke truly, for the weather was upon them as well. So then I received permission to land my cargo in bond, and wait there at Herschel Island till Ottawa should further consider the matter. Ottawa was slow, and at last I decided that once more I would go down to the South, and across to interview personally the topside officials of Ottawa, and ask them to do right by me and mine.

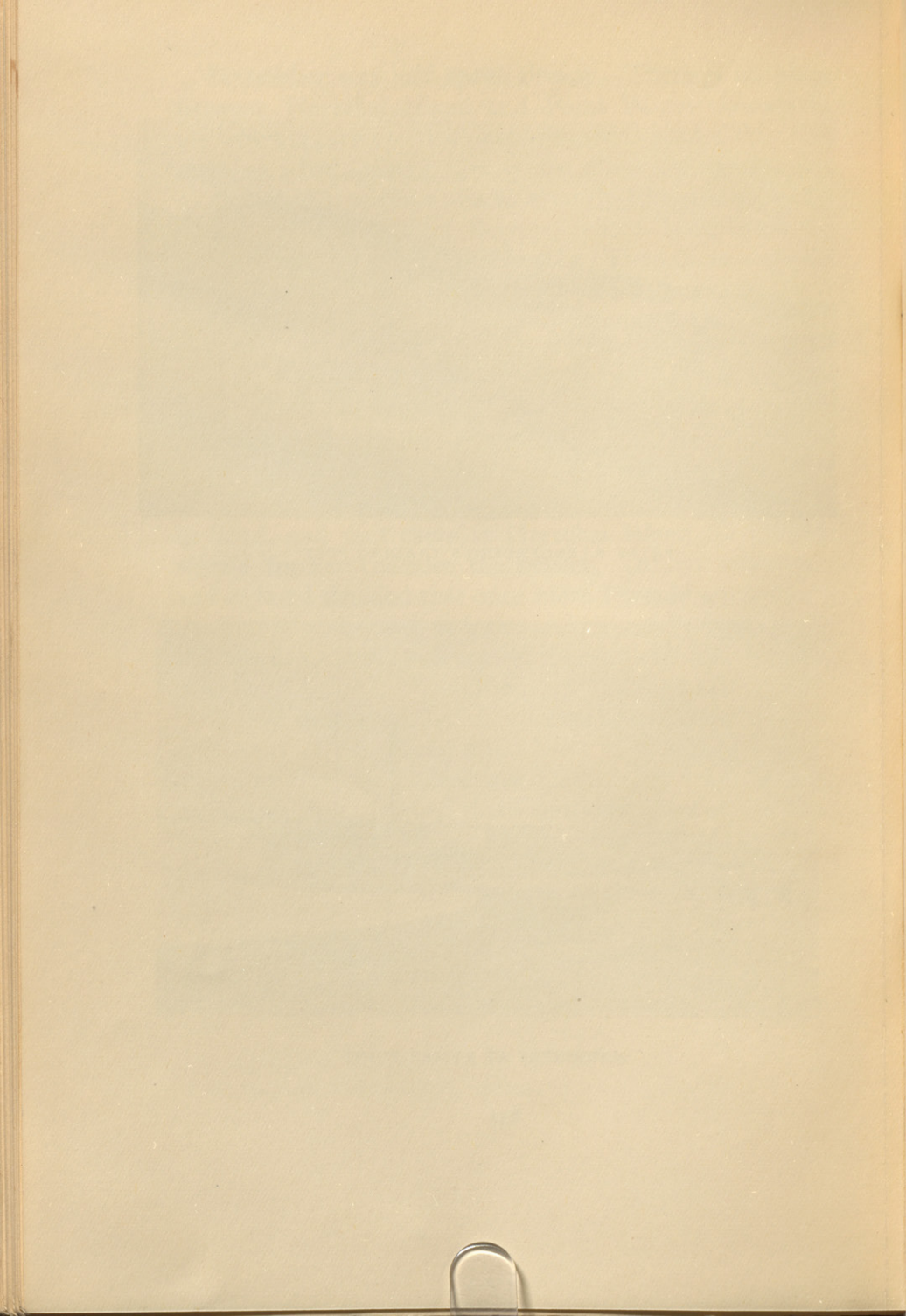
In my innocence I did not then realize the malign continuity of the official mind when it gets a set against a man or his project. Nor was it until after I had arrived in Ottawa that I learned that Constable Macdonald, who disappeared from my ship, was a grandson of the great Canadian Premier, Sir John A. Macdonald.



