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LESTÆDIUS AND THE LAPLANDERS.

Scarcely half a century ago the Laplanders were pagans ; they are now protestants. This fact affords a strong testimony in favour of missionary enterprise, against which neither the burning plains of Africa, nor the frozen regions of the north, have presented obstacles too great for true christianity to overcome.

The missionary was obliged in his labours among these people as Lestædius did, to wander from hut to hut, from man to man, to deliver the glad tidings of the gospel. His privations, hardships, and zeal may be estimated from the details of the scene of his labours we are about to give. Whilst among some of the people he had to overcome a deeply rooted paganism, others had to be weaned from a degraded form of christian worship—that of the Greek church, the national religion

of Russia, to which two-thirds of Lapland belong. The climate of these inland parts of Lapland is one of extremes. The winter is long and severely cold, the summer short and intensely hot, lasting only about sixty-six days, during which no change is experienced either in light or temperature during the whole twenty-four hours, for there is no night, the sun never absenting himself. But the long winter presents a dreary reverse. The cold is so excessive that mercury, and even brandy, frequently freeze in the open air, and the whole face of nature is buried beneath sheets of ice or snow of great depth. During the winter the sun continues for seven weeks below the horizon, and in the day time only partial twilight prevails.

To these phenomena the characteristics of the people may be traced.