

dest. As soon as the concert was over I sat in the bows looking at the most splendid panorama it has ever been my lot to see. It was so hot that a thin white gown was comfortable, though the wind was high. It was a regular sirocco and came in warm puffs.

Saturday, 17th. We arrived at Hammerfest at 6 a. m. and went early on shore. It is not a pretty place and is chiefly remarkable as being the most northern town in the world. I got a chair lent me and sat in one of the narrow streets with quite a little court round me, many of the children knitting stockings, or making crochet edgings. Some of them came with me to show me the shops. I bought a most charming stick, and a bell of a peculiar shape which they hang around their cows' necks. The furs are good and cheap too. There is a Roman Catholic church both here and at Tromsø, but both were shut. I was sorry, as I think a church ought always to be open. The heat was too great to be pleasant, and there is a pervading smell of cod liver oil. I was glad to get out to sea again, as when we did it became at once cool and pleasant. We reached the North Cape the same evening at 10 p. m. For an hour or so before there was a good deal of sea on, there always is more or less there. It faces the immense Arctic ocean, of which one has always heard so much that at last to see it even was a delight. The North Cape itself is a dark gray slate-colored rock, one of a chair; on one side there is a curious horn, exactly the shape of that of a rhinoceros. Grim and stern it stands, the uncompromising guardian of the land from the encroaching sea. I saw a glacier in one of the crevasses and patches of snow here and there. I suppose in winter it is quite covered. I had heard that there was no vegetation here, but that is a mistake, as I returned to the ship with my arms full of flowers. They grow in profusion, among others the yellow pansy. There were two Norwegians there, who, during the short summer, live in a wooden hut and sell wine to visitors. It was a steep climb, but there is a rope to help people by the side of the path. We had to climb quickly to see all we could as we had to return to the ship as soon after midnight as possible. They were nervous about a fog coming on or the wind getting up. However, I sat down sometimes in a grassy place almost buried in wild flowers, while a balmy wind helped to cool me. I was glad to reach the top, where there is an immense stretch of tableland and the air was so light and pure, I felt almost as if I could fly. At the highest point an obelisk has been placed to commemorate the visit of King Oscar in 1873, and the view there is indescribably grand— one saw nothing but boundless sea and sky all round, the steep cliffs and precipices steeped in a clear pale light which had something unearthly about it. The sun never set, but as at Tromsø, sank near the horizon and then slowly rose again. After my climb I must confess I was glad to have some Hock, which General L., who had gone on before, had ready for me. The Norwegians had brought it to the obelisk. I stayed with the others only a short time and then went back by myself. I wanted to get some flowers, and also, to thoroughly appreciate such a scene, one ought to be alone or with some kindred spirit. How true it is that it is we ourselves who give the color to everything, as in all nature Tennyson only heard and saw the voice and form of him he loved, and sang:

"Thy voice is on the rolling air,
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

And every pulse of wind and wave
Recalls, in change of light or gloom,
My old affection of the tomb
And my prime passion in the grave."

On that wind-swept height, nothing but the immensity of sky and sea near me, no sound to be heard but the "note of some far off bird," the wind as it rushed past me seemed to speak of other "lonely lands" where sleep my best beloved, soldiers all, brave men and true, and as that voice of days departed died away, it seemed to sigh "the tender grace of a day that is dead will never come back to me!" Never here, forever there. Ah! when and where is that "there?" One never felt one's own nothingness more than all alone there, with one's back to Europe, and facing that mysterious sea from which so many have never returned. One realised that "time passes away like a shadow, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

At midnight a gun from the ship warned us it was time to descend, and everyone hurried down as fast as they could. One, a professor of geology, who was probably looking more at his beloved stones than at his feet, fell and rolled over and over. I thought he would never stop, but at last he did, much to my relief and no doubt to his own.

It was rather difficult getting into the boats, as the stones were slippery, but the sailors helped us, and we were soon rowed back over the swelling waves and safely on board, thoroughly delighted with the expedition.

We found everyone on board up still. Some had been fishing and had caught some curious looking fish. A charming supper was ready, in which all joined, and champagne, which was most acceptable after our climb. The menu was dated, "North Cape, Midnight Sun Supper." The health of our host, the owner of the ship, who was on board with his wife, was proposed by Sir —, one of the passengers, and drunk with enthusiasm. How the poor stewards managed to exist with no sleep is an enigma to me. The purser, too, is worthy of all praise; he is kind to everyone and always pleasant. After supper I felt quite remontée and went on deck, where the sun was shining more brightly than before, and we were steaming south. I stood and looked at the North Cape as it faded slowly out of sight, and thought of the darkness in which for a great part of the year it is shrouded, only lightened by the stars and Aurora Borealis, and the moon when there is one, and of those times of black darkness when there is bad weather or a fog, which is at all times so frequent and so much dreaded here. I should

like to have gone on to Spitzbergen, that land of ice, grisly bears, seals and walrus.