PATSY KLENGENBERG'S TRADING POST



SCHOONERS AT RYMER POINT



HAPPY AND READY FOR MORE

GREMNIA being comfortably settled at Rymer Point, with children and friends around her, I am having a good time in Vancouver, where I have established a home for my daughter Weena, and her two daughters, Ida Storkersen and Bessie Storkersen, who are attending the public school here, while their sister Matina is attending school in Toronto. After I am satisfied that they have had teaching enough in reading and writing, and history and geography and keeping accounts, then we shall all go back to the Arctic. Patsy is here with me on a visit, but Etna and Andrew and Jorgen and Lena and Diamond and Bob are doing business and playing about Coronation Gulf, when they are not with their mother at Rymer Point.

There are mysteries of the Arctic, and of the Barrens below it. And there are other profitable things besides furs and fish. Maybe I can give hints to the Canadian Government worth heeding, touching those Arctic territories of which it has taken possession for better or for worse. But first I would tell now of how I found the good road at last, after so many false starts and mishaps.

Unfinished because of sudden death.

TOM MACINNES.

4th May, 1931.

POSTSCRIPT

CAPTAIN KLENGENBERG was with me in my room on Thursday, the last day of April, 1931, checking over what had been written in Chapter xxiv, and also title and start for Chapter xxv, which was to be the last. He approved of all that I had so far written. Klengenberg liked a neat caption, just as he liked a smart hat, and he knew I had the knack. About noon Patsy called for him, and he went off in his car to his suburban home in Kerrisdale, saying as he left that he wanted to spend all of Monday with me, when he would tell for the writing some secrets which he had kept to himself through all his years in Canada.

I knew that Klengenberg had made peace with all persons of importance in Canada North — official, commercial and even ecclesiastical — and so it would not be about them that he would tell, nor about what they had been to him on occasions when he was a young family man trying to get along, and they so irritable in the Arctic because of him not going along to suit them, their profits or persuasions. Klengenberg was a free person, who would be independent of every union of persons afraid to live without the backing of their union.

I was wondering might he be going to tell me of some find of rich stuff on Victoria Island, or in the region of the Coppermine River, or about Great Bear Lake — gold or fossil ivory or emeralds or maybe iridium. Or might he have heard something new about the fate of Franklin and his men — or might he have recovered a bit of the keel or equipment or a quadrant from one of the lost

ships of the Cortereals — lost on their way to the Strait of Anian?

Klengenberg had already recounted to me a few discreet incidents in connection with his first reception by the officials in Ottawa whom he went to see — a reception sufficiently frigid to merit inclusion among his Arctic experiences. But later at Ottawa the air of the various stiff ones in the Service became more genial toward Klengenberg, and several of kindly heart personally conducted him through the pleasant suburb of Hull, which lies across the river for the edification of many, and where they do it in the wood; making much pulp and the most premier of matches. But I think it better not to put in this relation anything which was not first submitted to Klengenberg, and worded to suit him. In such matters he was a bit finical.

Shortly after breakfast, on the morning of the 4th May following my last talk with him, Klengenberg told Patsy that he would go across to the cobbler's shop for a pair of shoes belonging to one of his granddaughters, which had been left for repair, after which he said he must go to town to see me. It was not until the afternoon that I was told of his sudden death from indigestion affecting the heart, just as he returned home with the shoes. So there was an end of my writing from what things he told me in his own way.

I had become fond of the Captain. I followed his fancies easily, some of them being so similar to my own, and he lost shyness in telling them, after he found that I took them seriously, and that I wanted something more of him than blood and blubber. Klengenberg was clean and trim in all his ways. He was nice about the quality of his food, and about seasoning, and the cut of his clothes. He preferred light grey for colour, so long as

texture and feel were right otherwise. He was particular about his hat.

Klengenberg had a taste for good things, and he was for giving his friends a good time whenever he could. Also he was disposed to let bygones be bygones with his enemies, so long as he had the better of them or could elude them. Usually he had a humorous word, and seldom a bad one, to say of those against whom he had to use his wits or his weapons. And he furnished occasion, and an easy foundation now and then, for those whose spiteful pleasure it was to speak evil of him. What more can one ask of a man in the way of accommodation than that?

