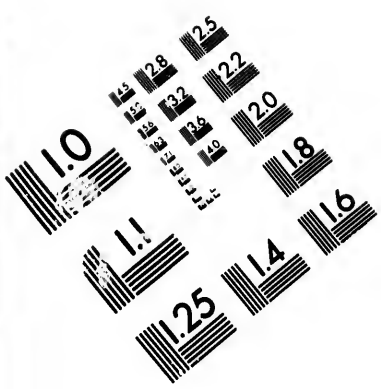

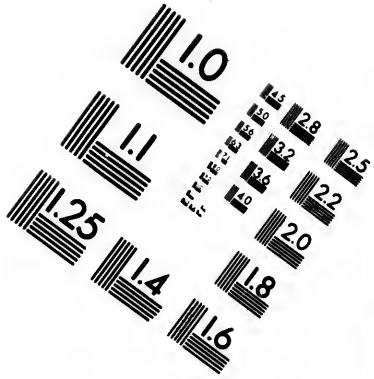

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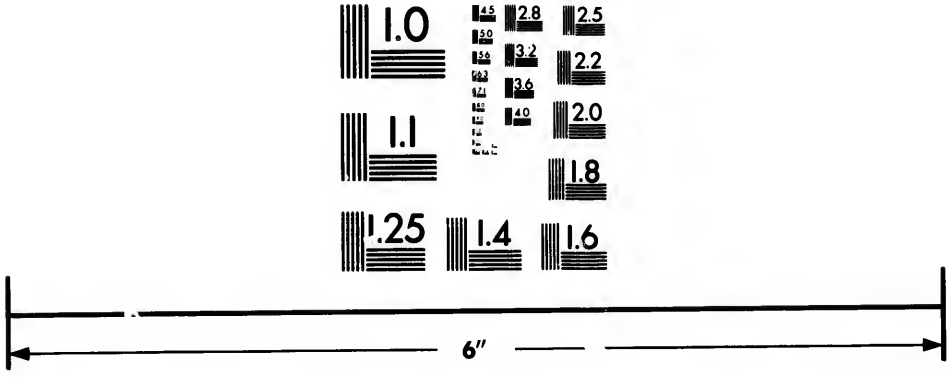

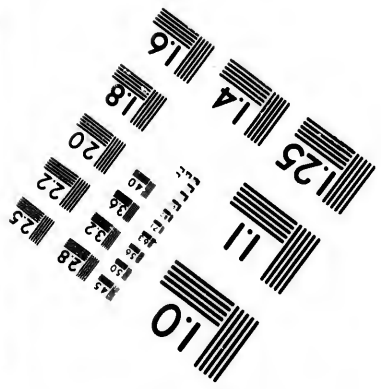

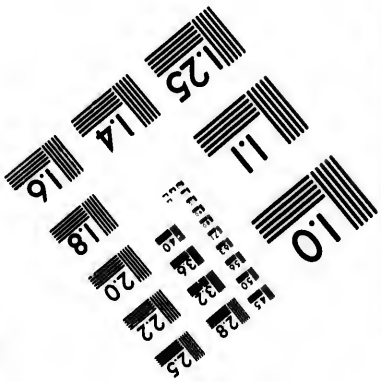

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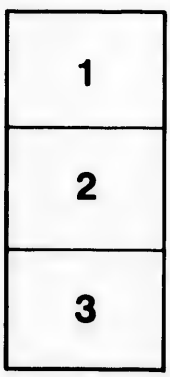

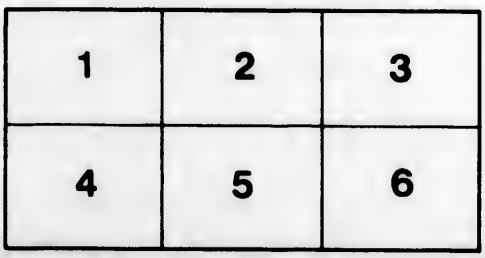

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OR,

CAST AWAY IN THE ARCTIC SEAS.

A BOOK OF ADVENTURE,

EDITED BY

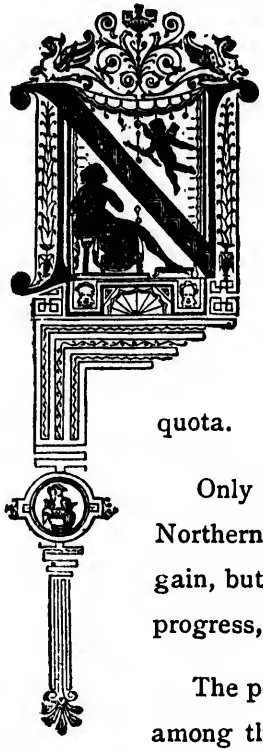
PERCY B. ST. JOHN.

WITH EIGHT PAGES OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

London:
DEAN & SON, 160A, FLEET STREET, E.C.

CONTENTS.

PREFACE.



NO phase in modern history is more glorious than that connected with Arctic Exploration. The names of the English heroes who have sacrificed themselves—of those who have risked their lives, are legion; while France has supplied her honored quota.

Only second to England in the annals of Northern Discovery—a task undertaken not for gain, but for the sake of science, geographical progress, or perhaps fame—we find America.

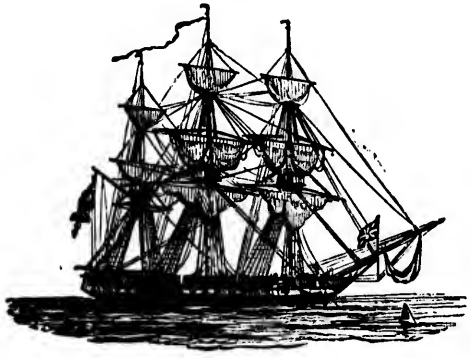
The people of this country can never forget, among the noble band of adventurers who have dared the dangers of the Polar Seas, the intrepid surgeon to the Expedition under Doctor Kane in search of Sir John Franklin.

The truthfulness of the scenes, and the variety of the incidents in this volume, of which he is the author, have rendered it a very pleasant duty for me to introduce it to English readers.

Having on more than one occasion devoted myself to the charming and fascinating study of Polar literature, I can truly speak of this work as deserving of wide reading and extensive success.

PERCY P. B. ST. JOHN,

AUTHOR OF ARCTIC CRUSOE.



THE POLAR CRUSOES;

OR

CAST AWAY IN THE POLAR SEAS.

CHAPTER I.

I Run Off to Sea.

THAT I, John Hardy, who was born and bred inland at Rockdale in the county of Durham, and brought up in my early years to agricultural pursuits, should have 'gone to sea,' and suffered as I have, is not a short story; and can only be told by me in my own way.

My mother died when I was six years old, but I remember her as a good and gentle woman. She was taken away however, too early to have left any distinct impression upon my mind or character. I was thus left to grow up with three brothers and two sisters, all but one of whom were older than myself, without a mother's kindly care and instruction; and I must own, that I grew to be a self-willed and obstinate boy; and this disposition led me into a course of disobedience, which but for the protecting care of a merciful Providence, would have brought my life to a speedy end.

My father being poor, neither myself nor my brothers and sisters received any other education than what was afforded by the common country school. It was indeed, as much as my father could do at any time to support so large a family and at the end of the year make both ends meet.

As for myself, I was, it must be owned, altogether a very ungrateful fellow, and appreciated neither the goodness of my father nor any of the other blessings which I enjoyed. Of the advantages of a moderate education which were offered to me I did not avail myself,—preferring mischief and idleness to my studies; and I manifested so little desire to learn, and was so troublesome to the master, that I was at length sent home, and forbidden to return to school any more.

Whereupon my father, very naturally, grew angry with me, and no doubt thinking it hopeless to try further to make anything of me, he regularly bound me over, for a period of years, to a neighbouring farmer, who compelled me to work very hard; so I thought myself ill used, whereas in the way of punishment, in truth I did not receive half my deserts.

With this farmer I lived three years and a half before he made the discovery that I was wholly useless to him, and that I did not do work enough to pay for the food I ate; so the farmer complained to my father, and threatened to send me home. This made me very indignant, as I foolishly thought myself a greatly aggrieved and injured person, and in an evil hour, I resolved to abide such treatment no longer. I would spite the old farmer, and punish my father for listening to him, by running away.

I was now in my eighteenth year,—old enough, one would have thought, to have more manliness and self-respect, as well as to know that both parent and master were acting for my good; but about this I did not reflect much.

I set out on my ridiculous journey without one pang of regret,—so hardened was I in heart and conscience,—carrying

with me only a change of clothing, and having in my pocket only one small piece of bread, and two small pieces of silver. It was rather a bold adventure, but I thought I should have no difficulty in reaching Shields, where I was fully resolved to take ship and go to sea.

The journey to Shields was a much more difficult undertaking than I had counted upon; and I believe, but for the wound which it would have caused to my pride, the arch enemy of boy and man, I should have gone back at the end of the first five miles. I held on, however, and reached my destination on the second day, having stopped overnight at a public house or inn, where my two pieces of silver speedily disappeared in paying for my supper, lodging and breakfast.

I arrived at Shields about the middle of the afternoon, very hot and dusty, for I had walked all the way through the broiling sun along the high-road; and I was very tired, and hungry, too, for I had tasted no food since morning, having no more money to buy any with, and not liking to beg. So I wandered on through the town towards the place where the masts of ships were to be seen as I looked down the street,—feeling miserable enough, I can assure you.

Up to this period of my life, I had never been ten miles from home, so of course everything was new to me. By this time, however, I had come to reflect seriously on my folly, and this, coupled with hunger and fatigue, so far banished curiosity from my mind that I was not in the least impressed by what I saw. In truth, I very heartily wished myself back on the farm; for if the labour there was not to my liking, it was at least not so hard as that which I had performed these past days, in walking along the dusty road,—and when on the farm I was never without the means to satisfy my hunger.

What I should have done at this critical stage, had not some one come to my assistance, I cannot even imagine. I

was afraid to ask any questions of the passers-by, for I did not really know what to ask them, or how to explain my situation: and, seeing that everybody was gaping at me with wonder and curiosity (and indeed, many of them were clearly laughing at my absurd appearance), I hurried on, not having the least idea where I should go or what I should do.

At length I saw a man with a very red face advancing along the opposite side of the street, and from his general appearance I believed him to be a sailor; so, driven almost to desperation, I crossed the street, looking, I am sure, the very picture of despair, and I thus accosted him: "If you please sir, can you tell me where I can go and ship for a voyage?"

"A voyage!" shouted he in reply, "a voyage! A pretty-looking fellow you for a voyage!"—which observation very much confused me. Then he asked me a great many questions, using a great many hard names, the meaning of which I did not at all understand, and the necessity for which I could not exactly see. I noticed that he called me "land-lubber" very frequently, but I had no idea whether he meant it as a compliment or an abusive epithet, though it seemed more likely to me that it was the latter.

After a while, however, he seemed to have grown tired of talking, or had exhausted his collection of strange words, for he turned short round and bade me follow him, which I did, with very much the feelings of a culprit when he is going to prison.

We soon arrived at a low, dingy place, the only noticeable feature of which was that it smelt of pitch and tar and had a great many people lounging about in it. It was, as I soon found out, a "shipping office,"—that is, a place where sailors engage themselves for a voyage. No sooner had we entered than my conductor led me up to a tall desk, and then, addressing himself to a hatched-faced man on the other sid

of it, he said something which I did not clearly comprehend. Then I was told to sign a paper, which I did without even reading a word of it, and then the red-faced man cried out in a very loud and startling tone of voice, "Bill!" upon which somebody at once rolled off a bench, and scrambled to his feet. This was evidently the "Bill" alluded to.

When Bill had got upon his feet, he surveyed me for an instant, as I thought, with a very needlessly firm expression of countenance, and then started towards the door, saying to me as he set off, "This way, you lubber." I followed after him with much the same feelings which I had experienced before, when I followed the man with the red face, until we came down to where the ships were, and then we descended a sort of ladder, or stairs, at the foot of which I stumbled into a boat, and had like to have gone bodily into the water. At this the seamen in the boat set up a loud laugh at my clumsiness,—just as if I had ever been in a boat before, and could help being clumsy.

To make the matter worse, I sat down in the wrong place, where one of the men was to pull an oar; and when, after being told "to get out of that," with no end of hard names, I asked what bench I should sit on, they all laughed louder than before, which still further overwhelmed me with confusion. I did not then know that what I called a "bench," they called a "thwart," commonly pronounced "thawt."

At length, after much bad language and more laughter, I managed to get into the forward part of the boat, which was called, as I found out, "the bows," where there was barely room to coil myself up; the boat being soon pushed off from the wharf, the oars were put out, and I heard an order to "give way," and then the oars splashed in the water, and I felt the boat moving; and now that I was in truth leaving my home and native land, perhaps to see them no more for ever, my heart sank heavy in my breast.

It was as much as I could do to keep the tears from pouring out of my eyes, as we glided across the harbour. Indeed, my eyes were so bedimmed that I scarcely saw anything at all until we came round under the stern of a ship, when I heard the men ordered to "lay in their oars." Then one of them caught hold of the end of a rope, which was thrown from the ship; and the boat being made fast, we all scrambled up the ship's side; and then I was hustled along to a hole in the forward part of the deck, (having what looked like a box turned upside down over it), through which, now utterly bewildered, I descended by means of a ladder to a dark, damp, mouldy place, which was filled with the foul smells of tar and bilge-water, and thick with tobacco-smoke.

This they told me, was the "fo'castle," where lived the "crew," of which I now became painfully conscious I was one. If there had been the slightest chance I should have run away; but running away from a ship is a very different thing from running away from a farm.

If I had wished myself back on the farm before, how much more did I wish it now! But it was too late, for we were all ordered up out of the forecastle even before I had tasted a mouthful of food. In truth, however, it is very likely that I was too sick with the foul odours, tobacco-smoke, and heart-burning, to have eaten anything, even had it been set before me.

Upon reaching the deck, I was immediately set to work at the windlass to get up anchor; and it was very evident to me that we were going to put to sea immediately. The idea of it was as dreadful to me now as it had before been agreeable, when I had contemplated it from the stand-point of a quiet farm, a good many miles away from the sea. But I could not help myself: no matter what might happen, my fate was sealed so far as concerned this ship.

We had not been long engaged at this work of turning the windlass before my companions started a song, keeping time

with the lever, which we were pushing up and down, one of them leading off by reciting a single line, in which something was said about "Sally coming," or "having come," or going to come to "Nor' Shields town"; after which they all united in a dismal chorus, that had not a particle of sense in it, so far as I could see, from beginning to end.

When they had finished off with the chorus, the leader set to screaming again about "Sally" and "Nor' Shields town," and then as before came the chorus. After a while I heard some one cry out, "The anchor's away," which, as I afterwards learned, meant the anchor had been lifted from the bottom; and then the sailors all scattered to obey an order to do something, which I had not the least idea of, with a sail and with some ropes, which appeared to me to be so mixed up that nobody could tell one from the other, nor make head nor tail of them.

In the twinkling of an eye, however, in spite of the mixed-up ropes, there was a great flapping of white canvas and a creaking and rattling of pulleys. Then the huge white sail was fully spread, the wind was bulging it out in the middle like a balloon, the ship's head was turned away from the town, and we were moving off. Next came an order to "lay aloft and shake out the topsail"; but happily, in this order I was not included, but was instead, directed to "lend a hand to get the anchor aboard," which operation was quickly accomplished, and the heavy mass of crooked iron which had held the ship firmly in the harbour was soon fastened in its proper place on the bow, to what is called the "cat-head." By the time this was done every sail was set, and we were flying before the wind out into the great ocean.

And now my wish was gratified. I was in a ship and off on the "world of waters," with the career of a sailor before me,—a career to my imagination when on the farm, full of romance, and presenting everything that was desirable in

life. But was it so in reality, when I was brought face to face with it,—when I had exchanged the farm for the forecastle? By no means. Indeed, my mind was filled with nothing but mingled disgust and terror.

The first view which I had of the ocean was much less impressive to me than would have been the sight of my father's duck-pond. I soon got miserably sick; night came on, dark and fearful; the winds rose; the waves dashed with great force against the ship's sides, often breaking over the deck and wetting me to the skin. I was shivering with cold; I was afraid that I should be washed overboard; I was afraid that I should be killed by something tumbling on me from aloft; for there was such a rattling up there in the darkness that I thought everything had broken loose.

I could not stand on the deck without support, and was knocked about when I attempted to move; every time the ship pitched or went down into the trough of a sea I felt more sick than ever. So, altogether, I was in a very bad way. It would be difficult to imagine how it could be otherwise, for can anyone conceive greater ills than these?—

1st, To have all your clothes wet;

2nd, To have a sick stomach; and,

3rd, To be in a dreadful fright.

Now that was precisely my condition; and I was already reaping the fruits of my folly in running away from home and exchanging the comforts of land for the indescribable miseries of a forecastle.

CHAPTER II.

SURROUNDED BY ICE.

MISERABLE existence most young sailors have to endure, but there are few who experience such trials as I did. In the first place, they gave me such wretched food to eat, all out of a rusty old tin plate, and I was all the time so sick from the motion of the vessel, as we went tossing up and down on the rough sea, and from the tobacco-smoke of the forecastle and all the other collection of horrid smells, that I could hardly eat a mouthful, so that I was half ready to die of starvation; and as if this was not misery enough, the sailors were all the time, when in the forecastle, quarrelling like so many cats and dogs, or wild beasts in a cage; and as two of them had pistols, and all of them had knives, I was every minute in dread lest they should take it into their heads to murder each other, or kill me by mistake.

I was miserable enough in more ways than one; for to these troubles was added a great distress of mind, caused by the sport the sailors made of me, and also by remorse of conscience because I had run away from home, and thus got myself into this great scrape, having indeed nobody to blame but myself! Then, to make the matter worse—as if it was not bad enough already—a violent storm set upon us in the

dark night. None but those who have passed through such a trial can ever imagine how the ship rolled about over the mountainous waves.

Sometimes the waves swept clear over the deck as if threatening our lives, and all the time the creaking of the masts, the roaring of the wind through the rigging, and the dashing of the seas, filled my ears with such awful sounds that I was in the greatest terror, and I thought that every moment would certainly be my last. Then, as if still further to add to my terror, one of the sailors told me, right in the midst of the storm, that we were bound for the Northern seas to catch whales and seals.

So now, what little scrap of courage I had left took instant flight, and in truth, I believe I should actually have died of fright had not the storm soon come to an end; indeed it was many days before I got over thinking that I should, in one way or another, have a speedy passage into the next world, and therefore I did not much concern myself with where we were going in this. Hence I grew to be very unpopular with the sailors, and learned next to nothing.

I was always in somebody's way, was always getting hold of the wrong rope, was in fact all the time doing mischief rather than good. In truth, I was set down as a hopeless idiot, and was considered proper game for everybody. The sailors tormented me in every possible way. One day (knowing how green I was) they set to talking about fixing up a table in the forecastle, and one of them said. "What a fine thing it would be if the mate (who turned out to be the red-faced man I had met in the street, and who took me to the shipping-office) would only let us have the keelson."

This being agreed to in a very serious manner (which I hadn't wit enough to see was all put on) I was sent to carry their petition. Seeing the mate on the quarterdeck I approached, and in a very respectful manner thus addressed him :—

"If you please, sir, I've come to ask if you will let us have the keelson for a table?"

Whereupon the mate turned fiercely upon me, and, to my great astonishment, roared out at the very top of his voice:—

"What! what's that you say? say that again, will you?"

So I repeated the question as he had told me to,—feeling all the while as if I should like the deck to open and swallow me up. I had scarcely finished before I perceived, that the mate was growing more and more angry; if, indeed, anything could possibly exceed the passion he was in already. His face was many shades redder than it was before,—and, indeed, it was so very red that it looked as if it might shine in the dark; his hat fell off, when he turned round, as it seemed to me in consequence of his stiff red hair rising up on end, and he raised his voice so loud that it sounded more like the angry howl of a wild beast than anything I could compare it to.

"You lubber!" he shouted. "You villain!" he shrieked? "you, you!"—and here it seemed as if he was choaking with hard words which he couldn't get rid of,— "you come here to play tricks on me? You try to fool me? I'll teach you!"—and seizing hold of the first thing he could lay his hands on (I did not stop to see what it was, but wheeled about greatly terrified) he let fly at me with such violence that I am sure I must have been finished off had I not quickly dodged my head.

When I returned to the forecastle, the sailors had a great laugh at me, and they called me ever afterwards "Jack Keelson." The keelson is a mass of wood down in the very bottom of the ship, running the whole length of it; but how should I have known that?

One day I was told to go and "grease the saddle." Not knowing that this was a block of wood spiked to the main-mast, to support the main boom, and thinking this a trick too, I refused to go, and came again near getting my head

broken by the red-faced mate. I did not believe there was anything like a "saddle" in the ship. And thus the sailors continued to worry me.

Once, when I was very weak with sea-sickness and wanted to keep down a dinner which I had just eaten, they insisted upon it that, if I would only put into my mouth a piece of fat pork, and keep it there, my dinner would stay in its place. The sailors were right enough, for as soon as my dinner began to start up, of course away went the fat pork out ahead of it.

But by and by I came to my senses, and upon discovering that the bad usage I received was in some measure my own fault, I ceased lamenting over my unhappy condition, and began to shew more spirit. I had actually been in the vessel five days before I had curiosity enough to inquire her name. They then told me it was called the "Blackbird"; but whatever possessed anybody to give it such a ridiculous and inappropriate name I never could imagine.

If they had called it the "Black Duck," or the "Black Diver," there would have been some sense in it, for the ship was driving head foremost into the water pretty much all the time. But I found out that the vessel was not exactly a ship after all, but a sort of half schooner, half brig,—what they call a brigantine, having two masts, a mainmast and a foremast. On the former there was a sail running fore and aft, and on the latter there was a foretop-sail and a foretop-gallant-sail, all of course square sails, that is, running across the vessel, and fastened to the yards.

The vessel was painted jet-black on the outside, but inside the bulwarks the colour was a dirty sort of green. Such was the brigantine "Blackbird," three hundred and forty-two tons register. Brigantine is, however, too long a word; so when I pay the "Blackbird" the compliment of alluding to her, I will call her a ship.

Having picked up the name of the ship, I was tempted to pursue my inquiries further, and it was not long before I had possessed myself of quite a respectable stock of seamen's knowledge, and hence I grew in favour. I learned to distinguish between a "halyard," which is a rope for pulling the yards up and letting them down, from a "brace," which is used to pull them round so as to "trim the sails," and a "sheet," which is a rope for keeping the sails in their proper places.

I found out by diligent inquiry and exercise of the memory, that what I called a floor the sailors called a "deck"; a kitchen they called a "galley"; a pot, a "copper"; a pulley was a "block"; a post, a "stanchion"; to fall down was to "heel over"; to climb up was to "go aloft"; and to walk straight, and keep one's balance when the ship was pitching over the waves, was to "get your sea legs on." I found out too, that everything behind you was "abaft," and everything ahead was "forwards"; that a large rope was a "hawser," and that every other rope was a "line"; to make anything temporarily secure was to "belay" it; to make one thing fast to another was to "head it on" and when two things were close together, they were "chock-a-block."

I learned also, that the right-hand side of the vessel was the "starboard" side, while the left-hand side was the "port" or "larboard" side; that the lever which moves the rudder that steers the ship was called the "helm," and that to steer the ship was to take "a trick at the wheel"; that to "put the helm up" was to turn it in the direction from which the wind was coming (windward), and to "put the helm down" was to turn it in the direction the wind was going (leeward).

I found out still further, that a ship has a "waist," like a woman, a "forefoot," like a beast, besides "bull's eyes" (which are small holes with glass in them to admit light), and

"cat-heads," and "monkey-rails," and "cross-trees," as well as "saddles" and "bridles" and "harness," and many other things, too numerous to mention, which I thought I should never hear anything more of after I left the farm.

When it was discovered how much I had improved, they proposed immediately to turn it to their own account; for I was at once sent to take "a trick" at the wheel, from which I came away, after two hours' hard work, with my hands dreadfully blistered, and my legs bruised, and with the recollection of much abusive language from the red-faced mate, who could never see anything right in what I did. I gave him, however, some good reason this time to abuse me, and I was glad of it afterwards, though I was badly enough scared at the time.

I steered the ship so badly that a wave which I ought to have avoided by a dexterous turn of the wheel, came breaking in right over the quarter-deck, wetting the mate from head to foot. He thought I did it on purpose, and once more his face increased its redness, and his mind invented hard words faster than his tongue would let them out of his ugly throat.

However, I never could have much sympathy for my shipmates in the "Blackbird," for if they did treat me a little better when they found that I could do something, especially when I could take a "trick at the wheel," I still continued to look upon them as little better than a set of pirates, and I felt satisfied that, if they were not born to be hanged, they would certainly drown.

All this while we were approaching the Arctic regions, and were getting into the sea where ice was to be expected. A man was accordingly kept aloft all the time to look out for it; for we were going after seals, and it is on the ice that the seals are found, The weather was now very cold, it being the month of April.

At length the man aloft cried out that he had discovered ice.

"Where away?" shouted the mate.

"Off the larboard bow," was the answer.

So the course of the ship was changed, and we bore right down upon the ice, and very soon it was in sight from the deck, and gradually became more and more distinct. It was a very imposing sight. The sea was covered all over with it, as far as the eye could reach,—a great plain of whiteness, against the edge of which the waves were breaking and sending the spray flying high in the air, and sending to our ears that same dull, heavy roar which the breakers make when beating on the land.

As we neared this novel scene, I observed that it consisted mostly of perfectly flat masses of ice, of various sizes, called by the sealers "floes"; some were miles in extent, and others only a few feet. The surface of these ice floes or fields rose only about a foot or so above the surface of the water. Between them, there were in many places very broad openings, and when I went aloft and looked down upon the scene, the ice-fields appeared like a great collection of large and small flat white islands, dotted about in the midst of the ocean.

Through these openings between the ice fields the ship was immediately steered, and we were soon surrounded by ice on every side. To the south, whence we had come, there was in an hour apparently just as much ice as before us to the north, or to the right and left of us—a vast, immeasurable waste of ice it was, and looked dreary enough.

I have said that the pieces of ice now about us were called "floes," or ice fields; the whole together was called "the pack." We were now in perfectly smooth water, for the ice soon breaks the swell of the sea. But the crew of the ship did not give themselves much concern about the ice itself; for it was soon discovered that the floes were covered in many places with seals, lying in great numbers on them near their margins.

They had reached the scene of action, and saw before them a rich reward for their labours.

Seals are not fish, but are air-breathing, warm-blooded animals, like horses and cows, and therefore, they must always have their heads, or at least their noses, out of water when they breathe. When the weather is cold, they remain in the water all the time, merely putting up their noses now and then (for they can remain a long time under water without breathing) to sniff a little fresh air, and then going quickly down again In the warm weather, however, they come up bodily out of the sea, and bask and go to sleep in the sun, either on the land or on the ice. Many thousands of them are often seen together.

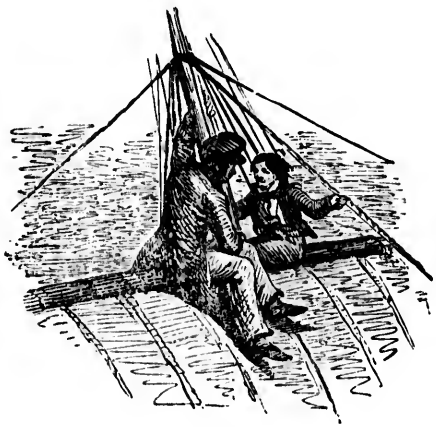
As we came farther and farther into the pack, the seals on the ice were observed to be more and more numerous. The greater number of them appeared to be sound asleep; some of them were wriggling about, or rolling themselves over and over, while none of them seemed to have the least idea that we had come all the way from Shields to rob them of their sleek coats and their nice fat blubber.

We were now fairly into our "harvest-field," and when a suitable place was discovered, the ship was brought up into the wind, that is, the helm was so turned as to bring the ship's head towards the wind, when, of course, the sails got "aback" and the ship stopped. Then a boat was lowered and a crew, of which I was one, got into it with the end of a very long rope, and pulled away towards the edge of a large ice-field, dragging out the rope after us, of course, from the coil on shipboard.

As we approached the ice, the seals nearly all became frightened, and floundered into the sea as quickly as they could, with a tremendous splash. In a few minutes, however, they all came up again, putting their cunning-looking heads up out of the water, all round the boat, no doubt curious to

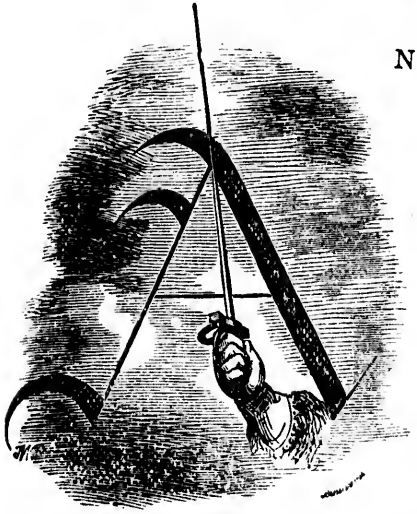
see what these singular-looking beings were that had come amongst them.

As soon as we had reached the ice, we sprang from the boat to its surface; and after digging a hole into it with a long, sharp bar of iron, called an ice-chisel, we put through this one end of a large, heavy crooked hook, called an ice-anchor, and then to a ring in the other end of this ice-anchor we made fast the end of the rope that we had brought with us. This done, we signalled to the people on board to "haul in," which they did on their end of the rope, and in a little while the ship was drawn close up to the ice. Then another rope was run out over the stern of the ship, and this being made fast to an ice-anchor in the same way as the other, the ship was soon drawn up with her whole broadside close to the ice, as snug as if she were lying alongside a wharf.



CHAPTER III.

My First Seal Hunt—Alone in the Arctic Sea.



AND now began the seal-hunt. Preparations were made, first to catch the seals, and then to preserve the skins and fry out the oil from the blubber, and put it away in barrels. For this latter duty some of the crew were selected, while others were sent off to kill and bring in the seals. These latter were chosen with a view to their activity; and I, being supposed to be of that sort, was one of the party. I was glad enough to get off the vessel for once on to something firm and solid, even if it were only ice, and, at least for a little while, to have done with rocking and rolling about over the waves.

Each one of the seal-catchers was armed with a short club for killing the seals, and a rope to drag them over the ice to the ship. We scattered in every direction, our object being each by himself to approach a group of seals, and coming upon them as noiselessly as possible, to kill as many of them as we could before they should take fright and rush into the sea. In order to do this, we were obliged to steal up between the cunning animals and the water as far as possible.

