

Cook's Own Story of the Conquest of the Pole.

The Most Absorbing Description of Adventure Ever Written.

The Gloom of the Long Winter Night—Eighty-Three Degrees Below—Willing Savage Hands and Abundant Brute Force—Marching Over Polar Seas—Cutting Down Weight and Stripping for the Race—Large Expedition and Heavy Equipment Seemed Imprudent—Helping the Advance—Return of the Helpers—Polar Party Reduced to Three and Northward March Continued—All Conditions Favorable.

BY DR. FREDERICK A. COOK.

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THIRD INSTALLMENT.

EARLY in January of 1908 the campaign opened. A few sleds were sent to the American shores to explore a route and to advance supplies. Clouds and storms made the moonlight days dark, and therefore these advance expeditions were only partly successful. On Feb. 19, 1908, the main expedition started for the pole. Eleven men, driving 103 dogs and moving 11 heavily loaded sleds, left the Greenland shore and pushed westward over the troublesome ice of Smith sound to Cape Sabine. The gloom of the long winter night was but little relieved by a few hours of daylight, and the temperature was very low. Eighty-three Degrees Below. Passing through a valley between Ellesmere Land and Grinnell Land from the head of Flagger bay, in crossing to the Pacific slopes, the temperature fell to 83 degrees F. below zero. In Baj ford many musk oxen were secured, and, though the winter frost

and small ice; ahead was a cheerless expanse of larger floes. Using the accumulated vigor of man and beast, we had advanced a degree of latitude in three days. Our destination was about 400 miles beyond. But our life had assumed quite another aspect. Previously we permitted ourselves some luxuries. A pound of coal oil and a good deal of musk ox tallow were burned each day to heat the igloo and to cook abundant food. Extra meals were served when an occasion called for it, and each man ate and drank all he desired. If the stockings or the mittens were wet there was fire enough to dry them out. But all of this must now be changed.

Camp is Pitched. After a run of twenty-six miles we pitched camp on a floeberg of unusual height. There were many big hummocks about, to the ice of which were great banks of hardened snow. Away from land it is always more difficult to find snow suitable for cutting building blocks, but here was an abundance conveniently placed. In the course of an hour a comfortable palace of crystals was erected, and into it we crept out of the piercing wind. The first day's march over the circum-polar sea was closed with a good record. The dogs curled up and went to sleep without a call, as if they knew there would be no food until the morning. My wild companions covered their faces with their convenient long hair and sank quietly into a comfortable slumber, but for me sleep was quite impossible. Letters must be written. The whole problem of our campaign had to be studied and planned. Plans must be made not only to reach our ultimate destination, but for the returning parties and for the security of the things at Annotok.

Impossible to Foretell Return. It was difficult at this time to even guess at the probable line of our return to land. Much depended upon the conditions encountered in the northward route. Though we had left caches of supplies, with the object of returning along Nansen sound into Cannon fiord and over Arthur Land, I entertained grave doubts of our ability to return this way. If the ice drifted strongly to the east we might not be given the choice of going east or west. In that event we would be carried perhaps helplessly to Greenland and must seek a return either along the east coast or the west coast.

This drift did not offer a dangerous hardship, for the musk oxen would keep us alive to the west, and to the east it seemed possible to reach Shannon Island, where the Baldwin-Ziegler expedition had abandoned a large cache of supplies. It appeared not improbable also that a large land extension might offer a safe return much farther west.

Frank's Instructions. Because of this uncertainty Frank was instructed to wait until June 5, 1908, and if we did not return he was to place Kooloogwah in charge and go home either by the whalers or by the Danish ships to the south.

No relief which he could offer would help us, and to wait for an indefinite time alone would have meant a less hardship. This and many other instructions were prepared for Kooloogwah and Inugito to take back. In the morning the frost in crystals had been swept from the air, but there remained a humid chill which pierced to the bones. The temperature was minus 56 F. A light air came from the west, and the sun burned in a freezing blue.

After a few hours' march the ice changed in character. The extensive thick fields gave place to moderate sized floes. The floes were separated by zones of troublesome crushed ice thrown into high pressure lines, which offered serious barriers, but with the ice ax and Eskimo ingenuity we managed to make fair progress.

The second run on the polar sea was with twenty-one miles to our credit. I had expected to send the supporting party back from here, but progress had not been as good as expected. We could hardly spare the food to feed their dogs, so they volunteered to push along another day without dog food.

