

## An American Writer at the Sealfishery.

What George Allan England Wrote About Our Winter Industry.

It was my very good fortune to get intimately acquainted with the seal herd at point-blank range, though I never did any shooting except with camera and notebook. It gives you a peculiar feeling, up there in those lifeless wastes, all at once to run into a spot of seals, probably the most graceful and beautiful of living creatures. To watch a herd disporting itself in a broad bay, golden with sunshine; to see the sleek, lithe, largeeyed creatures leap, dive, swim on their back, revel in the very poetry of motion, is unforgetable. Little fear they show of man; they seem to regard this strange new biped with a kind of mild curiosity—usually to their undoing. Up and down in their bobbing holes they surge, watching the ship, the men. Often an explosive bullet puts an end, in a bloody lash and smother, to their investigations.

Newfoundlanders have a name for every age of both harps and hoods. Young harps, of course, are whitecoats Their second year these hecome rusties, or rusty-jackets. These graduate into bedlamers, which in turn become saddlers or saddlebacks. Freshmen hoods are young hoods; sophomores, bedlamers; juniors, curriers; and seniors, old dogs.

These old dogs, by the way, are not to be trifled with. The hood family is invariably three-dog, female and It takes two good men to kill a dog fishing. Even the nogheads—that is, in jetty pools, where sparkles of It takes two good men to kill a dog fishing. Even the nogheads—that is, in jetty pools, where sparkles of hood. He's called a hood because when whitecoats whose mothers are killed phosphorescent green flash up, then of zero—which no Newfoundlander angry he blows up a big skin bag over when the young are just born-often vanish. No wind; a dead world, save his head, which you may hammer with plug along somehow and make a go for the ship—and the whitecoats. For bite your leg off first-without in any they live. And in due time they, too, filled with a continuing cry, far, near; way discommoding him.

sealers losing hand, arm or leg by serts. dog-hood bites. Even the carcass, so to puff hard to haul one of these slate- when death comes running and yell-

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blue giants aboard. Hoods always waken lively but respectful enthusi-

Harps weigh from one hundred and fifty to three hundred; the young, three or four feet long, run thirtyfive to sixty pounds. As playthings, you can't beat whitecoats.

Heaven knows how many of them fondled, much to the disgust of the hardboiled sealers. For general allround furriness and softness, fatness, innocence, unsophistication and confiding childlike blandness, I commend the whitecoats to your attention. They're Angora kittens, plus.

I enjoyed trudging out over the ice, finding whitecoats and having a little heart-to-heart with them. They look up at you with a couple of perfectly for prize winners in any beauty show Brutal to kill them? Well, how about lambs? I believe even some kindlamb chop. And besides yielding the very finest fat, each whitecoat has a flippers, as Newfoundlanders call so would you if you could ever get a more too, no matter how kind-hearted

basking on the pans; whereas, among to make up for an almost total lack shadows. A world of ink and milk, all Many a fearsome tale is told of has to be hardy in those frozen de-

Incidentally, one of the most charmthey say, will bite you after the pelt ing bits of domesticity in the world is ness is off. Newfoundlanders prefer not to a whitecoat at dinner, in some sheltermix it much with dog hoods. I've seen ed ice nook, while its proud mother other animals than these six-hundred stretches out on her side with an air to nine-hundred pound monsters that of infinite content. The mother often I prefer as playmates. The winch has refuses to abandon her child, even

rotect their weeping, mewing in-Johnny or Susie Harp has to get into ribs held. Swift cracks ran lightn

erring instinct bids him turn toward the polar star. He, who seems to know of his tribe. Summer finds him with his kin at the mouth of Hudson Bay. and so begin the vast wanderings which are the portion of his race.

INSTINCTIVE STRATEGY. If you want to study animal intincts in all their wonder, wholly unnfluenced by man, go up into the north and watch the seal herd. There you will see the mother seal infallibly recognizing her own precious among whole acres of moon-eved white pincushions, all exactly alike, fondling it and snappishly repelling all others that enterprising hump themselves near the maternal fount. Any old seal appears good to a young one; but the rule doesn't work both ways. And there, too, you will learn of the mother seal leaving her baby on the ice. sliding through a bobbing hole and go-

ing miles away to fish; then—while that ice pan has drifted ten to twenty miles-infallibly returning to the same bobbing hole, and up it, and so back to her darling. How's that for instinct? It's been proved by leather tickets fastened to mother seals' scutters. How can human reason explain thing like such sense of location? Again you will see a herd, close be-

set by enemies and caught in nipped ice where the bobbing holes and rifts have been closed up, gather in a have I witnessed a stranger, a more bunch, fifty or sixty of them. Thus their weight breaks through the ice and they escape.

Who or what taught them the trick? don't know. Does anybody, or can anybody guess?