My first essay at this novel sport, or rather business, was ridiculous enough, and besides nearly causing my death, overwhelmed me with mortification. It happened thus: I made at a large herd of seals, nearly all of whom were lying some distance from the edge of the ice, and before they could get into the water I had managed to intercept about a dozen of them.

The seals, of course, all rushed towards the water as fast as they could go, the moment they saw me coming. But I got up with them in time, and struck one on the nose, killing it, and was in the act of striking another, when a huge fellow, that was big enough to have been the father of the whole flock, too badly frightened to mind where he was going, ran his head between my legs, and whipping up my heels in an instant, landed me on his back, in which absurd position I was carried into the sea before I could recover myself.

Of course, I sank immediately, and dreadfully cold was the water; but, rising to the surface in a moment, I was preparing to make a vigorous effort to swim back to the ice, when another badly-frightened and ill-mannered seal, plunged into the sea without once looking to see what he was doing, and hit me with the point of his nose fairly in the stomach.

I thought now for certain that my misfortunes were all over, and that my end was surely come. However, I got my head above the surface once more, and did my best to keep it there; but my hopes almost vanished when I perceived that I was at least twenty feet from the edge of the ice. It was as much as I could do to keep my head above water, without swimming forward, so much embarrassed was I by my heavy clothing, the great cold, and the terrible pains, caused by the seal hitting me in the stomach.

I am quite certain that this would have been the last of John Hardy's adventures, had not one of my companions, seeing me going overboard on the back of the seal, rushed to

my rescue. He threw me his line for dragging seals, the end of which I had barely strength to catch hold on to; and then he drew me out as one would haul up a large fish.

I came from the sea in a most sorry condition. My mouth was full of salt water, I was so prostrated with the cold that I could scarcely stand, and my pains were so great that I should certainly have screamed had I not been so full of water that I could not utter a single word. But I managed after a while to get all the water out, and then, after drawing into my lungs a few good long breaths of air, I felt greatly refreshed. I could still, however, hardly stand and was shivering with the cold.

But I found there was strength enough left in me to enable me to stagger back to the ship, where I was greeted in a manner far from gratifying. The sailors looked upon my adventure as a good joke, never once seeming to think how near I had been to death's door, and the mate simply cried out:

"Overboard, eh? Pity the sharks didn't catch him.

It was clear enough that this red-faced and unpitying tyrant would show me no mercy; and when, pale and cold and panting for breath, I asked him for leave to go below for a while, he cried out—

"Yes, for just five minutes. Be lively, or I'll warm your back for you with a rope's end."

The prospect of a "back warming" of this description had the effect to make me lively, sure enough, although I was shivering as if I would shake all my teeth out, and tumble all my bones down into a heap. As soon as I reached the deck, the mate cried out again for me to "be lively," and when he set after me with an uplifted rope's end, his face glaring at me all the while like a red hot furnace, you may be sure I was quite as lively as it was possible for me to be, and was over the ship's side in next to no time, and off again in search of

seals. After a while I got warmed up with exercise, and this time, being more cautious, I met with no other similar misadventure, and soon came in dragging three prizes after me.

We continued at this seal-hunting for a good many days, during which we shifted our position frequently, and made what the sealors call a good "catch." But still the barrels in the hold of the ship were not much more than half of them filled with oil, when a great storm set in, and the ice threatening to close in upon us, we were forced to get everything aboard, cast loose from the ice-field, and work our way south into clear water again, which we were fortunate enough to do without accident.

But some other vessels which had come up while we were fishing and were very near to us, were not so lucky. Two of them were caught by the ice-fields before they could effect their escape from the pack, and where wholly crushed to pieces. The crews, however, saved themselves by jumping out on the ice, and were all successful in reaching other vessels, having managed to save their boats before their ships actually went down. It was a very fearful sight, the crushing up of these vessels,—as if they were nothing more than egg-shells in the hand.

This storm lasted with occasional interruptions, thirteen days, but the breaks in it were of such short duration that we had little opportunity to "fish" (as seal-catching is called) any more. We approached the ice repeatedly, only to be driven off again before we had fairly succeeded in getting under way again with our work, and hence we caught very few seals.

By the time the storm was over the season for seal-fishing was nearly over too; so we had no alternative, if we would get a good cargo of oil, but to go in search of whales, which would take us still farther north, and into much heavier ice, and therefore, necessarily, into even greater danger than we

had hitherto encountered. Accordingly, the course of the vessel was changed, and I found that we were steering almost due north, avoiding the ice as much as possible, but passing a great deal of it every day.

The wind being mostly fair, and the ice not thick enough at any time to obstruct our passage, we hauled in our latitude very fast, that is, we were going north fast; for what a sailor makes in northing or southing he calls "hauling in his latitude," just as making easting or westing is "hauling in his longtitude."

The days wore on and still we kept going on and on,—getting farther and farther north, and into more and more ice. Sometimes our course was much interrupted, and we had to wait several days for the ice to open; then we would get under way again, and push on. At length it seemed to me that we must be very near the North Pole.

It was a strange world we had come into. The sun was shining all the time. There was no night at all,—broad daylight constantly. This of course favoured us; indeed, had there been any darkness, we could not have worked among the ice at all.

As it was, we were obliged to be very cautious, for the ice often closed upon us without giving us a chance to escape, obliging us to get out great long saws, and cut out and float away great blocks of the ice, until we had made a dock for the ship, where she could ride with safety. We had thus many narrow escapes from the miserable fate which had befallen the poor sealers.

At first, when we decided to go after whales, there were several vessels in company with us. At one time I counted nine, all in sight at once, but we had become separated in thick weather, and whether they had gone ahead of us, or had fallen behind, we could not tell. However, we kept on and on and on; where we were or where we were going to, I, of course,

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ENTERING THE ICE—SPECTRE-LOOKING ICEBERGS. P. 25.

F. 25. ENTERING THE ICE—SPECTRE-LOOKING ICEBERGS.

had not the least idea; but I became aware from day to day, that greater dangers were threatening us, for icebergs came in great numbers to add their terrors to those which we had already in the ice fields.

They became at length, and suddenly too, very numerous, and not being able to go round them on account of the field-ice, which was on either side, we entered right amongst them. The atmosphere was somewhat foggy at the time, and it seemed as if the icebergs chilled the very air we breathed. I fairly shuddered as we passed the first opening.

The bergs were at least three times as high as our masts, and very likely more than that, and they appeared to cover the sea in every direction. It seemed to me that we were going to certain destruction, and indeed I thought I read a warning written as it were on the bergs themselves.

Upon the corner of an iceberg to the left of us there stood a white figure, as plain as anything could possibly be. One hand of this strange, weird-looking figure was resting on the ice beside it, while the other was pointing partly upwards towards heaven, and backwards towards the south, whence we had come. I thought I saw the figure move, and much excited, I called the attention of one of the sailors to it.

"Why, you fool," said he, "don't you know that the sun melts the ice into all sorts of shapes. Look out hard, if there isn't a man's face?"

I looked up as the sailor had directed me, and, sure enough, there was a man's face plainly to be seen in the lines of an immense tongue of ice which was projecting from the side of a berg on the right, and under which we were about to pass.

I now became really terrified. In addition to these strange spectral objects, the air was filled with loud reports and deep rumbling noises, caused by the icebergs breaking to pieces, or masses splitting off from their sides and falling into the sea. These noises came at first from the icebergs in front of

us; but when we had got fairly into the wilderness of bergs which covered the sea, they came from every side. It struck me that we had passed deliberately into the very jaws of death, and that from the frightful situation there was no escape.

I merely mention this as the feeling which oppressed me, and which I could not shake off. Indeed, the feeling grew upon me rather than decreased. The fog came on very thick, settling over us as if it were our funeral shroud. The noises were multiplying, and we could no longer tell whence they came, so thick was the air. We were groping about like a traveller who has lost his way in a vast forest, and has been overtaken by the dark night.

It seemed to me now that our doom was sealed,—that all our hope was left behind us when we passed the openings to this vast wilderness of icebergs; and the more I thought of it, the more it seemed to me that the figure standing on the corner of the iceberg where we entered, whether it was ice, or whatever it was, had been put there as a warning. How far my fears were right I found out afterwards.

The fog kept on thickening more and more, until we could scarcely see anything at all. I have never, I think, seen so thick a fog, and it was with the greatest difficulty that the ship was kept from striking the icebergs. Then after a while, the wind fell away steadily, and finally it grew entirely calm. The current had now complete possession of us, and was moving us about upon the dead waters; and in order to prevent this ebb of the waters from setting us against the bergs, we had to lower the boats, and making lines fast to the ship, and to the boats, pull away with our oars to keep headway on the ship, that she might be steered clear of the dangerous places. Thus we made a slow progress, but it was very hard work.

At length the second mate, who was steering the foremost boat, which I was in, cried out, "Fast in ahead."

Now "fast in" is a belt of ice which is attached firmly to the land, not yet having been broken up or dissolved by the warmth of the summer. This announcement created great joy to everybody in the boats, as we all supposed that we would be ordered to make a line fast to it, that we might hold on there until the fog cleared up and the wind came again. But instead of this we were ordered by the mate to pull away from it.

And then, after having got the vessel as was supposed, into a good clear open space of water—at least there was not a particle of ice in sight—we were all ordered, very imprudently, as it appeared to every one of us, to come on board to breakfast.

We had just finished our breakfast, and were preparing to go on deck, and then into the boats again, when there was a loud cry raised on deck :—

"Ice close ahead! Hurry up! Man the boats!" were the orders which caught my ear among a great many other confusing sounds; and when I got on deck, I saw, standing away up in the fog, almost obscured in the thick cloud, an enormous iceberg; the top of which hung over like the one we first saw on entering the ice.

It was very evident that we were slowly drifting upon this frightful object, and directly under this overhanging tongue. It was a fearful sight to behold, for it looked as if it was just ready to crumble to pieces; and indeed, at every instant small fragments were breaking off from it, with loud reports, and falling into the sea.

We were but a moment getting into the boats. The boat which I was in had something the start of the other two. Just as we were pulling away, the master of the ship came on deck, and ordered us to do what, had the mate done it an hour before, would have made it impossible that this danger should have come upon us.

"Carry your line out to the fast ice," was the order we received from the master, and every one of us, seeing the great danger, pulled the strongest oar he could. The "fast ice" was dimly in sight when we started, for we had drifted while at breakfast towards it, as well as towards the berg.

Only a few minutes were needed to reach it. We jumped out and dug the usual hole and planted the anchor.

The ship was out of sight, buried in the fog. A faint voice came up from the ship.

It was "Hurry up! we have struck."

They evidently could not see us. The line was fastened to the anchor in an instant, and the second mate shouted, "Haul in! haul in!"

There was no answer but "Hurry up! hurry up! we have struck."

"Haul in! haul in!" shouted the second mate; but still there was no answer.

"They can't hear nor see," said he, hurriedly; and then, turning to me, said, "Hardy, you watch the anchor that it don't give way. Boys, jump in the boat, and we'll go nearer the ship so they can hear us."

The boat was gone quickly into the fog, and I was then alone on the ice by the anchor,—how much and truly alone, I had soon to learn.

Quick as the lightning flash, sudden as the change of one second to another, there broke upon me a sound that will never, never leave my ears. It was as if a volcano had burst forth, or an earthquake had instantly tumbled a whole city into ruins.

A fearful shock, as of a sudden explosion, filled the air. I saw faintly through the thick mists the masts of the ship reeling over, and I saw no more;—vessel and iceberg and the disappearing boat were mingled as in one awful chaos.

The whole side of the berg nearest the vessel had split off,

hurling thousands and hundreds of thousands of tons of ice, and thousands of fragments, crashing down upon the doomed ship. Escape the vessel could not, nor could her crew, the shock came so suddenly. The spray thrown up into the air completely hid everything from view; but the noise which came from out the gloom told the tale.

Presently there was a loud rush. Great waves, with white crests that were frightful to look upon, set in motion by the crumbling icebergs, came tearing out of the obscurity, and perceiving the danger of my situation, I ran from it as fast as I could run. And I was just in time; for the waves broke up the ice where I had been standing into a hundred fragments, and crack after crack opening close behind me, I fled as before a devouring fiend.

I had not, however, far to run before I had reached a place of safety, for the force of the waves was soon spent. And when I saw what had happened, I fell down flat upon the ice, crying—

"Saved, but for what? to freeze or starve! O that I had perished with the rest of them!"

I was really and truly *cast away in the cold.* In almost a single instant the ship which had borne me through what had seemed great perils, was so far as appeared to me, swallowed up in the sea,—crushed and broken into fragments by the falling ice; and every one of my companions was swallowed up with it. And there I was on an ice-raft, in the middle of the Arctic Sea, without food or shelter, wrapped in a black, impenetrable fog, with a lingering death staring me in the face.

CHAPTER IV.

An Avalanche of Ice—Saved from the Wreck.

I WAS greatly astonished by what had happened, and indeed it was hard for me to believe my senses, so suddenly had this great disaster come upon me. I stood staring into the mist, and listening to the terrible sounds which came out of it, as one petrified; yet, after a little time, I recovered myself sufficiently to comprehend my situation. The instinct of life is strong in every living thing, and after I had stood in the presence of this frightful chaos for I have not the least idea how long, I began to think what I should do to save myself.

The waves which had been raised, after awhile began steadily to subside, and as the sea became more calm I found that I could approach nearer to where the wreck had happened by jumping over some of the cracks which had been made in the ice, and walking across piece after piece of it. These pieces were all in motion, rolling on the swell of the sea, and the farther I went, of course the greater the motion became. I had therefore to proceed cautiously, and when I jumped from one fragment of ice to another, I was obliged to look carefully what I was about, for if I missed my footing I should

fall into the sea, and be either drowned or ground up by the moving ice.

Had the iceberg all gone to pieces at once, the sea would soon have become quiet; but it was evident from the noises which reached me that a considerable part of the berg was still holding together, and was wallowing in the sea in consequence of its equilibrium being disturbed by the explosion, and still keeping the sea agitated.

I could indeed vaguely see this remaining fragment, swaying right and left, and I could also perceive that with every roll, fresh masses were breaking off with loud reports, like the heavy crash of artillery. I could however, discover nothing of the ship or either of the boats.

I was able to detect when the fog cleared up a little, even at a considerable distance, some fragments of ice floating and rolling about; and as I peered into the gloom I thought at one time that I saw the figure of a man standing upon one of them. It was but a moment, for the fog closed upon the object, whatever it might have been, and it vanished like a spectre.

My eyes were strained to catch a further glimpse of this object, but nothing more was to be seen of it. But from this my attention was soon attracted by a dark mass which had drifted upon the edge of the broken ice, not far to the right of the place where I had been standing when the boat left me. I soon made this out to be some part of the wreck of the ship.

In a few moments I could make out that it was a piece of a mast; then I could plainly distinguish the foretop. Each succeeding wave was forcing it higher and higher out of the water, and I discovered, after a few moments, that other timbers were attached to it, and that beside these there were sails and ropes, making of the whole a considerable mass.

After observing it attentively still further, I thought that I perceived a man moving among the tangled collection of

timbers and ropes and sails, endeavouring to extricate himself. Whatever it might be, it was some distance above the sea,—so high, indeed, that the waves no longer washed it fairly,—only the spray,

It soon became clear to me that my suspicions of this being a man were correct; and being more convinced than ever that one of my shipmates at least was yet alive, I rushed forward, without any thought as to the consequences, to rescue him or perish in the attempt. It was clear that he could not liberate himself.

I was now standing on a fragment of ice which had been broken off from the solid ice-field by the waves. It was one of a number of similar fragments, all lying more or less close together, between me and the place where I had been standing when the waves began to subside and the ice ceased to break up.

Between where I now stood and the wreck, the ice was in the same broken condition as behind me, only, being nearer the open water, the pieces were rolling more, so that there was much greater danger in springing from piece to piece.

Without, however, pausing to reflect upon this circumstance, I rushed forward as fast as I could go, jumping with ease over every obstacle in my way, until I was, in a very few moments, on the piece of ice that held up the end of the tangled wreck. I had evidently arrived in the very nick of time, for the wreck was, instead of coming farther up, now beginning to sink back into the sea.

What I had taken for a man proved to be one, or, as I soon found out, a boy,—the cabin-boy of the ship, a light, pale-faced lad, only fourteen years old. The boy was evidently fast in some way among the rigging, and had been trying to extricate himself. As I came close, however, I observed that he was entirely quiet, and had sunk out of view.

Quick as thought I mounted up into the wreck, and then I

RESCUE OF THE CABIN BOY. p. 33

saw the boy with a rope tangled round his leg and lying quite insensible. Underneath him a man was lying, much mutilated and evidently quite dead. As I was mounting up, a wave washed in under the wreck, but I escaped with only a little spray flying over me, which however did not wet me much.

It was but the work of a moment to whip out my knife, which I carried like every other sailor, and cut the rope which bound the boy down, and which he had tried in vain to loosen. After this I had no further difficulty, and, seizing the boy round the waist with one arm—he was very light even for his years—I clambered out of the wreck to the ice without getting much more water upon me, and hurrying off, did not stop until I had jumped with my burden across several cracks, and ran across several pieces of ice, making a place of present safety on the unbroken or fast ice.

Here I laid down my insensible burden, all dripping with the cold water, and in a state of great anxiety I bent over the boy. At first I thought that he was dead, but it was soon clear that this was not the case, for he was breathing, although slowly, yet freely. Out from his wet hair a little blood was oozing, and upon examining the spot I found that there was a bad bruise there, and that the skin was broken, though there was not a serious cut. This was clearly the cause of his present unconsciousness, as his breathing seemed conclusively to show that he had managed to keep his head above water, and had not been brought to his present state by drowning.

It occurred to me that the blow had simply stunned him, and that it had come almost at the moment I arrived to rescue him. I could not perceive that the skull was fractured, and I felt convinced that, if the boy could be warmed and allowed to lie at rest, he would after a while come to. To this conclusion I arrived while leaning over the poor fellow, examining his heart, while he lay on the chilly ice, never once

thinking where I was, and all the while calling frantically to him; but I might as well have spoken to a stone.

When I rose up, fully impressed with the necessity of securing for the lad rest and warmth, I realized for the first time my powerless situation, and that I was apparently unable to save myself, still less the boy. My heart seemed to give way entirely, and I sank down once more beside him. A prayer to Heaven for succour, which I had no thought could ever come to me, rose to my lips, and at that very moment a ray of hope dawned upon me.

The great fog was breaking away, the bright sun was scattering the mists, and land was bursting through it near at hand. Light, fleecy clouds were rolling up above the sea, and as they floated off before a gentle wind, a blaze of sunshine burst through an opening in them and fell upon myself and the boy whose life I had, at least for the present, saved.

I could now look out over the sea for a considerable distance. Although there was still much confusion there, yet the ice was steadily quieting down, and the waves caused by it were subsiding rapidly. But a change not less marked had taken place in the space between where I stood and the open water.

The wreck from which I had rescued the boy had settled back into the sea, and the fragments of ice which had fallen upon it were separating and floating off. Had I delayed but a few minutes longer, I should never have reached the fast ice, but should have drifted off upon the dark waters, as the man had done whom I saw standing in the fog.

As the fog cleared up more and more, the land which had first appeared stood out boldly, and the sea was visible over a range of many miles. It was dotted all over with fragments of ice and numerous icebergs, many of which reached up into the disappearing mists, looking like white mountains in miniature, with clouds drifting across their summits.

The land did not appear to be more than a mile distant from me, and it was evident that I stood upon ice which was fast to it. Indeed, when I was first cast upon this ice I might have known, had I paused to reflect, that land could not be very distant from me, as the very name "fast ice" indicates clearly of itself that land is near.

With this lighting up of the air, various thoughts came into my mind. First, could I get to the land and save the boy as well as myself; secondly, could I aid anybody else; and thirdly, could I save anything of the wreck out of the sea. These last two reflections were quickly disposed of, for although I could see many fragments of the wreck, none were within reach, and no other person was in sight,—ship and boats and men were all gone down before the crushing avalanche, and nothing was left but myself and a senseless boy.

Although we were in the Arctic regions, and on the ice, the weather was not cold, the time being the middle of the short polar summer. Of course the dense fog made the air a little damp and chilly, but as I have said, not cold. My shipmates before the wreck happened, never dressed in anything warmer than the usual woollen clothing, and seldom wore coats.

For some reason, I do not exactly remember why, I had upon going on deck from breakfast that fatal morning, in addition to my ordinary coat, put on a heavy pilot-cloth overcoat, which had been furnished me by the master of the ship, —the price of it to be deducted from my wages. And it was most fortunate that I had put this coat on, for it now served a good purpose in wrapping up the boy.

Seeing that there was now nothing to be gained by longer delay on the ice, I picked the boy up in my arms and started for the land. It is somewhat strange that I should have gone about it so calmly, or indeed that I did not fall down in despair, and at once give up the hope of saving myself when there was so little, or rather no apparent, prospect of it before

me. But for this there were some very natural reasons; for, in the first place, the thought of saving the boy's life kept my mind from dwelling too much upon my own misfortunes; and the hope of finding the land, which had come in sight out of the fog, inhabited, stimulated my courage and inspired exertion.

Although the boy was not heavy, yet I found that in the distance I had to carry him I grew much fatigued; but the necessity for haste made me strong, and to save the boy's life seemed now much more desirable than to save my own, inasmuch as if the boy died and I survived him, and could in any way manage to live on, I should be in truth in a worse condition than if dead, as it appeared to me,—being all alone.

As I approached the land very near, I became much alarmed by discovering that a considerable space of water, partly filled with fragments of ice, intervened between me and the shore; but after holding to the right for a little distance I came at length to a spot where the ice was firmly in contact with the land, and after climbing over some very rough masses which had been squeezed up along the shore, I found myself at length on the green hillside already spoken of; and here upon the grass, in the blazing sun, I laid down the yet insensible boy.

What was I now to do?

The boy was yet in very much the same condition that he was when I set out with him for the shore. Meanwhile more than half an hour must have elapsed, during which time the boy was wrapped in his wet clothes, which to a man in the full possession of his senses would have been prostrating enough. It seemed to me that he was sinking under the double influence of the blow which he had received, and the wet clothes which were on his body.

I had, however, the gratification of knowing that I was on

firm land, and away from the cold ice. The grass was warm, and the air, as I have said, was scarcely chilly. Under these improved circumstances, it was clearly better to expose the boy's body wholly to the air than to allow him to remain in his wet clothing. The first thing therefore which I did, was to divest myself of my own clothing in order that I might give my warm under-clothing to the boy. This left for myself only my trousers and my coat.

After buttoning the coat tightly round me, I removed the boy's wet clothing and rubbed his body with such parts of the tail of my overcoat as his clothes had not wetted while carrying him, and this done I drew on him my shirt and drawers, and then pulling up the grass, I heaped that about him, and over this threw my damp overcoat, the grass however, preventing it from touching him.

All this occupied but a few minutes, for I worked with the energy of despair. I then set to rubbing and pounding his feet and hands, which were very cold, to get some circulation back into them.

I had now done all that it was possible for me to do for the present towards the restoration of my poor companion, who still remained in precisely the same insensible condition as before, and I now determined to look about me and ascertain if there were any evidences to be discovered of human beings living near at hand. The scene around me was dreary enough to strike terror even into a stouter heart than mine; and when I had fully viewed it, I had to confess to myself that it did not seem probable that any living thing, not to mention human beings, could possibly be there.

The first thing I did was to shout and halloo again and again, at the very top of my voice; but no answer reached me except the echo of my own voice from a deep and dark gorge close by. This echo startled me and made me afraid, though I never could tell why. My loud calling had failed to

produce any impression upon the boy whatever, and I now felt sure that he was going to die.

Without exactly knowing what I did, or what I was doing it for, I now ran to the right over the green grass, and then over rough stones up to a considerable elevation, and commenced hallooing again, when, much to my astonishment, I heard a great fluttering and loud sounds right below and within thirty feet of me. I sprang back as if some terrible enemy had attacked me, but I recovered myself in an instant, when I discovered that the fluttering came from a number of birds, which rose from among the rocks.

The birds were brown and large, and I knew at once that they were eider ducks, for I had seen them frequently before while in the ship, and the sailors had told me their name. Without having any distinct motive in doing so, I now went down to where the birds had risen, when others again rose before me in great numbers.

The rapidity of their flight, and the loud noise which they made, startled others still farther away, and thus flock after flock kept on rising from among the rocks, screaming and flapping their wings in a very loud manner. Several hundreds, perhaps thousands of them, must have thus got upon their wings and commenced sailing overhead.

The eider duck, in order to protect its eggs from the air when it goes off to get for food the little fish that it catches in the sea, plucks from its breast the fine feathers, called down, in which it buries its eggs very carefully. In each of the nests I found there was a good handful of this down, and the thought at once occurred to me to gather a quantity of it, and cover the boy with it.

I went to work immediately, and collected a great armful of it, and, hastening to where the boy was, I deposited it, and then hurried back for more. In a very short time I had accumulated a great pile of it, and spreading a thick layer

of it out close beside the boy, I drew him over upon it, and then covered him with it completely, and spread my overcoat as I had done before.

The value of putting this discovery to prompt use was soon manifested. The boy, from being cold almost as a corpse, began to show some symptoms of returning warmth, his breathing seemed to be more rapid and free, and his eyelids began to move a little, though they did not fully open for some time; but it was then only for an instant, and I was not certain whether he recognised me or not. I called to him loudly by name, I rubbed his forehead, I pounded his hands, but he gave no further recognition; yet he was getting warmer and warmer, and in this circumstance I rested my hope.

Having accomplished this much, and feeling pretty sure that the boy would recover in the end, my mind now very naturally fell back upon the contemplation of my own unhappy condition. I moved a few steps from the boy, and sat down upon a rock overlooking the sea. There was nothing there to inspire me with courage when this question came uppermost in my mind:

"Suppose the boy does recover from his present stupor, how are we going to live?" Could anybody indeed be in a more sorry state? Let me enumerate:—

1st. I had been shipwrecked,—a fortune usually considered bad enough under any circumstances.

2nd. I had lost all of my companions except a feeble boy, whom I had rescued from death, and who was now thrown helpless on my hands.

3rd. I was cast away on a desert land, I knew not where, but very far towards the North Pole, as was clear enough from the immense quantities of ice which whitened the sea before me.

4th. I was chilly, and had no fire nor means of making any. Nor had I sufficient clothing to cover me.

5th. I was hungry, and had no food nor means of obtaining any.

6th. I was thirsty, and had nothing to drink, nor could I discover anything.

7th. I was without house or hut to shelter me.

8th. I was without weapons to defend myself against the attacks of wild beasts, if any there should be to molest me.

To counteract these positive evils I had four things, namely:—

1st. Life.

2nd. The clothes on my back.

3rd. A jack-knife.

4th. The mercy of Providence.

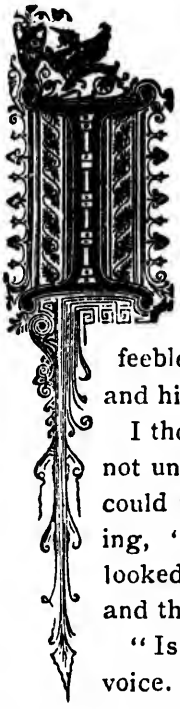
And this was all.

What chance was there for me?

Little enough one would think. And in truth, there did not seem to be any at all. When I thought of all, I buried my face in my hands, and moaning aloud, the big tears began to gather in my eyes.

CHAPTER V.

CAST AWAY ON AN ISLAND—THE SHIP-WRECKED BOY RECOVERS.



DRIED my eyes, however, when I thought of the poor boy. His name was Richard Dean. The sailors always called him 'the Dean.' He was a clever, lively boy, and everybody liked him. To see him in such a state made my heart bleed. But he was growing warm under his great load of eider-down, and that I was glad to see; and at last he showed some feeble signs of consciousness. His eyes opened wide and his lips moved.

I thought he was saying something, though I could not understand for some time what it was. Then I could make out, after a while, that he was murmuring, "Mother, mother dear!" As he spoke he looked at me, wildly like, turned his head away, and then turned it back and looked at me again.

"Is that you, Hardy?" he said, in a very low voice.

"Yes," I replied; "and I'm glad you know me,"—which indeed I was.

But the poor fellow's mind soon wandered away from me again; and I could see that it was disturbed by visions of something dreadful.

"There! there!" he cried, "it's tumbling on me! the ice! the ice! it's tumbling on me!" and he tried to spring up from where he lay.

"There's nothing there at all, Dean," said I, as I pressed him down. "Come, look up; don't you see who it is?"

He was quiet in an instant; and then looking up into my face, he said,

"Yes, it's Hardy, I know; but what has happened to us,—anything?"

But without pausing to give me time to answer, he closed his eyes and went on,—

"O, I've had an awful dream! I thought an iceberg was falling on the ship. I saw it coming, and sprang away! As it fell, the ship went down, and I went down with it,—down, down, down; then I came up, clinging to some pieces of the wreck. Another man was with me; we were drifted with the waves to the land. I kept above the water until I saw somebody running towards me. When he had nearly reached me, I was drowned. O, it was an awful dream!—Did you come to call me, Hardy?"—and he opened wide his eyes. "Is it four bells? Did you come to call me?"

"No, no, I haven't come to call you, it isn't four bells yet." I answered, scarcely knowing what I said; "sleep on, Dean."

"I'm glad you didn't come to call me, Hardy. I want to sleep. The dream haunts me. I dreamed that I was fast to something that hurt me, when I tried to get away, It was an awful dream,—awful, awful, awful!"—and his voice died away into the faintest whisper, and then it ceased entirely.

"Sleep, sleep on, poor Dean!" murmured I; and I prayed with all my heart that his reason might not be gone when he awoke.

"What could I do?" "What should I do?" were the questions which shortly afterwards crossed my mind respecting the Dean. There was, however, one very obvious answer.—"Let him alone"; so I rose up from his side, and saw, as I did so, that he was now sleeping soundly,—a genuine quiet sleep. He had become quite warm; and after some minutes'

watching, it appeared to me very likely that he would, after a while, wake up all right,—a conclusion which made me very happy; that is, as happy as one circumstanced as I was could be.

Once more I began to consider my situation. It seemed to me that I had grown many years older in these few hours, and I commenced reasoning with myself. Instead of sitting down on the rock, and beginning to cry, as I had done before, I sat down to reflect. And this is the substance of my reflection:—

"1st." I said, "while there is life there is hope"; and,

"2nd. So long as the land remains unexplored, I have a right to believe that it is inhabited"; and,

"3rd. Being inhabited, there is a good chance of our being saved; for even the worst of savages cannot refuse two such helpless creatures food and clothing." And having thus reflected, I arrived at these conclusions respecting what I should do; namely,—

"1st. I will go at once in search of these inhabitants, and when I find them, I will beg them to come and help me with a sick companion.

