

During the six months' long winter night our man standing there will see every star, of those he can see at all, always the same height above the horizon. Polaris, the North Star, will be practically in the zenith, and a star which can be seen barely peeping above the horizon will circle forever just grazing the horizon. In other words, to the observer on the Pole the heavenly bodies move in horizontal circles, instead of oblique circles, as they do here, or vertical circles, as they do to an observer on the Equator.

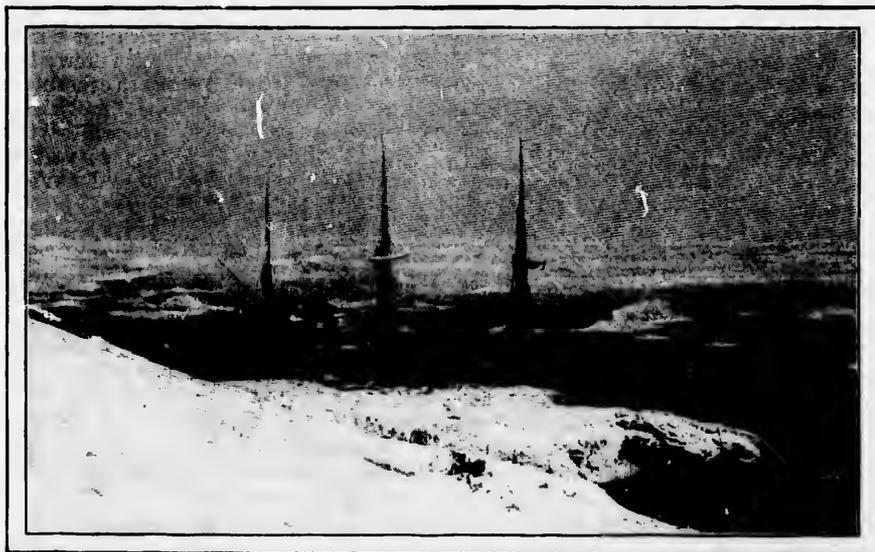
One other interesting point: our man standing upon the Pole would not be able to say, speaking with precision, that he was having either a good time or a bad time, nor would he have the pleasure of complaining of hard times. Why? Simply because he would have no time. What is time? And what do we figure it from but noon, and what is noon but the moment the sun crosses our local meridian? Now our man standing upon the Pole has no meridian, or rather he has three hundred and sixty of them, so mixed up under his heel that he could not pick one out if he tried. He has no noon, no starting point for time, no time. So much for the conditions which are the result of the mathematical definition of the Pole.

Now, in regard to its physical characteristics. There is no reason whatever for assuming any abnormal conditions at the Pole.

No reason whatever for supposing there a perennial summer sea or a paleocrystic (that is, an eternally frozen) sea, or a Symmes Hole giving access to the center of the earth, or a specially rounded mountain, *a la* Jules Verne, for the earth to whirl upon. None of these. There will be simply prosaic land or water at the Pole. No man living can say which until some man gets there. But if it is land, it will be land with characteristics practically the same as those of other Arctic lands, such as we know a few hundred miles south; and if it is water, it will be an Arctic sea, with the characteristics practically the same as those of other Arctic seas, with which we are familiar a few hundred miles distant.

Will the Pole ever be reached? Most assuredly; and possibly within a comparatively short time. The distance which to-day separates the highest north from the Pole itself is but two hundred and sixty miles, about the same as the distance between Albany and Buffalo; and I do not believe there is one of my readers who is willing to admit that a distance of only two hundred and sixty miles is to remain forever impassable to human efforts and energy. I am not.

Returning from the Arctic regions in 1895 with the belief that the capabilities of the Greenland inland ice as a means of getting north were practically exhausted, I formu-



THE "HOPE," THE VESSEL IN WHICH LIEUTENANT PEARY MADE HIS PREPARATORY VOYAGE TO GREENLAND IN 1897, AND WHICH ATTENDED HIM OUT ON HIS PRESENT EXPEDITION, RETURNING AT THE END OF AUGUST, 1898.

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