The bawling of the whitecoats is one of the most eerily strange and compelling sounds you can hear. Out on suffused with tears, and need only a the sealer's grimed or bloodied or snowy deck at night, I often used to gry wail, usually of orphaned young; a kind of nos morturi te salutamus; hearted ladies enjoy a nice little for on the morrow, they, too, must die. The nearest thing to it is a kitten's cry; and yet it's not that either. Overhead, perhaps, blazes a full

moon, pitilessly cold and clear. The them. Oh, yes, I've eaten flippers; and stars are holes burned in a purple dome, letting the glory of heaven chance. You'd pass your plate for gleam through. At the horizon a milky-white gleam extends. Everywhere ice is shimmering like a hard These entrancing young beggars glaze, while here or there the heapedpossess astonishing vitality—enough up pressure ridges glint with jet-black the harps, the dog rarely concerns of brains. If their fond mammas have frozen, Merciless cold transfixes you, first thing you know you're about himself with domestic affairs. Usual- nursed them for a week or so they lay but you forget to feel it. Deep black mile deep, on the Atlantic floor, But himself with domestic anairs. Usual-ly the hoods will stand and fight, dif-up fat at a tremendous rate, so that lanes and bays of water gloom away. with the bag in your hand, you can ferently from the harps, which are even when orphaned they survive till In the moonlight spars and rigging runaways. or at best passive resisters, they can dip for themselves and go to glitter, ice-incrusted. Stars shimmer the gaff till you're tired—if he doesn't of life. They're all head, true; but the illimitable black-and-whiteness is take to the sea. Hardy babes! Life a call of life in death; sentience appealing to implacability of Nature and of man; and to the stars drifts up

THE NORTHWARD CHASE.

into the fleet's reeking holds or the spots o' fat. Atlantic. Gaff work is ended now;

tracking the migration. Fifteen, twen- hateful presence. ty miles a day the Terra Nova must win, every day hitting the herd, hoping always for some luck that will ed the decks, all trodden to a slush of id ice. That's bad. The ice too, creaks bring wind, weather. Ice conditions, red and black! Poke a hornet's nest and bends, with the labor of incalculseals and all into happy accord as will and you know what happens when able pressures; the sound is of titanic fill her up and bring her richly to the cry of "Big patch a'eed!" rings wheels creaking over frozen snow.

The matter of bucking arctic ice is Now, cartridge boxes were being out in the blue drop-openwaternone of the pleasantest, especially if broken open in the cabin-companion there to rock and drift till your pan you stand at the wheel. Backing up alley. Quickly the dogs loaded up, grounds on solid floes. Entertaining! for a charge at the floes, the rudder They thrust hard bread into the And for riflemen, who at long range, is liable to strike a pan—then all will bags, too, for in case of having to must put their dumdum bullets plunk stand clear while the wheel spins. No spend the night on the ice such fare through seals' heads-for a body shot four men could hold her. If she eatch- helps a meal of fipper cooked over a damages the pelt-it introduces some es you, you're lucky to get off with fire of gaff-stick shavings and strips rare problems of ballistics. Riflemen only bones broken. Once Peary was of seal fat.

"Run down the steam!" ordered the to be an incredibly goed shot to qualithe sealing fleet—and had his leg cap'n. The funnel must not smoke fy. smashed. You have to watch your now; that might scare the herd, "Mas- One by one the gunners went away, self every minute aboard a sealer." ter watches, get all your men on the each with his dog and his batsmen. In vast slants and tacks the Terra ice! Have every man take two flags! "Get away on the lee bow!" shouted Nova fought northward through the All the crowd with their master wat- the cap'n from the bridge, massive in sheets, lakes, pinnacles, fantasias of ches now! Get on, me darlin' b'ys!" | fur cap and coat. "Away! Get alang ice, her mile-long shadow at morning | The ship swung parallel to the an' God bless you!" and night creeping, crinkling over skein of seals, perhaps a half mile. Hastily they strode, ran, leaped torments of ruin that now seemed from it, worked westward. By name—flags, gaffs, torchlights followed. Skipper Joe or Skipper John, for evthe wasted surface of the moon. Some eryone is skipper here—the Old Man supermen of the ice. Such agility! A times, ghostlike, we moved through a ordered the gunners out. One by one, dozen bands went out, at quarter-

elves in a perfectly vain attempt to ers of open, gleaming water, where fants! Yet, noce the nursery days are ingly disported themselves, for in the

while and have a perfectly glorious ed aloft. The ship shook as if river time of freedom and play, while young Thunders boomed. But her sto the swim for himself and paddle his swift ahead. The Terra Nova's bluf had to give. And, guided by the scunner's musical cries from the barrel, she fought her way.

