

route they picked up the Eskimo interpreter.

The trip by either route is a desperate business. Only once a year do the Indians from the eastward end of Great Bear Lake get out to Fort Norman with canoe-loads of dried caribou and skins. Then the short summer of midnight suns slinks away, perhaps in an August blizzard, as sometimes happens, into the long winter of snow. The caribou are back from the Arctic. The camps are frozen again. The great lake that never gets warm freezes in early autumn. The whole world in that country goes into winter camp in early October. The Eskimos go abroad to hunt the musk-ox. Travel there is by dogs and sleds. Only the most intrepid explorers and the police ever dream of travelling there in winter. The patrol party to the Coppermine kept on its way. We know little or nothing—only the matter-of-fact R.N.W.M.P. reports will tell in detail—of just how this long journey occupying just about a year, was made, via Great Bear and Dease Bay at its eastern end; or what sort of journey Corporal Bruce had from Herschell Island. If Jack London were alive he would make a 100,000-word story out of the thing.

All we know is that the party arrived at Coppermine Camp as per schedule; that they examined the tribe and sifting down the preliminary evidence, picked on Sinnisiak and Ulusuk as the men probably guilty. Without a shot fired or a handcuff, these men of Canadian law got their two men and two witnesses away from the band and began the year's journey via Herschell Island back to Edmonton.

There they arrived in the early part of August,

1917. By this time the Eskimos had travelled further than they had ever dreamed they could, and still stay upon the earth; away out, and up South by the frozen pack-trail and the roaring rivers, away from the last traces of the caribou and the copper lands, away from the midnight sun, out through queer, jostling trade-posts, beginning at Fort Norman; up and up into the Great Slave and the Lesser Slave and their chain of posts among the many tribes of Indians; up into the Peace River country as the Spring broke and the rivers ran again.

Sixty miles north of Fort Vermilion the boat on her one round-trip to Herschell Island was met by a party from Edmonton, of whom one was the lady whose notes and photographs form the basis of this description. Another long, dazzling journey and Sinnisiak and Ulusuk were at Athabasca Landing, where they met the queer thing known as a railway. Here they found the first train they had ever seen; such speed and noise and confusion as never they had known to exist in the world. This Athabasca Landing—big city—was surely the place where they were to answer all the questions. But no; a hundred miles further—Edmonton!

Great Aurora Borealis! what a place! No wonder Ulusuk and Sinnisiak, out of their caribou skin togs by now, clung to the police. So many strange people, worse than Athabasca, worse than all the trading-posts put together; such a clatter of big trolleys pulled by nothing; such queer motor-cars propelled by God knew what; such high walls and hot, dizzy streets. They gasped in bewilderment and said it

was most surely the uttermost end of all the earth. They had now seen more people than ever they had thought God had made; more numerous, it seemed to them, than the countless herds of the caribou. Eheu! and the languages were such as no tongue from Eskimo-land could possess. And then the trial; one of the strangest that ever took place in the North. These were the first Eskimos that ever got through to Edmonton.

Here in this story of new-world sensations we are reduced to the petty dimensions of a newspaper despatch—always such a wise, matter-of-fact thing. This is what the thousands of strange people read about the thing that happened four years ago up in the Coppermine:

Edmonton, Aug. 16.—The feature of the murder trial of the two Eskimos, Sinnisiak and Ulusuk, yesterday was the confession which was put in evidence by the Crown prosecutor, C. C. McCaul, K.C. It was made by Sinnisiak. He said that he was at the Coppermine River, and that Father Leroux asked him to pull his sleigh and he would pay him in traps. Both he and Ulusuk, the other accused, gave their aid. The next day, while they were still helping, it was storming and they lost the road. The two Eskimos found a cache, and were looking at it when the priests came. Father Leroux was angry, said the confession, and when asked if he was going to kill them, nodded his head. After some further quarrelling they became frightened, and Sinnisiak stabbed the priest in the back with a knife and Ulusuk finished him. Father Rouviere, the narrative continues, ran away, and Sinnisiak took the rifle from the sleigh and shot the fleeing priest, and with the aid of an axe and a knife they both killed him. They then cut up the bodies, eating the liver.