Klengenberg's pronunciation was sometimes a bit difficult for my deaf ear, and the way he wrote his scrappy English confused me. But he could read English with as full appreciation as some can Latin, and because of having read several books of great merit over and over again in lonely hours he retained the best that was in them. I found, moreover, that he was quite informed about European history. He knew into the middle of it minutely as I never did. There must have been good common schools in Denmark in his day — not cluttered with unessentials like ours.

I was glad when Patsy accepted the suggestion that the body of his father be cremated, and the ashes given to the winds of the Arctic off Rymer Point. Several of his old tilikums and navigators of northern waters, who had known him all around from Point Hope to Rymer Point, were present at his funeral in Vancouver, and among these appeared the sturdy figure of Hank Cole, now in his eighty-sixth year, who presently is in Vancouver trying to dispose of a mineral claim, so that he may return again with his wife to the Barrens, where he

has been prospecting for placer gold during the past fifty years, all the way from Alaska across to Hudson Bay, now along one side, now along the other, of the Arctic Circle.

Patsy had arranged to sail next week on the *Baychamo*, one of his father's ships renamed, and bought by the Hudson's Bay Company. But this arrangement had been made before his father's death, and it would have taken him all of two months to reach Herschel Island on her, after which there might be another seven hundred miles to make by sailboat to Rymer Point. So Patsy, being in a hurry now to get back to his mother, has decided to fly. He has taken train for Edmonton, and from there he will do that.

With Patsy will go the handful of grey dust which is all that remains tangible now of Christian Klengenber. We hope that he will be content with what we have done for him, and that he will overlook our incompleteness, as we turn to handle other things which have become urgent. Whatever his faults, Christian Klengenber was a man who endured bravely under most trying conditions. He made the most, for the day and for the minute, of what came to hand. He kept faith with family and friends, and always he looked expectantly and cheerily ahead for many futures beyond every finish!

Vancouver, Canada,
10th June, 1931.

Extract from the *Vancouver Sunday Province*, 2nd August, 1931:

'Near Hunter Bay on Great Bear Lake, a few miles from the Arctic Circle, men are mining pitchblende,

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the world, from the beginning of time to the present day. The author discusses the various civilizations that have flourished on the earth, and the progress of human knowledge and art. He also touches upon the religious and philosophical systems that have shaped the minds of men.

The second part of the book is a detailed account of the history of the British Empire, from its rise to its present state. The author traces the expansion of the empire across the globe, and the various conflicts and triumphs that have marked its history. He also discusses the political and social changes that have taken place within the empire, and the role of the British people in its development.

The third part of the book is a history of the United States, from its founding to the present. The author describes the struggles of the early settlers, the growth of the young nation, and the various crises that it has faced. He also discusses the political and social changes that have shaped the United States, and the role of the American people in its history.

The fourth part of the book is a history of the world from 1875 to the present. The author discusses the various revolutions and wars that have shaped the modern world, and the progress of human knowledge and art. He also touches upon the religious and philosophical systems that have shaped the minds of men.

The fifth part of the book is a history of the world from 1875 to the present, focusing on the various revolutions and wars that have shaped the modern world. The author discusses the progress of human knowledge and art, and the religious and philosophical systems that have shaped the minds of men.



