

only the face from the eyebrows to chin. We turned our backs to it as much as possible, and especially after we had reached camp and were at work making our snow-houses and digging the thick ice for water. After all, it is not so much the intensity of the cold as expressed in degrees on the thermometer that determines the unpleasantness of an Arctic winter as is the force and direction of the wind, for I have found it far pleasanter with the thermometer at even 70 degrees below zero, with little or no wind blowing, than to face a rather stiff breeze when the little indicator showed even 50 degrees warmer temperature. Even a white man acclimated to Arctic weather, and facing a strong wind at 20 or 30 degrees below zero, is almost sure to freeze the nose and cheeks, and the thermometer does not have to go many degrees lower to induce the Eskimo themselves to keep within their snug snow-house under the same circumstances, unless absolute need of food forces them outside. It is one of the consoling things about Arctic weather that the intensely low temperatures are almost always accompanied by calms, or if there is a breeze it is a very light one. With the exception of a very few quiet days during the warmest summer weather of the polar summer, these clear, quiet cold ones of the Arctic winter are about the only times when the wind is not blowing with great vigor from some point of the compass. Of course there were a few exceptions to this general rule of quiet weather with extreme cold, and when they had to be endured they were simply terrible. Early one morning the thermometer showed us it was 68 degrees below zero, but, as it was calm, we paid no attention to it, but harnessed our dogs and loaded our sledges for the day's journey, which was to be an exceedingly short one in a place where the Eskimo thought they could get food for ourselves and dogs. We were just ready for the start when a sharp wind sprang up, and it felt like a score of razors cutting the face. Had the wind arisen a little sooner we would not have thought of starting, but as we were all ready and the distance short we concluded to go ahead rather than unload and go back into the old camp. We kept the dogs at a good round trot and ran

alongside of the sledges the whole distance, and I can assure my readers that when we reached the snow-house of some Rimrepetro Eskimo it was as welcome a refuge as if it had been a first-class hotel. I was frozen along my left arm from my shoulder to my wrist, and it was quite painful for a number of days, and almost all the others, Eskimo as well as white men, were frozen more or less severely. When we reached the end of our journey I again looked at the thermometer, and found it indicated 55 degrees below zero — that is, it had grown 13 degrees warmer during the time we were out, although it seemed to us it must be at least thirty degrees colder. I told the Eskimo who had been with us that it was much colder, as shown by the instrument, before we started than it was when the wind was at its highest, but from their incredulous glances at each other they wondered how we could be duped by such ideas directly against our common sense and personal observation. They might believe our statements that the world was round and turned over every day, without the polar bears sliding off the slippery icebergs when it was upside down, simply because the white man had told them so, but nothing would persuade them that when they felt perfectly comfortable and warm loading the sledge it was colder than when their arms and legs were frozen and their noses "nipped" by the frost. I tried to explain to them the effect of the wind, but they said they had known the wind to blow them off their feet in summer and not freeze them a particle. They said they knew it seemed colder when the wind blew, but that was because it actually was colder, and here they stood firm in the belief we were wrong. When the thermometer was at 71 deg. below, the cloudless sky in the vicinity of the sun hanging low in the southern horizon assumed a dull leaden hue, tinged with a brownish red, looking something like the skies of cheap chromo lithographs. At night the stars glitter like diamonds, and fairly seem on fire with their unusual brilliancy. Should you pour water on the surface of the ice it greets you with an astonishing crackling noise, and the ice was so clear you felt timid about