THE LIFE OF A SLEDGE TRAVELLER AMID THE SPACES OF THE NORTH

Graphic Account of the Perils Met With by Those Who Have Gone In Search of the Coveted Goal ---Dr. Cook Tells of a Dash Poleward--Always Hungry--Weariness, Homesickness But a Strong Fascination in the Frozen North.

DR. F. A. COOK IN ARCTIC DRESS.

BY DR. FREDERICK A. COOK.

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Few of us ever have a long run over a hill of happiness without stumbling upon several ups and downs of misfortune but we soon forget this, and altogether life seems easy enough to most of us who live in temperate climes.

It is not the same, however, with the men who seek the realms of the great frozen lands in the arctic and antarctic. They who aim to reach the pole are kicked about by giant seas, are pounded by heavy storms, are brushed by freezing drifts of snow, and yet they calmly resign themselves to become the foot balls of a hard fate because of a few pleasures. An effort only partly crowned with success gives such elation and joy that all the sufferings and discomforts are forgotten.

The Lure.

Herein lies the reason for the unfaltering law that he who has once behld the other world conditions, and has felt the charm of the white snowy silence of the frigid zones, will ever long to return.

Let us follow briefly the life of a sledge traveler. He starts out for a determined poleward dash, taking with him no money to buy necessities and comforts en route, no trunk or little luxuries; nothing besides his bed and his tent, with fuel and provisions for three months or more. All of this is in such shape that at any moment he is prepared to carry his baggage on his back for miles. There are no half-way inns, no houses, no shelter and no bazaars by the wayside. If he has forgotten or lost anything, it cannot be replaced. He is far awy from the familiar world, far from the accustomed comforts of life, and as completely isolated as if he was on the surface of the moon. Day after day he plods along over desolate fields of rough ice, pushing and pulling sledges, urging and whipping the wolf dogs. He is always too tired to talk, frequently too weary to eat, and often also too uncomfortbale to sleep. Still he has resolved to make the effort of his life, and he continues to press onward.

Half Rations.

One day he advances five miles, the next 20 miles, and again but a mile; and then a storm comes which causes a halt of five days. As time goes on the stock of provisions decreases, the load becomes lighter, but he finds the distance covered all too small. Half rations are now served. Heretofore the full ration would seem a starvation diet, but now it is only half, and the character of this [illegible] such as to make one's marrow [illegible] ak. Here is the day's gastro[illegible] a comfort: For breakfast, [illegible] of tea, a few ship's biscuits h[illegible] and tough, a bit of pemmican, 20 years old, which is made of equal quantities of dried meat and beef tallow.

No luncheon, except a soap-like cake of bacon fat mixed with pulverized peas.

For dinner the breakfast is repeated with an extra treat in the form of a large drink of water, if the fuel supply will permit such a luxury. Experience has proven that this is the most practicable bill of fare, and it does not permit of elaboration. Except the tea everything is taken cold.

Remarkable Diet.

It is really remarkable to see how this scant polar diet keeps up the physical powers, and it is even more remarkable to see how a fat piece of frozen pemmican will change a hungry man's mind. Hunger is as normal to the explorer as the shivers, and both complaints are treated by the same remedy, food—for when the stomach is full the body is warm. When the day's journey is ended the tongue burns, the throat is parched and there is an uncomfortbale pinching at the pit of the stomach. One feels like eating a mountain and drinking a river, but the effect of pemmican upon this condition is marvelous. It is hard to eat rapidly, so one nibbles away, shivers and dreams of better times. The dry, uncooked bits of meat go down with a snatch and some effort, and one is very conscious of its position in the stomach by a heavy, full feeling, which is always a joy to hungry mortals.

Long before the half-pound lump, which is the usual allowance, disappears, the pangs of hunger are forgotten, and then a desire for a hot cup of tea to take away the scratchy feeling is all that is necessary to make life again worth living. The diet of a sledge traveller is not so bad when you have nothing else within reach, but the gods could not force a man to eat it if he could get something else instead. One takes to it kindly as a convict does to prison diet.