"2nd. On my way I will make my dinner off raw eggs, of which there are so many hereabout, for I am so frightfully hungry that I can no longer resist the repulsive food.

"3rd. I will also hunt on my way for some water, as I am so thirsty that I scarcely know what to do.

"4th. For the rest I will trust to Providence."

Having thus resolved, I immediately set out, and in a very few minutes I had eaten a whole dozen raw eggs,—and that too, without any compunctions at all. Then, as I walked on a little farther, I discovered that there were a multitude of small streams dashing over the rocks, the water being quite pure and clear,—coming from great snow-banks on the hill-tops, which were melting away before the sun.

Being thus refreshed with meat and drink, it occurred to me

to climb up to an elevation, and see what more I could discover. The ice was very thick and closely packed together all along the shore; but beyond where the wreck had happened the sea was very open, only a few straggling bits of field-ice mixed up with a great many icebergs,—indeed, the icebergs were too thick to be counted. I thought I saw a boat turned upside down; but it was so far away that I could not make out distinctly what it was. It was clear enough to me that nobody had been saved from the wreck except the Dean and myself.

As I looked around, it appeared very evident to me that the land on which I stood was an island. Indeed, it seemed to be one of a group; for a large island stood before me, apparently only a few miles distant; and a few miles farther on, there was a long stretch of land, covered with snow, which appeared to be main-land. In that direction the ice was all solid, while in the other direction the sea was quite open.

After hallooing several times, without any other result than to startle a great number of birds, as I had done before, I set out again, briskly jumping from rock to rock, the birds all the while springing up before me and fluttering away in great flocks. There seemed to be no end to them.

As I went along, I soon found that I was turning rapidly to the left, and that I was not only on an island, but on a very small one. I could not have been more than two hours in going all the way round it, although I had to clamber most of the way over very stony places, stopping frequently to shout at the top of my voice, with the hope of being heard by some human beings; but not a soul was there to answer me, nor could I discover the least sign of anybody ever having been there.

This failure greatly discouraged me, but still I was not so much cast down as I might have been. Perhaps it was because I had eaten so many eggs, and was no longer

hungry; for, when one's stomach gets empty, the courage has pretty much all gone out of him.

Besides this I had made some discoveries which seemed in some way to forebode good, though I could not exactly say why. I found the birds thicker and thicker as I proceeded; in fact, they were in some places so thick that I could hardly walk without treading on their eggs. I also saw several foxes, some of which were white and others were dark gray. As I walked on, they scampered away over the stones ahead of me, and then perched themselves on a tall rock near by, apparently very much astonished to see me.

They seemed to look upon me as an intruder, and appeared as if they would ask, "What business have you coming here?" They had little idea how glad I should have been to be almost anywhere else,—on the farm from which I had run away, for instance,—and leave them in undisputed possession of their miserable island.

They seemed to be very sleek and well-contented foxes, for they were gorging themselves with raw eggs, just as I had been doing, and they were evidently the terror of the birds. I saw one who had managed in some way to capture a duck nearly as large as himself, and was bouncing up the hill—to his den, no doubt—with the poor thing's neck in his mouth and its body across his shoulder.

Then too, I discovered from the east side of the island, where the ice was solid, a large number of seals lying in the sun, as if asleep on the ice; and when I came round on the west side, where the sea was open, great shoals of walruses, with their long tusks and ugly heads, were sporting about in the water as if at play, and an equally large number of the narwhal, with there long horns were also playing their. Only that they are larger, and have these hideous-looking tusks, walruses are much like seals.

The narwhal is a small species of whale, being about twenty

feet long, and spotted something like an iron-gray horse. Its great peculiarity is the horn, which grows, like that of a sword fish, straight out of the nose, and is nearly half as long as the body.

Like all the other sea mammalia, it must come up to the surface of the water to breathe; and its breathing is done through a hole in the top of the head, like any other whale's. The breathing of a whale is called 'spouting,' or 'blowing,'—that is, when he breaths out, it is so called, and when he does this, he makes the water fly up into the air.

This act of breathing by the largest whales can be seen several miles; that is, I should say, the spray thrown up by their breath. The common expression of the whale-fishers, "There she blows!" is a very good one; for sometimes when the whale is very large, the spray which they throw up looks like a small waterspout in the sea.

Besides the narwhal, I saw another kind of whale, even smaller still. This is called the white whale, though it is not exactly white, but a sort of cream-colour. They have no horns, however, like the narwhal; and they skim along through the water in great numbers, and very close together, and when they come to the surface they breathe so quickly that the noise they make is like a sharp hiss.

Considering the numbers of these animals,—the seals and walruses and narwhals and white whales,—I was not surprised, when I went close down to the beach, to find a quantity of their bones there, evidently of animals that had died in the sea and been washed ashore.

Indeed, as I went along a little farther, and had reached nearly to the place where I had left the Dean, I found the whole carcass of a narwhal lying among the rocks, where it had been thrown by the waves, and very near it I discovered also the body of a dead seal. About these there were several foxes, which went scampering away as soon as they saw me.

They had evidently come there to get their dinner; for they had torn a great hole in the side of the dead narwhal, and two of them had begun on the seal.

I thought if I could get some of the skins of these pretty foxes, they would be nice things to wrap the Dean's hands and feet in, so I began flinging stones at them as hard as I could, but the cunning beasts dodged every one of them, and running away up the hillside, chattered in such a lively manner that it seemed as if they were laughing at me, which provoked me so much that I went on, vowing to get the better of them in one way or another. All this time I had left the poor Dean by himself, and I was very anxious to get back to him.

On the island on which I had been cast away, there were no trees at all; and indeed, there were scarcely any signs of vegetation whatever. On the south side, where we landed after the wreck, the hillside was covered for a short distance with thick short grass, and above this green slope there were great tall cliffs; but all the rest of the way round the island I saw scarcely anything but rough rocks, very sharp and difficult to walk over.

In some places, howe.er, where the streams of melted snow had spread out in the level places, patches of moss had grown, making a sort of marsh. Here I discovered so.e flowers in full bloom, and among them were the buttercup and dandelion, just like what we find in our meadows only not a quarter so large; but my head was too much filled with more serious thoughts at that time to care about flowers.

Nothing, however, can be imagined so dreary as this island was. Indeed, nothing could be worse except the prospect of living on it all alone, without any shelter, or fire, or proper clothing, and without any apparent chance of ever escaping from it.

I found, however, a sort of apology for a tree growing among the moss beds. I have learned since that it is called the

'dwarf willow.' The stem of the tree, if such it might be called, was not larger than my little finger; and its branches, which lay flat on the ground, were in no case more than a foot long.

Besides these willows, I discovered also, growing about the rocks, a trailing plant, with very small stem, and thick dry leaves. It had a pretty little purple blossom on it, and was the only thing I saw that looked as if it would burn, and I wished hard enough that I had some way of proving whether it would burn or not. However, since I had discovered so many other things on this my first journey round the island, I was not without hope that I should light upon some way of starting a fire.

So I named the plant at once 'the fire plant;' but I have since been told that its right name is 'Andromeda.' It is a sort of heather, like the Scotch heather, only it is as much smaller than the Scotch heather as the dwarf willow is smaller than the tall willow-tree that grows by our streams.

Although I had not, as I have said, discovered any natives living on the island, yet I came back from my journey feeling less disappointed than would have been supposed. No doubt my anxiety to see how the Dean was, so occupied my mind that I did not dwell so much upon my own unhappy condition, as I otherwise should have done. In truth, I think the Dean must have saved me from despair and death; for, if I had not felt obliged to exert myself in his behalf, I must have sunk under the heavy load of my own misfortunes.

When I came back to the Dean, I found the poor boy was still sleeping soundly—a sort of dead, heavy sleep. At first I thought of rousing him; but then again, since I found he was quite warm, I decided that the best thing was not to disturb him. Some colour had come into his face; indeed, there was quite a flush there, and he seemed to be a little feverish. The only thing I now feared was that his reason might have left

him; and this thought filled me with a kind of dread of seeing him rouse up, just as every one, when he fears some great calamity, tries to postpone the realization of it as long as possible.

So I suffered him to remain sleeping, and satisfied myself with watching his now somewhat heavy breathing for a little while, when, beginning to grow chilly—for the sun had by this time gone behind the island, thus leaving us in the shadow of the tall cliffs—I began to move about again. I set to work collecting more of the eider-down, so that when I should be freed from my anxiety about the Dean, I might roll myself up under this warm covering and get some sleep; for although my mind was much excited, yet I was growing sleepy, besides being chilly. I also collected a number of eggs, and ate some more of them; and using several of the shells for cups, I brought some water setting the cups up carefully in the grass, knowing that when the Dean opened his eyes he must needs be thirsty as well as hungry.

All this being done, I fell to reflecting again; and as was most natural, my thoughts first ran upon what I should do to make a fire. I had found—or at least I thought I had found—something that would burn; but what should I do for the first spark? True, with my jack-knife for a steel, and a flint-stone, of which there were plenty, I could strike a spark without any difficulty; but what was there to strike it into so that it would catch and make a blaze?

I knew that in some countries people made a blaze by rubbing two pieces of dry wood together; but this I could not do as I had not a particle of wood. In other countries, I knew, they have punk, into which they strike a spark, and the spark will not go out until the punk is all burned up, so that they have only to blow it on some inflammable substance until a blaze comes; but where was I to get the punk from?

I had also heard that fire had been made with lenses of

glass, which, being held up to the sun concentrate the rays and make a great heat, sufficient to set wood and like combustible things on fire; but I had no lens.

Thus the night wore on. I say *night*, but there was really no night at all, the sun being above the horizon all the time; and the only difference now in the different periods of the day was, that when the sun was in the south it shone upon us, while when it was at the north we were under the shadow of the cliffs. The sun in the Arctic regions, circles round, during the summer, only a little way above the horizon, never rising overhead, as it does at home, but being always quite low down; and hence it never gives a very strong heat, although the air is sometimes warm enough to be very comfortable.

I was glad when the shadow of the cliff had passed over me, and the sun was once more in view. I now grew quite warm, though my great fatigue did not vanish; but I was so anxious about the Dean that I would not sleep, and kept myself awake by moving about all the time, staying always near him.

At length, soon after the sun appeared, the boy began to show some restlessness; and as I approached him, I found that his eyes were wide open. He raised himself a little on one arm, and turned towards me as I came up to him, and looked straight at me, so calmly and intelligently, that I saw at once he had come to his senses entirely; and so rejoiced was I, that without thinking at all what I was doing, I fell down beside him, and clasped him in my arms, and cried out, "O Dean, Dean!" over and over a great many times.

"Why, Hardy," said he, in a very feeble voice, "where are we? What's the matter? What has happened to us?"

Seeing that it was useless for me to attempt to evade the question, I told him all the circumstances of the shipwreck, and how I had carried him there, and what I had been doing. I thought at first this would disturb him, but it

did not seem to in the least. After I had finished, he simply said:

"I thought it was all a dream. It comes back to me now. I remember a frightful crash, of being in the water on the wreck, of seeing some one approaching me, of being held down first by a drowning man and then by a rope, of trying to free myself, and then I must have swooned, for I remember nothing more. I have now a vague remembrance of some one talking to me about a dream I had, but nothing distinct."

"But," said I, "Dean, don't talk any more about it just now, it will fatigue you; tell me how you feel."

"No," answered he, "it does not fatigue me to talk, and I want to collect myself. Things are getting clearer to me. My memory returns to me gradually. I see the terrified crew. It was but an instant. I heard the crash. The great body of the ice fell right amidships—right upon the galley. Poor cook! he must have been killed instantly. Some of the crew jumped overboard; I tried to, but got no farther than the bulwarks and then was in the water; I don't know how I got there.

"When I came up there was a man under me, and I was tangled among some rigging, but was lifted up out of the water on some large mass of wreck. The man I told you of tried to get up too; but his feet were caught, and I saw him drowning. I saw another man holding on to the wreck, but a piece of ice struck him, and he must have fallen off immediately."

"Dean, Dean!" said I, "do stop! you are feverish; quiet yourself, and we'll talk of these things by and by;"—and the boy fell back quite exhausted. His skin was very hot and his face flushed.

"O my head, my head;" exclaimed he; "it pains me dreadfully! Am I hurt?" and he put his hand to the side of his head where he had been struck, and finding that he was wounded, said:

"I remember it now perfectly. A heavy wave came, and was tossing a piece of timber over me, and I tried to avoid being struck by it. After that I remember nothing. It must have struck me. I'm not much hurt,—am I?"

"No, Dean," I answered, "not much hurt, only a little bruised."

"Have you any water, Hardy?" asked he, "I am so thirsty!"

It was fortunate that I had brought some in the egg-shells, and in a moment I had given him a drink. It did me good, as I handed him the water, to see him smile, and ask where I got such odd cups from.

"Thanks, Thanks!" said he; "I'm better now." Then after a moment's pause he added, "I want to get up and see where we are. I'm very weak; won't you help me?"

But I told him that I would not do it now; for the present he must lie quiet.

"Then raise me up and let me look about."

So I raised him up, and he took first a look at the strange pile of eider-down that was upon him, and then at the ice-covered sea, but he spoke not a word. Then he lay down, and after a short time said calmly:

"I see it all now. Hard,—isn't it? But we must do the best we can. I feel that I'll soon be well, and will not be a trouble to you long. Do you know that until this moment I could hardly get it out of my head that I had been dreaming? We must trust in Heaven, Hardy, and do the best we can."

Being now fully satisfied as to the complete recovery of the Dean, I gave myself no further concern about watching him; but at once, after he had in his quiet way asked me if I was not very tired and sleepy, buried myself up in the heap of eider-down close behind him, and was soon deeply buried in a sound sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS—THE DUCK TRAP.

SLEPT full twelve hours without once waking up. When I opened my eyes again, we were in the shadow of the cliffs once more; that is, the sun had gone round to the north again. The Dean was already wide awake.

When I asked him how he was, he said he felt much better, only his head still pained him greatly, and he was very thirsty and hungry.

I got up immediately and assisted the Dean to rise. He was a little dizzy at first, but after sitting down for a few minutes on a rock he recovered himself. Then I brought him some water in an egg-shell to drink, and then gave him a raw egg, which he swallowed as if it had been the daintiest morsel in the world. "It's lucky, isn't it," said he, "that there are so many eggs about." After a moment I observed that he was laughing, which very much surprised me, as that was about the last thing that would have entered into my head to do. "Do you know," he inquired, "what a very ridiculous figure we are cutting? Look, we are covered all over with feathers; I have heard of people being tarred and feathered, but never heard of anything like this. Let's pick each other."

Sure enough we were literally covered with the down in which we had been sleeping; and when I saw what a jest the poor Dean, with his sore, dizzy head, made of the plight we were in, I forgot all my own troubles and joined in the fun which he was inclined to make of it. So we fell to work

picking each other in good earnest, and were soon as clean of feathers as any well-plucked geese.

By this time the Dean's clothes had become quite dry; so each dressed himself in the clothes that belonged to him, and then started over to the nearest brook, where we bathed our hands and faces, drying them on an old bandanna handkerchief, which I was lucky enough to have in my pocket. I had to support the Dean a little as we went along, for he was still very weak; but notwithstanding this his spirits were excellent, and when he saw for the first time the ducks fly up, he said, "What a great pair of fools they must take us for, —coming into such a place as this."

After we had refreshed ourselves at the brook and eaten some more eggs, we very naturally began to talk. I related to the Dean more particularly than I had done before the events of the shipwreck, and our escape, and what I had discovered on the island, and then made some allusion to the prospect ahead of us. To my great surprise the Dean was, apparently, not in the least cast down about it. In truth, he took it much more resignedly and had a more hopeful eye to the future than I had. "If," said he, "it is God's will that we shall live, He will furnish us the means; if not, we can but die. I wouldn't mind it half so much, if my poor mother only knew what had become of me."

This reflection seemed to sadden him for a moment, and I thought I saw a tear in his eye; but he brightened up instantly as a great flock of ducks went whizzing overhead. "Well," exclaimed he, "there seems to be no lack of something to eat here any way, and we ought to manage to catch food somehow, and live until a ship comes along and takes us off."

The Dean took such a cheerful view of the future that we were soon chatting in a very lively way about everything that concerned our escape, and the fate of our unfortunate ship-

mates; and here I must have expatiated very largely upon the satisfaction which I took in rescuing the Dean, for the little fellow said: "Well, I suppose I ought to thank you very much for saving me; but the truth is, all the agony of death being over with me when you pulled me out, the chief benefit falls on you, as you seem so much rejoiced about it; but I'll be grateful at all events, and show it by not troubling you any more, and by helping you all I can. See, I'm almost well. I feel better and better every minute,—only I'm sore here on the head where I got the crack."

To tell the truth, in thinking of other things I had neglected, or rather forgotten, the Dean's wounded head; so now, my attention being called to it, I examined it very carefully, and found that it was nothing more than a bad bruise, with a cut near the centre of it about half an inch long. Having washed it carefully, I bound my bandanna handkerchief round it, and we once more came back to consider what we should do.

Of course, the first thing we thought of and talked about was how we should set about making a fire; next in importance to this was that we should have a place to shelter us. So far as concerned our food and drink, our immediate necessities were provided for, as we had the little rivulet close at hand and any quantity of eggs to be had for the gathering, and we set about gathering a number of them at once; for in a few days we thought it very likely that most of them would have little ducks in them, as indeed many of them had already.

Another thing we settled upon was, that we would never both go to sleep at the same time, nor quit our present side of the island together; but one of us would be always on the look-out for a ship, as we both thought it possible that, since our ship had come that way, others would be very likely to do the same, though neither of us had the remotest idea in the

world as to where we were, any more than that we were on an island somewhere in the Arctic seas.

But the fire which we wanted so much to warm ourselves and cook our food,—what should we do for that?

Here was the great question; and fire, fire, fire, was the one leading idea running through both our heads;—we thought of fire when we were gathering eggs, we talked of fire when, later in the day we sat upon the rocks resting ourselves, and we dreamed of fire when we fell asleep again,—not this time, however, under the eider-down where we had slept before, but on the green grass of the hillside in the warm sunshine, under my overcoat, for we had turned night into day, and were determined to sleep when the sun was shining on us at the south, and do what work we had to do when we were in the shade.

Every method that either of us had ever heard of for making a fire was carefully discussed; but there was nothing that appeared to suit our case.

I found a hard flint, and by striking it on the back of my knife-blade I saw there was no difficulty in getting any number of sparks, but we had nothing that would catch the sparks when struck; so that we did not seem to be any better off than we were before; and as I have stated already, we fell asleep again, each in his turn,—"watch and watch" as the Dean playfully called it, and as they have it on shipboard,—without having arrived at any other result than that of being a little discouraged.

When we had been again refreshed with sleep, we determined to make a still further exploration of the island; so after once more eating our fill of raw eggs, we set out. The Dean, being still weak and his head still paining him very much from the hurt, remained on the look-out. He could, however, walk up and down for a few hundred yards without losing sight of that part of the sea from which quarter alone were we likely to discover a ship.

This brought him up to where I had discovered the dead seal and narwhal lying on the beach, when on my first journey round the island. I had told him about them, as indeed I had of everything I had seen, and he was curious to see if he could not catch a fox; but his fortune in that particular was not better than mine.

For myself, I had a very profitable journey, as I found a place among the rocks which might, with a little labour in fixing it up, give us shelter. I was searching for a cave, but nothing of the sort could I come across; but at the head of a little valley, very near to where I left the Dean, I discovered a place that would, in some measure at least, answer the purpose of sheltering us. Its situation gave it the still further advantage, that we commanded a perfect view of the sea from the front of it.

I have said that it was not exactly a cave, but rather an artificial tent as it were of solid rocks. At the foot of a very steep slope of rough rocks there were several large masses piled together, evidently having one day slid down from the cliffs above, and afterwards smaller rocks, being broken off, had piled up behind them. Two of these large rocks had come together in such a manner as to leave an open space between them. I should say this space was ten or twelve feet across at the bottom, and rising up about ten feet high joined at the top like the roof of a house.

The rocks were pressed against them behind, so as completely to close the outlet in that direction; and in front the entrance was half closed by another large rock, which was leaning diagonally across the opening. I climbed into this place, and was convinced that, if we had strength to close up the front entrance with a wall, we should have a complete protection from the weather. But then, when I reflected how—if we did seek shelter there—we should keep ourselves warm. I had great misgivings; for there came uppermost

the great question of all questions, "What were we to do for a fire?"

Although this place was not a cave, yet I spoke to the Dean about it as such, and by that name we came to know it; so I will now use the term, inappropriate though it be. I also told the Dean about some other birds that I had discovered in great numbers. They were very small and seemed to have their nests among the rocks all along the north side of the island, where they were swarming on the hillside, and flying overhead in even larger flocks than the ducks. I knew they were called little auks, from descriptions the sailors had given me of them.

"But look here what I've got," exclaimed the Dean, as soon as I came up with him. "See this big duck!"

The little fellow had actually caught a duck, and in a most ingenious manner. Seeing the ducks fly off their nests, the happy idea struck him, that if he could only contrive a trap, or device fall, he might catch them when they came back. So he selected a nest favourable for his design, and piled up some stones about it, making a solid wall on one side of it; then he put a thin narrow stone on the other side, and on this he supported still another stone that was very heavy. Then he took from his pocket a piece of twine which he was fortunate enough to have about him, and tied one end of it to the thin narrow stone, and holding on to the other end, hid himself behind some rocks close by.

When the duck came back to her nest, he jerked the thin narrow stone away by a strong pull on the twine, and down came the big heavy stone upon her back. "You should have heard the old thing quacking" said he, evidently forgetting everything else but the sport of catching the bird: "but I soon gave her neck a twist, and here we are ready for dinner, if we could only find a way to cook it. Have you discovered any way to make a fire yet?"

A NOVEL CONTRIVANCE.—THE DUCK TRAP. p. 58.

I had to confess that on the subject of fire I was yet as ignorant as ever.

"Do you know," continued he, "that I have got a brilliant idea?"

"What's that?" said I.

"Why," replied he, "you told me something about people making fire with a lens made of glass. Now, as I was down on the beach and looked at the ice there, I thought, why not make a lens out of ice—it is as clear as glass?"

"But," said I, "what will you set on fire with it?"

"In the first place," he answered, "the pockets of my coat are made of some sort of cotton stuff, and if we could only set fire to that, couldn't we blow a blaze into the fire plant as you call it. See, I've gathered a heap of it." And sure enough he had, for there was a pile nearly as high as his head, looking like a heap of dry and green leaves.

The idea did not seem to me to be worth much, but still, as it was the only one that had been suggested by either of us, it was at least worthy of trial; so we went down to the beach, and finding a lump of ice almost as big as my two fists, we began chipping it with my knife into the shape we wanted it, and then we ground it off with a stone, and then rubbed it over with our warm hands until we had worn it down perfectly smooth, and into the shape of a lens.

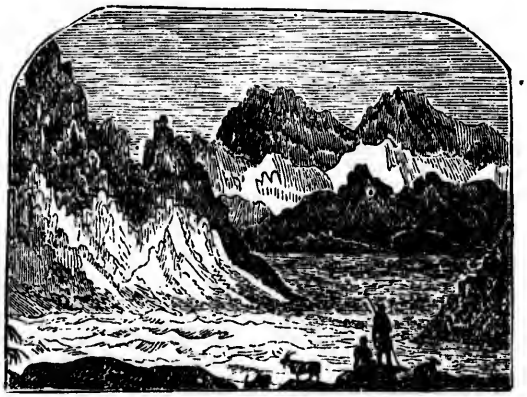
This done, we held it up to the sun, relieving each other as our hands grew cold; but without any success whatever. We tried for a long time, and with much patience, until the ice became so much melted, that we could do nothing more with it, when we threw it away and the experiment was abandoned as hopeless.

Our disappointment at this failure was in proportion to our hopes. The Dean felt it most, for he was at the very outset perfectly confident of success.

Neither of us, however, wished to own how much we felt the

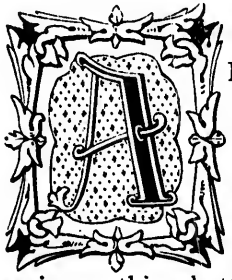
failure, so we spoke very little more together, but made almost in silence another meal off the raw eggs; and being now quite worn out and weary with the labours and anxieties of the day, we passed the next twelve hours in watching and sleeping alternately in the bright sunshine, lying as before on the green grass, covered with the overcoat. We did not even dare hope for better fortune on the morrow.

We had, however, made up our minds to struggle in the best manner we could against the difficulties which surrounded us, and mutually to sustain each other in the hard battle before us. Whether we should live or die was known but to God alone, and to his gracious protection we once more commended ourselves; the Dean repeating and teaching me a prayer which he had learned, as was very evident, from a pious and careful mother, who had brought him up in the fear of God, and taught him, at a very early age, to have faith in His unceasing watchfulness.



CHAPTER VII.

Building A Cave—A Fire at Last.



FTER our refreshing sleep we were once more upon our feet again, both very determined to do something, but neither of us knowing exactly what it should be.

So we set off to inspect the cave. The Dean was much pleased with it; and, seeing nothing better to do, we both went to work at once to build up a wall in front of it, feeling very sad and sorrowful as we worked away in silence.

But in spite of our gloomy thoughts we made good progress, and had soon a solid foundation laid; but as we went on, it was plain enough to see that our wall was likely to be of very little account, as we had no means of filling up the cracks between the stones. This set me once more thinking.

Down below us in the valley there was plenty of moss, or rather turf; but when we tried to pull it up with our hands, we discovered that we could do nothing with it, and we wished for something to dig with. Then I remembered the bones I had seen on the beach; so I told the Dean about them, and we both agreed that they might be of use to us. The thing which I first thought of, was the dead narwhal with the long horn; and I imagined that, if we could only get that out of his head, we should have all we wanted.

When the Dean and I went down to the narwhal, we found that our task would be even greater than we had supposed;

for the horn was so firmly embedded in the skull and flesh that it promised to be a very serious business to get it out.

First we had to cut away the flesh and fat from the thick nose, until we exposed the skull, and then we had to break the horn loose by dropping heavy stones upon the socket. At length we were successful. But we had consumed almost the whole day, and we found ourselves very much fatigued; so we sat down upon the green grass, and rested and talked for a while, and then went back to work upon the wall again.

The horn was very heavy, but it answered our purpose; and we were soon digging up the moss with it, which we carried up to complete the wall.

This moss was very soft, being full of water; and it fitted with the stones as nicely as any mason's mortar, so that we had no more trouble in making the wall perfectly tight and solid. Nor did we have any trouble in building up a little fireplace and chimney along with it. We had some discussion as to what use there was in taking all this pains, since we had no fire to put in our fireplace.

But then, if we should in the end find that we could make a fire, we saw that we should have to tear the wall down again if we did not build the fireplace and chimney up at once; therefore, it was clearly better to take a little extra trouble now and save it possibly in the end.

We laboured very hard, and were well satisfied with the progress we had made, when we found it necessary to knock off and eat some more raw eggs, and sleep away our fatigue again. By this time we had grown tired enough of these raw eggs, and in truth, were very sick of them. But we had nothing else to eat unless we devoured the duck which the Dean had caught; and this we could never, as we thought, bring ourselves to do, uncooked as it was.

The Dean had by this time grown pretty strong again, but still he was so comparatively weak that I should not have

allowed him to work had he not insisted on it; so when his turn came to go to sleep, I was glad to be at work by myself, and I much surprised the Dean, when he got up again, with what I had accomplished.

"Do you know what I was thinking of?" said the Dean, as we paused to rest, after we had again worked some time together.

"What's that?" said I; "for I dare say it's something clever, as you have a wise head on your young shoulders."

"Thank you," said the Dean; "being cast away in the cold don't stop us from paying compliments it appears; but I was thinking that we ought to save all the blubber of that old narwhal down there; we shall want the oil by and by."

"What for?" said I.

"To burn," he said.

"Nonsense," said I; "how are you going to burn it?"

"That's just what we are going to find out," said the Dean; "we'll get a fire somehow, of that I'm sure."

"I should like to know how," said I. "Perhaps you have another bright idea."

"To be sure I have," answered the Dean.

"What is it this time?" said I.

"Well, I don't know," said he, "as there's much in it, but I'm going to try the lens again."

"That's of no use," I said.

"I'm not so sure," said he; "you know we made a great deal of heat with our lens the other time, so much that it almost burned the hand. I think the trouble was my old pocket had been wet with salt water, and therefore would not burn; now I think I've found out something that is better."

"What's that?" said I.

"Why, some cotton stuff," said he, "that I found blowing about among the stones."

"Cotton!" I exclaimed in great surprise, "there's no cotton growing here."

"Well, it looks like cotton for all that," answered the Dean, "and I'm sure it will burn. Let me get some of it, and I'll try it." So he ran off, and soon came back again with a little roll of pure white stuff that looked very much like cotton only finer in its texture.

I remembered it perfectly, for I had seen it everywhere I went, about the little willow-bushes; and I had even plucked a willow-blossom to find it covered all over with this tender cotton-like material, which I blew from it with my breath. But the idea had never once come into my head that it would be of any use.

"What are you going to do with this?" said I to the Dean, when he had showed it to me.

"Why," said he with much confidence, "I'm going to make another lens of ice, and set fire to it."

To set fire to it was something easier said than done, yet the idea seemed to take root in my mind; and how or why it ever came about I can no more tell than I can fly, but somehow or other, it matters not what was the impulse or idea or expectation I had in view, without saying a single word, I pulled out my knife and the bit of flint which I had found and carefully preserved the day before, and then struck one upon the other (as if it were quite mechanical) above the Dean's little bit of cotton stuff which lay upon the grass.

A great shower of sparks was thrown off with each fresh stroke, and these told of the fineness of the steel and the hardness of the flint. I went on pounding and pounding away, as if resolved on something. And if I was resolved my resolution was rewarded; for at length the Dean threw up his hands so suddenly as if a shot had struck him in the heart, and he shouted out, "A spark, a spark!"

The Dean's little bit of cotton stuff had taken fire, and the daintiest little streak of smoke was curling upwards from it.

Without pausing an instant, quick as the hawk to swoop down upon its prey, quick as the lightning-flash, quick as thought itself, I threw away my knife and flint, and caught up the spark. The Dean drew instantly from his pocket the bit of cotton cloth which we had tried to light with the lens the day before, and thrust it in my hand. I put the spark upon it, and then blew.

