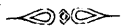


Literary Notices.



THE LAND OF DESOLATION. By Isaac J. Hayes, M. D., Author of the "Open Polar Sea," &c. New York: Harper Bros

Numerous books of adventure in the Arctic regions have been published of late years, but the demand still seems to be unabated. The present volume relates more particularly to Greenland, and gives the details of a coasting trip made by the author in company with Mr. Bradford, the artist, and others, for the purpose of seeking the picturesque in Arctic scenery. The adventures of the "Panther" and her passengers form the principal material for the book, but some attention is paid to the history and antiquities of the Northmen in Greenland and the items of scientific interest which were observed. The formation of icebergs was watched with a careful attention which perhaps no previous writer has been in a position to give. On one occasion, the whole party were in imminent danger from the sudden birth of one of these sea-mountains. Our readers will be interested in the story:—

A NARROW ESCAPE.

During the absence of the captain and myself from the vessel the artists had not been idle. They had landed near the glacier, and with brush and camera had begun their work. The day was warm, the mercury rising to 68° in the shade, and the sun, coming around to the south, blazed upon the cold, icy wall. This must have produced some difference of temperature between the ice touched by the solar rays and that of the interior, which was in all probability several degrees below the freezing-point, for towards noon there was an incessant crackling along the entire front of ice. Small pieces were split off with explosive violence, and, falling to the sea, produced a fine effect as the spray and water spurted from the spot where they struck. Scarcely an instant passed without a disturbance occurring of this kind. It was like a fusilade

of artillery. Now and then a mass of considerable size would break loose, producing an impression both upon the eye and ear that was very startling.

By one o'clock every body had come on board to dinner, and for a while we all stood on deck watching the spectacle and noting the changes that took place with interest. It was observed, among other curious phenomena, that when the ice broke off the fractured surface was deep blue, and that if any ice, as sometimes happened, came up from beneath the water, it bore the same color; but after a short exposure to the sun, the surface changed, and became almost pure white, with the satin glitter before described. Our situation for a view could not have been better chosen, and it is not likely that such an opportunity was ever enjoyed before by explorers, since it is not probable that a vessel ever rode before at her anchor so near a glacier.

After dinner the work was to be resumed. The photographers hastened ashore, hoping to catch an instantaneous view of some tumbling fragment, which if they could have done would certainly have exceeded in interest any other view they had secured. The question of moving our anchorage was deferred to the captain, who decided to go over to the other side when the artists had been put ashore with their tools. Steam was indeed already up.

The boat had reached the shore for this purpose, and had shoved off for the ship, leaving the artists on the beach; and the order had been given by the captain to "up anchor," when loud reports were heard one after another in quick succession. A number of large pieces had broken off, and their fall disturbed the sea to such an extent that the vessel began to roll quite perceptibly, and waves broke with considerable force upon the shore. Then, without a moment's warning, there was a report louder than any we had yet heard. It was evident that some unusual event was about to happen, and a feeling of alarm was generally experienced.

Casting my eyes in the direction from which the sound proceeded, the cause of it was at once explained. The very centre or extreme point of the glacier was in a state of apparent disintegration. Here the ice was peculiarly picturesque, and we had never ceased to admire it,