

From his bag he dragged forth a ragged pasteboard box.

After diligent search among the odds and ends in the box he found a fairly clean double sheet of ruled note-paper and a dingy official envelope. Armed with an indelible pencil, the constable seated himself, the unlit pipe still between his lips.

For more than an hour he wrote, taking both time and pains in the turn of each phrase, the text of each sentence. Then he addressed the envelope, drew the moistened point of the pencil thru the words, "On his majesty's service," and affixed a stamp to the missive—the last stamp at Seal Point.

These things done, Buck placed the letter beneath the untanned caribou hide which served him as a mattress, ready for the coming of Kewpik—and the regular mails below Fort What Cheer. Only then did Walsh seem to perceive that his pipe was cold.

An hour later, the barrack blue with smoke, Buck opened the sliding window an inch, blew out the lamp, and drew his flannel shirt over his head. The black sheep was snoring gently, dreaming doubtless of fairer lands where nature was more bountiful.

The morning-brought Kewpik and the dogs.

Squat and rotund, his coffee-colored face all smiles, the Kenipatoo came trotting along ahead of the laden wolf-dogs. Four tenderloins of venison, fresh from "the land of Little Sticks," was the burden of the one-eyed leader. "Dr. Cook."

The other huskies bore hides and furs, the perquisites and property of the native factotum.

Oolah greeted her foster-parent with a radiant smile and a few words of welcome. The widower paused to lay a brown hand upon her shining tresses.

Then he approached the iron barrack and unslung a string of birds from around his neck. Buck noted a brace of red-breasted sheldrake, a plump blue-winged teal; then Kewpik's right hand was free, and the soldier-policeman gave him a white man's greeting.

"My tribe is headed this way," the native went on to say in sonorous Kenipatoo, sister language of the inland Cree. "This warm season they will camp near their white brothers, where they will stay until the caribou leave at the coming of the ice."

"Then we'll have plenty of salmon and berries this summer," commented Buck.

Idly he watched the native strip the panting dogs of their packs, turning now and again to look toward Napier's bunk. But the sick man still slumbered fitfully, his curly brown head pillowed on the crook of his elbow.

Buck was deliberating whether or not to rouse his mate that he might take nourishment, when a cry came from Oolah.

She was standing atop a granite boulder a few yards away, the skirt of her fawnskin koolitang fluttering in the morning breeze. When the girl saw that she had attracted Buck's attention she pointed to the eastern horizon. Buck looked in that direction.

He saw in the foreground the canvas-covered prow of his whale-boat hauled high upon a rocky shelf.

In the middle distance a black-throated loon squawked harshly as it dived from view. Beyond, where the gray of the sky-line blended with the darker gray of the water, Buck saw a small speck—a speck that indicated a sail, since the bergs and floes were all well on their way to the Atlantic.

"West made a quick passage," muttered the constable to himself.

He went on thinking of the heavy ice still jammed at the mouth of Hudson Strait, of the brute courage and recklessness of the whisky-runner who had so early in the season forced his way into the bay.

Then he turned on his heel and entered the barrack.

Straight to the head of his berth he strode. A glance at the flushed face and closed eyes of his comrade, and Buck then took from his hiding-place the letter he had written the night before.

In front of the skin tuck Buck found the hunter busily engaged in dressing birds.

"Kewpik," said the constable, "I'm sorry to start you right off again, but here's a letter I want to get into the mails. You savvy Superintendent Mur-

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