

SOME ASPECTS OF LIFE AND WORK IN COLD REGIONS.

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(Continued.)

THE climate of the vast territory of North America is remarkably uniform, and although, during the season of winter, rigorous in the extreme, yet it is the healthiest, and I am sure many of my readers will aver, the pleasantest in the world. It is warmer in the west and south than in the north and east. In Alaska, the region of Hudson's Bay, and Greenland, the resources of the thermometer are severely taxed during the winter in its efforts to indicate the intensity of the temperature, it frequently falling as low as 50, 60 and sometimes even 62 degrees below zero. In January, 1853, Sir Edward Belcher experienced, at his winter quarters, in Wellington Channel, a temperature as low as 66 degrees below zero of Fahrenheit. This sounds very alarming, and we are amazed to know that life can be sustained under such conditions. It must, however, be borne in mind that during the prevalence of such intense cold, the weather is invariably fine and calm and the sky cloudless—consequently, the cold is felt but little. The lamented Sir John Franklin tells us that during these intense colds, i. e., with the thermometer at 57 degrees below zero, his men were able to travel and go about their ordinary work without taking any extraordinary precautions, yet without feeling any bad effects. They were clad in reindeer shirts, leathern mittens lined with blanket, and fur caps. This is the testimony of all Arctic travellers. This feature is happily characteristic of the climate of North America generally, otherwise it is very obvious that life in any form would be insupportable in some parts of the Continent. But such is the wisdom of that Good Providence who "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." Nevertheless, it must not be thought from the foregoing remarks that wind *never* accompanies severe cold. The writer has experienced gales of wind with the thermometer at the same time standing as low as 20 degrees below zero. Such experience, it will readily be understood, is far from pleasant; indeed, it is frequently, if not always, more or less dangerous, particularly in such places as Northern Newfoundland, Labrador and the Far North, where the population is thin and scattered, roads are unknown, and where locomotion is dependent on raquet and dog sleighs. In these places, too, owing doubtless in a great measure, if not altogether, to their proximity to the sea, atmospheric changes at all seasons of the year, but particularly in summer and winter, are remarkably sudden, and consequently deleterious to health in the former, and to life perhaps more than health in the latter



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season. Hence, during the summer months, notwithstanding that it is sometimes intolerably hot, still the body must be heavily and comfortably clad if health is to be preserved. During the winter, should an abundant fall of snow be quickly succeeded by high winds, the weather becomes very disagreeable and equally dangerous. The recently fallen snow has not had time to settle, and although too minute to be visible to the unaided human eye, the myriad flakes, whose formation is as varied as it is beautiful, merely touch each other at angles, consequently they are easily lifted and carried away by the angry wind currents which sweep across the surface of the snow. The atmosphere, therefore, which perhaps an hour before was calm, serene and lovely, is now filled with dense clouds of snow, which are driven furiously by the savage wind, whirling and eddying in sportive ferocity, but bewildering and endangering, and alas! sometimes stealing the life of the traveller whom it has overtaken, probably alone and unprepared. The following incidents corroborate the truth of what has been said above. During the winter of 1882-3,