

a single person, and are drawn sometimes by three, but more frequently by five dogs, one of which acts as leader. They are guided not by reins, but by striking on the ice with a stick, the voice being occasionally employed; and in a country where there are no roads, the direction must depend on the instant obedience of the leader to the indications of the driver, otherwise danger would often be incurred from a precipice or impediment. When any of the dogs are inattentive to their duty, the rider punishes the delinquent by throwing his stick at him, which he dexterously again picks up without stopping. It is said, these cunning animals very soon ascertain when the stick is lost; and unless the leader is uncommonly well trained, the driver is in peril, since they set off at full speed, and do not stop till they are exhausted, or the sledge overturned. They possess the most wonderful sagacity in finding their way during snow storms, when their master can see no path, nor even keep his eyes open in the blinding storm. In such cases they seldom miss their way; but if at a loss, they will go in different directions, until satisfied of the course, probably by the smell. If during a long journey, it is found that the place of destination cannot be reached, and it is impossible to proceed further, then the dogs are unharnessed, and lying down in the snow with their master in the midst, they keep him from freezing, and if necessary defend him from danger. A popular writer and traveller, Bayard Taylor, says, that "driving Esquimaux dogs is very much like driving a lively sturgeon in rough water. As soon as you are seated in your sledge, which is like a little canoe, off they start, and as the bottom of the sledge is perfectly round and slippery, it is no easy matter to maintain your balance. If you are a new hand, your first experience is head-first downward in a snow-drift." The value and use of the Esquimaux dog in the Arctic expeditions, seem to have been appreciated, only by our recent explorers, Kane and Rae; both of whom made great use of them, in scouring those inhospitable wastes in search of the missing Franklin and his crew; had he been provided with those necessary appendages of Arctic travel, we should not have the mournful detail recorded by the natives to Dr. Rae in 1854 "that a band of forty white men *dragging their sledges* along the coast of King William's land were making apparently for the great Fish River; that all, even with one who seemed to be an officer, were *dragging on the haul ropes*

of the sledge." Both these explorers speak in the highest terms of the assistance these dogs afforded to their party; and from Dr. Kane, the writer gleaned what knowledge he has of their habits. Snow he stated to be their substitute for water; and on a lump of it, or ice given to those he brought to New York with him, they would roll with the greatest delight. The snow he observed they did not *lick* up, but by repeatedly pressing with the nose, they would obtain a small lump or ball of it, which they then drew in to the mouth with their tongue.

The following account is given of the habits and disposition of one of these dogs by its owner: "even if coaxed and fed by a stranger, he had so strong an attachment to his master, that he would merely take the food without returning thanks either by looks or wag of the tail. He never barked, and would snap at those he did not like, without a growl or the least notice. He was remarkably cunning, resembling in that respect the fox, for he was in the habit of strewing his meat around him to induce fowls or rats to come within his reach, while he lay watching, but pretending to be asleep, and when near enough he would pounce upon them, never missing his aim."

The Fox (*Canis Vulpes*) when compared with the dog family, is found to be lower in height, in proportion to his length. Its nose is sharp, limbs slender, tail bushy and long, reaching to the ground. This family generally speaking, lead nocturnal lives, and have a propensity to burrow in the earth, which dogs never do; in habits they are unsociable, never, although capable of being tamed, becoming truly domestic; they are sly, cautious, and "cunning as a fox," being ever ready to destroy all such animals, especially young and tender ones, as they can master. When caught in a trap they will sacrifice the limb, by gnawing it off and thus escape. There are five species ascertained to be peculiar to this country, though Geoffrey adds a sixth, since, however, ascertained to be only a variety of the black; of these the red fox (*V. fulvus*) is by far the most common. This has been thought to be identical with the common fox of Europe—but the fineness of its fur, the brightness of color, slenderness of body, and the form of its skull, clearly prove it a distinct species. The gray fox (*V. Virginianus*) is very common, being found more in the vicinity of farm buildings than the red one. It is preferred by the hunters since it does not start off directly from its haunts, but after sundry doublings

