

back of which was strangely suggestive of a polar bear's paw ; and he laughed as he looked down at the little white hand laid in it, and then gave it a grip which changed its colour. "But you're not a sailor."

"I? No, a medical man."

"Name?"

"Handscombe," said the doctor, smiling.

"Got stuff in you, though," said the Norwegian grimly, "or you'd have hallooed when I gave your hand that nip. But why are you going? They won't want a doctor?"

"Oh, I don't know; I may be useful. I am a bit scientific though, and want to see what we can discover."

"Good," said the Norwegian; "deal to learn up there, sir. Ice, currents, the cold, the storms—and you'll find something beside snow; but you will not find the North Pole."

"No," said Dr. Handscombe, smiling; "we don't expect that, do we, Steve?"

The lad smiled.

"Why not, sir? We might, you know."

"Yes, my lad, you might," said the Norwegian seriously. "It is more likely to be found by accident than by those who go on purpose. Well, Captain Marsham, I'll see about your men at once. Shall I find you on board by-and-by?"

"Yes; I'll stay there till you come."

They parted, the Norwegian to stride away for the little town, while Captain Marsham with his two companions made at once for the sturdy-looking vessel with its low grey funnel lying in the land-locked harbour, about fifty yards from the sunny shore.