INDEX

- AFRICA, 31
 Agnew, Joseph, 344
 Aklavik, 331, 336-7
 Alaska, 51
 Aleutian Islands, 51, 65
Alexander, The, 46, 47, 266, 267
 Amundsen, Raold, 223, 239
 Amundsen Gulf, 237
 Anderson, Dr. R. M., 273
 Aneyok, 144
 Anujak, 224 ff.
 Arctic, life in, 50 ff., 56 ff., 81 ff.,
 260 ff.
Argo, The, 41
 Atmospheric Effects, 189
Australia, The, 37
 Australia, visit to, 38-40
- BAILLIE ISLAND, 264, 275
 Bain, Captain, 57, 66, 69, 78, 81
 Banks Island, 127, 267
 Barrow, Point, 119, 162, 195, 239
 Barrow, Village, 175
 Bates, Antone, 81 ff.
 Bears, and Bear-hunting, 48-9, 58,
 61, 72, 73, 74, 76, 115, 173,
 174, 193, 280 ff.
 Beaufort Sea, 134, 264
 Bering Sea, 51
 Bernard, Albert, 161, 162, 168,
 170
 Bernard, Joe, 275, 276
 Bernard Harbour, 276
 Birds, 120, 176
 'Blabbertown', 56, 57, 58
 Bolt, Ikey, 274, 275
 Booth Island, 267
 Boothia Land, 310
 Borden Land, 261
 Brooks Range, 172
 Brower, Charles, 17, 174, 175
 Burdoff, Lieutenant, 149
- CALL, DR., 149
 Camden Bay, 171
 Candle, 250
 Cape Baring, 226
 Cape Kendall, 276
 Cape Lisburne, 192, 246
 Cape Parry, 199, 268
 Cape Seppings, 153, 161
 Caribou Hunting, 125, 216 ff., 333
 Carter, 170, 172
 Cemetery, Eskimos', 187-9
 Ceylon, 32
 Chandalar River, 172
Charles Hansen, The, 195, 196,
 197, 336
Chechacos, 152
 Chief Moses, 342
 Chipman, Dr. K. G., 273
 Christian River, 172
 Clerk Island, 261
 Climate, 120, 145, 146, 183 ff.
 Clothing, 74, 142, 226
 Collinson Point, 119, 126, 171
 Colville Hills, 333
 Colville River, 161, 171
 Cook, Captain James, 12
 Cooper Island, 258
 Coppermine, 101, 276
 Copper River, 37
 Corwin Mines, 247, 248
 Customs, Old and New, 307 ff.

DANCING, 61, 89, 90
Darnley Bay, 119, 268, 269, 271
Dashneff, 143
Davis Strait, 261
Dawson, 143, 158
Dease Inlet, 162
De Salis Bay, 267
Diomed Islands, 51, 52, 143
Doctor Island, 258
Dogs, 101, 179, 218

EAST CAPE, 143
Ellis, Tom, 124
Emily Schroeder, The, 50, 51, 56,
70, 147
Eskimos, characteristics of, 52, 54,
55; blond, 222, 223, 224;
methods of fighting, 296; no-
madic, 307
Eskimos and Indians, 101
Espenberg, Cape, 152, 156
Etna, The, 139, 141, 147-8, 150

FAIRBANKS, 158
Feraro, Joe, 104, 106, 107, 115
Fishing, 41, 45, 126, 298
Flaxman Island, 259
Food, 293 *ff.*
Fort Yukon, 340
Franklin Bay, 198, 199
Franklin Return Reef, 124
Frias S. Thompson, The, 42

GILLEN, CAPTAIN, 53, 54, 55
Girling, Mr., 160, 170
Gold, 144, 152, 155, 170 *ff.*
Gordon Bay, 332
Gordon, Tom, 175
Gottschalk, Max, 11-12
Great Bear Lake, 277
Greenland Eskimos, 309
Gremnia, 75, 76, 77, 83, 84, 87,
103, 171, 240, 255, 258, 349
Griggs, Dr., 52, 65, 70, 71

HAMLET, CAPTAIN, 240, 241
'Happy Alice,' 341-2
Hara, The, 45, 47
Harpooning, 86-7, 99, 107, 135
Helen, The, 161, 163, 170, 171,
172
Henderson, Captain, 275, 276
Hermann, 201, 203, 216, 217
Herschel Island, 100, 119 *ff.*, 128,
259
Hobson, Fred, 175
Homely Hippopotamus, The, 272 *ff.*
Honolulu, 45
Howard, Major, 238
Huskies, 180

Iceland, The, 25, 28, 30
Icy Cape, 161, 178
Igloos, 307
Indians, and Eskimos, 101, 310
Infanticide, 320
Initkilly, 185
Ivy, The, 254 *ff.*

JACKSON, ENGINEER, 201 *ff.*, 238,
243 *ff.*
Jarvis, Lieutenant, 149, 150
Jeanette, The, 35
Jenks, Captain, 156
Jennie, The, 124, 125, 127, 134
Jesse Freeman, The, 145, 149