Happiest Moments.

It is not so bad with the bed. Among the incidents of bed-going are to be found the happiest moments of an explorer's life. It is a pity that the north pole cannot be reached in a sleeping bag, for therein lies the foundation of most of the comforts of polar adventures.

If the camp is pitched in some nook out of the wind, you are quickly buried under the drift of snow. If the sleeping bag is too thin or too thick, if it is too long or too short, or if it has any one of a dozen faults, it makes life a torture. Some prefer a "one-man" bag, others a bag for three. Now I like a "three-man" bag, but I want to choose my bed fellows carefully, and I also want to select my position in the bag. When three men are slipped into a bag like fingers into a glove there is not much room for discussion. Such men must not have bristles which can be rubbed the wrong way, for there is nothing worse than sulphurous language in a sleeping bag. It doesn't matter how charming a man may ordinarily be, he is another sort of creature in a bag; and then, too, men have such different ways when asleep.

An Experience.

To illustrate the comforts and discomforts, however, I must recount a part of this experience. In field work one seldom has shelter except a small tent or a snow house, but usually, when the weather is at all tolerable, the bag is spread out upon the open field of ice. One man attends to the culinary business; his duties are simple. After building a wall of snow as a wind guard for the little blue flame oil stove he selects some blocks of snow to be melted for tea. The tea is several hours in preparation, and while this is being done the other two undress and slip into the bag. It is remarkable how quickly men will jump out of their clothing in a temperature of 40 degrees below zero.

As the men quiver and shuffle and grunt in the bags to overcome the chill of their cold air bath, the cook chops off pieces of pemmican with an axe and, with a package of biscuits, he tosses it to them. For a half hour they punch each other and munch the hard food, and then a reaction sets in—a sort of warm electric glow which raises the mind to the seventh heaven of happiness. Ah, these are the moments for which polar men will gladly shiver for weeks. Then it is that they lie down and dream of happy homes, sweethearts and friends far away.

A Godsend.

After a time the lonely mortal upon whom the lot has fallen to prepare the tea brings over a condensed milk can full of steaming stuff. It is feeble, but it is hot, and anything hot is a godsend. Little things, like cups and saucers, knives, spoons and table linen do not trouble the explorer. Nor does he ever think of washing clothes. The cook then kicks up some bits of ice as a pillow and stores the clothing under the bag to keep it from being blown away, after which he drops out of his garments, shivers and pushes into the centre like a wedge between the other two. He has a distinct advantage over the first bag tenants, because he gets the warmth of the others, who are by this time in a fever heat of happiness.

In a very short time all are sleeping the sleep of the just in a lonely wilderness of ice, and then what care they for the cruel outside world? There is no noise except the metallic crackling of the snow under the bag, the snore of the companions, and the steady blow of the wind as it brushes the bag.

It is the universal opinion that polar explorers suffer mostly by reason of the intense cold, and that success or failure is due to the powers of enduring low temperatures, but this is far from the truth. True, there are snow and ice everywhere in evidence. Snow falls during the summer as well as during the winter. For this, however, we are prepared; suitable garments so fit the body that one does not really suffer much more from the effects or cold than does a New Yorker in winter, and we avoid the life-reducing heat of the home summers.

Still I do not mean to infer that the cold is ever forgotten. The conditions are such that the absence of heat is constantly brought to mind. When we start out from our comfortable rooms at headquarters we emerge from an agreeable temperature of 70 degrees into an icy air of minus 40 degrees, which makes a difference of 110 degrees of cold within 10 seconds. This causes the breath to come in jets of steam, and soon the whiskers, the eyebrows and every fragment of hair about the face are covered with icicles and crystals of hoarfrost; beautiful little things, but they do not seem pretty at all to the possessor, for he is constantly brushing them off, pulling out bunches of hair and blowing out warm phrases. One never learns the real trouble of the life of the frigid zones until he has his face bejewelled with icicles.