The first breath drove all the Dean's light cotton stuff away, and the spark was gone.

But we were now no longer where we were before. The spark had been made once, and it could be made again; and our hearts were bounding with delight. "Hurrah! hurrah!" shrieked the Dean, "we're all right now!"

But our troubles about the fire were far from ended. We had no difficulty in getting another spark to catch in another piece of this strange sort of tinder, of which we found great plenty near at hand. But it would not blaze. With the slightest breath it vanished almost as a flash of powder; and it was a long, long time before we hit upon anything that would do us any further good.

We tried all the pieces of cotton cloth that we had about our clothes, picking it into shreds, and putting the lighted tinder among these shreds, tried to make them blaze. But no blaze could we get. Once only did we raise a little flash, but it was gone in a single instant. We tried the dry leaves of the fire-plant (*Andromeda*), the dry grass,—everything indeed that we could think of, which was within our reach,—but still no blaze, no blaze.

With sore fingers and wearied patience, and with wits as well as bodies quite exhausted, we fell once more asleep, with mingling thoughts of triumph and disappointment, and with

prayerful hopes of what the morrow might bring forth running through our minds.

When the morrow came, a chance seemed to open for us; and we resolved to go about our work with caution, determined since we had gone thus far, that we would in the end succeed. I don't know whether it was the Dean or I that first suggested it, but we made up our minds that the *moss* which we had turned up with the narwhal horn, when we were building at the hut, some of which had dried, would burn.

We picked to pieces some of the long fibres of this moss, and laid upon them, loosely, some fragments of the tinder. A spark was struck as before, and upon blowing this a bright blaze flashed up, and then died out again as quickly as it had come.

"I have it now!" shouted the Dean, "we're sure of it next time!" and without saying another word he darted off towards the beach. When he came back again, he held in one hand a chunk of blubber from the narwhal, out of which we squeezed some drops of oil, and soaked in them some fibres of the moss.

Another piece of tinder and another piece of moss were placed as they had been before; another spark was struck, another blaze was blown, and when this came, the Dean was holding in it his fibres of oil-soaked moss, and the cunning little fellow soon had a lighted torch. "Hurrah, hurrah!" he might well shout now, for the thing was done. "Praised be Heaven! we have got a fire at last!"

It was but the work of a moment to add fresh moss to the flaming torch, which was scarcely larger than a match, and then a few more drops of oil were added, and so on, oil and moss, and moss and oil, little by little, gently, gently all the time, until we had secured at length a good and solid flame.

Then we laid the burning moss upon a flat stone, and then, as before, moss and oil, and oil and moss, were added, each

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A FIRE AT LAST!

time in larger and larger quantities,—no longer gently, gently, but with a careless hand, and in less perhaps than half an hour, we had a great, smoking, fluttering blaze; and then we threw on some of the driest leaves and twigs of the Andromeda, and some dead willow-stems and dry grass, after which we had a roaring, sputtering, red-hot fire.

And how we danced, and skipped, and shouted round the fire, like happy children round some new-found toy.

The next thing was, of course, to turn the fire to some account.

On two sides of the blaze we placed large square stones, and over these we put another that was thin and flat; and then, in a twinkling of an eye, we skinned the duck which the Dean had caught, and cut the rich flesh into little pieces, and placed them on the flat stone above the blaze; and then to keep the smoke and ashes from the cooking food, we placed another light thin stone upon the flesh, and then we watched and waited for the coming meal.

To help the fire along, and make it burn more quickly, we threw into it some little chunks of blubber, and then in a little while, the duck was cooked.

O what a royal meal we had!—we half-famished, shipwrecked boys,—the first hot food we had tasted during all these long, weary, dreary days; and, not satisfied with the duck, we next broiled some eggs upon the heated stone, and ate and ate away until we were as full as we could hold.

All this had consumed many hours, and all the time we had been so much excited that we found ourselves quite exhausted when the meal was over, and we could do no more work that day; so we laid down again upon the grass, to talk and rest and sleep.

When we came to sleep, however, we had now another motive beside watching for a ship, to make us sleep one only at a time; for we must keep this fire going, which we had

got with so much trouble. This was easily done, since we only had to add, from time to time, some branches of the Andromeda, and these kept up a smouldering fire.

Before either of us went to sleep, we had seen that the first thing now was to catch more ducks; and this we could either of us do, besides watching the sea for ships, and the fire that it did not go out.

Accordingly, as soon as the Dean had fallen asleep, I went about this work, fully resolved upon a plan as to how I should proceed. The knowledge of seals which I had acquired when in the "Blackbird" had perhaps something to do with it.

I knew from the thickness of the seal's skin, that lines could be made out of it very well; and remembering the dead seal lying down on the beach, where it had been thrown up out of the sea by the waves; and in addition, several other seals, or rather I should say parts of them, for most of them had been eaten up by the foxes or had gone to pieces by decay; I at once went down to the seal that I had first discovered, and taking out my knife I made a cut round his neck, close behind the ears.

It was a very large seal, and I found it no easy matter to lift him up so that I could get my knife all the way round him; but I managed to do it notwithstanding, and made not only one cut but a great many of them,—or rather I should say one continuous cut round and round the body of the animal; so you will easily understand, that in this way, by keeping my knife about the eighth of an inch from where it had gone before when it passed round, I obtained at last a very long string, or rather one might say a thong, very strong and pliable. It must have been at least a hundred feet in length when I stopped cutting it, and I divided it into three parts.

Having done this I next went back to where the ducks were thickest, when of course, the birds flew off their nests. Then I fixed four traps, just as the Dean had done, tying to three of

them the sealskin strings which I had made, and to the fourth I tied the Dean's bit of twine; then I hid myself among the rocks, and waited for the birds to come back.

I had not long to wait, for in a few minutes two of them returned, and, without appearing to mind at all the trap that I had set for them, crawled upon their nests so quickly that it seemed as if they were afraid their eggs would grow cold. Seeing a third one coming, I waited for that too, and the fourth one came soon afterwards; and indeed by this time, nearly all the birds that had their nests near by had returned to them.

As soon as all was quiet I pulled my strings one after another as quickly as I could, and three of the birds were caught; but the last one was too quick for me, as the noise made by the others startled her, and the heavy stone only struck her tail as she went squalling and fluttering away, frightening off all the other ducks that were anywhere near. I was not long, as you may be sure, in securing my three prizes; and I carried them at once up to the fire near which the Dean was lying under my overcoat in the sun.

Soon after this the Dean awoke, and when he saw what I had done, seemed to be much amused, as he declared that I had stolen his patent; but when he saw what kind of a line I had made, he was filled with admiration, saying, "Well, who would ever have thought of that? I'm sure I never should."

Being now very tired, I lay down while the Dean took his 'turn;' and by the time my eyes were opened again he had caught seven birds, so that we had now in all ten,—enough probably to last us as many days. This of course, gave us a great deal of satisfaction, especially as we soon had one of them nicely cooked, and made a good breakfast off it.

We had now been several days on the island, and felt that we had done pretty well already towards providing for ourselves. The Dean—as I ought to have mentioned before

—had grown in strength very rapidly during the last forty-eight hours; and except that his head was still sore from the cut and bruise, he was quite well.

We felt now, that whatever else might happen to us, we should not for a certain time want for food, as besides the eggs, we could have as many ducks as we pleased to catch. We had succeeded in making a fire, and had abundant means to keep it burning.

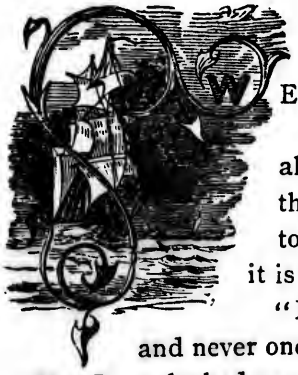
There were only two things that seriously troubled us. One was our lack of shelter, if a storm should come; and the other, our lack of proper clothing if the weather should grow cold.

But having succeeded so well thus far, we were very hopeful for the future. Heaven had kindly favoured us. The temperature had been very mild all the time. There had been no wind, and scarcely a cloud to obscure the sky. As for shelter, we felt that we could manage in two days to enclose the cave; and as to the other trouble, although we were not very clear in our minds about it, yet we did not loose confidence that a ship would come along and take us off before winter should set in.

So we resolved not to abandon our vigilance, but to keep up a constant watch, as we had done before. Now that we had made a fire, we knew the smoke would be a great help to us in drawing the attention of the people on board any ship that might come near.

CHAPTER VIII.

Making up our Reckoning—Our Snow and Ice Cave—Preparing for Winter.



WE now went about our work very hopefully. But as we were going along, meditating on our future plans, the Dean stopped suddenly, and said to me: "Hardy, do you know what day it is?"

"No," said I, "upon my word I don't, and never once thought about it!"

The Dean looked very sad all at once, and not being able to see why that should be the case, I asked what difference it made to us what day it was.

"Why, a great deal of difference."

"How?" said I.

"Why," said the Dean, "when shall we know when Sunday comes?"

To be sure, how should we know when Sunday came! I had not thought of that before; but the Dean was differently brought up from me; for while I had not been taught to care much what day it was, he had been taught to look upon Sunday as a day when nobody should do any sort of work. So I became anxious too about the matter, and for the Dean's sake, if not for my own, I tried hard to recall what day it was.

It is not at all surprising that we should have lost our reckoning in this way, seeing that the sun was shining all the time; and we worked and slept without much regard to

whether the hours of night or day were on us. So we had good reason for a little mixing up of dates. In fact, we could neither of us very well recall the day of the month that we were cast away. It was somewhere near the end of June, that we knew; but the exact day we could not tell for certain.

We remembered the day of the week on which we were cast away well enough, and it was Tuesday; but more than this we could not get into our heads, and so it seemed that there was nothing for us but to sink all days into the one long continuous day of the Arctic summer, and never more know whether it was Sunday, or Monday, or Friday, or what day it was of any month; and if it should be Heaven's will that we should live on upon the island until the New Year came round, and still other years should come and go, we should never know when the New Year was.

I did everything I could to refresh my memory about it. I counted up the number of times we had slept, and the number of times we had worked, and recalled the time when I first walked round the island; and I tried my best to connect all those events together in such a way as to prove how often the sun had passed behind the cliffs, and how often it had shone upon us; and thus I made out that that very day was Sunday, —at least I so convinced the Dean, and he was satisfied. And that's the way we made a Sunday for ourselves. So we resolved to do no work that day; and this was well, for we were very weary and needed rest.

Having settled about Sunday, that was off our minds; and after recalling many things which had happened to us, and things which had been done on the "Blackbird," we finally concluded that we had found out the day of the month, and so we called the day "Sunday, the second of July," and we marked it thus:

On the top of a large flat rock near by I placed a small white stone, and this we called our "Sunday stone;" and

then, in a row with this stone, we placed six other stones, which we called by the other days of the week. Then I moved the white stone out of line a little, which was to show that Sunday had passed, and afterwards when the next day had passed, we did the same with the Monday stone, and so on until the stones were all on a line again, when we knew that it was once more Sunday. Of course we knew when the day was gone, by the sun going round on the north side of the island, throwing the shadow of the cliffs upon us.

For noting the days of the month we made a similar arrangement to that which we had made for the days of the week; and thus we had now got an almanac among our other things. "And now," said the Dean, "let us put all this down for fear we forget it." So away the little fellow ran and gathered a great quantity of small pebbles, and these we arranged on the top of the rock so as to form letters; and the letters that we thus made spelled out "John Hardy and Richard Dean, cast away in the cold, Tuesday, June 27, 1824."

Now, when we came to look ahead, and to speculate upon what was likely to befall us, we saw that we had two months of summer still remaining; and as midsummer had hardly come yet, we knew that we were likely to have it warmer than before, and we had now no further fears about being able to live through that period. In these two months it was plain that one of two things must happen,—that is, a ship must come along and take us off, or we must be prepared for the dark time that must follow, after the sun should go down for the winter.

But there was also a third thing that might happen besides,—we might both die; and that seemed likely enough, so we pledged ourselves to stand by each other through every fortune, each helping the other all he could. At any rate, we would not lose hope, and never despair of being saved through the mercy of Providence, somehow or other.

Having reached this resigned state of mind, we were ready to consider rationally what we had to do. It was clear enough that if we only looked out for a ship to save us, and that chance should in the end fail us, we should be ill prepared for the winter if we were left on the island to encounter its perils. Therefore it was necessary to be ready for the worst, and accordingly, after a little deliberation, we concluded to proceed as follows:—

Firstly, we must construct a place to shelter ourselves from the cold and storms. In this we had made some satisfactory progress already.

Secondly, we must collect all the food we could while there was an opportunity.

Thirdly, we must gather fuel, of which, as had been already proved, there was the Andromeda (or fire-plant) and moss and blubber to depend upon. Of this latter the dead narwhal and seal would furnish us a moderate supply; but for the rest we must rely upon our own skill to capture some other animals from the sea; though, as to how this was to be done, we had to own ourselves completely at fault.

Fourthly, we must in some manner, secure for ourselves warmer clothing, otherwise we should certainly freeze to death: and here again we were completely at fault too.

Fifthly, we must contrive in some way to make for ourselves a lamp, as there is no sunshine but constant darkness throughout the Arctic winter, and we could never live in our cave in darkness; and here was a difficulty apparently even more insurmountable than the others,—as much so as appeared the making of a fire in the first instance,—for while we had a general idea that we might capture some seals, and get thus a good supply of oil, and that we might also get plenty of fox-skins for clothing, yet neither of us could think of any way to make a lamp.

When we came thus to bring ourselves to a practical view

of the situation, the prospect might have made stouter hearts than ours quake a little; but as we had seen before, nothing was to be gained by lamentation, so we put a bold front on and firmly resolved to make the best fight we could for life.

When Monday came we set about our work, not exactly in the order which I have named, but as we found most convenient; and as day after day followed each other through the week, and as one week followed after another week, we found ourselves at one time building up the wall in front of the cave then catching ducks and gathering eggs, then collecting the fire-plant, and then turning moss up on the rocks to dry, and then cutting off the blubber and skins of the dead seal and narwhal.

All of these things were carefully secured; and in a sort of cave, much like the one we were preparing for our abode, only larger, we stowed away all the fire-plant and dried moss that we could get. Then we looked about us to see what we should do for a place to put our blubber in,—that is, the fat we got off the dead narwhal and the seal, and also any other blubber that we might get afterwards. When we had cut all the blubber off the seal and narwhal, we found that we had an enormous heap of it,—as much, at least, as five good barrels,—and since the sun was very warm, there was great danger, not only that it would spoil, but that much of it would melt and run away.

Fortunately, very near our hut there was a small glacier hanging on the hillside, coming down a narrow valley from a greater mass of ice which lay above. From the face of this glacier a great many lumps of ice had broken off, and there were also deep banks of snow which the summer's sun had not melted. In the midst of this accumulation of ice and snow we had little difficulty in making, partly by excavating and partly by building up, a sort of cave, large enough to hold twice as much blubber as we had to put into it. Here

we deposited our treasure, which was our only reliance for light in case we invented a lamp, and our chief reliance for fire if the winter should come and find us still upon the island.

After we had thus secured in this snow-and-ice cave our stock of blubber, we constructed another much like it, near by, for our food, and into this we had soon gathered a pretty large stock of ducks and eggs. And when we contemplated all that we had done in this particular, you may be sure our spirits rose very considerably.

A glacier is nothing more than a stream of ice made out of snow partly melted and then frozen again, and which forming high up on the tops of the hills, runs down a valley and breaks off at its end and melts away. Sometimes it is very large—miles across—and goes all the way down to the sea; and the pieces that break off from it are sometimes very large, and are called icebergs. Sometimes the glaciers are very small, especially on small islands such as ours.

This little glacier lay in a narrow valley; and, as the cliffs were very high on either side, it was almost always in shadow, and the air was very cold there; so it was fortunate that we thought of fixing upon that place for our storehouses. Then another great advantage to us was, that it was so near our hut,—being within sight, and only a few steps across some very rough rocks; but among these rocks we contrived to make, by filling in with small stones, a tolerably smooth walk.

As we caught and put away the ducks in our storehouse, we began at length to preserve their skins. At first we could see no value in them, and threw them away; but we saw at length, that in case we could not catch the foxes, they would make us some sort of clothing, while out of the seal-skin, which I mentioned before, we could make boots if we only had anything to sew with.

Thus one difficulty after another continually beset us; but

this last one was soon partly overcome, for the Dean, on the very first day of our landing discovered that he had in his pocket his palm and needle, carrying it always about him when on shipboard, like any other good sailor; but we lacked thread.

A palm is a band of leather going round the hand, with a thimble fitted into it where it comes across the root of the thumb. The sailor's needle differs only from the common one in being longer and three-cornered, instead of round. It is used for sewing sails and other coarse work on shipboard. The needle is held between the thumb and forefinger, and is pushed through with the thimble in the palm of the hand, and hence the name.

But a sailor's palm and needle could be of very little use unless we had some thread, of which we did not possess a single particle, except the small piece that was in the needle, and by which it was tied to the palm. It was a good while before we obtained anything to make thread of, so we will pass that subject by for the present, and come back to what we had more immediately in hand. This was the preparation of our cave, or rather, as we had better say, hut,—that being more nearly what it was.

The building of our hut, then, was indeed a very difficult task, as the solid wall we had to construct in front was much higher than our heads, and in this wall we had, of course, to leave a doorway and a window, besides a sort of chimney or outlet for the smoke from the fireplace, which was opposite to the door.

We must have been at least two weeks making this wall, for we had not only to construct the wall itself, but when it got so high that we could no longer reach up to the top, we had in addition to build steps. We left a window above the doorway not thinking, of course, to find any glass to put in it, but leaving it rather as a ventilator than a window. It

was very small, not more than a foot square, and was easily shut up at any time, if we should not need it. For a door, we used a piece of the narwhal skin, when it became necessary to close up the orifice. This skin was fastened above the doorway with pegs, which we made of bones, driving them into the cracks between the stones, thus letting the skin fall down over the doorway like a curtain.

In making the wall we were greatly helped by the bones which I had found on the beach, as they were much lighter than the stones, and aided in holding the moss in its place, so that we were able to use much more of that material than we otherwise should. When the wall was completed, we were gratified to see how tight it was, and how perfectly we had made it fit the rocks by means of the moss.

Having completed the wall, our next concern was to arrange the interior; but about this we had no need to be in so great a hurry as with the wall, for we had now a place to shelter us from any storm that might come, and we could hope to make ourselves somewhat comfortable even there, although the inside was not well fitted up; for we had a fireplace, and could do our cooking without going outside. And when we found how perfect was the draft through the outlet, or chimney (such as it was), you may be very sure we were greatly delighted.

As it fell out, we had secured this shelter in the very nick of time, for in two days afterwards a violent storm arose,—a heavy wind with hail and occasional gusts of snow,—a strange kind of weather for the middle of July. This storm made sad havoc with the ice on the east side of the island, breaking it up, and driving it out over the sea to the westward, filling the sea up so much in that direction that there was no use, for the present at least, in looking for ships, as none could come near us.

The storm made a very wild and fearful spectacle of the

OUR ICE CAVE

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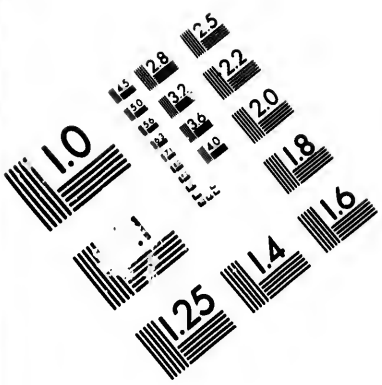

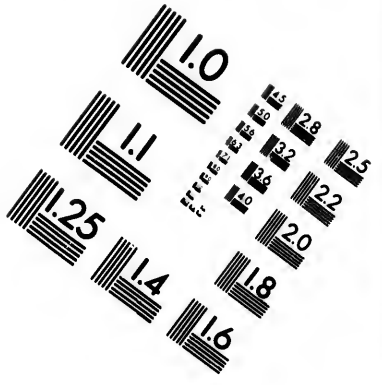

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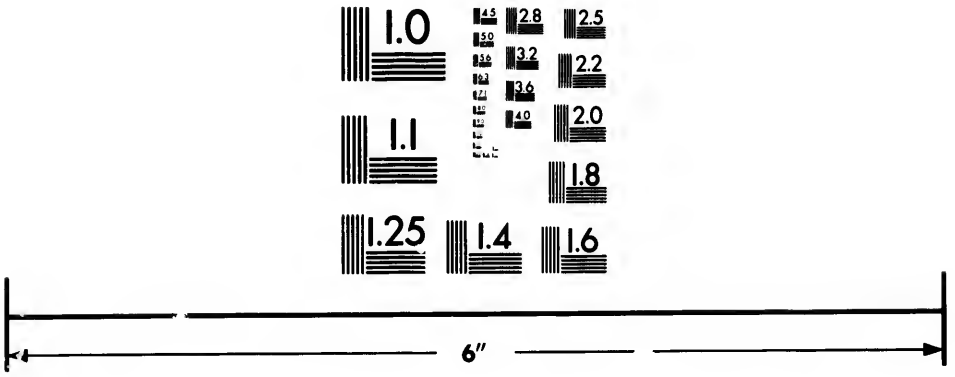

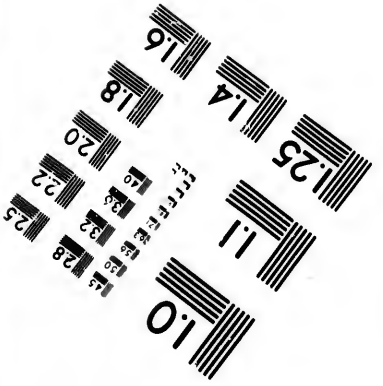

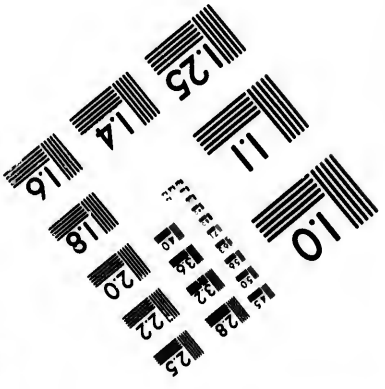

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sea, as the waves went dashing over the pieces of ice and against the icebergs. When I looked out upon this scene, and listened to the noises made by the waves and the crushing ice, and heard the roaring wind, I wondered more than ever what could possess anybody to go to such a sea in a ship; for it seemed to me that the largest possible gains would not be a sufficient reward for the dangers to be encountered.

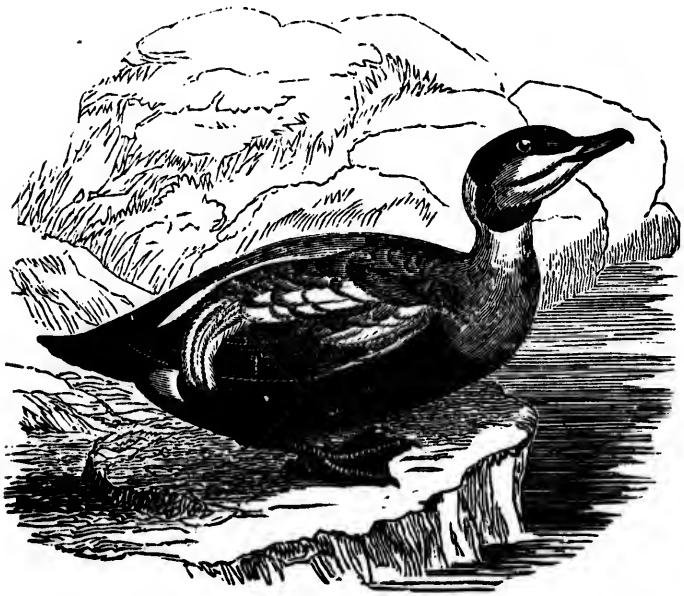
But so it always was and always will be, I suppose. Wherever there is a little money to be made, men will encounter any kind of hazard in order to get it. Thus, the risks in going after whales and seals for their blubber, which is very valuable, are great; but then, if the ship makes a good voyage the profits are very large, and when the sailors receive their "lay," that is, their share of the profits on the oil and whalebone which have been taken, it sometimes amounts to a really handsome sum of money to each, and they consider themselves well rewarded for all their privations and hardships.

And it must be owned that the whalers and sealers are a very brave set of men, especially the whalers who go among the ice: for besides the dangers to the vessel, there is the danger always to be encountered in approaching a whale to harpoon him, as for instance, when he sometimes knocks the boat to pieces with his monstrous tail and spills all the crew out into the water; or he may, while swimming away with the harpoon in him and the boat fast to it dragging after, take it into his head to rush beneath the ice, and thus destroy the boat and endanger the lives of the people in it.

When the weather cleared off after the storm, we went to work again as before. But everything about us now looked gloomy enough. The cliffs were besprinkled with snow, and about the rocks the snow had drifted, and it lay in streaks where it had been carrried by the wind. The sea was still very rough, and as there were many pieces of ice upon the

water, when the waves rose and fell, the pounding of the ice against the rocks and the breaking of the surf made a most fearful sound.

The sun coming out warm, soon however, melted the snow, and getting heated with work we got on bravely. Indeed, we soon became not less surprised at the rapid progress we were making than at the facility with which we accommodated ourselves to our strange condition of life, and even grew cheerful under what would seem a state of the greatest possible distress.



CHAPTER IX.

Furnishing our Hut—Important and Useful Discoveries.

ONE difficulty after another vanished before our patient and persevering efforts; and now that we had a fire to warm us, and a hut to shelter us, we felt as if we could overcome almost anything. So we gained great courage, and became as the soldiers say, "masters of the situation." In truth, we were fast settling down to business, like any other people, feeling that we were at least in no present danger of our lives.

The Dean and I had a conversation about this time, which I will try to repeat as nearly as I can. We were seated on the hillside overlooking the sea to the west, attracted by what we at first took for a ship under full sail, steering right in towards the island; but you can imagine how great was our disappointment when we found that what we had taken for a ship was nothing more than an iceberg looming up above the sea in a hazy atmosphere. This was the third time we had been deceived in that manner.

Once the Dean had come rushing towards me, shouting at the top of his voice "The fleet! the fleet!" meaning the whale-ships; but he might just as well have saved himself all that trouble, for "the fleet" proved to be only a great group

of icebergs; but when I told him so he would hardly believe it, until he became at last convinced that they were not moving.

These icebergs assume all sorts of shapes, and it was very natural, since we were always on the look out for ships, that our imaginations should be excited and disturbed, and ready to see at any time what we most wanted to see; nor were we at all peculiar in this, as many people might tell you who were never cast away in the cold. So it is not surprising that we should cry out very frequently, "a sail, a sail!" when there was not a sail perhaps within many hundred miles of us,—not half so surprising, in fact, as that boys should see ghosts and hobgoblins sometimes on dark nights.

Well, the Dean and I sat upon the hillside overlooking the sea, thinking the icebergs were ships, or hoping so at least, until hope died away, and then it was that we fell to talking.

"Do you think, Hardy," said he, "that any other ship than ours ever did come this way, or ever will?"

"I'm afraid not," said I; and I must have looked very despondent about it, as in truth I was,—much more so than I would have liked to own.

I had not considered what the Dean was about, for he was despondent enough himself, and no doubt wished very hard that I might say something to cheer him up a bit; but instead of doing that, I only made him worse, whereupon he seemed to grow angry, and in a rather snappish way he enquired of me if I knew what I was.

"No," said I, quite taken aback. "What do you mean?"

"Mean!" exclaimed the Dean. "Why, I mean to say,"—and he spoke in a positive manner that was not usual with him,—"I mean to say that you are a regular Job's comforter, and no mistake."

I had not the least idea at that period of my life as to what kind of a thing a Job's comforter was. I had a vague notion

that it was something to go round the neck, and I protested, most vehemently that I was nothing of the sort.

"Yes, you are, and you know you are," he went on,—"regular Job's comforter,—croaking all the time, and never seeing any way out of our troubles at all."

"I should like to know," said I—and I thought I had him then,—"how I can see any way out of our troubles when there isn't any!"

"Well, you can think there is, if there isn't—can't you?" and the Dean was ten times more snappish than he was before; and having thus delivered himself, he snapped himself up and snapped himself off in a great hurry; but, as the little fellow turned to go away, I thought I saw big tears stealing down his cheeks, I thought that his voice trembled over the last words; and when he went behind a rock and hid himself, I knew that he had gone away to cry, and that he had been ashamed to cry where I could see him.

After a while I went to him. He was lying on his side, with his head upon his arm. His cap had fallen off, and the light wind was playing gently with his curly hair. The sun was shining brightly in his face, and sunburnt and weather-beaten though it was, his rosy cheeks were the same as ever. But bitter, scalding tears had left their traces there, for the poor boy had cried himself to sleep.

His sleep was troubled, for he was calling out, and his hands and feet were twitching now and then, and cruel dreams were weighing on his sleeping, even more heavily perhaps than they had been upon his waking thoughts. So I awoke him. He sprang up instantly, looking very wild, and sat upon the rock. "Where am I? What's the matter? Is that you, Hardy?" were the questions with which he greeted me so quickly that I could not answer one of them. Then he smiled in his natural way, and said, "After all, it was only a dream."

"What was it?" I asked. "Tell me, Dean, what it was!"

"O, it was not much, but you see it put me in a dreadful fright. I thought a ship was steering close in by the land; I thought I saw you spring upon the deck and sail away; and as you sailed away upon the silvery sea, I thought you turned and mocked me, and I cursed you as I stood upon the beach, until some foul fiend, in punishment for my wicked words, caught me by the neck and dragged me through the sea, and tied me fast to the vessel's keel, and there I was with his last words ringing in my ears, with the gurgling waters, 'Follow him to your doom,' when you awoke me. 'Follow him to your doom!' I seem to hear the demon shrieking even now, though I'm wide enough awake."

"I don't wonder at your fright, and I'm glad I woke you!" said I, not knowing what else to say.

"It all comes," went on the little fellow, "of my being angry with you, Hardy;" and so he asked me to forgive him, and not think badly of him, and said he would not be so ungrateful any more, and many such things, which it pained me very much to hear him say; and so I made him stop, and then somehow or other we got our arms round each other's neck, and we kissed each other's cheeks, and great cataracts of tears came tearing from each other's eyes; and the first and last unkindness that had come between us was passed and gone for ever.

"But do you really think," said the Dean, when he got his voice again,—" do you really think that if a ship don't come along and take us off, we can live here on this wretched little island,—that is, when the summer goes, and all the birds have flown away, and the darkness and the cold are on us all the time?"