KEEWALIK RIVER, 250
Kittigazuit Channel, 199
Kivalina, 144, 153
Klengenber, Andrew, 195, 339,
349
— Bob, 275, 349
— Collinson, 175
— Diamond, 349
— Etna, 144, 265, 268, 274,
275, 320, 349
— Jorgen, 339, 349
— Lena, 259, 349

- Patsy, 162, 203, 265, 269,
273, 282, 294, 349
- Weena, 234, 235, 237, 259,
349
- Klondike, 143, 163
Kolmak, 220, 222 *ff.*
Kotzebue, 144, 194
Kris, a sailor, 173, 174
Krusenstern, 152
Kukpuk River, 56
- LANE, LOUIE, 155
Langton Bay, 198, 274
Laws, in the Arctic, 312 *ff.*
Letter-carrying, 176 *ff.*
Liverpool Bay, 264
London, Jack, 9, 10, 11
Lopp, Tom, 150
Lyons Cape, 268
- MACDONALD, CONSTABLE, 346-7
McKenna, Captain, 195 *ff.*, 336
Mackenzie River and Delta, 335,
336
McLean, Captain A., 9, 10, 11,
46, 47
McPherson, The, 275
Maid of Orleans, The, 344-5
Malamutes, 180
Marsh, 170, 171
Marsh, Dr., 173, 175, 244
Mary D. Hume, 127
Mathieson, George, 159-60, 169
Medicine-men, 299
Miller, Frank, 214, 215
Mosinkos, 122
Mutiny on the *Olga*, 203 *ff.*
- NELSON, MR., 144, 151-2
Nome, 143, 155, 156 *ff.*, 252, 345
- OIL GETTING, 136
Olga, The, 195 *ff.*, 217 *ff.*
O'Neill, Dr. J. J., 273
- Orka*, The, 122, 123, 124, 145,
149
Osterberg, Andrew, 156
- PAISLEY, GEORGE, 161, 162, 169,
172, 173
Peizer, 131-3
Petersen, Captain, 255, 331
Plover Land, 261
Point Hope, 55, 56, 65, 119, 144,
250
Porcupine River, 337
Port Clarence, 149, 156
Port Safety, 144
Prince of Wales Cape, 156
Prison Life, 253
- RAMPART HOUSE, 340
Reindeer, 149, 150, 176
Religion, 301 *ff.*
Romanzoff Mountains, 171
Rosie H., The, 265
Royal Canadian Mounted Police,
101, 130, 262, 306
Rymer Point, 119, 277, 329 *ff.*
- ST. LAWRENCE ISLAND, 149
San Francisco, 41, 45, 138, 253
Seattle, 344
'Sea Wolf,' 9, 10, 11
Seals, and Seal-hunting, 59, 60
Shanghai, 31
Silver Wave, The, 52
Slime Banks, 41
Smith Bay, 168
Smyth Cape, 169, 175
Sprague, Rev. —, 175, 177, 178,
194
Starr, Bill, 192
Stefansson, V., 9, 223, 239, 273
'Stone Age' Men, 228, 273, 314
Storkersen, Bessie, 349
— Ida, 349
— Storker T., 259