Return of the Helpers. On the next day, with increasing difficulties in some troublesome ice, we camped after making only sixteen miles. Here a small snow house was built, and from here, after disposing of a net of steaming musk ox lungs and broth, followed by a double brew of tea, our last helpers returned.

With empty sleds and hungry dogs they hoped to reach land in one long day's travel. But this would make the fourth day without food for the dogs, and in case of storm or moving ice other days of famine might easily fall to their lot. They had, however, an abundance of dogs and might sacrifice a few for the benefit of the others, as we must often do.

Kooloogwah and Inugito had gone northward for the dog sled, and had gone through many dangerous and hard experiences together. We therefore felt more keenly their departure than the going of the first six. We were at first lonely, but the exigencies of our problem were soon sufficiently engaging to occupy every call and strain every fiber.

Now our party was reduced to three, and though the isolation was more oppressive, there were the usual advantages for greater comfort and progress of a small family of workers. The increased number of a big expedition always entails the responsibility and difficulties. In the early part of a winter venture this disadvantage is eliminated by the survival of the fittest, but after the last supporting sleds return the men are married to each other and can no longer separate. A disabled or unfitted dog can be fed to his companions, but an injured or weak man cannot be put aside. An exploring venture is only as strong as its weakest member, and increased numbers, like increased links in a chain, reduce efficiency.

The personal idiosyncrasies and inconveniences always shorten the day's march; but, above all, a numerous party quickly divides into cliques, which are always opposed to each other, to the leader and to the best interests of the problem in hand. With but two savage companions, to whom the arduous task was but a part of an accustomed life of frost, I hoped to overcome many of the natural personal barriers to the success of arctic expeditions.

One Degree in Three Days. By dead reckoning our position was latitude 82 degrees 23 minutes, longitude 95 degrees 14 minutes. A study of the ice seemed to indicate that we had passed beyond the zone of ice crushed by the influence of land pressure. Behind were great hummocks

over the horizon, merging imperceptibly with the lighter purple blue of the upper skies. We saw the land, however, repeatedly for several days whenever the atmosphere was in the right condition to elevate the terrestrial contour lines. All Conditions Favorable. Everything was in our favor in this march. The wind was not strong and struck at an angle, making it possible to guard the nose by pushing a mitten under the hood or by raising the fur clad hand. The snow was hard, and the snow in fairly large floes separated by pressure lines, offered little trouble. At the end of a forced effort of fourteen hours the register indicated twenty-nine miles. Too tired to begin the construction of a house at once, we threw ourselves

down on the sledges for a short breathing spell and fell asleep. Awakened about an hour later by a strong wind, we hastened to seek shelter. The heavy foe upon which we rested had several large hummocks, and over to the lee of one of these was found suitable snow for a camp. Lines of snowy vapor were rushing over the pack, and the wind came with a rapidly increasing force. But the dome was erected before we suffered severely from the blast, and under it we crept out of the coming storm into warm fur.

It blew fiercely that night, but in the morning the storm eased to a steady draft, with a temperature of 59 degrees below. At noon we emerged. The snow grains had been swept from the frigid dome, but to the north there remained a few black lines over a pearly cloud which gave us much uneasiness. It was a narrow belt of water sky and indicated open water or very thin ice at no great distance. The upper surface of Grant Land was a mere line, but a play of land remains over the black line over the last known rocks of solid earth. In this march we felt keenly the piercing cold of the polar sea. The temperature gradually rose to 46 below in the afternoon, but the chill of the shadows increased with the swing of the sun's glimmer.

A Life Sapping Wind. It still blew that night, life sapping draft which sealed the eyes and bleached the nose. We had hoped that this would soften with the midday sun, but instead it came with a sharper edge. Our course was slightly west of north; the wind was slightly north and struck us at a painful angle and brought tears. The moistened lashes quickly froze together in winking, and we were forced to halt frequently to unseal the eyes with the warmth of the uncovered hand. In the meantime we found the nose tipped with a white skin, and it also required nursing. The entire face was surrounded with ice.

This experience brought warm language, but there was no redress. If we aimed to succeed the face must be bared to the cut of the elements. At about 6 o'clock, as the sun crossed the west, we had reached a line of high pressure ridges. Beyond the ice was cut into smaller floes and thrown together into ugly irregularities. An active pack and troubled seas could not be far away, according to our surmises. The water sky widened, but became less sharply defined. We managed to pick a way among hummocks and pressure lines which seemed impossible from a distance.

