


CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

T was on the island of Blejinic, the last of the Aleutian group, at the extreme south of Behring Sea, that all the colonists of Fort Hope at last landed, after having traversed eighteen hundred miles since the breaking-up of the ice. They were hospitably received by some Aleutian fishermen who had hurried to their assistance, and were soon able to communicate with some English agents of the Hudson's Bay Company.

After all the details we have given, it is needless to dwell on the courage and energy of the brave little band, which had proved itself worthy of its noble leader. We know how all struggled with their misfortunes, and how patiently they had submitted to the will of God. We have seen Mrs Barnett cheering every one by her example and sympathy ; and we know that neither she nor those with her yielded to despair when the peninsula on which Fort Hope had been built was converted into a wandering island, when that island became an islet, and the islet a strip of ice, nor even when that strip of ice was melting beneath the combined influence of sun and waves. If the scheme of the Company was a failure, if the new fort had perished, no one could possibly blame Hobson or his companions, who had gone through such extraordinary and unexpected trials. Of the nineteen persons under the Lieutenant's charge, not one was missing, and he had even two new members in his little colony, Kalumah and Mrs Barnett's godson, Michael Mac-Nab.

Six days after their rescue the shipwrecked mariners arrived at New Archangel, the capital of Russian America.

Here the friends, bound together by so many dangers shared, must part, probably for ever ! Hobson and his men were to return to Fort Reliance across English America, whilst Mrs Barnett, accompanied by Kalumah, who would not leave her, Madge, and Thomas Black, intended to go back to Europe *via* San Francisco and the United States.