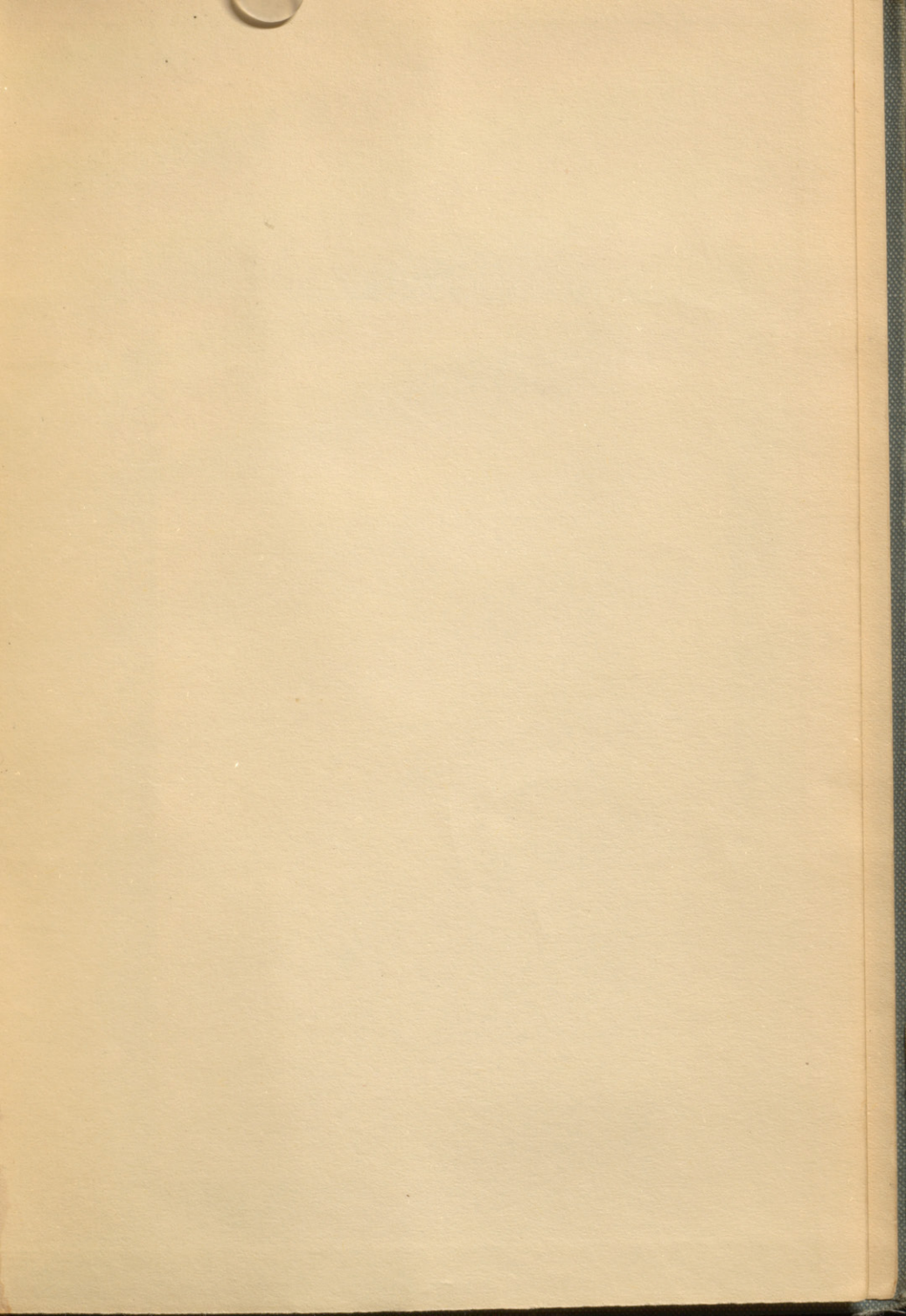
Stringer, Rev. J. O., 130, 131
Sulzer, Senator, 171, 244

TANGENT POINT, 258
Tazekpuk, 169
Thetis Bay, 129
Thetis, The, 240
Tolman, J. C., 250, 251, 252
Townsend, The, 156
Townsend, Captain, 122, 123,
124
Tuttle, Captain, 174

Umatilla, The, 252
Unalaska, 195, 345
Unimak Pass, 51

VAN FLEET, JUDGE, 253
Venus, The, 12
Victoria Island, 199, 200, 222
Victoria Land, 79, 267, 309

WALRUS-HUNTING, 198 ff., 246 ff.,
295
Walter, 201, 203, 216, 217
Wevok, 248
Whaling, 50, 81 ff., 100 ff., 127,
135, 163 ff., 195 ff., 242
Whitney, Ben, 201
Winterton, Arnold, 11
Wollaston, Cape, 268
Wollaston Land, 79, 200
Woods, Inspector, 335



DATE DUE

OCT 7 - 1932

OCT 20 1932

NOV 12 1932

NOV 18 1932

DEC 14 1932

APR 1 - 1933

JUL 18 1933

AUG 17 1933

JAN 5 - 1934

MAY 10 1946

M DEC 27 1973

DEC 27 1973

ILL ML FEB

3/19/78 4 1978

C FEB 4 1980

MAR 26 1980

C ILL ML APR 9 1980 1980

