

bought and the good man returned happy to his home to make preparation for the voyage after eleven years of patient toil and trials. Yet when he came to leave the people whom he loved it needed all the courage of his wife to carry him through the ordeal. At Bergen where the vessel lay the people pitied his young and devoted wife, but looked on him as a fanatic. It needed strong faith in God to take not only his wife, but the four little ones whom God had given them, on such a voyage, with not even the prospect of a shelter when they landed on that dreary shore, but God honored that trust reposed in him by not only preserving every one of them through many years in that climate, but in making them vessels of mercy and channels of grace to others.

Forty souls in all were on board the ship which sailed from Bergen in May, 1721, and after a perilous voyage, the latter part of it among vast masses of ice in a stormy sea, and often in dense fog, they landed on the island of Kangek, on July 3rd.

They found there the summer tents of a Greenland village, who wondered at the strange sight of a woman and little children on board the ship. When they found however, that this meant remaining in the country, they at once moved their tents to a distance, and would not even receive a visit from the strangers who they feared had come to take vengeance for previous robberies and murders of their countrymen.

The situation was anything but attractive. As many as twenty natives occupied one tent, their bodies unwashed, and their hair uncombed and both their persons and clothing dripping with rancid oil. The tents were filled and surrounded with seal flesh in all stages of decomposition, and the only scavengers were the dogs, and even they do not seem to have been adequate to the disposing of the offal. Not only were there no readers, but few that had any thought beyond the routine of their daily life. No article that could be carried off was safe within their reach, and, of course, lying was open and shameless, for stealing and falsehood always go together. Further acquaintance only brought to light even greater unloveliness. They were skillful in derision and mimicry, and, despising men, who, they said, spent their time in looking at a piece of paper, or scratching it with a feather, they did not study gentle modes of giving expression to their feelings. It was still worse when they pretended interest in the truth before the missionary, and then mocked and mimicked him with their companions. They wanted nothing but plenty of seals, and as for the fires of hell, that, they said, would be a pleasant contrast to

their terrible cold. And when the missionary urged them to deal truly with God, they asked him in reply when he had seen him last.

The cold in winter was terrific. The missionary made a fire in every room, carefully closed every cranny and wore a suit of fur, yet the eider down pillows stiffened with frost under his head, the hoar frost extended even to the mouth of the stove, and alcohol froze upon the table. The cold was most unendurable where the surface of the water did not freeze, for then a thin smoke arose from it that cut like a knife, and none could stand before it. The sun was invisible for two months. There was no change in the dreary night. What wonder if people in such cold grew slothful! Even our daintiest housekeepers, under such an ordeal, would abate somewhat of their punctilio.

It is not strange that in such a climate and among such a people, when the traders found there was no trade, and provisions began to run low, his associates began to murmur when the expected store ship did not appear in the spring, and resolved to go back. In vain Egede pleaded with them. They would only consent to remain till June. As the time drew near he was in agony; he could not desert his post; at the same time he could not stay alone and see his wife and children perish. He had yielded to the demand for returning had not his wife nobly refused to abandon the work God had given them to do. Even when the men began to tear down the buildings she expressed her firm conviction that the ship was near, and on June 27 it arrived, bringing news that the merchants promised to persevere in spite of their ill-success, and that the King had even laid an assessment on his subjects to sustain the mission.

On his first arrival Egede had gone among the people, as soon as he had learned to ask the question, "What is this?" and wrote down their answers to his inquiries. Now, in the winter of 1722, both he and his two sons took up their abode in the winter quarters of the people, despite their filth and stench, in order to learn their language, and in summer he explored a valley in Amalik Bay, where, amid grass and wild flowers and low thickets of birch, willow and juniper, he found the ruins of one of the settlements that he had read about at home. Here in the fallen church he felt that his countrymen once sang their Norwegian hymns and offered prayers which he knew would be answered by Him who never forgets.

In the second year three ships were sent, one with stores, another for whaling, which carried back a cargo valued at £600, and a