Lose Heat First.

Owing to the natural laws of radiation, the extremeties lose their heat first. The careless traveller constantly suffers from cold hands and feet, and even a careful adept loses his fingers or toes with remarkable ease.

We plod on and on over the weary snows until we find a camping place. Then we pitch camp, but now one has a stinging pain in his toes; after a while this vanishes and is replaced by loss of sensation in a large part of the foot.

The boot is removed and promptly the many thicknesses of hose. The foot feels like something foreign. One stocking after another is cautiously taken off, but still there is a woody touch to the foot. When the last stocking is stripped down the foot is found white and glossy, like porcelain. A more careful examination reveals the fact that one or two toes are missing, and then the sock is shaken for the missing bits before an effort is made to restore circulation of the icy tissues. But an explorer must learn to rise above such little discomforts. He who cannot afford to lose strips of his skin or parts of his hands and feet is not worthy to be counted among the braves who seek the pole.

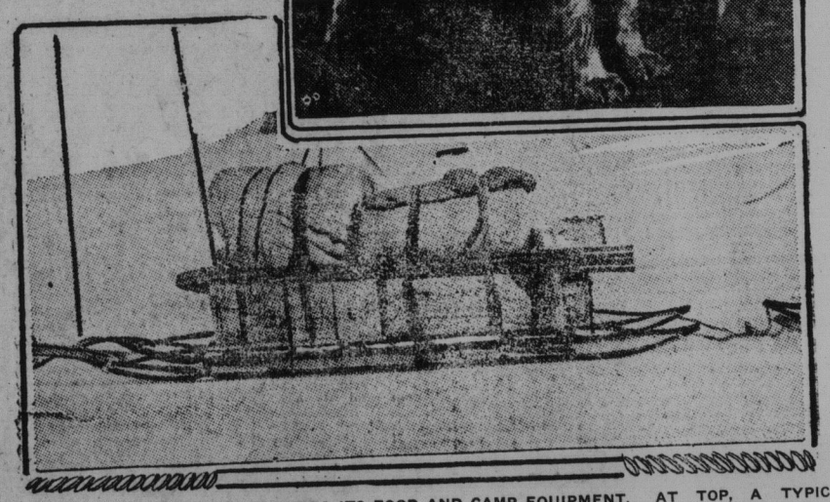
No! it is not the cold which makes the life of frigid explorers hard; it is the hopelessness of the unimaginable isolation from the accustomed walks of life.

After being in the ice and forced to endure its awful monotony for a few months, what would one not give for a few months, what would one not give for a letter or a word from home, from mother or sisters, or other men's sisters? Ordinarily men do not know what it is that makes life enjoyable, but he who aims to reach the North Pole will quickly learn that he suffers not from the cold or hunger, but from the little nothings of home and social life which are there far out of reach.

I might go on and recite a hundred other lessons which go to make up the schooling and deprivation of the pole seekers, but I hasten to record the comforts. There are few, but they exist to him who seeks them. For here is the world nearest to its youthful character. The moving crust of the earth with which we drift the hardy, simple life, and even the sky, all suggest a period of the earth in its infancy long before the advent of man. It is this strange simplicity, this other-world air of terrestial youth, which makes the polar regions so fascinating to nature-loving man.

Everything about us is new, yet old; every sight is simple, yet clothed in mystery; every phenomenon, like a shy maiden, is attractive, but difficult of access, the haste and hustle of the living world are far from the mental horizon and the mind is ready to examine new problems. It is fortunate that one can, after a little experience here open the book of nature and record the causes and effects of nearly all phenomena, for then the mysterious halo which surrounds everything polar disappears.

Henry Marsh, K. C., of Toronto and one of the most widely known barristers in Ontario, died of heart failure today while swimming.



HOW AN ARCTIC EXPEDITION CARRIES ITS FOOD AND CAMP EQUIPMENT. AT TOP, A TYPICAL ESKIMO SLEDGE DOG.