"To be sure we can," I answered; but to tell the truth, I had very great doubts about it, only I thought that this would cheer him up a bit; and as I had, by this time, made for

myself a better definition to Job's comforter than a something to go round the neek, I had no idea of being called by that name any more.

"I'm glad to hear you say that!" exclaimed the Dean. "Indeed I am!"

There was no need to give me such very strong assurance that he was "glad to hear it," for his face showed as plain as could be that he was glad to hear me say anything that had the least encouragement in it.

After this the Dean grew quite cheerful. Suddenly he asked, "Do you know Hardy, if this island has a name?"

Of course I did not know, and told him so.

"Then I'll give it one right off," said he; "I'll call it from this minute the Rock of Good Hope, and here we'll make a start in life. It's as good a place, perhaps, to make a start in life as any other; for nobody is likely to dispute our title to our lands, or molest us in our fortune-making, which is more than could be said if our lot were cast in any other place."

This vein of conversation brightened me up a little. Indeed, it was hard to be very long despondent in the presence of the Dean's hopeful disposition. There was much more said of the same nature, which it is not necessary to repeat. It is enough for me to add that the upshot of the whole matter was that we came in the end to regard ourselves as settled on the island, if not for the remainder of our lives at least for an indefinite period; and we made up our minds that there was no use in being gloomy and cast down about it.

So from that time forward we were more cheerful, and though you may think it very strange, were generally contented. This was a great step gained, and when we now came to make an inventory of our possessions, we did it just as a farmer or merchant would have done. Being the undisputed owners of this Rock of Good Hope, we considered

ourselves none the less owners of all the foxes, ducks, eggs, eider-down, dead beasts, dry bones, and whatsoever else there might be upon it; and, besides this, we had a lien upon all the seals and walruses and whales of every kind that lived in the sea.

We now worked with even a better grace than we had done before; for the idea of being settled on the island for life, seemed to imply that we had need to look ahead farther than when our hopes of rescue had been strong.

And first we finished the hut in which we were to live,—doing it not as if we were putting up a tent for temporary use, but as a man who has just come into possession of a large property puts up a fine house on it, that he may be comfortable for the rest of his days.

I have said our hut was about twelve feet square, and that we had, after much hard labour, succeeded in closing it up perfectly, and in making it weather-tight. Along the peak of it, where the two rocks came together, there was a crack which gave us much trouble; but at length we succeeded in pounding down into it, with the butt-end of our narwhal horn, a great quantity of moss or turf, and thus closed it thoroughly.

I must not forget while we are on the subject of moss, to mention that the moss grew on our island, as it does in all arctic countries, with a richness that you never see at home —moss being, in truth, the characteristic vegetation of the arctic regions. In the valley fronting us there was a bed of it several feet thick. Its fibres were very long,—as much in some places as four inches,—all of a single year's growth; and as it had gone on growing year after year, you will understand that there was layer after layer of it beneath.

In one place, at the side of the valley to the right as we went down towards the beach, it seemed to have died out after growing for many years: and when we discovered this,

we were more rejoiced than we had been at any time since starting the fire; for the moss, being dead, had become dry and hard, and burned almost like peat, as we found when we came to try it in our fireplace; and when we added to it a little of our blubber, it made such a heat that we could not have desired anything better. Indeed, it made our hut so warm that we could leave the doorway and window both open until the weather became colder; so we did not trouble ourselves about making a door, but attended to other matters.

One thing which gave us great satisfaction was the immense quantity of the dead moss which was in this bed—so much, indeed, that no matter how long we should live there, we could never burn up the hundredth part of it. At first there had not appeared to be much of it, but it developed more and more, like a coal mine, as we dug farther and farther into it.

Our fireplace was therefore, as you see, a great success; but we were after a few days most unexpectedly troubled with it. Thus far the wind had been blowing only in one direction, but afterwards it shifted to the opposite quarter, driving the smoke all down into the hut, and smothering us out. Neither of us being a skilful mason, we could not imagine what was the matter; but finally it occurred to us, after much useless labour had been spent in tearing part of it down and building it up again, that it was too low, being just on a level with the top of the hut; so we ran it up as much higher as we could lift the stones, which was about four feet, and after that we had no more trouble with the smoke.

Having succeeded so well with our arrangements towards keeping up a fire, we next fitted up a bed, as the storms now began to trouble us, and we found, when we were driven away from the grass, and were obliged to sleep inside of the hut, that it was a very hard place to sleep in, being nothing but

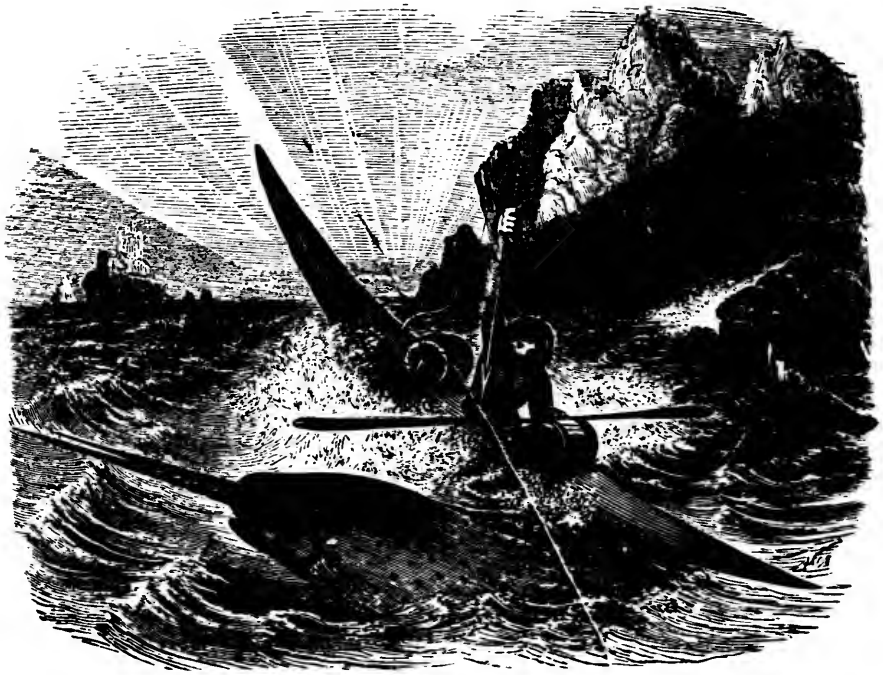
rough stones, which made us very sore, and our bones to ache awfully.

The first thing we did now was to build a wall about as high as our knees, right across the middle of the hut, from side to side; then, across the space thus enclosed in the back part of the hut, we built up another wall about three feet high,—thus you see, making two divisions of the back part of the hut. One of these divisions we used as a sort of store-room or closet, levelling the bottom of it with flat stone, of which we had no difficulty in getting all we wanted.

We also covered the front part of the hut with stones of the same description, thus making quite a smooth floor. It was not large enough, as you will see, to give us much trouble in keeping it clean. Of the second division, in the back part we made our bed, by first filling it up with moss, then covering the moss over with dry grass.

Having given up all hope of a ship coming near us during the present season, we now gave up watching for one; and we went to sleep together on our new bed, lying on the dry grass, and as before, covering ourselves over with my large overcoat. We found it to be more comfortable than anyone would think, and altogether better than anything we had yet had to sleep on. But we came near losing our fire by it, as the last embers were just dying out when we awoke from our first sleep in the hut.

But after all this bed did not exactly suit our fancy, and seeing the necessity for some better kind of bedclothes, our wits were once more set to working, in order to discover something with which to fasten together the duck-skins that we had been saving and drying, and of which we had now almost a hundred. We had spread them out upon the rocks, and dried them in the sun; for we had seen that if we could only find something to sew them together with, we might make all the clothing that we wanted.



NARWHAL FISHING IN THE ARCTIC SEAS.

The eider-duck skin is very warm, having besides its thick coat of feathers, a heavy underlayer of soft warm down, which, as I told you before, the ducks pick off to line their nests with. The skins are also very strong, as well as warm; but the trouble was to find something to fasten them together with; for until this could be done, they would continue to be to us like the grapes to the fox in the fable.

Now, however, as at other times since we had been cast away, good fortune came to us; and we had scarcely begun seriously to feel the need of sewing materials before they were thrown in our way, as if providentially. It happened thus:—

In cutting the blubber from the dead narwhal, we had quite exposed the strong sinews of his tail, without, however, for a moment imagining that we were preparing the way to a most important and useful discovery; for after a few days this sinew became partially dried in the sun, and one day, while busy with some one of our now quite numerous occupations, I was much surprised to see the Dean running towards me from the beach, and was still more surprised when I heard him crying out, "I have it, I have it!" It seemed to me that the Dean was always having something, and I was more than ever curious to know what it was this time.

He had been down to the beach, and observing some of the dried sinew, had begun to pull it to pieces; and in this way he found out that he could make threads of it, and he immediately set off to communicate the intelligence to me. We at once went together down to the beach, and cutting off all that we could get of this strong sinew, we spread it upon the rocks, that it might dry more thoroughly.

In a few days the sun had completely dried and hardened enough of this stuff to last us for a length of time; and we found that when we came to pick it to pieces, we could make, if we chose, very fine threads of it,—as fine and as strong as ordinary silk. This was a great discovery truly, as it was the

only thing now wanting, except some cooking utensils, to complete our domestic furniture. As for the latter, it was some time before we invented anything; but thus far we had been occupied with what seemed to be more important concerns.

But on the opposite side of the island I had found some stones of very soft texture; and upon trying them with my knife, I discovered that they were the same kind of stones that I had often heard of at home, and which serve the savages in America to make their pots, and which they call soapstone. Upon making further search there proved to be an extensive vein of it; and since I knew that in the United States gridle cake pans are made out of this peculiar clay-like material, I concluded at once that other kinds of cooking utensils might be made as well. Accordingly I carried to our hut several pieces of it, and there they lay for a good while, just outside of the hut, until I could find leisure to carve some pots and other things out of them.

Thus we were getting along very well, steadily collecting those things which were necessary as well for our comfort as our safety. If the island on which we had been cast away were indeed barren and inhospitable, it was none the less capable, like almost every other land, in whatever region of the earth, of furnishing subsistence to men. Nor was there any great peculiarity in this island upon which we had fallen; for, as we afterwards found, there were many other islands in the region where we might have lived quite as easily; and we found out also, that there were natives living not a hundred miles from us, and living too in all respects just as we were doing.

When we found what we could do with the sinew of the narwhal, we set about immediately preparing some bedclothes for ourselves. This we did by squaring off the duck-skins with my knife, and then sewing them tightly together. Thus

we obtained not only a soft bed to lie upon, but a good warm quilt to cover us.

This done, we went back to the cooking utensils, which you may be sure we were very much in need of. Out of a good large block of soapstone, by careful digging with the knife, and afterwards warming we soon made a large-sized pot, which was found to answer perfectly. We could now change our diet a little,—at least, I should say, the manner of cooking it; for while we could before only fry our ducks and eggs on flat stones, when we got the pot we could boil them.

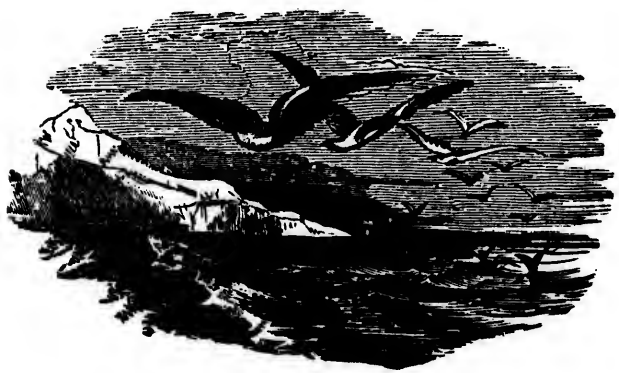
This gave us great pleasure, as we were getting very tired of having but one style of food; still I cannot say that there was so very much occasion for being over-glad, as at best it was only ducks and eggs, and eggs and ducks, just like the boy in the story, who had first honey and milk, and then for variety, milk and honey.

So one day the Dean said to me, "Hardy, can't we catch some of these little birds,—auks you call them?" "How?" said I. "I don't know," said he; and we were just as well off as we had been before. But this set us thinking again; and the birds being very tame, and flying low, it occurred to us that we might make a net, and fasten it to the end of our narwhal horn, which we had thus far only used while making our hut.

Luckily for us, the Dean—who I need hardly say was a very clever boy in every sense—had learned from one of the sailors the art of net-making; and out of some of the narwhal sinew he contrived, in two days, to construct a good-sized net. And now the difficulty was to stretch it; but by this time our invention had been pretty well sharpened, and we were not long in finding that we could make a perfect hoop by lashing together three seal ribs which we picked up on the beach, and having fastened this hoop securely to the narwhal horn, we sallied forth to the north side of the island where the auks were most abundant.

Having hidden ourselves away among the rocks, we waited until a flock of the birds flew over us. They flew very low,—not more than five feet above our heads. When they were least expecting it I threw up the net, and three of them flew bang into it. They were so much stunned by the blow, that only one of them could fly out before I had drawn in the net; and the Dean was quick enough to seize the remaining two before they could make their escape.

This being the first experiment, gave us great encouragement, as it was more succesful than we had ventured to hope. We went on with the work without pausing for several hours, looking upon it as great sport, as indeed it was; and since it was the first thing we had done that seemed like sport, the day was always remembered by us with great delight.



CHAPTER X.

STORING OUR PROVISIONS—WINTER UPON US—THE AURORA BOREALIS—OUR CLOCK IN THE SKY—THE FOX TRAPS.

WE had now by working very hard, and by persevering very much, and by using our wits as best we could, gathered about us everything that was needed to insure our present safety, and some things to make us comfortable We had a hut to shelter us, and clothes to keep us warm, and fire to cook our food.

But the winter was coming on very fast, and we knew well enough what that was likely to be. The grass and moss and flowers were dead or dying; the ice was forming on the little pools, and here and there upon the sea little spurts of snow were coming now and then; the winds were getting to be more fierce and angry, and every day grew colder and more dark. We knew that the long winter was close upon us, and that the shadow of the night would soon be resting on us all the time.

The birds had hatched their young, and quitted their nests, and were flying off to the sunny south, where we so longed to go, and so longed to send a message by them, to the loved ones far away. It made us sad—Oh, how very, very sad!—to see the ducks so happy on the wing, and sailing off and

leaving us upon the island all alone. Alone,—all, all alone! alone upon a desert island in the Arctic Sea! Alone in cold and darkness! All, all alone!

We made ourselves warm coats and stockings out of the skins of the birds that we had caught; and we made caps too, out of them,—plucking off the feathers, and leaving only the soft, warm, mouse-coloured down upon the skin. And out of the seal's skin we made mittens and nice soft boots, or rather, as I might call them, moccasins.

The ducks began to go away about the middle of August, as nearly as we could tell, but it was more than a month after that before they had all left the island. Meanwhile we had caught a great number of them,—two hundred and sixty-six in all; and we had collected, besides, ninety dozen of their eggs. These birds and eggs were all carefully stowed away in our storehouses of ice and rocks near the glacier.

In the matter of food we had therefore done very well; but we felt the need of some more blubber for our fire, and some warmer clothing than the birds' skins. To supply this latter want, we tried very hard to catch some foxes; but it was a long time before we were successful,—not until all the ducks had gone away; for the foxes would not trouble themselves to go inside our traps so long as there were any young ducks to be caught, or eggs to eat. These traps were made of stones, and in building them I had derived the only benefit which had ever resulted to me from my indolent life on the farm.

I was always fond of shirking my duties, and going into the woods to set rabbit-traps; and remembering how I made them of wood, I easily contrived a stone one of the same pattern, and it was found afterwards to answer perfectly. When there were no longer eggs for them to eat, or ducks for them to catch, the foxes went into our traps, which we baited for them with flesh from the dead narwhal. The pelts of these

foxes were thick and warm; and by the time the weather got very cold we had obtained a good number, and of these we made suits of clothes at our leisure. There were two kinds foxes,—one sort of blue gray, and the other quite white.

As the weather grew colder the little streams, which had thus far supplied us with water, all froze up; and we had now nothing to depend upon but the freshly fallen snow, which we had of course, to melt. Thus you see how important it was that I should have found the soapstone in season, and made a pot of it, else we should not only have been obliged to go without boiled food, but likewise without water.

As for the blubber for fuel, which we felt that we should badly need before the winter was over, we had great confidence that we should be able to catch some seals, though neither of us could imagine exactly how it was to be done. Happily for the present we were relieved from all anxiety by a dead walrus and a small white whale drifting in upon the beach during a westerly gale. The waves being very strong, they were landed so high up on the beach that there was little fear of their being washed away again.

It was no easy matter to cut these animals up with our one jack-knife, since, before we could get it done, they had frozen quite hard. The temperature had gone down until it was already below freezing all the time; and very soon the snow fell deeply and was drifted into great heaps by the wind. The sea soon after this became frozen over quite solid all about the island, although we could still see plenty of clear open water in the distance. There was one satisfaction, at least, in this freezing up of the sea, as we could walk out upon it, and go all round the island without having to clamber over the rough rocks.

The winter came by and by in good earnest, I can tell you. The sunlight all went away, and then soon afterwards the autumn twilight disappeared; and then came the darkness

that is constant in the winter, up towards the North Pole. The winter there is but one long night.

Dark in the morning, dark in the evening, dark at midnight, dark at noon, dark all the time, only, everything being white with snow, of course that makes it look lighter than it does at home, where the trees and the houses, and other dark objects, help the blackness of the night, and make it more gloomy.

Of course the darkness set our wits working, and through our wits we got over the lamp trouble as we had over many others. First we made an open dish of the invaluable soapstone, and put some oil in it; and then we made a wick out of the dry moss, and set fire to it; but this was found to make so much smoke that it drove us out of the hut, and it was given up.

But we did not throw away the dish, and after awhile it occurred to us to powder the dry moss by rubbing it between the hands, and with this powdered moss we lined our soapstone dish all over on the inside with a layer a quarter of an inch thick. After smoothing this down all around the edge (this dish, which we called a lamp, was much like a saucer, only rougher and much larger), we filled it half full of oil, and again set fire to it all round the edge; and this time it worked beautifully,—smoking very little and giving us plenty of light.

But the stars were shining brightly there upon us all the time; and then the moon came every month; and when it came, it came for good and all, and never set for several days; and then sometimes the aurora borealis would flash across the heavens, and clear away the darkness for a little while, as if it were a huge broom sweeping cobwebs from the skies, and letting in the light of day beneath the stars. O, what a splendid sight it was!

Aurora borealis—means northern light; and the name

comes from a pagan goddess called Aurora, who was supposed to have rosy fingers, and to ride in a rosy chariot, and who opened the gates of the East every morning, and brought in the light of day; and thus, in course of time, any great flush of light in the heavens came to be called Aurora. And then there was a pagan god called Boreas, who was the North Wind, and had long wings and white hair, and made himself generally disagreeable. So you see Boreas, from being the pagan name for north wind, came to mean the north; and Borealis, from that, became Northern, and Aurora Borealis became Northern Light.

My scientific friends say that the Aurora Borealis is electricity broken loose, and tearing through the air for some purpose of its own. It can't be caught, nor bottled up, as Franklin bottled up the lightning, nor analyzed,—and in short, nothing can be done with it; and so it goes tearing through the skies, just where it likes.

And when you go up beyond the Arctic Circle, you see it starting up from a fiery arch that stretches right across the sky before you; and from this fiery arch great streams of light shoot out, and then fall back again, and continue to come and go for hours and hours—sometimes lasting for a little while, and waving to and fro like a silken curtain of many colours fluttering in the wind, and then again seeming to be phantom things playing hide and seek among the stars; sometimes like wicked spirits of the night, bent on mischief; and then again like tongues of flame from some great fire in some vast world beyond the earth.

And how bright the colours are sometimes! The great arch of light that spans the sky is often bright with all the colours of the rainbow, changing every instant. And from these flickering belts of light, great sheets and streams fly up with lightning speed,—green, and orange, and blue, and purple, and bright crimson,—all mingling here and there and every-

where above, while down beneath comes out in bold relief before the eye the broad white plain of ice and snow upon the ocean, the great icebergs that lie here and there upon it, the tall white mountains of the land, and the dark islands in the sea; and then it dies away again, and the dark islands in the sea, and the tall white mountains, and the icebergs, and the white plain around, all vanish from the sight, and the mind retains only an impression that the icebergs, with all these bright colours reflected on them from above, had come from space and darkness, like the meteors, then to vanish and leave the darkness more profound.

And thus the auroral light and colour keep pulsating in the air, up and down, up and down; and thus the icebergs seem to come and go; and the very stars above seem to be rushing out with a bold bright glare, and going back again as quickly, singed and withered as it were, into puny sparks, and utterly disheartened with the effort to keep their places in the face of such a flood of brightness, are at length resolved no more to try to twinkle, twinkle through the night.

But in spite of this auroral light and the moonlight, the winter was dreary enough. At first we wanted to sleep all the time; and we had much trouble to keep ourselves from giving way to this desire. If we had done so, it would have made us very unhealthy and altogether miserable. We had to keep up our spirits, whatever else we did; and after a while, to help us with this, we got into regular habits; and we set a great clock up in the sky to tell us the time of day.

The "Great Bear" and all the other constellations of the north go round and round the polar star; and it so happened that I knew the "Great Bear," and the two stars at its side called "the Pointers" because they point to the pole star. Now these two "Pointers," going round once in the four-and-twenty hours, pointed up from the south at one time, and up from the north at another time, and up from the east and

from the west in the same way; and thus we had a clock up in the sky to tell us the time of day, for we had an iceberg picked out all round for every hour, and when "the Pointers" stood over that particular berg we knew what time it was.

We should have got along through the winter much more comfortably if we had had some books, or some paper to write on, and pen and ink to write with; but these things were quite beyond the reach of our ingenuity. So our life was very monotonous; doing our daily duties—that is whatever we might find to do—and after wading through the deep snow in doing it, we came back again to our little hut to get warm, and to eat and talk and sleep.

And much talking we did about each other, and our families and lives, and what great things we should do when we got away from the island. Thus we came gradually to know each other's history, and thus there came to be greater sympathy between us, and more indulgence of each other's whims and fancies, as we got better and better acquainted.

The Dean had a perfect story to relate of himself. He told me that he was born in the city of York. His father died before he could remember, and his mother was very poor; but so long as she kept her health she managed, in one way or another, to live from day to day by sewing; and she managed too, to send the Dean to school. She loved her bright-haired little boy so very, very much, that she would have spent the last shilling she could hope to earn, could she only give him a little knowledge that might help him on in the world when he grew to be a man.

And so she stinted herself and saved, all unknown to her boy; and she had not clothing or fire enough to keep her warm in the bleak winter, when the Dean was out; though she had a fine fire when the Dean came back. All would have been well enough if the poor woman had not, with her hard work and her efforts to save, become thin and weak, and

grown sick with fever; and then there was nothing for her but the hospital, for there was no money to pay for medicines, or doctor's bills, to say nothing of rent and fire and clothes.

And now for the first time the Dean began to realize the situation; and a vague impression crossed his mind, that the poor, pale woman, now restless with pain on a narrow bed in a long ward of a dreary hospital—his own dear mother, suffering with strange hands only to comfort her—had been brought to this for his sake; and when she grew better, after a long, long time, but was still far from well, he thought and thought, and cried and cried, and prayed and prayed, and wished that he might do something to show his gratitude, and make amends.

By and by he got into a factory, and worked there early and late, until he too grew sick, and was carried to the hospital, and was laid beside his poor sick mother, on a narrow bed. But he soon got well again, though his mother did not, and then, all unknown to her (he could do nothing else) he went to sea as cabin-boy of a ship sailing to the West Indies, and he came back to; and with a proud heart beating in his little breast, he carried his little purse of gold and silver coins that the captain gave him to his poor sick mother; and then he went away again in the same ship, and came back once more with another purse of money, twice as big as the first; but the good captain that had been so kind to him, and rewarded him so well, fell sick, and died of yellow fever on the passage home, and the mate, who got command of the ship, being a different sort of man, disliked the Dean, and told him not to come back any more.

And so the poor Dean didn't know what to do; until one of his old shipmates met him in the street, and took him off, and shipped him as cabin-boy of the "Blackbird;" "and now here I am," said the poor little Dean, "and all the rest you know,—cast away in the cold, in this awful place, while

my poor sick mother has no money and no friends in the world, and is thinking all the time what a wretch I am to run away and desert her, when God knows, I meant to do nothing of the sort;" and so he burst out crying, and to tell you the truth, I couldn't help crying a little too.

But the Dean was a right plucky little fellow, I can tell you, and so full of hope and ambition was he that nothing could keep him down very long; and nothing I believe, could ever make him despond for a single minute but thinking of his mother, sick and far away, without friends or money, lying on a narrow bed, all through the weary, dreary days and nights in the weary, dreary ward of a crowded hospital, Poor Dean! he had something to make him cry, and something always to make him sad, if he had a mind to be; but what had I in comparison?—I, who had run away from home with no good motive like the Dean's.

After the recital of his story, we were both very sad, until the Dean suddenly roused himself, and said, "Let's go and look at our traps, Hardy;" and so we sallied out into the moonlight, and waded through the snow, to see if there were foxes in our traps. But to get outside our hut was not so easy a matter now as it was when we first built it; for in order to keep the cold winds away, we had made a long, low, narrow passage, with a crook in it, through which we crawled on our hands and knees, before we reached the door.

We walked all the way round the island, and visited all our traps, of which we had seventeen, but only two of them had foxes in them; the others were either filled with snow, or were completely covered over with it, for the wind had been blowing very hard the day before.

And now, as we got farther and farther into the winter, we began to have some very strange adventures—altogether different from anything we had encountered before.

CHAPTER XI.

Seal Catching—Polar Bears.

THE winter having fairly set in, our field of operations was much enlarged, and although the birds had all flown away, we were hardly worse off than before; for all through the summer we had been kept close prisoners on the island; but now, when the ice was solid all over the sea, we could walk out upon it, and this we did as soon as it would bear our weight.

Once the little Dean broke through, being careless where he was stepping; but I got him out, with no more harm than a cold bath and a fright.

Soon after this we made a valuable discovery.

Some of the arctic seals have a habit, when the sea is frozen over, of cutting holes through the ice with their sharp claws, in order that they may get their heads above the water to obtain air,—the seals not being able to breathe under water, like fish.

They can keep their heads under water about an hour, by closing up their nostrils, so that not a drop can get in; and during that time, they do not breathe at all; but at last they must find the open sea, or a crack in the ice, or else dig a hole through the ice from below, and thus get their heads to the surface in some way, or they would drown.

As we then knew nothing about the habits of the seals in this respect, I was very much surprised one day, while

walking over ice that was everywhere apparently very solid, to find one of my feet suddenly break through.

I was carrying at the time our great narwhal horn, which had already been used for so many purposes; and when I had got my foot, as quickly as possible, out of the cold water, I pounded with the heavy horn all about the place, and found that there was a large round hole there, that had evidently been made by some animal; and I could think of nothing else as likely to have made it but a seal.

The reason why I had not seen it was because the snow had drifted over it in a hard crust, and through this crust the seal kept open with his nose a small orifice for breathing, that was not larger round than a crownpiece.

This discovery set us off in quite a new line of adventure,—for having decided what it was, we concluded there must be more like it, and we went in search of them immediately. Our search was soon rewarded, for these seal-holes were very numerous.

How to catch a seal was the question which now most occupied our minds.

The difficulty was very great, for we had no weapons of any sort for such a purpose. Once more however, we fell back upon the narwhal horn.

To this horn we had already become much attached, and as if to express our gratitude, we had bestowed upon it several names,—as for instance, "Life-preserver," "Crumply Crowbar," "The Castaway's Friend," "Old Crumply," which last title finally stuck to it.

Besides this "Old Crumply," we made another weapon, in quite an ingenious way as we thought, though at a great expense of time and labour.

This was called by several names, like the other; but generally I called it the "Dean's Delight," for it was made after the Dean's idea, and he used to flourish it about at a great rate, and was very proud of it.

It was simply a kind of spear made by lashing together (after carefully cutting with our knife, and fitting and overlapping) a great many pieces of bones. The lashing was the same string we had before used for the duck-traps. It was very strong, though not half so heavy as "Old Crumply."

But though we had "Old Crumply," and the "Dean's Delight," we were apparently just as far off as ever from catching a seal; for although the "Delight" was tipped with hard ivory (a piece of walrus tusk carved into shape with the jack-knife), and "Crumply" was of the very best kind of ivory throughout, yet we could not sharpen either of them so as to be of much use.

But, remembering the general shape of the harpoon-heads used in whale ships, I managed to carve one of that pattern out of walrus ivory, and this I set on the end of the "Dean's Delight," and then, making a hole in the centre of it, I fastened it to the end of one of our long lines.

And thus I had obtained all that was needed, in name at least, for catching a seal; but only in name, as was soon proved; for the Dean and I set out at once to try our fortunes in this new line of adventure, and discovering a seal-hole, we stood near it (on the leeward side, that the seal might not scent us) until the animal appeared, which was not for a long time, and not until we had grown very cold.

The seal had evidently been off breathing in another hole. When he did come up, we knew it by a little puff he gave, which threw some spray up through the little orifice in the snow-crust.

Quick as thought I plunged the "Dean's Delight" down into the very centre of the hole, and struck the animal; but the ivory harpoon-head that was on the end of it only glanced off, without penetrating the skin; and the seal, no doubt very much astonished, got off as quickly as he could, more frightened probably than hurt; at least, we heard of him no

more. He never came back to the hole, for it was all frozen over next day, and so it remained.

We afterwards discovered that when a seal-hole has been once touched, the seal will never go back to it.

I was now more puzzled than ever to know what to do; but I did not give up trying, determined to succeed one way or another.

Presently it occurred to me that almost anything that was hard would answer to sharpen the edge and point of the ivory harpoon-head, and since I could not get any kind of metal to make a whole harpoon-head out of, I had to try some other plan.

As good luck would have it, I now thought of the brass buttons on my coat. Some of these I quickly tore off. Then I hacked my knife with a sharp flint stone until I had made a saw of it, and with this saw I cut a little groove along the tapering point of the ivory harpoon-head; and into this groove, which was about a quarter of an inch deep, I set the buttons, which I had squared with the knife, and then wedged them firmly.

I had now only to grind all these bits of brass down even, and to sharpen the whole with a stone, and my work was done. The only thing remaining was to put the weapon to the test; and this we quickly did.

A seal-hole being soon found, we had not long to wait before the seal came into it, with a little puff, as before; and as quick as the noise was heard, I let fly with my harpoon, and striking through the snow-crust, hit the seal fairly in the neck, and drove the harpoon into him.

