

the Toronto Peninsula in the midst of his own band of Mississaugas, the Indian Murderer Ogetonick (only that he might be drowned in Lake Ontario with Judge, Lawyers, High Constable, witnesses, interpreters, captain and crew when the Government Schooner "Speedy" conveying them to the Assize Town was lost with all hands, *spurious verus*, till when a handful of North West Mounted Police went to the International Boundary to receive Sitting Bull and his braves, our system has always been not to permit the native to imagine himself different from ourselves in obedience to law, but to treat him as an ordinary British subject submissive to law until he proves himself otherwise. While there has been an occasional exception, it has almost invariably happened that one or two North West Mounted Policemen could enter the camp of a band of Indians and exercise their authority as freely and as safely as though they were in the streets of Toronto. The native knows that the arm of Canadian law is as strong as it is long. With the Indian we have the same determination to enforce the law as with the white, and we have never made a hero of the gunman or the professional gambler, but have treated them as the brutal murderer and the vulgar thief which they are. Bret Harte could never find a model in our Northwest.

After four days' journey through water and snow, the little party reached the mouth of the Coppermine, and while the Eskimos had not yet arrived, an Eskimo boy with the party, standing on the top of an island, saw through a glass six sleds far out on the ice approaching: these disappeared but another sled reached the police party on the following day. The sled contained an important witness who said that Uluksak was on an island about ten miles out in the gulf (apparently with the former party of six sleds). They went to the island where they found the Eskimos in their skin tents, gave the peace sign and all the Eskimos ran down to meet the invaders except Uluksak who hung back. He was arrested: like Sinnisiak he expected instant death, but went quietly with his captors. They rejoined Bruce at Bernard Harbour: a formal charge was laid against Uluksak and he made a complete confession of guilt—"very nervous and shivering and shaking."

It had been intended to take the prisoners for trial out by the overland route by Great Bear Lake: there was a danger of losing them on the long trip overland, and moreover they begged not to be taken into the Indian country—they still have a well-grounded dread of the Indians. Fortunately the Canadian Arctic Expedition put their whole service at the disposal of the Police, and the Inspector decided to take the prisoners out by the Herschell Island route, utilizing the Arctic Expedition's Schooner "Alaska."

The ice did not leave Bernard Harbour until July 8, when open leads began to show. The days got very warm and the mosquitoes very troublesome. By July 10, the "Alaska" had her load of zoological, ethnological and geological specimens on board, with a full year's supplies in the event of being ice-bound on her way out: July 13 she started on her long voyage steaming west down a lead close inshore. By reason of the vicinity of the Magnetic Pole, the compass was quite unreliable—one night it swung right round—and the navigator had to steer by sun or shore. By July 22 they had got through the ice into open water, and although there was much loose ice, it was so scattered that the "Alaska" was able to travel at full speed. On the 28th, Herschell Island was reached and the prisoners were placed in the R. N. W. M. P. Post.

The Inspector reported to the C. O. and recommended that a Judge should come out to Coronation Gulf at the mouth of the Coppermine River in a strong and comfortable ship, and winter there—the witnesses could be got together and the case tried there, the prisoners picked up at Herschell Island and brought in on the ship: "still," he adds, "there is always the risk of being ice-bound in these parts, as some years ships fail to reach Herschell Island." Leaving now the two Eskimo prisoners at the Post at Herschell Island, let us break the thread of the narrative to give an account of the tragic death of the two priests.

#### HOW THE PRIESTS MET THEIR DEATH

The two Eskimos caught up the priests three days' journey on their way south: Le Roux asked them to go with them as far as the trees, offering to give them traps for their help. The first day all went well, and, when the time came to make camp, the Eskimos made a small snow-house for the whites: the following day there was friction—the priests apparently were disappointed at not reaching the timber—and Uluksak went on pulling the sled, Sinnisiak close to the sled and the priests behind. What happened is not very clear; apparently Rouvier handed Le Roux a knife and a rifle, and Le Roux pointed the gun at Uluksak, perhaps to frighten him. After a while Sinnisiak said to Uluksak, "We ought to kill these white men before they kill us." Uluksak objected and Sinnisiak said, "Well, I will kill one anyway, you had better try and be strong too"; Le Roux turned around and Sinnisiak stabbed him in the back, the priest struck Uluksak with a stick and he retaliated by stabbing him twice and he fell. Rouvier ran away and Sinnisiak shot at him with the rifle, hitting him at the second shot; he fell down and Uluksak stabbed him and Sinnisiak chopped his neck with the axe and killed him. The Eskimos cut open the dead bodies and ate a piece of the liver of each (of course that the

strength and courage of the dead might enter the eater, not by way of cannibalism). The murderers went straight home, taking with them some of the property of the deceased, and at once told their people. Such was Uluksak's story, and Sinnisiak's was not much different; but he made it appear that Le Roux forced the Eskimos to pull the sled and threatened them with the rifle when it stuck.

If any credit is to be given to the murderers, the priests were the victims of their own want of tact; but it may be that the murder was premeditated and was for their frearms and other goods. As the Inspector wisely remarks, "We are dealing with a still practically primitive people, who six years ago were discovered living in what might be termed a stone age and hidden away in the vast Arctic spaces of the Northland of Canada."

INSPECTOR La Nauze wintered on Herschell Island with his prisoners. This little island is only 3/4 by 4 1/2 miles with a circuit of 23 miles and its highest point is only 500 feet high.

Winter is a very elastic term in those latitudes but the Royal North West Policeman does not stretch it.

On May 9th 1916, the Inspector left the Island over the ice for Moose River, one of the several mouths by which the waters of the mighty MacKenzie reach the Arctic Ocean. He was accompanied by Corporal Bruce, the ubiquitous Ilavik and the two prisoners. The authorities had decided not to send a judge to the North, but to try the prisoners in the settled country further south.

Passing the Escape Reef (every place-name has its history in that region) the party arrived at the River and sending their dogs back to Herschell Island, awaited the opening of the River. Not till June 13 was Moose River free of ice—it was a late spring. On that day a Constable who had been sent to meet them from Fort McPherson on the Peel River (the Fort a little north of the Arctic Circle) arrived at the camp having followed the ice down the River in a whale boat. The next day they all proceeded in the whale boat up the River and after a five days' run arrived at Fort McPherson a trip of some 270 miles from Herschell Island. Remaining there for a time, on July 7th the Inspector received orders to take the prisoners to Edmonton the capital of Alberta and on the North Saskatchewan River, where they were to be arraigned. Leaving Fort McPherson by steamer "Mackenzie River" on July 8th, they arrived at Fort Norman in four days, a year lacking 15 days since the Inspector had left it on his perilous mission. There he found a valuable witness and an interpreter whom he took along with him—up the Mackenzie River, across Great Slave Lake, up the Great Slave River they sailed for eight days and arrived at Fort Smith July 21st; then