On With the Play

ETHEL BARYMORE.

This is the first season that Ethel Barrymore—now Mrs. Russell Colt—will start with a husband on her hands.

3,000 WILL ATTEND HUDSON-FULTON BANQUET

Hotel Astor Ballroom at New York Will Present Dutch Scene to Throngs of Festival Dancers.

New York Sept. 7.—At least three thousand persons will attend the banquet which will be given in the Hotel Astor on September 29 in connection with the Hudson-Fulton celebration, and the committee having the affair in charge promises it will be on a scale of magnificence in arrangement seldom attempted. Instead of the usual conventional arrangement of flags, spears and bunting the ballroom will be a scene of artistic splendor.

Charles R. Lamb, who planned the triumphal arch and court of honor in Fifth avenue for the Dewey celebration has charge of the transformation of the big ballroom for this Hudson-Fulton banquet. There will be mural paintings and striking original decorations by well known artists. To this end $5,000 has been appropriated.

The diners will find themselves in a thoroughly Dutch atmosphere, in which Delft blue and the orange of the royal house of Netherlands will be relieved by various scenes and objects symbolical of the historic events which the banquet is to commemorate.

Suspended from the ceiling will be a large model of the old Half Moon. Behind it will be a great decorative painting representing old Amsterdam. Across on the north side, will hang a model of Fulton's steamboat, the Clermont, with a view of New York harbor in the back ground, showing the Statue of Liberty and a big modern liner coming up the bay. Flanking these will be the shields of the United States and Holland, respectively, connected by garlands of orange chrysanthemums against the blue background of the pervasive Delft.

At the corners of the room, and around the front wall of the galleries will be immense branches of the orange colored flower, supported in vases which form a part of the decorations on the bases of the gallery pillars. The walls, the columns supporting the galleries and every part of the big room except the ceiling will carry out the same blue and orange scheme.

The ceiling decorations will be done in gold, which is to be the permanent color of the room. It will be lighted from above by concealed lights, and by the mere turn of a switch it will be possible to change its aspect to that of a sky lighted by stars.

CANADA'S NAVAL POLICY ANAEMIC, SAYS ROGERS

Sir Frederick Borden and Mr Brodeur Were to London With Ironclad Instructions--Borrowing of Undignified.

Winnipeg, Man., Sept. 7.—In commenting on the address delivered by Sir Wm. White on the naval situation, Hon. Robert Rogers said anyone listening to Sir William's argument and accepting the principles he laid down, could not for a moment endorse the anaemic expedients that Canada has put forward in the name of a naval policy.

Never Any Doubt.

"There has never been any doubt," Mr. Rogers said, "about Canada's full membership in the Imperial firm, so long as it gives us protection for nothing. But when it appeared necessary for us to do something to ensure the permanence of that protection, we were asked to regard the head of the firm much as we would regard some one with an infectious disease, that we should keep as far away from as as possible."

Mr. Rogers further declared that Sir Frederick Borden and Mr. Brodeur went to the Imperial Defence Conference with ironclad instructions from Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which they were not permitted to vary.

The borrowing of cruisers from Great Britain he described as an utterly useless and undignified proceeding. "To be borrowers in a situation where we should be givers," he said, "is about as contemptible a way of fulfilling an Imperial obligation as could be possibly imagined. There is no doubt, and there can be no doubt, but that the sentiment of the people of Canada from one end to the other demands something more."

WOMAN RECLUSE DEAD IS FREED OF QUEER VOW

New York, Sept. 5.—The fulfillment of her repeated resolution that death alone would cause her to give up the house of her ancestors came yesterday when for the first time in years strangers entered the home of Mary Elizabeth Crocheron in New Springville, Staten Island, to prepare her body for burial.