Down sank the seal through the hole, taking the harpoon along with him, and spinning out the line which was attached to it at a furious rate.

Before the seal was struck, and while I was watching for him, the Dean had quietly tied the end of the line that was

not fast to the harpoon around the middle of "Old Crumply," and when the seal decended into the sea, "Old Crumply" was whipped along over the snow until it lodged right across the hole, and there the seal was—"brought up with a round turn," as the sailors say.

And now was anybody ever so rejoiced as we? The Dean fairly shouted with delight, and danced round the hole as if he were crazy, crying "Bravo, bravo!" and "Hurrah for Crumply!" and "Hurrah for Old Crumply!" and hurrah for this, and hurrah for that, until he was fairly hoarse.

Meanwhile the seal was trying his best to get away. He darted from side to side, and up and down, without any other result than to tire himself out; for the harpoon held firmly in his body, and the line held firmly to "Old Crumply," and "Old Crumply" lay squarely across the hole.

By and by the seal was forced to come up to breathe; and since there was no other place for him, he had to return to the hole where he had been struck. But he did not stay more than a second or so, going down as quickly as he had done before.

As soon as the line was loosened, however, we drew in the slack, and wound it around "Old Crumply," so that the seal did not have so much of it now to play with. Nor did he remain under so long the second time. When he came up again, we got in all the slack of the line that we could, as before.

It was now clear to us that we should be sure of the seal, if we only had something to kill him with; and so the quick-witted Dean ran off at once to the hut, and brought a walrus tusk that we had saved.

This was driven into the hard snow not far from the hole, and while the Dean held it there firmly, I got the line made fast around it. As soon as I saw that this was secure, and that the Dean was holding on bravely, I unfastened the line

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from "Old Crumply," and when the seal came next time, I gave him a heavy thrust with the sharp end of it.

But this did not kill him by any means, nor did he give me another chance for some time.

Then however, he was almost dead with bleeding, and fright, and hard struggling to get away, to say nothing of holding his breath so long; but I wanted him too badly to have any mercy on him, so I worked away as hard as I could to get in all the line, so that the seal could not sink down through the hole any more.

At last I was successful, and the seal was fast in the hole, and with all his struggling he could not get away. With the aid of "Old Crumply," I now quickly made an end of him. As soon as he was dead, we drew him out on the ice, and rejoiced over him.

Such shouting never was before known, at least in that part of the world. If anybody could have heard and seen us, we should have surely been taken up for insane people, especially the Dean, whose joy knew no bounds.

Having no sledge, we had to drag the dead seal over the ice and snow, for which purpose we made the line fast through his nose. It was a very difficult task to get him to the hut; and when we did at last succeed, we found that the seal was partly frozen, so that we were obliged to draw it inside the hut, and then thaw it, before we could get the skin off, which made the hut very disagreeable.

After the skin and blubber were removed, we cut off some of the flesh, and made for ourselves a good hot supper,—first cooking a stew in our soapstone pot, and then frying some steaks on a flat stone; and if anything was before wanting to make us happy over the capture of so great a prize, we had it now when we discovered what excellent food it was, and what a quantity there was of it.

When we had finished butchering the seal, we prepared the

skin for making boots; and we put the blubber and flesh away in our storehouses for future use,—the flesh for food, and the blubber for our fire and lamp.

Then we slept, and the very next day we set out to catch more seals, without however, the same success, for we were unfortunate in every attempt; and it was indeed, almost a week I think, before we made a second capture.

Some time afterwards we caught a third, and then a fourth, and by great good fortune on the very same day a fifth; and not long after that we caught another, which made the sixth.

But it would have been well had we been content with five, without coveting a sixth, as this last had like to have been the ruin of us; for as we were going slowly back to the hut, dragging the seal after us, and all unsuspicious of harm, we were set upon by a large white beast, the like of which we had never seen before, but which we knew must be one of those savage animals called polar bears.

He was not coming rapidly, but was rather crawling along cautiously, with mouth wide open, looking very fierce.

As soon as we discovered him we dropped the line with which we were dragging the seal, and ran as fast as our legs would carry us, never stopping until we had reached the hut, and crawled into it,—not once having had the courage to look back, for at every step we expected that the bear would be atop of us.

We had left "Old Crumply" and "Dean's Delight" where we captured the seal, intending to go for them the next day; and having no weapon of any kind, we were in the greatest terror, expecting every moment to hear the bear coming to tear the hut down, and drag us out, and probably eat us.

But finding that we were not disturbed, we at length fell asleep from sheer exhaustion.

Upon awaking the next day, and finding that we had been suffered to go undisturbed thus long, we began to wonder

whether we had not been needlessly alarmed, and finally we set to wondering whether we had really seen a bear after all, and at length we grew to feel quite ashamed of ourselves.

So we put on a little bravado, like the boy that whistled in the dark to keep his courage up, and went out, cautiously approaching the spot where we had left the seal.

Arriving there we had positive proof enough, if any were wanting, that we had certainly seen a bear. The bones of the seal were all strewn about over the snow, picked as clean as could be. Some foxes were gnawing at them, as we came up; but they all scampered off when they saw us coming.

Hurrying on, we picked up "Old Crumply" and "Dean's Delight," and then hastened back to the hut, which we reached without any further adventure; but on the day following, upon going out to visit our fox-traps, we came across the bear's tracks, from which it was evident to us that the wild beast was prowling round the island, where he had already obtained one good meal, and was in hopes, no doubt, of getting another; and so we ran back to the hut with all speed, imagining as we went along, that every rock and snow-drift was a bear.

We had now even greater fears than before that we should be attacked and eaten up by the wild beast.

It did not once occur to us that the bear would be much more likely to prefer the contents of our storehouses to ourselves, if he came that way, but we thought only of our own safety; and this was perhaps not unnatural, for boys and men alike are everywhere liable to magnify their own importance, even in the eyes of a bear.

We had not been in the hut more than a couple of hours, I should say, before we heard the tramp of our enemy. We knew it must be the footsteps of the bear, because it could be nothing else. Our fears were now even greater than ever.

The bear appeared from the sound of his footsteps, crunch-

ing in the snow, to be making directly for us, sniffing the air as he came along, apparently enjoying in advance a supper that he felt quite sure of. He seemed to halt at every step or so, as if greatly relishing the prospect.

At last he came very near, and we expected at every instant to see his head appear at the window, preparatory to tearing down the wall.

Resolved to sell our lives as dearly as possible, we grasped our weapons firmly, the Dean his "Delight" and I "Old Crumply," to the end of which I had firmly lashed the jack-knife, after grinding it very sharp on a stone, and giving it a good point.

As the knife blade was quite long, I had strong hopes of giving the bear such a wound, when he appeared at the window, as might be the death of him, or at any rate, frighten him so badly that he would be glad to run away, and not come back any more.

Nearer and nearer came the bear, and greater grew our alarm. Our hearts beat violently in our breasts, our faces were pale as death; we held our breath, as if fearful of making the least noise to give the bear encouragement.

At length the enemy gave a sudden start. It seemed to us as if he had now made a dash at the window, so we both rose to our feet, with our weapons ready to meet him; but to our great joy and relief, the sound of his footsteps showed that the beast was retreating, rather than advancing, and was moving more rapidly.

A moment afterwards we heard the rattle of stones, and now, from fear for ourselves, we passed instantly to fear for our stores; for we knew that it was our stores, and not we, that he was after, and that he must be tearing down one of our principal storehouses. And what if he should tear them all down, and eat up all our food and fuel? It was a fearful thought.

How often do we pass almost insensibly from the greatest terror to the greatest courage! Relieved now from all immediate personal apprehension, we felt at once inspired to protect our property, on the safety of which our lives depended.

We ceased at once to feel like standing passively on the defensive, but immediately crawled out of the hut to do something,—exactly what we did not know. Our thoughts had indeed hardly time to take shape in our minds, so quickly had the change come in the situation and in our feelings.

The bear was plainly in sight as soon as we got outside, tearing down our storehouse, as we had expected; but he appeared not to be thinking of us at all.

Without reflecting in the least what I was about, but filled only with alarm at the prospect of losing our food and fuel, I set up a loud shout, in which the Dean joined; and to our great astonishment, the huge beast that had caused us so much terror, took fright himself, and without looking round, or stopping a moment, he made a great bound, and tore away over the rocks, plunging through the snow-drifts, and rolling down the hill into the valley where we had dug the turf, in a most ridiculous manner.

We passed now from a state of the greatest terror to a feeling of perfect safety, and in such an unexpected manner too, that we laughed outright; and we thought that we had been very foolish to be so frightened, and looked upon our enemy as a great coward.

So we concluded that an animal who was so easily scared as that would never attack us; and therefore, getting our weapons, we followed after him hoping to drive him from the island. The jumps that he had made were immense, showing clearly the state of his mind.

Following the tracks of the bear, we came very soon in full view of the beach where the carcase of the narwhal was

lying half buried in ice and snow. The tracks led in that direction, and finally pointed straight to the spot.

He had in his flight evidently smelled the old narwhal, and remembering only that he was hungry, had stopped there; for presently we caught sight of him, tearing away at the narwhal with as much energy as he had before wasted upon our storehouse.

We had come quite near before we saw him; and now our spirits underwent another sudden change, and our minds were once more filled with such feelings of respect for the bear, that we turned about immediately, and beat a hasty retreat; and when once more under the shelter of the hut, prepared again to stand on the defensive.

All we could now do was to watch the bear closely. So long as the old narwhal lasted, we felt that we were safe enough, even after he had apparently satisfied himself with a good meal, and had gone away, as seemed likely, to sleep.

He would certainly, however, come back to the narwhal again when he got hungry; but now, worse than ever, when he did come back, there were two other bears with him, and all three of them were tearing away at the carcase of the dead narwhal. These last two were quite small ones,—the smaller not being larger than a big Newfoundland dog.

With this discovery all our newly found courage took rapid flight, and we were overtaken with even greater terror than before.

That the narwhal would soon all be gone seemed plain enough, with three bears feeding upon it; and then when this feeding was over, the first bear, knowing where our storehouse was and forgetting his fright, and having two bears and perhaps by that time even more to help him, we were sure he would soon come back again.

It seemed as if a great crisis had now come in our fortunes, and what to do we did not know, and what was to become of us we could not imagine. We were in great trouble.

CHAPTER XII.

A Bear Chase.

T was a long time before the bears finished the old narwhal; but finding how much they were occupied in that quarter, we went to our store-houses and brought all our stores away, and stowed them close to the mouth of the hut, thinking that if they were discovered, we should be better able to protect them.

First, however, we built up two solid snow-walls, about three feet apart, and as high as our heads, directly on a line with the entrance to our hut, so that when we went outside we walked right between them.

Then, behind these walls, we piled all the birds, seal-flesh, and eggs that we had for food, and all the blubber (now frozen quite hard) that we had for fuel,—the former on the right-hand side (going out), and the latter on the left.

Having done this, we covered the whole over with snow several feet deep; and as a still further protection against our enemies the bears, we built up a wall all round in front of the hut where there were no high rocks. Through this wall we left only one small hole to crawl through when we went out; and, when we came inside, we carefully closed it up with some large blocks of snow.

But we did not go outside much, being afraid; and, at length, when one of the bears was discovered prowling about very near the hut, we drew within our fortification, closed the opening in the wall as tightly as possible, and were prepared for a siege.

At first we did not sleep much, being all the time fearful of attack; but gaining courage as we found, day after day, that the bears did not come to molest us, we at length fell asleep both together; and it was while we were thus asleep that the bears discovered us; and before either of us awoke they had actually scaled the wall of our snow fort, and advanced to where our food and fuel were stowed, close to the mouth of the hut, and were tearing through the snow to get at it.

We were much frightened,—or I might perhaps better say alarmed, as we felt quite secure ourselves for the present, since the bears would not be likely to trouble us so long as there was anything else to eat; but then they might just as well eat us first, and the stores afterwards, as to eat the stores first; for then we must surely starve and freeze, which would be quite as bad.

We became now fully aroused to a sense of our unhappy position, and the first feeling of alarm having passed over, we began seriously to reflect upon what we should do; for something had to be done, and that very quickly.

I looked out through the window. and there were the bears all crowded together in the narrow passage; and one of them had already got among the frozen ducks, which were tumbling out in the snow at his feet, and he had one in his mouth, crunching away at it in such a manner as to leave no doubt that he was either very hungry or was in a violent hurry,—growling all the while with each crunch he gave, to keep away the other two bears.

This bear was much the largest of the three; indeed, the smallest one was not larger than a Newfoundland dog,—so not only was he a destructive, but what a selfish beast he was.

From alarm we now got to be angry, as we observed the liberties these bears were taking with our food, and the little ceremony they made of eating up, in this wholesale manner,

that which had cost us so much hard labour, and upon which our very lives now depended.

I seized "Old Crumply" in very desperation, and asked the Dean if he would follow me.

"What!" exclaimed he, "you don't mean to attack them?"

"That's just what I am going to do," said I; "and if you can do anything with 'The Delight,' now's your chance."

"I'll stand by you," said the Dean, grasping his weapon; "better to be killed outright by the bears than to let them starve us to death, and then perhaps kill us afterwards."

Desperate as was our condition, I could not help being amused by the Dean's way of putting the matter,—"first starved to death, and then killed;" and I think this little speech, turned in that happy though awkward way, did a great deal to stiffen up my courage.

I crawled out through the door and passage-way of the hut (which I have told you was not high enough for us to stand upright in), and upon coming near the end of it, there was the bear within three feet of me. His head was turned away, and his nose was all buried up in the snow; for he had swallowed his duck, and was getting a fresh one, so that he did not see me.

My heart seemed to be in my mouth,—so close to the dreadful monster,—so ferocious and fearful did he appear as I looked up at him. Had I been alone, I think I should have retreated; but here was the Dean behind me, and I was ashamed to back out, having gone thus far.

Summoning all my courage, therefore, I brought forward my spear, grasped it with both hands, and plunged it with all my force into the animal's neck, just behind the lower jaw and below the ear.

It was a fortunate stroke.

I had evidently, by chance, cut some great blood vessel,

for the blood gushed from the wound in a regular stream. The bear dropped his duck very quickly, I can tell you. He was probably never so much astonished in all his life before.

I had come upon him so stealthily, and he was so absorbed in what he was about, that he had never once suspected the presence of an enemy, but thought himself no doubt, a very lucky bear to find such a dinner ready caught for him.

But I caused him to sing another tune than to be constantly growling to frighten off the little bears, for he roared with terror, so that you might have heard him full half a mile; and finding that he could not wheel round as quickly as he wanted to, he roared again, louder than before, which sounded so dreadful that I drew back into the hut quite instinctively, and thus lost the opportunity of giving him another thrust, which I might very well have done, in the side.

When he had at last wheeled round, he rolled over the other two bears, and the three together, all roaring very loud, rolled against the snow-wall of our fort, and broke it down; and now, as soon as they could scramble to their legs again, they hurried away through the snow down into the valley,—the smallest one trying hard to keep up, and whining piteously all the while, as if he were afraid something would catch him; and now, just as we had done before, when we had with our shouts frightened the bears away when they had first come to disturb us, we ran after them, little thinking in the excitement of the moment of danger.

We found that the bear I had wounded held straight down the valley, as was easily told by the red streak he left behind him on the snow. The other two turned to the right, and ran over in the direction of the old narwhal.

Following the red streak, we soon came down to the beach; and then, climbing over the rough ice which the tide had

piled up, we were quickly upon the frozen sea, hurrying on as fast as we could go.

Indeed no feeling of fear ever crossed our minds; for the great quantity of blood that the bear left behind him somehow or other went to convince us, without reflection even, that the bear must be dead, and that we should presently come upon him.

While hurrying on at this rate, our spirits received a sudden check; for we did at length come upon the bear sure enough. As soon as we saw him we forgot all our courageous resolutions immediately, and wheeling about in great alarm, we ran back towards the hut.

Finding, however, that we were not pursued, we turned about again; and proceeding more cautiously this time, we came in a little while in sight of the bear again, very near where he was before; but now he was clearly by no means a formidable enemy; for he was going along very slowly, and making a crooked track.

Directly afterwards he fell over; and in a little while, we went up to him and found him dead,—having bled to death from the wound I had given him.

Imagine how rejoiced we were; for now we had an enormous supply of food, and a fine bear-skin besides; so I lost no time in unlashing the knife-blade from the end of "Old Crumply," and with this we began to butcher him.

It was a very cold and tedious operation; but we got through with it at last, and then burying all of the flesh in the snow except a small piece that we wanted for supper, we returned to the hut, dragging the skin after us, the Dean whistling all the way, 'Bonaparte crossing the Alps,' which he had picked up, as he told me, from a Frenchman in Havana.

While we were coming up the valley towards the hut, in this lively state of mind, the Dean stopped suddenly, and

said: "Suppose Hardy, the other two bears have taken a notion to come back;" and he was right; for we came presently in sight of one of them, very near the hut, and making directly for it.

As soon as he saw us, however, he ran away. So we took a good laugh at his expense, and thinking the other one must be near him though not in sight, we proceeded on our way.

Fortunately, however, before seeing the bear, we halted long enough to secure the knife-blade again on the end of "Old Crumply;" and it was well that I did this, for when we arrived at the broken wall where the bears had made their way out, much to our surprise, we came right upon the other bear, close up to the mouth of the hut, busily [illegible]llowing a duck. This was the smallest of the three bears, and he could not have been more than a year or so old.

No sooner did he hear us than he, like the other one, became alarmed; but, seeing that the road by which he had entered was blocked up, he did not try to escape in that way, nor did he appear to have the least idea that he had only to charge upon us to see how quickly he would clear the passage; for, instead of doing this, he rushed forward and darted into our hut, no doubt thinking that would lead to a place of safety.

I do not exactly know by what motive I was impelled, but I suppose the same that governed me on several other occasions; that is, a general one belonging to almost all human beings, and indeed, to most animals,—to chase whatever runs away, and to run away from whatever chases.

At any rate, I rushed up to the doorway of the hut, I believe without any idea at all in my head and without giving much thought about it, and had like to have got into a great scrape; for the bear, having found that the hut gave him no chance of escape, had turned about, and was coming out again.

I was wholly unprepared for him, so hasty had I been. I could not run, and therefore quite mechanically, I hit him in the face with the sharp point of "Old Crumply," which sent him back into the hut again, and made him roar in a dreadful manner, as if he were half killed.

I knew I must have hit him on some tender spot,—the eye it proved to be afterwards, so he was half blind as well as half dead.

It was very unfortunate that I had not let him go, or killed him outright; for we could now hear him tearing everything to pieces in our hut, trying to find a place of escape.

The wall between our sleeping-place and our closet was first knocked over, as he scrambled about; and there was no doubt that our pots and lamps were all broken to pieces.

It was like a roaring bull in a china shop, and we wished many times that he was only out and off; and if he had only known our minds upon the subject, a compromise would have been speedily made, and the bear might have gone scot-free on condition of his doing no further mischief.

The bear was not long in discovering the window. Now the window being very small, it was evident that if he attempted it, he would do us a great damage, for he could only pass through by knocking down some part of the wall.

No sooner, therefore, had his head appeared in that quarter, than the Dean charged him most gallantly with the "Delight," and gave him such a tremendous blow on the nose that he was glad enough to draw his head in again, which he did with a piteous cry. Then he became quiet for awhile, as if meditating upon what course it was best for him now to pursue.

Availing myself of this little pause, I exchanged weapons with the Dean, and fixing the harpoon head on the end of the "Delight," I tied the other end of the line, which was fast to

it, round a large stone which lay across the entrance to the hut.

This I did because I thought that there might be a possible chance of catching the bear; and that if we could only induce him to run out, I might harpoon him as he passed, and the stone would hold him fast until we could find some way of despatching him.

No sooner had these preparations been made than the bear was again in motion; and now he gave a roar that seemed loud enough to have rattled the whole hut down about his ears.

This time he had clearly tried the chimney, and had not only scattered the burning moss and fat all about the hut, but had set himself on fire into the bargain; for a great volume of smoke came out through the window, which smelled of burning hair.

The screams of the bear were now pitiful to hear, and in very desperation he once more tried the window, when the Dean quickly gave him a crack with "Old Crumply," which sent him back again.

Grown now utterly reckless, he bolted right through the door. I was ready for him, standing on the top of the passage-way and on the stone to which the harpoon line was made fast. As the bear came under me, I let drive with the harpoon, and stuck him in the back. And then away he dashed, plunging through the snow, smoking and blazing all over.

He had evidently rolled all about in our burning fat and moss, as bits of burning moss were sticking to him, setting his hair all on fire, and no doubt scorching his skin to a degree that must have made a dive into the snow very comfortable indeed.

As soon as he had run out all the line, the stone under my feet, instead of holding fast, gave way, pitching me after the

bear, and turning me quite upside down. I landed head-foremost in a snow-bank.

The burning bear went rushing and roaring away, dragging the big stone after him; but not far, however, for he fell over and died quickly, no doubt partly from fright, but chiefly perhaps from his wounds and his severe burns.

Having got rid of the bear, we gave him no further thought for the present, but rushed into the hut to see what mischief had been done there. The smoke was at first so thick that we were almost smothered by it.

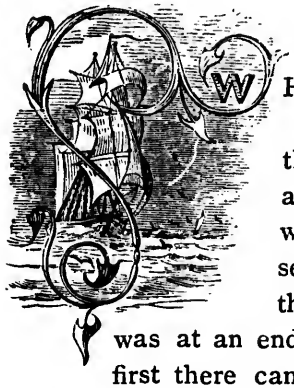
Our cloth coats and part of our fur bedding were all mixed up with the burning moss upon the floor, and were being rapidly destroyed. As we had feared, the pots and lamps were all broken; and in short, the inside of the hut was in a very sorry state.

It was a long time before we fully repaired all the damage the bear had done, and we suffered much inconvenience and discomfort before we replaced our pots, cups, and lamps.

When we had, however, at last done all this, we were not sorry that the bears had come to disturb us, but on the other hand were rather rejoiced; for we were now in all respects just as comfortable as ever, and had besides, a large warm bear-skin to sleep on, and one more variety of food added to our list, and that too, in such quantity that there was no fear of our coming to want very soon.

CHAPTER XIII.

Our Second and Third Summer and Second and Third Winter—An Unexpected Arrival.



WHILE all these adventures of the hunt and other matters were happening, the winter was passing rapidly away, and indeed was soon gone; and from what I have before said about the arctic seasons it will be understood that when the winter was at an end the darkness was at an end too; that is, to be more particular, first there came a little flush of light at noon, to see which made us very glad.

And after this, from day to day, the light grew brighter and brighter, until it was almost broad daylight, as it is here just before the sun has risen in the morning; then the sun came up next day only a little way above the horizon (of course right in the south); and then next day it was a little higher, and the next day a little higher still; and then by and by it was (as it had been in the summer-time before) circling round and round us, shining all the time; and now our hut was at midnight in the shadow of the cliff, and at noon the sun was blazing down upon us, softening the snow, and making our hearts, O, more happy and thankful than I can tell.

I thought I never in all my life saw anything so splendid as the sun's bright force, when he appeared for the first time after this long dark winter. For we were more than one hun-

dred and twenty days without once setting eyes upon the sun at all; and now, when he did rise after this long interval, what could we do but take off our caps and whirl them round and round our heads, in very joy and gladness?

The summer now came on steadily, and the temperature became warmer every day. The spring was passing into summer, and early in the month of June the snow began to melt in good earnest, and by July great streams of melted snow went dashing and roaring over the cliffs, and through the gorges, to the sea.

And the sea too, quickly began to show the influence of the summer heat; for the ice grew rotten shortly, and from being white it got to be quite dark, and we could no longer go out upon it with any safety, except in one particular direction, towards the east, where it was much thicker than in any other place.

Then strong winds came, and the ice was broken up, and after that it went drifting here and there to right and left, up and down upon the sea, according as the winds were blowing.

And now once more we kept a sharp look-out for ships, hoping every day that that would be the day of our deliverance. And so we lived on as we had done before, every day adding one more disappointment to the list, for no ship came.

Thus watching, waiting, hoping on, we grew restless with anxiety, and were more unhappy than we had ever been in the gloomy winter that had passed away.

But the summer brought some pleasure to us. As soon as the snow had gone the grass grew green upon the hillside, and the tiny little plants put out their leaves; then the tiny little flowers began to bloom brightly, turning up their pleasant faces to the ever-smiling sun.

And the birds came back again; the eider-ducks and the little auks, and great flocks of geese and gulls, all looking out for places where to make their nests; and they fairly kept

the air alive with the flutter of their wings, and their "quack, quack, quack," and their gladsome screams, as they hurried to and fro.

And then bright yellow butterflies and little bees came fluttering and buzzing about the little flowers, and all was life and happiness and brightness in the air about us; but there was no one there to look at us and see how heavy were our hearts at times.

But not on our desert island alone was nature full of life and gaiety. The seals, as if glad that summer had once more returned, crawled out upon the ice and lay there on it where it floated in the water, basking in the sun.

There were hundreds and hundreds of them to be seen almost every day; and, besides the seals, the walruses with their great long hideous-looking tusks and ugly and ungraceful bodies came up too; and the narwhals, also, with their long ivory horns, and the white whales, were to be seen at almost any time, "spouting" round about us in the sea.

And besides all this life in the sea, and in the air, and on the land, we now and then saw a large white bear, prowling about upon the floating ice-fields, seeking seals to feed upon, and when tired of one ice-field, springing into the water, and swimming away to another.

Thus it will be seen, that if we were upon a desert island in the Arctic Sea, it was not so barren as one would think who had never seen or known anything of such a place.

It is not worth while for me to recount how we lived through this second summer. Of course we had a much easier time of it than we had had the summer previous, for there was no hut to build, and we had now leisure to make ourselves more comfortable; and, indeed, we used our time so well that we accumulated, in good season, everything we needed in the way of food and fuel, catching the birds and other animals as before, and stowing all away in so many different places that

we felt quite sure the bears would not be likely to discover all of it.

And then we made fresh suits of fine fur clothes, and fresh fur bedding, and carved new lamps and pots and cups out of soapstone, that we might be safe against all accidents.

While we were thus working, and watching all the time for ships, without the hoped-for ship ever coming, the summer passed away, the birds flew off once more with the setting sun, the sea froze up all around the island, and we were left again alone—all, all alone, in the cold and snow and darkness of another winter.

And this winter passed as the other had. No bears came this time, however, to disturb us; and another summer came to find us in good health, and now well hardened to the climate. And this summer passed, with its bright sunshine, and its pretty butterflies and flowers, and myriads of birds, and still no ship, and still no rescue.

The next winter brought us the same routine, but greater resignation. "Here we are for ever," said the Dean, "and that we must make up our minds to. It is God's will, and we must bow before it and be reconciled."

"I fear Dean, that that is so," I answered solemnly.

This was in the month of February, and the sunlight was coming back; and to see if we could not catch a glimpse of the god of day we had gone out together, wading through the heavy snow.

The Dean felt it when he said "we must be reconciled;" but he had hardly spoken when our attention was quickly called away from such reflections (and from the sun too) by seeing an object moving on the frozen sea, not far away from us.

We were not long in doubt as to what the object was, for we had seen too many polar bears to be cheated this time; and a bear it was, without any doubt at all. He was running very

fast, and was making directly towards the island. He soon ran behind a large iceberg, and for a little time was out of sight; but he appeared again soon afterwards, and held on in the same course.

Then we lost him once more among rough ice, and then again he came in view. He appeared so dark at first, that less experienced persons might have been uncertain about what it was; for although the polar bear is usually called the white bear, yet in truth he has a yellowish hue and is quite dark, at least in comparison with the pure white snow.

"It's another bear, I do believe!" exclaimed the Dean, and at once we made for the hut, without stopping for further reflection. But the bear was running much faster than we were, and was moreover coming in right towards our hut. So we grew much alarmed and quickened our speed, and not without difficulty either; for the snow was in places very deep.

By and by the bear, which proved to be a very large one, caught sight of us; and as the polar bear is rather a cowardly brute than otherwise, it is not surprising, that when he saw us, he altered his course, and turned off from the island as fast as he could go. Seeing him do this (to our great delight), we halted to watch him; and now we perceived, for the first time, that the animal was pursued.

By what we could not imagine, but clearly enough by something; for in the distance, and from the quarter whence the bear had come there was clearly to be seen, winding among the bergs and rough masses of ice, a dark object, following on the very track which the bear had taken, sometimes lost to sight and sometimes in full view, and growing larger every moment, just as the bear had done.

Nearer and nearer came this object, and greater and greater grew our wonder. Presently we heard a cry.

"Hark!" said the Dean.

The cry was repeated.

"A dog!" exclaimed the Dean.

"A dog!" said I in answer, for I heard it clearly.

"Hark!" said the Dean again, for there was another sound.

"A man," said I.

"A man!" repeated the Dean, excitedly.

And a man it was.

Dogs and men! what could they be doing there? was the question that ran through both our minds at once.

But dogs and a man (not men) there were, and whatever they might be doing there, or whence they might have come, it was certain that of dogs and a man were made the dark spot which we saw upon the white frozen sea; and it was moreover clear that they were pursuing the bear which had passed us and was now pretty far away.

Nearer and nearer came the dogs and man, and the sounds came clearer and clearer; the dogs were upon the bear's great tracks, the man was upon a sledge to which the dogs were fastened. At length they came so near that we could easily count them.

They were seven, and all of different colours, and were fastened with long lines to the sledge, so that they were a great way in front of it, and were running all abreast. They were straining and pressing into their collars, all the while crying impatiently, as they bounded over the snow at a rapid gallop.

The man was encouraging them along all he could with a long whip, which he threw out with a lively snap, exclaiming, "Ka, ka! ka, ka!" over and over again; and then "Nenook, nenook, nenook!"—many times repeated; for he was now near enough for us to distinguish every word he uttered.

It was a wild chase, and both the Dean and myself became much excited over it, running all the time to get nearer to the passing sledge and man and dogs.

Very soon we should have met, but suddenly the bear came in full view of the dogs, evidently for the first time, for up to this moment the dogs had only been following the tracks. The dogs, now leaving the track, gave a wild, concerted howl, and dashed off after the bear in a straight line.

Man, sledge, dogs, and all passed us quickly by,—the man shouting more excitedly than ever to his dogs, sometimes calling them by name, as it seemed to us, and sometimes crying "Nenook, nenook!" and sometimes, "Ka, ka! ka, ka!" and so away they went rushing like the wind,—the whole scene more strange than strangest dream,—the dogs and man like spectral things, so quickly had they come and so unexpected; or at the least, the dogs seemed like howling wolves, and the man a wild man of the frozen ocean clothed in wild beasts' skins.