Northward he must beat-he's called Then it was "bombs out!" and stern a beater now—and ever northward work with blasting powder. Bombs still, to join the great north migration were nailed to long staves, while the osun ordered, "Hot der poker der a gang swarmed on the ice. The redhot poker was rushed overside. One touch of it to the fuse: then the bomb was thrust far under the ice. clump-

> ilmost to the masthead. Last year huge mass fell on Capt. Kean, up on the bridge, and crippled him for a fortnight. Sulphurous fumes mingled with the smell of blood and oil that surrounded the ship like an aura. Then, yelling, the stabber-pole crew and good. If not, more blasts rent the ice. Thus she worked free; and away she churned, butted, groaned and indomitably fought along once more Sometimes it seemed all in vain. No seals appeared. Again, luck favoring incredible multitudes were sighted

> Late one afternoon, as sunset was painting the ice world an entrancing old rose, the barrel master sighted a there, the cap'n said, as he swept 'em into view with his long gun. Never thrilling sight than that incredible multitude of living things out in that frozen desolation. There they lay lazy, fat, sleek, like cattle upon snowy plains, resting in a sunset glow was

"Scun 'er up to 'em. Jacob!" the right noisily yell back at him.

So we craunched and quivered night

Dogs by the way, are the riflemen's attendants, who carry cartridges in a canvas bag not slung over the shoulder. No. indeed! The cartridges are borne very good reason for that. You fall ammunition over your shoulder, and out of the pan with nothing worse thinks worth bothering about

"Once de outside clothes freezes you'm all warm inside!" You understand. This, however, is a mere di-

the universal hunger cry of helplessfrom their nooks and corners, each with the rifle he knew and loved. No more of the whitecoats now, and sculping knife, who must attend They pass. Another phrase of the great to skinning and panning the seals. killing draws our attention. For now Out came the dogs, eager to be away. the season is over when the young For a great kill promised; better far can be taken. They have gone, either than the scattered slaughter of small

The decks filled with black-grimed at last, beating north, and ever north- were dealt round. Flags and torch- then down, down, down, with a swing still incredibly numerous—is on the Tremendous enthusiasm burst out. home may be fed and life on shore be Nova for days had at last drawn away Then, too, the ice is always unexpectill now only a brown smudge on the tedly opening, closing, wheeling, So the chase is northward new, rim of the ice world betrayed their shifting. You have to watch your

THE MONSTER HERD. Such a swarming of sealers as fill- Sometimes you mistake slush for sol-

At any time you may find yourself out into the frozen air. moving, seals moving well, you have

the gangs shinned over the rail, slid mile intervals, streaming away toward I could see the hugh creatures—all down, watched their chance and leap- the herd. Their bodies, all absolutely old bedlamers and saddlers, theseed to the rolling, grinding pans over alike, became jetty silhouettes against beginning to wallow off the ice, some getting ready. Out came the riflemen which the sea was boiling. Fall in? the ice dazzle. Soon they looked like trailing blood; but others thrashed, Who cares? For the most part, the ants crawling over frosted cake, lay still. Ever the lines of men wound sparables, or calks in the Eskimo skin | Sparks, our jovial young wirless man, | forward, among crags and confusions Out came the batsmen, they of gaff boots did good, service. The men picks up news that the two rival ships gained safer pans, and away they went have sighted our men from their barcopying-jumping-from cake to cake rels and are turning our way. Well, leaping. Faster, ever faster, the herd over the slow heaving ice, out toward curses on 'em, those interlopers!

"Get away, my sons!" Making way over the ice is in itself Presently, as I watched tensely from no holiday sport. I've tried it; I the bridge, the rifles began to speak know. Usually a vast swell is run- out. Their hard little explosions bethe rifleman's turn has come. Wary men. Rifles bristled. Torchlights ning. Up, up heaves the ice plain; gan to drift in over the white emptiness like corn kernels popping. ward, the vast herd-decimated but lights alike are used to mark the pans. of maybe forty feet. You find yourself Through the glass I could see the looking down an icy hillside, immengunners crouching behind pinnacles, ed. Dem loves to ride de ice, such trek to the far places where men will | With luck, here was the loading of sely long; then all at once you're aiming, firing, running ahead, I could times. But now-" Disgustedly he not pursue them. Time is growing twenty ships, let alone one. And no looking up at one. It disconcerts you, see the kick of the gun, the flop and spat. short. The kill must be made, the other ships were in sight. Two that this breathing of the world, as if it fail of the seal; then, after a long ships leg-loaded, that the hungry at had been jealously tagging the Terra were some unthinkably vast animal. time, "Pop!" came the discharge. Always the gunner tries to bag the lookout seal first-the big, alert dog that guards the group on a pan. Once his chance for the floes to pendulum together, so that you can jump.

was dipping, scuttling to the sea, with derisive waves of the scutters saying good-bye.

Roundly the carpenter cursed them and the ill luck that had run us into such a patch just at sundown. "If us 'd hit dem swiles wid a hot sun." he explained, "dem would of bid-

(To be continued) Dr. Howlett, Dentist, has re-

Nature back

it's good-bye that group!

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