We played cricket with a tied ball until 3.30 a. m., when we went forward on the fore'st'le to see Bird Island, which looked lovely in the clear morning light. As we passed it the ship fired a gun, which brought out myriads of white birds, their wings glistening in the sun. They darkened the air and looked like a heavy snow-shower. Here and there, there was a puffin, bigger and darker than the rest. They wheeled round and round as long as the ship was in sight. Bedecker says, the owner of this island, who lives on it, makes a great deal of money by the sale of the gulls' eggs, "while the birds themselves are used for fodder, and are prepared for this purpose by being buried in the earth for a time, and are afterwards packed in casks," but as "fodder" for what kind of man or beast he says not. As soon as we had passed the island we retired and it must have been 4 a. m. before we slept, comforted by the thought that breakfast was not to be until 12 o'clock.

Sunday, July 18th. I got up at 9 a. m. Really one seems to be able to do very little sleep in this climate, and able, like a dog, to curl oneself up and go to sleep at any moment one chooses. All day we continued to pass splendid scenery, range after range of snowy mountains. At 3 p. m. we had service in the saloon, read by a clergyman, one of the passengers, and afterwards a collection for the Aged Merchant Seamen's benefit, to which I gladly gave what I could, as I think sailors deserve all we can do for them, and when one thinks of how much they suffer so constantly and so bravely, one can but wonder at their courage and endurance. I think firemen are perfect martyrs. A short time ago in the Red Sea, one came up from the engine room and jumped overboard, poor fellow! one could hardly help thinking he was well out of it.

In the evening we touched at Tromsø for our letters, which had not arrived when we were here before. The weather was colder and misty. We had some music after dinner in the music room on deck.

Monday, 19th. It poured all day, but cleared towards the evening. I occupied myself writing, reading and sleeping until dinner, which was half an hour earlier, as there was to be a concert in the saloon, given by the "Ceylon Minstrels," as the stewards called themselves, and they really amused us very much. The piano accompaniment was played by a young steward without any music; he played everything by ear. He must have a great natural talent as he does not know his notes. The songs were both comic and sentimental. One which was much appreciated began—

"Oh! the beautiful, beautiful ocean!
Oh! the up and down, up and down motion!"

and recalled all too vividly the sufferings some of us had undergone. When it was over we went on deck to see a splendid sky and the last view of the Lofoden Islands. The sun made an effectual attempt at setting at about 11.20 p. m., but it never got dark, as it rose again in about an hour. It was much colder and our ports were shut, but I managed to get the scuttle in mine opened (as the little round window in the middle is called) and so could breathe.

The next day we passed the famous Malstrom, which has been so much exaggerated, and where, save in exceptional conditions of wind and tide, there is nothing to be seen, except indeed that the sea appears a little more agitated in its neighborhood. We saw a whale spouting quite close to us after dinner. It began to rain, so we went down to the saloon for a little music, before going to bed.

ALBINA MURRAY ROLLAND.

(To be continued.)

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

LIVING.

Living, like common sense, is a great invention. We all like it, and, although we grow weary and gray, are never quite ready to stop. We hold on to it, as we do to a rich relation, and appear to forget that it may lead us to a happier land, where there are no taxes nor lawyers. Living in Nova Scotia is pleasanter than strangers sometimes think. Our American cousins may not like our Province, but they like to take our fish, and come over and enjoy our summers. Perhaps our winters are frosty, but they always have a Christmas full of presents and kind wishes. Our springs, though slow, bring back the birds and the flowers, and our autumns are the prettiest in the world. Queen Victoria rules us, and we sing and pray for her every day; and her fiftieth year of reign we celebrate to show our loyalty and love.

But living anywhere is not all sunshine. Sorrows are mingled with joys, toothache with teeth, and mother-in-law with girls. Tears and good-byes are as plenty as music and holidays. There are comforts and troubles made for everybody. One gets money and rheumatism, while another gets a big farm and a lot of lazy boys that don't like to milk, but want to learn to smoke. One has talents, but no mother to love. Some are blind, but can sing so sweetly that the angels listen. The weak have friends who are willing to lend their arms; and all are equal, and one can't laugh at the other.

There is a good deal of work and roseine candy these days, but there never was a better time to live. The years have made improvements. Everything moves rapidly. You can live more now in twenty minutes than you could in three years when Isaiah was a boy. Methuselah was an old man, so old that he got his name in a catechism, but a man to-day at sixty is about as old, and has seen more telegrams, and liniment, and dog-churns than ever he did. People lived slower then. Probably Methuselah was seventy or eighty years old before he was weaned, and not likely he ever went home with a girl until after he was two hundred and fifty. But this is a faster age. You can now talk far, and farm easy, and get cheated