We called to the man to stop; we shouted "Come here, come here!" and then again, "Come back, come back!" as loud as we could shout, waving round our caps, and throwing up our arms, and running in a most frantic way; but not the slightest notice would he take of us, not one instant would he stop, but upon his course and purpose he kept right on, pushing after the running bear, without appearing to give us even a single thought. We could not doubt that he had seen us, we were so near to him.

On went the bear, on after him went the dogs and sledge and man. More impatient grew the dogs, louder called the man to his excited team, and the Dean and I ran after, shouting still, as we had done in the beginning. We came soon upon the sledge track, and followed it at our greatest speed.

At length the cries of the dogs grew indistinct, and then

died away entirely; the man's voice was no longer heard, and that which had come so suddenly to put a tantalizing hope of rescue in our hearts for one brief moment, soon became but a dark moving speck upon the great white frozen sea, as it had first appeared; still we followed on.

Then the moving speck faded out of view, and everything around was still and cold and solemn and desolate as before.

Yet on and on we ran and ran, until we could run no more.

And then we laid us down upon the snow and wept, and we bemoaned our hard, hard fate; but no word was spoken.

The disappointment was too great for words; and after a short rest in the chilly air upon the frozen sea, we wandered slowly back to our poor hut; and after many weary hours we reached it, more dead than alive—for through miles and miles of heavy snow we had run after the sledge, and through these same miles we trudged back again, with a cruel disappointment rankling in our hearts, and with no hope to buoy us up.

Strange—was it not?—that at no period of our unhappy life upon the desert island were we so unhappy as we were that day—never so utterly cast down, never so broken-spirited, never looking on the future with such hopelessness.

And in this state of mind we crawled beneath our furs, feeling too lonely and forsaken to have any thought of cooking a meal, and so very weary with the labours we had done, in running and wading through the heavy snow, that we did not care for food; and in deep sleep we buried up the heaviest sorrow that we had ever known—the grievous sorrow of a dead, dead hope.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BEAR-HUNTER OF THE FROZEN SEA—A WELCOME VISITOR—MYSTERIOUS DEPARTURE.

HOW long we slept I have not the least idea. It may have been a whole day, or it may have been two days. It was not a twenty years' sleep, (how we wished it had been!) like that of Rip Van Winkle, yet it was a very long sleep; and indeed, neither of us cared how long it lasted. we were so cast down about what seemed to be the greatest misfortune that had yet happened to us.

If we woke up at any time, we went to sleep again as quickly as possible, not caring at all to come back any sooner than was necessary to the contemplation of our miserable situation,—never reflecting for a moment that the situation had not been changed in the least by the unknown savage who had appeared and disappeared in such a mysterious way.

But the sight of him had brought us back again to the world from which we had been cut off,—a world with human beings in it like ourselves; and it was not altogether unnatural therefore, that we should be made miserable by the event.

And so we sleep on and on, and thus we drowned everything but our dreams, which there as everywhere, are very apt to be

most bright and cheering in the most gloomy and despondent times. Such, as least, was the case with me; and if I could have kept dreaming and dreaming on for ever, about pleasant things to eat, and pleasant people talking to me, I should have been well satisfied.

But our long sleep was brought to an end very suddenly I was first startled by a great noise, and then springing up, much alarmed, I aroused the Dean, who was a sounder sleeper even than myself.

"What's the matter?" cried he.

"Didn't you hear a noise?" I asked.

"No!" answered the Dean; "nothing more at least, than a church-bell, and that was in my sleep,"—which was clear enough.

Presently I heard the noise again, and this time it seemed to proceed from something not far off. It was now the Dean's turn to be amazed.

"Did you hear?" I asked again.

"Yes!" said the Dean, holding his breath to listen.

Again the strange sound was repeated.

"Is it the wind?"

"How can it be? the wind does not make a noise like that!"

"Can it be a bear?"

"No! it cannot be a bear!"

"A fox? perhaps it is a fox!"

"No, listen! there it is again."

The sound was louder now, and nearer to the hut. Again and again it was repeated,—nearer now and more constant; then a footfall on the crusted snow.

"It is a man! the bear-hunter has come back again!" shouted the Dean, quite frantically, and throwing up his hands.

Again the noise was heard; again the footfall creaked upon the snow.

"The bear-hunter, it must be!" cried the Dean again.

"O God! I pray that it is so," I added.

Again the voice was heard. I answered it. The answer was returned, and with the answer came a heavier and more rapid creaking of the footfalls on the snow.

We rushed from the hut into the open air without a moment's loss of time, and without saying another word; and there, not ten yards away, stood the very man who had passed us on the sledge,—the bear-hunter of the frozen sea.

And a strange-looking creature he was, to be sure. There was not the least sign of alarm or fear about him; but on the contrary, he was looking mightily pleased, and was talking very fast in a language of which the Dean and I could neither of us understand a single word.

When he was not talking he was laughing, and his enormous mouth was stretched almost from ear to ear. "Yeh, yeh!" he went, and I went that way too, by way of answer, which seemed greatly to delight him. He was dressed all over in furs, and looked very wild; but as he kept yeh, yeh-ing all the time, we were not afraid. As he came up to us, we greeted him very cordially; but he could no more understand what we said than we could understand him.

He talked very much, and gesticulated a great deal, pointing very often in one particular direction with his right hand. Then he cried, "Mick-ee, mick-ee!" and pointed to the beach below, towards which we followed him. There we found a sledge and seven dogs; and now we understood very certainly, if we had any doubts before, that this was the man and these were the dogs that had passed us following the bear.

The man tried his best to explain to us the whole affair, talking very rapidly; but we could not gather from what he said more than our eyes told us already, for on the sledge we

soon discovered a large bear-skin, all bloody and folded up, and some large pieces of bear's meat.

The dogs were tied some distance from the sledge, and were securely fastened by their traces to a heavy stone, which I was very glad of, for the wolfish brutes were snarling at each other, and fighting and howling at us continually,—seeming all the while to wish themselves loose, that they might fly upon us, and tear us to pieces.

If we could not understand the hunter's words, we made out by his signs, after awhile, that he had seen us when he passed in pursuit of the bear.

After overtaking and capturing the animal, he turned about upon his track to look for us, and, finding our footmarks at last, he had followed us to the hut, calling loudly as he neared us to attract our attention, for he could not find us easily,—our hut was so buried up in snow.

After being fully satisfied with the inspection of the dogs and sledge and what there was upon it, we all three returned to the hut.

It would be difficult to describe our visitor. I have said that he was wholly dressed in furs. His pantaloons were made of bear-skins reaching to the knees, where they met the boots, which were made of the same material. His under-clothing was made of bird's-skins, like our own, and he wore a coat of fox-skins, with a heavy hood covering up the head completely. On his hands he wore mittens made of seal-skins, with warm dog skin for an inside lining, and his stockings were of the same.

So that no part of him was exposed but his face, which was quite dark, or rather, copper-coloured (something darker than a North American Indian), and it was very broad and very round. The nose was very small and very flat, and the eyes were small and narrow. His hair was jet black, long and tangled, and was cut straight across the forehead. He had

but little beard,—only a few black, wiry-looking bristles growing on his upper lip and on the tip of his chin.

One would hardly suppose that such a creature could be anything else than savage and repulsive; but he was really as amiable a fellow as ever was seen. The first word he said that we understood the meaning of was, 'Me drinkum.' This very much surprised us, as we knew that he was asking for water, which having been given him, he then said, 'Me eatum,' signifying that he was hungry. We lost no time therefore, in preparing him a hearty meal of ducks and bear's meat, which he appeared to relish very much.

Then he had a great deal to tell us about something that he called "Oomeaksuak," the meaning of which we could not make out; but as he pointed in a particular direction, we thought he meant the place where he lived. We could not understand from him what his name was; so, as we had to speak of him to each other constantly, we called him at once "Eatum," as that was the word he used most.

He amused us very much with his frequent repetition of it, and with the enormous quantities of food he took into his stomach after he did repeat it; for he only had to say, "Me eatum," to get as much food as he wanted. It soon got to be quite a joke with us, and when he said, "Me eatum," we all three fell not only to feeding but to laughing besides.

Finding himself in such plesant quarters, Eatum manifested no disposition to leave them; but after he had taken a sound sleep, he had a great deal to say about "mickee," as before; and since he made a great many motions, as if using a whip (pointing all the while towards the beach), we concluded that he must mean something about his dogs, which we found to be true, for "mickee" in his language means dog, as we afterwards discovered.

As soon as we had settled this, we all went out of the hut again, and went down and brought the bear's meat and skin

on the sledge up to the hut, and then we fastened the dogs near by. After being fed, they all lay down and went to sleep on the snow. These dogs were very large and strong animals; and the seven could draw a very heavy load.—I should think that the whole seven could draw as much as a small horse.

Eatum seemed to have been quite exhausted with long hunting when he came to us, and he did very little but eat and sleep for several days. His nose had been a little touched by the frost, but he scorched some oil, and rubbed it on as we would ointment, and cured it very quickly.

After he had eaten and slept to his entire satisfaction, he appeared to grow more lively, and showed a great deal of curiosity about our hut and furniture, and hunting implements, being highly pleased with every new thing he saw. It was very surprising to see how nearly like his own many of our things were,—our lamp and pot and cups, for instance, and also our clothing. Our harpoon (the "Dean's Delight") was almost exactly a match for his.

It was a great drawback to our satisfaction that we could not understand him or he us, but little by little we got over part of this difficulty; for upon discovering that he used one particular word very often, I guessed that he must be asking a question. The word was "Kina"; so once when he used it he was pointing to our lamp, and I said "lamp" at a venture, whereupon, after repeating it several times, he appeared to be much gratified and then said, "Kolipsut," and this I repeated after him, which pleased him again.

Then I knew that "Kina?" meant "What is it?" or "What's this?" so after that we *kina*-ed everything, and got on famously. We of course learned more rapidly than Eatum, picking up a great many words from him; and having both of us good memories, we got to be able to make him understand us a little in the course of time; and as fast as we

learned we taught him, and he got to know some of our language, in which we encouraged him. "Me speakum much bad," he would say sometimes, which was very true; but so long as we understood him it made little matter.

And now it was that we got to find out how he had picked up the few words such as *me drinkum*, *me eatum*, &c., that he had used at first; for he gave us to understand that we were not a long way from where ships came every year, and that some of his people saw the ships when they passed, and sometimes went aboard of them. "Ship" was what he meant by "*Oomeaksuak*," which word he had at first used so often. He had frequently been aboard of a Oomeaksuak, he said.

Now this was great news for us, and we began at once to devise means of escape from the island. We made Eatum understand as much of what we wanted as possible.

All this time I must not neglect to mention, however, that Eatum was of the greatest service to us; for when the weather was good he would fasten his dogs to the sledge, and all three of us would go out together on the sea to hunt,—Eatum driving. It was very lively sport indeed; and sometimes when the ice was very smooth and the snow hard, we went very fast, almost as fast as a horse would run, even with the three of us upon the sledge.

The sledge, by the way, was made out of bits of bones, all cunningly lashed together with seal-skin thongs.

Once we were caught in a severe gale, a good way from home, and had to make a little house to shelter ourselves from it out of snow; and in this, with our furs on, we managed to sleep quite comfortably, and remained there about twenty-four hours, before the weather would permit us to go on again.

While in the snow-hut we had a lamp to give us light and warmth; and this lamp (which was Eatum's) was made like ours, and Eatum made a spark, and started a flame, and kept it burning just as we had done,—the tinder being the down of

the willow blossom (which he carried wrapped up in seal-skin), with moss for wick and the blubber for fuel. The pot in which he melted snow for water, and cooked our suppers was made like ours, of soapstone.

When the storm broke we left the snow-hut and set out for the island; catching two seals by the way, and in the very same manner too that the Dean and I had done long before we ever knew there was such a person as Eatum in the world. We were much disappointed at not discovering any bears, and so were the dogs.

But not many days after, the weather being fine, we went out upon the sea a long way, and were rejoiced to come across a bear's track, which Eatum said was very fresh. No sooner had the dogs seen it than away they started upon it; and over the ice and snow—rough and smooth, right upon the track—they ran as fast as they could go.

The bear had been sleeping behind an iceberg, and we had come upon him so suddenly that he had not time even to get out of sight, and we saw him almost as soon as we had discovered the track. "Nenook, nenook!" cried Eatum, pointing towards him; and there he was, sure enough, running as fast as he could. But no matter how fast he ran, we went still faster; and it could not have been an hour before we overtook him. Then Eatum leaned forward and untied his dogs, letting them run ahead while the sledge stopped.

In a few minutes the dogs had brought the bear to bay,—surrounding the huge wild beast, and flying at his sides, and tormenting him in a very fierce manner. But I always observed that they took good care to keep away from his head, for if he should get a chance at one of them, and hit him with his huge paws, he would smash him into little bits.

While the dogs were worrying the bear we got out our weapons,—the Dean his "Delight," I "Old Crumply," and

Eatum a spear made of a narwhal horn, and looking for all the world, just like "Old Crumply's" twin brother.

Then we rushed up to the bear, Eatum leading; and fierce though the animal looked, and awfully as he roared, we closed right in upon him, and quickly made an end of him. Then we drove off the dogs, and tied them to a lump of ice, while we butchered the dead animal and secured the skin and what meat we wanted, after which we allowed the dogs to gorge themselves.

Being now too full to haul, we had to let them lie down and sleep, while we built a snow hut, and crawling into it, took a good rest. Then we returned to the island, mighty well satisfied with ourselves.

After this we fell again into conversation about the Oomeaksuaks, or ships, as I have explained before; and having learned more and more of the language which Eatum spoke, we got to comprehend him better, so we fixed clearly in our minds where the place was that the ships came to, and were fully satisfied that Eatum told the truth about it. We now offered to give him everything we had if he would take us there and stay with us until the ships should come along and take us off his hands.

About this we had several conversations; but just when we thought the treaty was complete, and Eatum was going to carry out the plan we had fixed upon, this singular savage disappeared very suddenly,—dogs, sledge, and all,—without saying a word to us about it.

When we made the discovery that he was gone, we were filled with astonishment and dismay. We hoped at first, that he had gone off hunting; but finding that he did not return, we tried to follow the tracks of his sledge, but the wind had drifted snow over them, and we could not.

We now made up our minds that Eatum was nothing more than a treacherous savage; and we were afraid that he

would come back with more savages and murder us, in order that he might get the furs and other things that we had; so for awhile we were much alarmed, and were more cast down I believe than ever before, for our hopes had been raised very high, and since we had heard of Eatum's people and the ships we had begun to feel sure of rescue.

The suddenness with which all our expectations were destroyed quite overcame us, and we passed the next five days very miserably indeed, hardly stirring out of the hut during all that time. But at length we saw the folly of giving way to despair.

One thing we quickly determined upon, and that was to leave the island, one way or another; for now we were so afraid of the savages coming to murder us, that we would suffer any risk and hardship rather than remain there longer. So once more we began to devise means for our safety.

It was no longer what we should do for food and fuel, or clothing, but how we should escape. The ships we had given up long ago, and with the ships had vanished every hope of rescue. But now a wild man had come to us out of the ice-desert, and had told us that ships came in the summer not far from where we were, and through this intelligence we had obtained a glimpse of home and our native country, as it were; and this too at the very time when we had become most reconciled to our condition, and had made up our minds to live as best we could on the Rock of Good Hope for the remainder of our days.

But now our minds were wholly changed. "We are worse off than ever," said the Dean, "for this little hope the savage gave us, and the fear, besides, that he had put into us,"—which was true enough.

Stimulated now by the memory of that hope and the presence of that fear, we prepared to undertake the bold task of rescuing ourselves.

The savage had pointed out to us the direction of the place where the ships passed, "And now," we thought, "if we can only reach the land there before the summer comes we shall be all right." But if we should not get to the proper place, or if the ships did not come along, then the chances were that we might starve or freeze to death.

Nothing daunted, however, but the contemplation of that gloomy side of the picture, we went earnestly to work, and very soon had contrived a plan.

Of course we must have a sledge, as we were obliged to travel a long distance, and must carry not only food to eat by the way, but blubber for a lamp with which to melt water from the snow, and furs to keep us warm while we sleep. Eatum had taught us how to construct a snow-hut, so that we felt quite easy about being able to shelter ourselves from the storms.

But the sledge was the great difficulty. How shall we make a sledge? was the question which most occupied our thoughts and most taxed our ingenuity.

Apparently we had nothing to make it of, nor tools to make it with.

To fasten together pieces of bone in the manner that Eatum had done, and thus construct a runner, was not in our power, as we had no drill to make holes with,—and besides if we had, the work would have required too long a time for our present necessities. Our purpose was to get away from the island with as little delay as possible.

We made a sledge however, at last, and in a very singular way.

First we cut our two strips of seal-skin, and sewed them into tubes. Then we filled the tubes with hair, and pieces of meat chopped very fine, and also bits of moss. Then we poured water into the tubes, and flattened them down by stamping upon them. Very soon the whole froze together, solid as a

board. These were soon fastened into the proper shape for runners. We found no difficulty in fastening the two together with crossties of bone, which we lashed firmly to each runner.

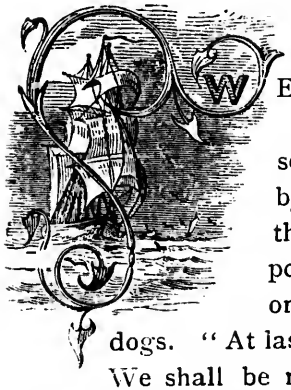
Thus in seven days from the time of beginning, our sledge was complete.

Very much rejoiced over this triumph, we put a load on the sledge, and set out to give it a trial. But one runner gave way before we had gone a dozen yards, and we were in a state of great perplexity. We resolved now to bundle up everything we needed in a bear-skin, and drag that over the snow after us,—drawing it headforemost, so that the fur would slip more easily over the snow.

But when we had done this, we discovered that we could not budge the load an inch; and so we unpacked it, in greater trouble and despair than ever. Next day we went back to the sledge, and began to work upon it again; all the while looking out for the savages, and expecting them to come and murder us every minute.

CHAPTER XV.

MORE VISITORS—A CHANCE OF ESCAPE—OUR NEW HOME—LIFE AMONG THE SAVAGES—SHIFTING OUR QUARTERS—THE SEALSKIN VILLAGE—THE RESCUE—HOMEWARD BOUND.



WE had completed our sledge a second time, and were about giving it a second trial, when we were startled by a loud noise; and there down upon the sea, coming round the nearest point of the island, were five savages on five sledges, with five trains of dogs. "At last," thought, we "our time has come. We shall be murdered now for certain, and then eaten up by the dogs afterwards."

"O!" exclaimed the Dean, "what will become of us?"

Seizing our weapons, we prepared to defend ourselves, since there was no use trying to run away, as the dogs would be atop of us before we could reach the hut.

But there was not the least necessity for our being so much alarmed; the savages soon convinced us they meant no harm. They would not let their dogs come near us, but kept them off, and stopping, tied them fast. Then, without any weapons in their hands, they came up to us in a most friendly manner, all yeh yeh-ing at a terrible rate. So we took the five of them right off up to the hut, and now our tears were turned into rejoicing, and thus in an instant had Providence turned our sorrow into joy.

Our savage visitors proved to be all just as singular-looking creatures, and were as curious about us and about everything we had, as Eatum had been. Their faces were on a broad grin all the time.

Having learned something of their language previously, from Eatum, we contrived to make them understand, with the aid of a great many signs, how the ship had been wrecked, and how we got first to the ice and then to the land,—for this they were most curious about,—and they were greatly puzzled to know how we came to be there at all.

After this they treated us quite affectionately, patting us on the back, and exclaiming "Tyna, tyna," which we knew to mean "Good, good," as Eatum had told us.

Then Eatum wanted to show himself off in our language, and pointing to us, he said, "Hunter plenty good, plenty eat get. All same," pointing to himself by way of illustration, and thus finishing it,) "tyna? yeh, yeh, yeh!" which was the way he had of laughing, as I have said before, and all the rest "yeh, yeh-ed" just like him. One of them we called at once "Old Grim," because he "yeh, yeh-ed" with his insides; but no laugh ever showed itself in his face.

After their curiosity was satisfied, they imitated Eatum, and began to call loudly, "drinkum" and then "eatum" "yeh, yeh-ing" as before in a very lively manner; so that, what with their "yeh, yeh-ing" and "eatum and drinkum," there was quite a merry time of it.

Meanwhile however, we were busying ourselves to satisfy their wants, and it was not long before our visitors were as full as they could hold. It was a curious sight to see them eat. They would put one end of a great chunk of meat in the mouth, and holding tight to the other end, they would cut it off close up to their lips. Our seal blubber they treated in the same way.

Of this blubber they seemed to be very fond; and indeed,

all people living in cold climates soon grow fond of fat of every kind. It is such strong food, which people require there as much as they do warm clothing, and in great quantities too. The people living in the Arctic regions have little desire for vegetable food; and the savages there eat nothing but meat, fish, and fat.

Our guests did not leave off eating until each had consumed a quantity of food equal at least to the size of his head; and then they grew drowsy, and wanted to "*singikpok*," which we knew from Eatum meant sleep; and in "*singikpok*" we were glad enough to indulge them, although greatly to our inconvenience, for they nearly filled our hut.

The savages slept very soundly for awhile; but one by one they woke up, and as soon as their eyes were open, they fell to eating again until they were satisfied, and then in a minute afterwards they were fast asleep. This they kept up for about two days, and you may be sure they made away with a great deal of our provisions before they were done with it.

When they had thoroughly gorged themselves, and slept all they could, they were ready to start off again; and now we found that they had come to take us away, which we were very glad of, although they were such singular looking people, and we could understand so little of what they said, or knew so little of what their designs might be concerning us.

But whatever these might be, it gave us an apparent chance of escape which was not to be thrown away, as it might be the only one we would ever have. Besides the savages never once asked us if we would go with them, but began to bundle up our furs, food, and blubber, and everything else we had, as if resolved to take us whether or no.

At first we felt a little alarm,—without expressing it however; but seeing how good-natured they were about it, and how considerate they appeared to be for us, we had no further fear, but trusted them entirely.

The five sledges were pretty heavily loaded with our property; but off we started at length I riding with Eatum, while the Dean was on the sledge of "Old Grim." The Dean carried his "Delight," of course, while I held on to "Old Crumply." Nor were our "palm and needle," and jack knife, that had done such good service, forgotten. Indeed we brought away everything.

Of course we were very much rejoiced to get away from the Rock of Good Hope, even although our fortunes were yet very uncertain; still it had been our rock of refuge and safety, and in our thankfulness, we could but cast upon it a look of tender regret at parting from it.

Together there, the Dean and I could but remember that we had achieved many triumphs, which were to us a source of great pride, and would always continue to be as long as we lived; while on the other hand, if we had suffered many discomforts and sorrows, these would not we knew linger long in the memory.

Besides, on the Rock of Good Hope, and in the hut we were leaving, we had learned to know each other, and to love each other, and to be bound together by a strong bond of friendship, which, as it was formed in adversity, was not likely to be broken.

But in thinking of what was before us, we had soon to give up thinking of what was behind us, and to let the Rock of Good Hope, and the hut, and the life we had led there, with its struggles and trials and triumphs pass away as some vague and shadowy dream; for on we sped, with our caravan of sledges, over the frozen sea,—the dogs all lively, and galloping away with their bushy tails curled over their backs, and their heads up; their savage drivers crying to them, now and then, "Ka, ka! ka, ka!" and snapping their whips to keep them at a brisker run, and all the while talking to each other in a loud voice,—sometimes, as we could clearly under-

stand, about ourselves, and sometimes whether they should go off on a bear hunt.

Occasionally one of the teams would scent a seal-hole, and away the dogs would rush towards it as hard as they could go, all the other teams following after, pell-mell; and when they reached the hole, it was all the hunters could do, by whipping and shouting and scolding, to keep all the teams from coming atop of each other, and getting all of a heap.

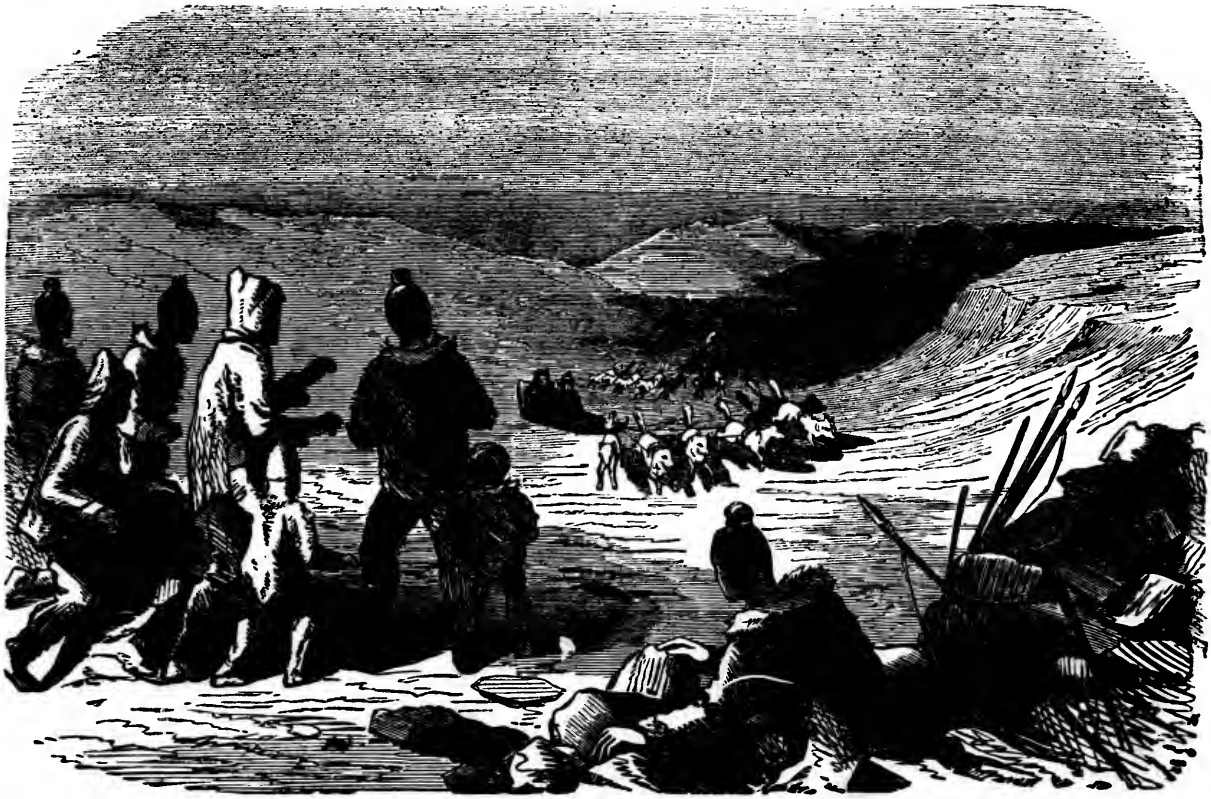
Once this happened with two of the teams. The dogs all became tangled in each other's traces, the sledges got locked together, and the animals fell to fighting, one team against the other, in a most vicious manner.

This was a very novel mode of travelling, and we enjoyed it greatly, even although it was pretty cold and the journey was very long. It seemed strange to us to be thus wandering without chart or compass over the great ice-desert on the sea; for all around us was nothing but a great plain of whiteness, only broken here and there by an iceberg, which glittered like a great diamond in the bright sunshine.

We must have gone at least sixty or seventy miles before we made a single halt; and then we came to the village where these singular people lived. It was not on the land, but out on the frozen sea over which we had travelled.

As we approached the dogs ran very fast; and this was the first idea I had of where we were coming to. "*Igloo, igloo!*" exclaimed Eatum, pointing, when we neared the village. As I had already learned that *igloo* meant hut in their language, I was much rejoiced; for I was very tired with the long journey, and cold besides.

We soon came up to the village, which proved to be only a collection of huts made of frost-hardened snow. There were in all six of them. Several more hunters were there, who came out to meet us; and their dogs rushed out too, making a



ARRIVAL AT THE SNOW-HUT VILLAGE. p. 146.

great noise; and when we had halted, a number of women joined them, all dressed in furs just like the men, and also children dressed in the same way, and all very anxious about us, and all yeh, yeh-ing a great deal.

Indeed, we made such a commotion in the village as never was seen before. But everybody appeared to be kindly disposed towards us, and into one of the huts we were both taken immediately, and down we sat on the floor of the hut, which was covered all over with bear-skins. There were two lamps in it, almost exactly like ours, and two pots were hanging over them.

We had soon a good meal, and very quickly after that were sound asleep; and even although it was a snow hut, and among savages, we were thankful in our very heart of hearts. And our thankfulness was because we were among human beings once more, and felt no longer as if we were wholly cast away from the world; and we felt hopeful that through these savages would come means of escape to our homes.

We felt thankful too, that they treated us so kindly,—the women especially; for savages though they were, they were possessed of much feeling and sympathy. One of the women made the Dean go to sleep with his head in her lap, which it was easy to see he did not like a bit; and before this, she had fed him with her own fingers, and while he was sleeping, she stroked his bright hair away from his handsome face. Another of the women treated me very much in the same way; but being older, and not handsome like the Dean, I didn't come in for so many favours.

Then besides that, the women took off our damp fur stockings, and gave us dry ones before we went to sleep; and they seemed to want to do everything they could for us, so that we soon became convinced they meant us no harm.

The woman who was particularly kind to me was the wife

of Eatum; and the Dean and I at once called her Mrs. Eatum which made them all "yeh, yeh," very much; and they got to calling her that too, as near at least, as they could pronounce it, which was "*Impsuseatum*." Her right name was *Serkut*, which means "little nose;" Eatum's right name was *Tuk tuk*, that is reindeer, because he could run very fast. There were two young Eatums; and when I began to play with them I grew in great favour with the Eatum family.

The Dean was quite as well off for patrons as I, being specially taken care of by a woman whose husband had been one of our rescued party. Her name I forget now, but it meant "Big-toes," so what with nursing by "Little-nose" and "Big-toes," and with plenty of seal meat to eat, the Dean and I got on capitally. The name of Big-toes' husband was *Awak*, which means walrus. He was a fine hunter, and had plenty of dogs.

These dogs I should mention, were always allowed to run loose about the village; and no matter how cold it was, they slept on the snow. But their harness had to be taken off else they would eat it! and everything eatable was buried out of sight in the snow, or brought inside the hut.

After we had been eating, and sleeping, and enjoying the hospitality of these savages about three days, a young hunter whose name was *Kossuit*, which meant that he was a little dark fellow, came driving into the village (he had been out prospecting for a hunt) proclaiming in a very loud voice, "There was a great crack in the ice, and that it was alive with walrus and seal!"