Liquid Sheep. A business communication in Arabic recently reached a Manchester firm, and when translated by a Syrian interpreter proved to contain a request for the price of coppering "two water sheep" of certain given dimensions. The translator was confident of his version, but admitted that he did not know what "water sheep" could be. For the moment even the heads of the firm were puzzled, until it struck some one that this was the nearest synonym in the vocabulary of a pastoral people for "hydraulic rams."—Manchester Guardian.

Life. Report by a young English school-girl of a lecture on "Phases of Human Life—Youth, Manhood, and Age": "In youth we look forward to the wicked things we will do when we grow up—this is the state of innocence. In manhood we do the wicked things of which we thought in our youth—this is the prime of life. In old age we are sorry for the wicked things we did in manhood—this is the time of our cottage."

Portland's Roses. Portland, Ore., is called "The Rose City." Her right to the title is borne out by the most perfect roses that are grown in the world, and every home has its rose garden. Successful business men are equally enthusiastic rosarians, and exhibits of the choicest varieties are held each year, not only by the Rose Society and the Rose Festival, but in the lobby of certain buildings by the tens of thousands.

ESKIMO DOG. and in a few hours we saw from sea

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DR. COOK AS HE APPEARED WHEN HE REACHED COPENHAGEN.

There was a short daily allowance of food and fuel—one pound of pemmican per day for the dogs, about the same for the men, with just a taste of other things. Fortunately, we were well stuffed for the race with fresh meat in the lucky run through game lands.

At first no great hardship followed the changed routing. We filled up sufficiently on two cold meals and used superiorly good tissue. It was no longer possible to jump on the sled for an occasional breathing spell, as we had done along the land. With overloaded sleds the drivers must push and pull at the sleds to aid the dogs, and I searched for a painful angle and brought tears. The moistened lashes quickly froze together in winking, and we were forced to halt frequently to unseal the eyes with the warmth of the uncovered hand. In the meantime we found the nose tipped with a white skin, and it also required nursing. The entire face was surrounded with ice.

Stripped For the Race. Man and dog must walk along together through storms and frost for that elusive pilot. Success or failure depended mostly upon our ability to transport nourishment and to keep up the muscular strength for a prolonged period.

As we awoke on the following morning and peeped out of the eye port the sun was edging along the northeast, throwing a warm, golden glow on that gladdened our hearts. The temperature was 63 degrees below zero F.; the barometer was steady and high. There was almost no wind, and not a cloud lined the dome of pale purple blue.

After two cups of tea, a watch sized biscuit, a cup of frozen meat and a bowlful of pemmican we crept out of the bags. The shivering legs were pushed through bearskin cylinders, which served as trousers; the feet were worked into frozen boots, and then we started on our march. The front out of the snow house and danced about to start the fires of the heart. Quickly the camp furnishings were tossed on the sleds and securely lashed down. The dog traces were gathered into the drag lines, and with a vigorous snap of the long whip the willing creatures bent like the shoulder straps. The sleds groaned, and the unyielding snows gave a metallic ring, but the train moved with a cheerful pace.

"Unne noona terronga dosangwah" (good land out of sight today) we said to one another, but the words did not come with serious intent. In truth, each in his own way felt keenly that we were leaving a world of life and possible comfort for one of torment and suffering. Heiberg Island was already only a dull blue haze, while Grant Land was making fantastic figures of its peaks and ice walls.

Wave of Mirages. The stupor of reality had given place to a wave of curious mirages. Some peaks seemed like active volcanoes; others rose to exaggerated heights and pierced the changing skies with multiple spires like church steeples. Altogether this unexpected panorama of the upper surface of Grant Land under the influence of optical illusions gave us considerable entertainment.

At every breathing spell the heads turned to the land, and every look gave a new prospect. From belching volca-



ESKIMO MOTHER AND BABE.

noes to smoking cities of modern bustle the mirage gave suggestive bits of scenes, but a more desolate line of coast could not be imagined. Low wind swept and ice polished mountains were separated by valleys filled with great depths of snow and ice. This interior accumulation moved slowly to the sea, where it formed a low ice fall, a glacier of the malaplasma type, but its appearance was more like that of heavy sea ice; hence the name of the fragments from this glacier, dog berg, which, seen in Lincoln sea, and resounding old does, were supposed to be the product of the upbuilding of the ice of the north polar sea.