HOW THE WAR LOOKS NOW

THE fighting at the northern end of the western front has broken out again with great severity and with the now familiar tale of Allied successes and of German reverses. It will be remembered that the attack, interrupted by the weather, was brought over a front of twenty miles, or from Dixmude to the bank of the River Lys. The area seems to have been divided between the British and the French, the British operating from Bixshoote to Warneton on the River Lys, and the French operating to the north from Dixmude to Bixshoote. The rains called a halt to the engagement until August 10, when a fresh attack was brought along the whole length of the line. At the moment of writing, on August 17, we learn that the French have crossed the Steenbeke River and have captured all their objectives, and that the British have taken Langemarck, five miles north-east of Ypres. In spite of the reticences of the British and French bulletins we need have no doubt that the present battle is of a much more critical nature than any of the battles that have preceded it. It is intended to have decisive characteristics that these have lacked. The bombardments have been of unprecedented severity and duration. A French army was moved up to the British left, and there must have been peculiar reasons for such a participation as this at a time when the French armies in the south are supposed to be hard pressed to hold their own. Everything seems to point to a supreme effort to expel the German armies from France.

I believe we are on the point of witnessing a German retirement on a large scale, and that we should already have witnessed it but for two difficulties that have caused hesitation on the part of the German commanders. The first is the effect upon public opinion at home, and perhaps this is the more pressing of the two. The German public was persuaded that the great Hindenburg retreat was a piece of strategy of so subtle a nature as to amount to a victory, that it brought an ultimate German triumph within measurable distance, and that it imposed upon the Allies an embarrassment of the gravest kind. How far this persuasion was real may be a matter of doubt. German newspapers reflect little save the wishes of officialism, but it is probable that the public was more or less convinced that the Hindenburg retreat was actually a "retreat to victory." But they must know better by this time as they witness the persistence of the

Coryn predicts a German retirement on a large scale, and very quickly. The effect upon public opinion in Germany being a large factor in its delay. The only other alternative to such a retirement will be a German disaster that will surpass anything in history.

By SIDNEY CORYN
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attack and the resolution with which the Allied forces have moved eastward. It might be impossible similarly to explain another retreat, and especially at a time when the outspoken utterances of popular leaders such as Maximilien Harden show how rudely the confidence of the public has been shaken. If the German armies were now to fall back to the Belgian frontier—and it is quite likely that they will fall back further than this—it would undoubtedly increase the gloom of the German public, and intensify the restlessness of which we have recently seen such remarkable evidences, and this is hardly a prospect to which the German leaders can look forward with equanimity. None the less a decision will have soon to be made. There must be some desperately hard fighting before a German retreat becomes compulsory, or before the danger of outflanking becomes imminent, but a retreat of this kind can not be carried out during a battle. It can not be done under actual pressure. Nor would it be confined to the area under immediate attack. It would be measured by scores of miles, and possibly by hundreds. Every part of the line is sensitive to the events on all other parts. It is impossible to say precisely what measure of Allied success in the present battle would involve an extensive retirement of the German lines, assuming that it was then possible to effect a retirement, but it is obvious that a relatively small advance on the part of the British and the French armies would have the effect of outflanking the German lines to the south and compelling their withdrawal. And it is hard to resist the conviction that the necessity for such a retirement is pressing hard on the minds of the German commanders.

But there is another difficulty, and a purely military one, and one that goes far to explain the persist-

ence of the German attacks upon the French forces in the south, around Craonne, on the Chemin des Dames, and at Moronvilliers. These are commanding positions, and especially the position at Moronvilliers. If the Germans are meditating a retirement in Flanders and along the line of the Hindenburg line it is of pre-eminent importance that they should guard themselves from an attack by the French on what would then be the left flank of their retreating forces. Their moving armies would then be most vulnerable to an assault from the Moronvilliers plateau, and in fact from the whole French line running from Craonne eastward.

The French position on this east and west line constitutes a grave danger to a German army moving eastward, a danger so great as to render almost impossible a retirement in the face of it. But with the Moronvilliers plateau in German hands, with the Germans dominant along the line westward from Moronvilliers, a retirement of the German lines to the northward could be carried out in relative safety from a flank attack. This seems to account for the fury with which the Crown Prince has been hurling his men to the assault of these positions, and the prodigality with which he expends the lives of his men for their capture. Unless he succeeds in his aim—and so far he has won none but the most transient of advantages—a retirement of the northern lines would be difficult and dangerous. They would inevitably be exposed to an attack from the south, and at a time when they would be in the worst of positions for a defence. If this view be a correct one, the German commanders are on the horns of a dilemma. If they hold on to their northern lines they are in danger of an outflanking movement in Flanders as a result of the present battle, and a successful outflanking movement would probably become a disastrous rout. If they retire in Flanders, and along the length of the Hindenburg line, they are in danger of an attack by the French on the southern extremity of their retiring army. Unless the Crown Prince is in a position to cover the retirement from the south by ejecting the French forces from their present commanding positions it would be extraordinarily dangerous to attempt such a retirement in the north. On the other hand the pressure of Haig's men is likely to be so severe as to threaten disaster unless the retirement be attempted in good time. And, as has been said, it will be too late to retire after the full pressure of battle has begun to make itself felt. The Germans