There was immediately a great stir, and a great harnessing of dogs, and hunting up of whips, and getting together of harpoons and spears and lines. Everybody was going on the hunt, that is, all the men and boys. When all was ready, Eatum came to me, and said, "Ketchum awak, ketchum

pussay, you go?" meaning, would we go with them, and catch walrus and seals. Of course we said "yes," and off we started at a wild pace; the Dean riding with Kossuit, while I rode with Eatum.

We had to go a good many miles before we came to the crack; and when we reached it, we found it to be as Kossuit had described it.

As soon as the savages saw the crack, they stopped their dogs, which was done by crying, "*Eigh, eigh, eigh!*" to them, and whipping them fiercely, if they did not mind soon enough.

The dogs being now fastened by running the points of the runners into the snow, the hunters went forward with their lines and spears and harpoons; and by approaching the side of the crack very cautiously, they managed at length to get near enough to throw their harpoons into the animals when they came up to the surface to breathe.

Their mode of capturing them was almost the same as that which we employed in catching seals, after finding it out for ourselves.

And thus it will be seen how people subjected to the same conditions of life will naturally be led to the same way of providing for their wants,—our senses being given to us all, whether savage or civilized, for the same purpose. I have already told how in our mode of starting a fire, in our lamp, pot, and other domestic implements, our clothing, harpoon, &c., we had unconsciously imitated these savages; and the more I was with them, the more I saw how much we were like them.

Having described how we killed the seal, it is not necessary to mention how the savages managed; and catching the walrus was just the same, only more difficult, for the walrus is several times larger than the seal. The walrus are those huge marine animals, living in the Arctic seas, that have long

white tusks, and look so fierce. They make a very loud and very hideous noise; and in the summer, like the seals, they come up on the ice, or on the rocks along the shore in great numbers, to bask and sleep in the sun.

It is enough to say there was a great deal of sport, and a great deal of excitement, not unmixed with danger.

One of the hunters got a line tangled round his leg, and was whipped over into the water, where he was not noticed, except to be laughed at, but all the hunters went on with what they were about, letting him shift for himself,—little caring as it appeared, whether he drowned or not; and I really believe he would have drowned, had it not been for the assistance of the Dean and myself. This was the first time I had observed how reckless these people were of their lives.

There were in the party altogether nine sledges, with one good hunter to each sledge. Five of them were old men and four were young men, besides which there were six boys of various ages; and these, with the Dean and myself, made seventeen.

By helping each other all round, we caught seven seals and three walrus,—all of which we skinned and quartered, and put on the sledges; and then we returned to the village, walking back, however, as the load on the sledges was too heavy to allow us to ride.

When we reached the village, the women came out to meet us, talking very much and yeh, yeh-ing louder than ever; and now I observed that they took all the game we had captured, and butchered it, the men doing nothing at all but look after their dogs. It was thought to be a disgrace for a man to do any work about his hut.

The Dean and I had taken our full share in the hunt, and won much admiration. Before, they had treated us with a kind of pity, but now they had great respect for us. Eatum

said, "Much good hunter you"; and now, seeing that we were good hunters, they were going to marry us right off, that we might have wives to cut up our seals when we brought them home, which proposition put us in a great embarrassment.

If we refused they might be offended, as was very natural; so I accepted their proposition at once, without a moment's hesitation, appearing as if I was very glad, and thought it a great compliment indeed; but at the same time I told them with a very grave face, that all our relatives lived in a far-off country, to which we were obliged to go as soon as a ship came along; and of course when we did go, the wives, they gave us would go with us. As none of the young women were willing to take us on these conditions, although not very flattering to us, we got out of the scrape without offending anybody.

At first the Dean was quite indignant, but afterwards he laughed, and said, "Why just think of it! Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Dean in seal-skin breeches and long boots,—a jolly idea indeed!" But one of the girls was fond enough of the Dean for all, only she mustn't show it; for these people are very particular about that.

When all is arranged by the parents, the girl is obliged even then, to say she won't have her lover. So the lover has to steal up, and take her unawares, and run off with her bodily. Of course, if she really likes the fellow, and wants to get married to him, he has an easy time enough of it; but if on the other hand, she dislikes him, she can readily enough get away from him.

Old Grim (whose right name was Metak, meaning eider-duck) had an adventure of this sort, as they told me, which resulted very differently from what usually happens. He was quite a young man, but having caught a seal, he thought it then was time he had a wife. Meanwhile a wife had been

provided for him by his father, who had made the bargain with the girl's father. The girl was told who her husband was to be, but it would have been against all rules to tell her when he was coming after her.

Well as I have said, having caught his first seal, Metak made up his mind to have a wife to butcher it for him; so he set out for the snow-hut of his lady-love's father, where the dusky-faced girl was lying fast asleep in her nest of furs.

As it was contrary to law for any girl to be captured in a hut, but must be taken on the wing, as it were, Metak had to wait for her to come out, which she finally did, and passed very near a deep bank of snow, behind which her lover was lying, shivering with cold and crying with impatience.

Quick as a fox to pounce upon the unsuspecting rabbit was Metak to pounce upon the unsuspecting girl. He seized her, and started for his sledge. She screamed, she pulled his hair, she tore his fur, she bit his fingers; but the valiant Metak held manfully to his purpose, and would not let her go. He reached the sledge, and put her on it; he tied her there, and springing on himself, he whipped up his dogs, and started for his home. But the refractory damsel would not stay tied.

Watching a favourable opportunity, when Metak was not looking, she cut the lashings with her teeth, seized the whip out of Metak's hands, pushed Metak off the sledge, and sent him sprawling on the snow; and then she whirled the dogs round, and fairly made them fly again on the backward track to her father's hut, where she crawled once more into her nest of furs, and where the luckless Metak was ever afterwards content to let her stay, satisfied that he was no match for her.

This story was told by Eatum one evening in the snow-hut, while Old Grim was present, and it was evidently a standing joke against him. He didn't seem to relish it at all, for he

went out of the hut as if driven away by their shouts of laughter. I could not understand the language well enough to fully appreciate the story at the time, but afterwards I got Eatum to repeat it to me.

It proved that the name of Old Grim, which the Dean and I had given Metak, was even more appropriate than we thought; for he was generally known as the man who laughed with his insides without the help of his face.

The Dean was greatly delighted with the change that had come about, as it not only led us away from our desolate life on the desert island, but gave us the promise at least of the rescue which we had so earnestly prayed for. "We ought to be very thankful," he said to me one day, "very thankful indeed for this deliverance."

But as I did not much relish the habits and customs of these savages, I did not find myself in the same thankful spirit; so I replied that the change looked much like that of the fish who fell out of the frying-pan into the fire. "You should not say so," he replied, "I see the hand of God in it; and he who has mercifully preserved us through so many trials and dangers will not desert us now.

The Dean said no more at that time, but he became very thoughtful; as for myself, I felt quite ashamed that I had spoken so slightingly of the savages, and had shown so much impatience with their rather disagreeable company; for to tell the truth, their ways were somewhat offensive, as they never washed their faces, and were rather a filthy set.

The Dean, however, did not stop with preaching about them, but on the contrary, did everything he could for them. One of the hunters had gone to catch seals, and the ice breaking up, he was drifted out to sea, where he took refuge on an iceberg, upon which he managed to drag his dogs and sledge.

Here he lived through terrible storms and cold for a whole moon (that being the way they reckon time), and he only escaped finally by the iceberg drifting in near the land, when the sea froze round it. After great trouble he got ashore, with both of his feet dreadfully frozen, which is easily accounted for when you know that the poor fellow had no shelter at all while on the iceberg, and had nothing to eat but his dogs, all of which died of starvation.

This savage had no wife, and the Dean took care of him, and dressed his frost-bites, and was so good to him that the savages all called him "*Paw-weit*," which means "Little Good-heart." So the Dean got on famously; but the poor frozen savage that he had been so kind to died at last, and was buried in the snow.

A child fell on the ice and broke its arm, and the Dean set it, and made it all right, and to other people he did many things to show his sympathy for them; but when he began to tell them about our religion, they did not understand him, and had no mind to listen. This very much grieved the Dean; for he wanted to convert the whole of them, and thought, if he only knew their language better, he could persuade them all to be Christians, —which I think very likely, for nobody could resist him.

We remained at the snow village several weeks, but we did not do much more hunting, as the savages seemed to think they had enough for their present wants; and since they are almost constantly moving about from place to place in search of food, they never store up much for the future.

Having enough to eat for the present, they let the future take care of itself; and, sure of a good meal, they amuse themselves mostly by telling stories, usually about each other,—that is, when they are not eating or sleeping, which I must say occupies most of their time.

They had a singular custom in their story-telling which I have never seen among any other people.

One person recites the story, and the listeners break in, every now and then, with a laughing chorus, that is nothing more than a repetition of the meaningless words, "*amma aya*," which are sung over and over to any extent. The women generally enjoy it the most and sing the loudest, especially when a man is concerned.

The Dean and I very much wanted to go on another bear-hunt, but the savages said it was too late in the season for that—the ice had many cracks in it and there was no use chasing a bear, as he would jump into the first crack he came to and swim over to the other side, and there he would be safe enough.

And indeed, when I climbed one day to the top of a tall iceberg, and looked out in the direction of our solitary island, I could see several cracks from a yard to a hundred yards wide, so that it was very fortunate we escaped from the island when we did.

The savages now said it was time to be moving, or a crack might come between us and the shore. Indeed, the season was getting well advanced; the snow was melting a little, and in places it was quite sloppy; so everything in and about the snow-huts, including our own property, was packed upon the sledges, and away we went to the mainland, which was not more than ten miles distant.

Here we came upon a village of three huts, built in the hill-side very near the sea, and in many respects fitted up as our own had been; only they had regularly constructed walls of stones and turf, which tapering in from either side, joined at the top, making a space large enough to accommodate two or three families in each hut. Into these three huts were crowded all the men, women, and children that had been in the snow village.

There we lived five days, after which we took up our march again, keeping along near the shore, where the ice was most

solid and safe. Then we came to a deep broad bay, where the hillside, which was exposed to the south, was quite free from snow, the snow having melted and run down to the sea.

Here we halted, and the savages went to some piles of stones, and brought out from under them a number of seal-skins, which were spread over some narwhal horns that were just like "Old Crumply." In a few hours they had pitched two comfortable tents, under which we all slept soundly, being very tired.

The next day they got more seal-skins, and pitched three more tents, and a few days afterwards other people came along, and put up two other tents, making in all seven,—quite a little seal-skin village, and a much more comfortable-looking one than the snow village had been.

Here it seemed to be the intention of the savages to remain for some time, as they went regularly to work to prepare for hunting various kinds of game, chiefly walruses and seals, and besides these, among others an animal I had not seen before,—a beautiful rabbit, or hare rather, very large and pure white.

These were quite numerous, and fed upon the buds and bark of the willow-bushes, and were caught by stretching a very long line across the tops of a great number of stones, or piles of stones, which are placed about six feet apart, the line itself being about a foot from the ground.

To those lines they tied a number of loops, and then all the people going out, surrounded the rabbits and drove them under the line, and several of them found themselves caught in the noose when they least expected it. I saw there also a beautiful white bird called a ptarmigan, which is a grouse, but it could not be caught.

By this time we had become quite domesticated among the savages.

They called me *Annorah*, which meant that I resembled

the wind when I talked,—that is I talked when I liked and where I liked, and nothing could stop me, while the Dean was much more sober. Him they finally called *Aupadleit*, which means "Little Red-head," though his hair was not exactly red, but very bright, and the savages admired it very much; so the Dean to humour them, cut off great locks of it, and gave it to them all round, just as I have known some girls do when their coquettish fancies got the better of their discretion.

I took great interest in Eatum's children, and this further inclined Mr. and Mrs. Eatum to have a good opinion of me. As they were people of much consequence in their tribe, this was a matter of great importance; and in truth, the juvenile Eatums were quite an interesting pair of savages, and were fond of play, like any other children. One was a boy and the other a girl. I cannot remember their right names, but the Dean and I christened the boy, *Mop-head*, because of the great quantity of dirty black hair that he had, and the girl we called *Gimlet-eyes*.

Mop-head had a little sledge made of bones just like his father's; and with this the two children used to play at travelling and other games. Gimlet-eyes had little dolls carved out of bones, which she used to dress up in furs and put on the sledge for Mop-head to drag when they went on their journeys; and he had little spears and she had little pots and lamps, and they used to make excursions over the snow that you could hardly throw a stone to the end of; and then they would build little snow houses and put the dolls in them, and while Mop-head went off to hunt, Gimlet-eyes would *amna-aya* them to sleep.

In these playful exercises we used to amuse ourselves with the children; and when we were travelling about in earnest, the Dean and I pulled Mop-head's sledge for him sometimes, when we were going slow; and he thought it great fun to have

the white-faced strangers drag his sister's lamps and pots and dolls along.

And now the summer was fairly come. The snow was melting very rapidly, and first in small and then in large streams the water came rushing and roaring down into the sea.

The birds came back soon afterwards from the south,—the eider-ducks and the little auks, which we had caught in the summer-time when upon the island; and then as soon as the snow was all gone, the moss and stunted grass grew green, and plants sprouted up here and there, and the butterflies with bright yellow wings went gathering the honey from flower to flower, and you cannot imagine how glad we were once more to come out of the dreary winter into this bright sunshine and this pleasant summer.

It was apparent now why the savages had come to this place, for the little auks arrived in much greater numbers than on our island; and they lived among the stones on the hillside for miles and miles. There must have been millions upon millions of them, and the savages caught them, as we had done, in nets.

There were some reindeer too, but these were not often caught. When the savages went on this kind of hunting, two always went together, walking so close, one behind the other, as to appear like one man. As soon as the deer saw the hunters, the latter would turn round and go back the other way, and the deer being very curious, would follow them.

Thus a deer may sometimes be enticed a long distance, and if through a narrow defile, there is then a chance of catching him; for one of the hunters drops down suddenly behind a rock, while the other goes on as if nothing had happened. The deer, thus cheated, keeps following the single hunter, where he had before followed a double one all unknown to himself, and at length approaches very near to the hunter lying behind the rock.

As soon as the deer comes within a few yards of him, this concealed hunter rises, and throws his harpoon, the line of which he has previously made fast to a rock. If fortunate enough to hit the deer, and the harpoon to hold, the animal is easily killed by the two hunters, who attack it with their spears.

Besides the birds that I have mentioned, there came a great many snipes, and different varieties of sea-gulls, and ducks of various species, and gerfalcons, and ravens,—also some little sparrows.

I was very desirous to know how they managed to make their harpoon and spear heads, as I observed that they were all tipped with iron. So one day they took us over a place they call *Savisavick*, which means "The Iron Place,"—the name being derived from a large block of meteoric iron, from which the savages chipped small scales; and these were set in the edges and tips of their harpoon and spear heads, just as I had done with my brass buttons.

They also made knives in the same way. Many of their spear-handles were nothing more than narwhal-horns, just like "Old Crumply;" and so we observe how the Almighty provides for all His creatures, endowing them all, whether white or black or copper-coloured, with the same instinct of self-preservation which leads them to seek and obtain for the security of their lives the materials that He places within their reach.

Thus occupied, we drifted on (as nearly as we could keep our reckoning) into the final week of July. There was scarcely any snow left on the hill sides by this time; the air was filled with the incessant cry of birds and the constant splash of falling waters.

We could sleep well enough once more on the green grass in the open air; and another period of watching now began, for here it was that the vessels passed nearly every year, as the savages told us.

Sometimes, however, they did not stop; but when the ships appeared, the savages always went to a valley facing the sea, from one side of which the snow never melted, and running to and fro over the white snow, endeavoured to attract the attention of the people on the ships.

We were much alarmed to find the ice holding very firmly along the shore; and as far away as the eye could reach, there was not much water to be seen. At last, however, a strong wind came, and started the ice. Some cracks were soon opened, and then a long lead or lane of water was seen stretching away to the south, and running close in by the land.

The savages said that the *Oomeaksuaks* (big ships), would come very soon now, if at all; so we watched very carefully for them.

The Dean and I did not hunt any more; as the savages, seeing how anxious we were and how our hearts yearned for our own homes and kindred, provided us with food in abundance; and besides this, they sent some of their women and young lads to aid us in looking out for the ships.

Thus the time wore on, and we were becoming very fearful that the ships would not come at all. This was a dreadful thought to us, for although the savages were very kind, yet we looked forward with great dread to living long with them. Besides this and our longing to get home, we had had quite enough of this cold, desolate part of the world, where the sun never sets in summer nor rises in winter.

While reflecting in this way, we heard one of the savages cry out "*Oomeaksuak, oomeaksuak!*" several times; and running a little higher up the hillside whence the cry proceeded, our eyes were gladdened by seeing far off, with the hull yet hidden below the horizon, a ship under full sail, bearing directly towards us.

At first the Dean, who had been so often cheated, thought

it might be an iceberg; but it was clearly a ship that we saw this time. From fear that it might be an iceberg, we passed now to fear that it might hold off from the land, and not discover us, which would be even harder to bear.

After awhile the hull of the ship was plainly to be seen, and soon afterwards we discovered that the ship was not alone, but that another was following only a few miles behind it; and by and by two more were seen, making four, and then a fifth hove in sight some hours later.

How fortunate it was for us that there were so many of these ships; for, as we had feared, the first ship held so far away from the land that it was hopeless to think of being seen from her. But the lead through which this first ship had sailed off from the land was closed up before the others could enter it; and now these other ships were forced to come nearer to us.

Seeing this, we hastened to the white hillside I have spoken of before, all the savages accompanying us, and we all began running up and down; but the next ship was still too far away to discover us. And the same with another, and still another.

Thus had four ships gone by without any soul on board being aware that two poor shipwrecked boys were so near, calling to them, and praying with all their might that they might see or hear.

But there was yet a fifth ship, a long way behind all the others, and we still had hope. If this failed us, all was over, and we must be content to live with the savages. We had observed one thing which gave us great encouragement.

Each ship that had passed us came a little nearer to the land; and this we saw was in consequence of the ice drifting steadily in before the wind. Indeed, by the time the last ship came along, the ice had pushed in ahead of her, and had touched the land, while the other ships had run through just in time.

When the people on board saw what was ahead of them, and that they could not pass, they tacked ship, and stood right away from us; but we saw clearly enough, from our elevated position on the hill, that they were not likely to get through in that direction,—which was no doubt, a much more pleasant thing for us than for the people on board.

This prediction proved true; for presently they tacked again, and stood straight in towards where we were standing. Coming very near the shore, we did everything we could to attract their attention. We shouted, we threw up our caps, and waved them round our heads, and we ran here and there across the white snow,—all the savages doing the same.

The ship is so near at last, that we can faintly see the people on the deck; why can they not see us?

The sails are shivering; the ship is coming to the wind! Have they seen us? are they heaving the vessel to? will they send a boat ashore to fetch us off?

We hear the creaking of the blocks; the yards are swinging round; the braces are hauled taut; the other tack is aboard; they *are not* heaving to!

The vessel fills away again; the sails are bulging out; the vessel drives ahead; they have not seen us!

Shout again! Up and down, up and down once more across the snow,—shout! shout all in chorus! but it is of no use.

The bows fall off; the vessel turns back upon her course. Where is she going now? is she homeward bound?

O no! she steers for the land; she nears it; she passes beyond a point below us, and is out of sight! Where has she gone?

We follow after her, hurrying all we can. Miles of rough travelling over rocks and through deep gorges,—climbing down one side and up the other,—in breathless haste hurrying on. The savages are with us.

What is our hope? It is that the vessel, failing to get through the ice, has sought the land for shelter.

Soon we round a lofty cliff, that rises almost squarely from the sea, with only a narrow, rugged track between it and the water, and we come upon a narrow bay. A little farther, and there the vessel lies before us,—quietly at anchor, with her sails all snugly furled.

Again we see the men upon the deck,—faintly, but still we see them.

Again we shout.

We see a man halting by the bulwarks; something glitters in his hand. Is it a spy-glass

No; he moves away.

Is that a man mounting to the mizzen cross-trees?

Yes, it is a man.

Is that a spy-glass glittering in his hand? Yes, surely it must be.

He waves his cap; he shouts to those below; he descends; all is bustle on the deck; a boat is lowered to the water; men spring into it; the oars are dropped; the men give way; the boat heads for the spot where we are standing; we are discovered; O, God be praised! at last, at last!

The boat cuts through the water quickly; it nears us; again we see white human faces; again we hear human speech in a familiar tongue.

"In oars!"—the boat touches the rocks, and we are there to take the painter, and to make her fast.

Two of the men spring out; a man rises in the stern; he shades his eyes with his hands, as if to protect them from the glaring sun, and stares at us, and then at the savages, who—of both sexes, and of every age and size—surround us. Then he calls out, "Is there a white man in that crowd?"

"Yes, sir; two of them."

He paused a moment, and his boat's crew all seemed

startled by the answer. Then he stared at me again, and cried: "Is that the lubber Hardy, of the 'Blackbird'?"

"Yes, sir; it is."

"Is that other chap the cabin-boy?—him they called the Dean?"

"Yes, sir," spoke up the Dean.

In an instant the man was on the rocks, and had us by the hands; and now we recognised *him*. He was the master of a ship that lay alongside the 'Blackbird' when we first went among the ice, catching seals. His ship was the 'Rob Roy,' of Aberdeen.

He told us, that the 'Blackbird' not having been heard of in all this time, it was thought that she must have gone down somewhere among the ice, with all on board; and he told us further, that he was on a whaling-voyage now, and then he said, "The 'Rob Roy' will give you a bonny welcome, lads."

All this time the savages were *yeh-yeh*ing round us, greatly to the amusement of the captain of the 'Rob Roy' and his boat's crew. Then, when I told the captain how good they had been to us, he sent his boat back to the ship, and had fetched for them wood and knives and iron and needles in such great abundance that they set up a *yeh, yeh*, in consequence, which for anything I know, may be, as it ought to be, going on even to this present time.

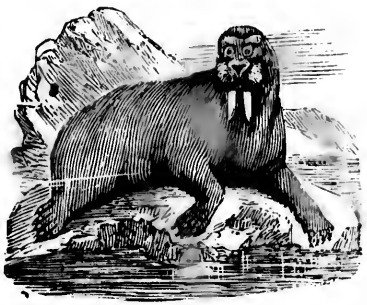
We kept our promise to give Eatum all our property; but the captain of the 'Rob Roy' wanted "Old Crumply" and "The Dean's Delight," and our pot and lamp, and some other things; so he gave the savages other valuables in place of them.

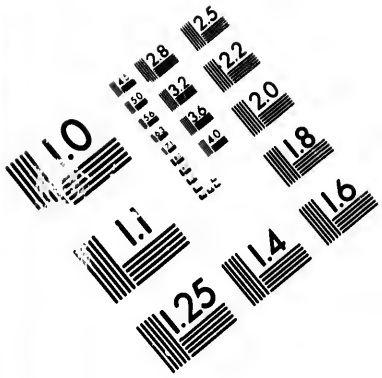
Then we said good-bye to our savage friends, which we of course did not do without some feelings of sorrow and regret at parting from them, remembering as we did how kind they had been to us, and how they had rescued us from our

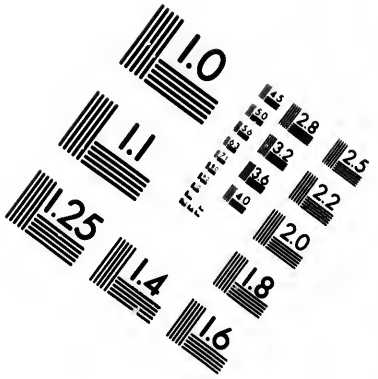
unhappy situation; and the savages seemed a little sorry too.

First came Eatum and Mrs. Eatum, and then the two little Eatums (Mop-head and Gimlet-eyes) that I had so often played with; then Old Grim, and Big-toes and Little-nose; and Awak, the walrus: and Kossuit; and the two young ladies who might have been our wives; and then all the rest of them, big and little, old and young.

Then off we started for the 'Rob Roy;' and a fair wind coming soon, the ice began to move away from the land, the 'Rob Roy's' sails were unfurled to the fresh breeze, and now, with hearts turned thankfully to Heaven for our deliverance, we are again afloat upon blue water,—whither bound we do not know, but *homeward* in the end.







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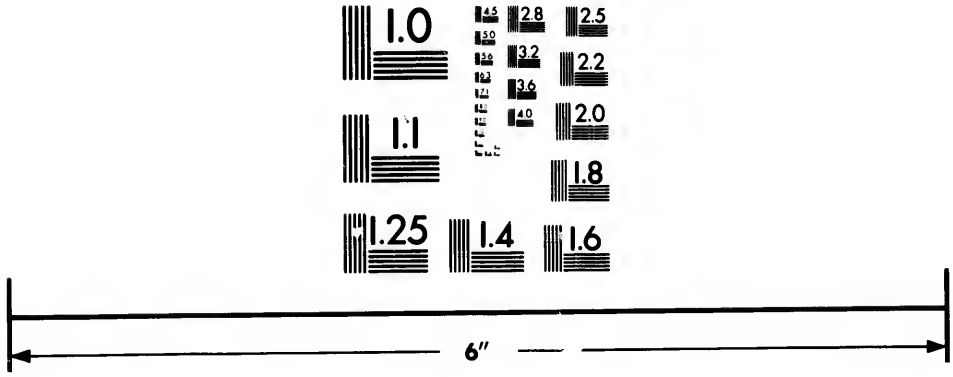

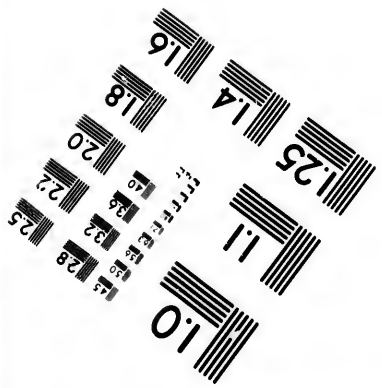

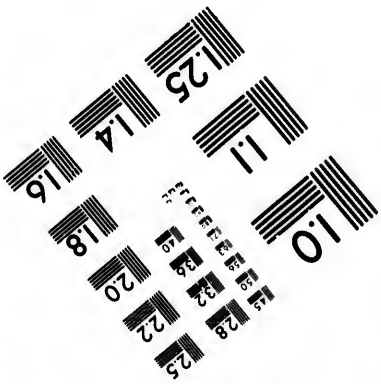

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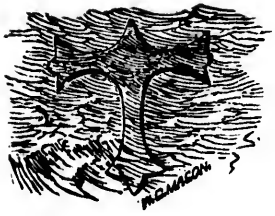
CHAPTER XVI.

Home at Last.



THE 'Rob Roy' was a good stout ship; the master a bluff, good hearted Scotchman; the mate a kindly man, and altogether different from the red-faced mate that was on the 'Blackbird;' and the people were all just as good and kind to us as the savages had been. But they feasted us with so much coffee to drink and ship's biscuit to eat (neither of which had we tasted for three years), that we got a dreadful colic, and were like to die. "Nearly killed with kindness," as the Dean said, as soon as he had strength to speak.

The worst of it was, they would make us tell our story over and over again, until we almost wished we had never been rescued at all.

The captain of the 'Rob Roy' took a great fancy to our odd-looking fur clothes, especially our undershirts, which were made of birds' skins; and he gave us in place of them some new clothes out of the ship's stores. You may be sure that we were glad enough to get these nasty fur clothes off, and be rid of them for ever. The captain offered to keep them for us, but we said "No, no," for we had had quite enough of them.

So we went after whales, and made a "good catch," as the whale-fishers call a good shipload of oil, and then we bore away for Aberdeen, only stopping on the way at two or three half-savage places.

When we reached Aberdeen, there was a great fuss made about us, and we had to tell our story over and over again.

The first thing the Dean did, after landing, was to write a letter to his mother, and send it off by post. It was just like the little fellow to do it. He began it—"Through the mercy of Providence I have been saved, and am coming back to you, dear mother."

Shortly after, we started for the Dean's Home. It was no easy work to find it. It was in a little by-street of the City, and by and by we came upon a tumble-down old house, and were shown into a little tumble-down old room, and in the middle of the room stood a little woman that was more tumble-down than all. It was the Dean's poor mother. She held a scrap of paper in both her hands, trembling violently, while she tried to puzzle out the contents of the Dean's letter (for this it was), that she held up before a face the deep wrinkles on which, told of many sorrows and much suffering.

There was no occasion to puzzle any more now, for there was her darling, bright-haired boy, whom she "always felt sure," she said, "would come back again,"—never losing hope; and how she was not long in recognising him, and how she greeted him, and cried over him, I never saw the like of it.

And seeing how matters stood, I went outside, where after awhile the Dean joined me, and having some money in our pockets, that we had earned on board the 'Rob Roy,' we went out and bought the best supper we could get, and had it brought into the tumble-down room and spread out upon the tumble-down table: and never was any poor woman so glad in all the world as the Dean's mother, and never were any two boys so happy as the Dean and I.

We were home at last, safe in body and thankful in spirit.

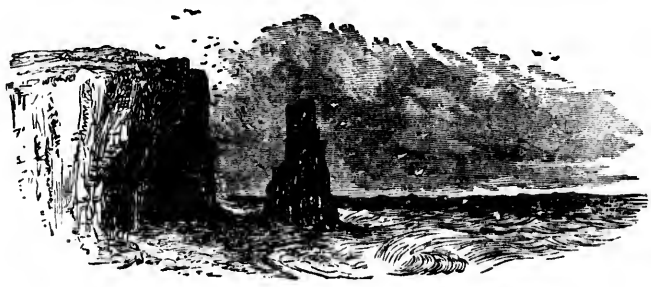
"And now," said the Dean, "I am going to further show my gratitude by making my mother comfortable for the rest

of her days,"—which he did by getting her into a better house, where she would not have to work any more,—the Dean declaring that he could hereafter make all the money that was necessary for her support.

Then we looked about us for a good ship to go to sea in, as we felt that we should make better sailors now than anything else; indeed, neither of us knew what else to do.

I did not feel like going to Rockdale yet, being still very much ashamed, not having made anything as I could see by running away. Besides, I learned that my father had given me up for dead long ago, and had moved with all my brothers and sisters to another part of the country, where I wrote to him, telling him all about my voyage and shipwreck.

The story of our remarkable adventures getting abroad we found many friends; so you may be sure we were not at a loss for a ship; and when we shipped again, it was not in such a crazy old hulk as the 'Blackbird;' nor did we go any more whale or seal fishing, having got enough of that to last us for the remainder of our lives.



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