Late in the afternoon the land suddenly settled as if by an earthquake. The pearly glitter which raised it darkened, and a purple fabric was drawn



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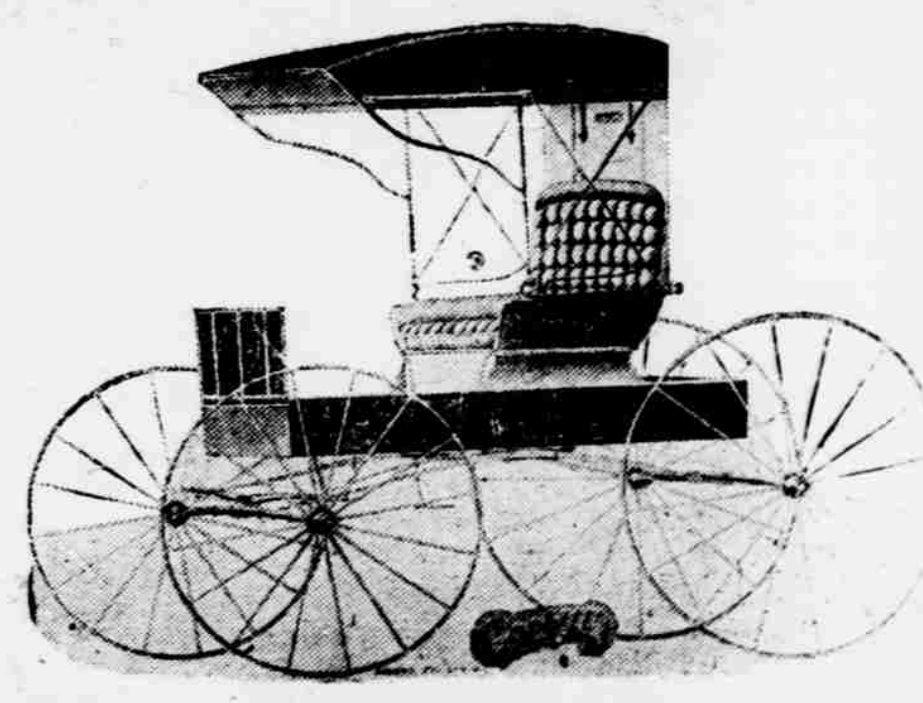
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ESKIMO BELLES ON THE JOHN R. BRADLEY.

was at its lowest, there was little wind, and with an abundance of fresh meat and also fat for fuel the life in the snow house proved fairly comfortable. The ice in Ereka and Nansen sounds proved fairly smooth, and long marches were made. With an abundance of game—musk oxen, bears and hares—we found it quite unnecessary to use the supplies taken from Greenland. Caches of food and ammunition were left along Heiberg Island for the return.

Willing Savage Hands. Thus we managed to keep in game trails and in excellent fighting trim to the end of known lands. Camping in the chill of the freezing cliffs of the northernmost coast (Starvtog), we looked out over the heavy ice of the polar seas through eyes which had been hardened to the worst of polar environments.

There was at hand an abundance of supplies, with willing, strong hands and a superabundance of brute force in overfed pets, but for a greater certainty of action over the unknown regions beyond I resolved to reduce the force to the smallest numbers consistent with the execution of the problem in hand.

We had traveled nearly 400 miles in twenty-eight days. There remained a line of 520 miles of unknown trouble to be overcome before our goal could be reached. For this final task we were provided with every conceivable device to ease this hard lot, but, in addition to a reduced party, I now definitely resolved to simplify the entire equipment. At Starvtog a big cache was made. In this cache fresh meat, tundra, pemmican and much other food, together with all discarded articles of equipment, were left.

In the northward advance every factor of the dog train had been carefully watched and studied to provide a perfect working force for the final reach over the polar sea. Etukshuk and Ahwehah, two young Eskimos, each twenty years old, had been chosen as best fitted to be my sole companions in the long run of destiny. Twenty-six dogs were picked, and upon two sleds were loaded all our needs for a stay of eighty days.

All For Progress. To have increased this party would not have enabled us to carry supplies for a greater number of days. The sleds might have been loaded more heavily, but this would reduce the important progress of the first days. With the character of ice which we had before us advance stations were impossible. A large expedition and a heavy equipment seemed imprudent. We must win or lose in a prolonged effort at high pressure, and therefore absolute control and ease of adaptability to a changing environment must be assured.

It is impossible to adequately control the complex human temperament of unknown men in the polar wilderness, but the two Eskimo boys could be trusted to follow to the limit of my own endeavors, and our sleds were burdened only with absolute necessities.

Another Sleep Before the Start. With a snow charged blast in our faces it was quite impossible for us to start, so we withdrew to the snow igloo, entered our bags and slept a few hours longer. At noon the horizon cleared. The wind veered to the southwest and came with an enduring force. The dogs had been doubly fed the night before. They were not to be fed again for two days. The 1,200