Miss Crocheron was fund dead in bed on Wednesday. She had died alone behind barred doors, which had to be broken open before the house

Eight years ago Miss Crocheron created a sensation by repelling with a loaded musket an eviction party under Sheriff McCormack, of Richmond. It was then that she declared that she would not leave her home alive. For months all who called were halted and kept under the aim of the firearm while they explained their business. The warfare was finally brought to a close by a nephew, who arranged for the payment of the mortgage, and the aged woman was allowed to remain in possession of her home.

Miss Crocheron ws descended from Sieur Jean de Crocheron, a Hugenot nobleman who escaped from France in a hogshead after the revocation of the Edict de Nantes and put his life in jeopardy. He took refuge in Staten Island, where he bought several thousand acres of land.

Family Prospered

The family prospered and at the time of the birth of Miss Crocheron, seventy years ago, was at its zenith. A Supreme Court judge and a Congressman had added to the lustre of the family name and in the early '50's the young woman, liberally endowed with wealth and beauty, was a belle of New York's most exclusive set.

The civil war brought a change. Investments made by Miss Crocheron's father were swept away and the family found themselves dependent on the revenue of the Staten Island estate. Two brothers attempted to recoup their fortunes in South America, but failed, and at their death Miss Crocheron found that all that remained was the homestead and 110 acres of ground, a large part of which was salt marsh.

Her income was reduced to $600 a year, on which she maintained herself for many years. A failure of the crops ten years ago forced Miss Crocheron to mortgage her property for $9,000 to St. Andrew's Protestant Church. She was unable to meet the interest and attempts at eviction followed.

APPLICANTS TO JUMP FOR THIS SINECURE

Those Who Wish To Qualify for Position of Deputy Warden of Caldwell Penitentiary Trying to Reduce Weight.

New York, Sept. 7.—Fat office seekers in Montclair, N. J., are getting up early these mornings and sprinting along the country roads in the hope of qualifying for a running high jump of four feet four inches, which will be one of the requirements demanded of applicants for the office of deputy warden of the County Penitentiary at Caldwell, which carries a salary of $1,380.

Politicians of girth, who have looked with longing eyes on the job, which is regarded as a good deal of a sinecure, are deeply grieved about the list of things that will be called for when the civil service examination to fill the position will be held on September 20 by Gardner Colby, chief examiner for the New Jersey Civil Service Commission.

Apart from the running high jump, the candidates will be required to undergo other severe physical tests such as hauling a weight by the arms to the height of the chin, pushing a weight from parallel bars, lifting from the floor with each hand a heavy dumbbell and raising it from the shoulder to the full length of the arm, the total lift for both arms to be one hundred pounds for a perfect mark.

The presumption is that the county authorities wish to get a deputy warden spry enough to clear a fence or any other barrier and to give a good account of himself in a struggle with a prisoner.

PERSONAL

Miss Belle Amdur left last evening on the Calvin Austin for New York where she will resume her studies in Grand Opera.

The Misses Rose and Mr. Harold Sills, of Geneva, N. Y., who have been visiting Mrs. H. B. Robinson, left last evening on their return home.

Mrs. J. King Hazen of Fredericton, arrived in the city yesterday on a visit to her son, Hon. J. D. Hazen.

Mrs. Edward Sears has returned from the West, where she spent eight months visiting her sons and daughters, Mr. Edward Sears, Jr., Mr. Harold and Miss Geraldine, who are located in Minneapolis and Chicago.

Mrs. L. P. D. Tilley returned to the city yesterday, from St. Andrews.

Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Emerson returned to the city yesterday.

Mr. George Olive, who has been visiting relatives on the west side, will return to Plaster Rock today.

Mr. Michael H. O'Connell, assistant superintendent of the stereotyping and press department of the Bangor Daily Commercial, is in the city for a few days visiting friends.

MRS. McCLARY DEAD.

Special to The Standard.

London, Ont., Sept. 7.—Mrs. McClary, wife of John McClary, president of the McClary Manufacturing Company, died this morning aged 50 years. She had been ill for over a year.

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