

A WOMAN WHO WENT TO ALASKA

MAY KELLOGG SULLIVAN



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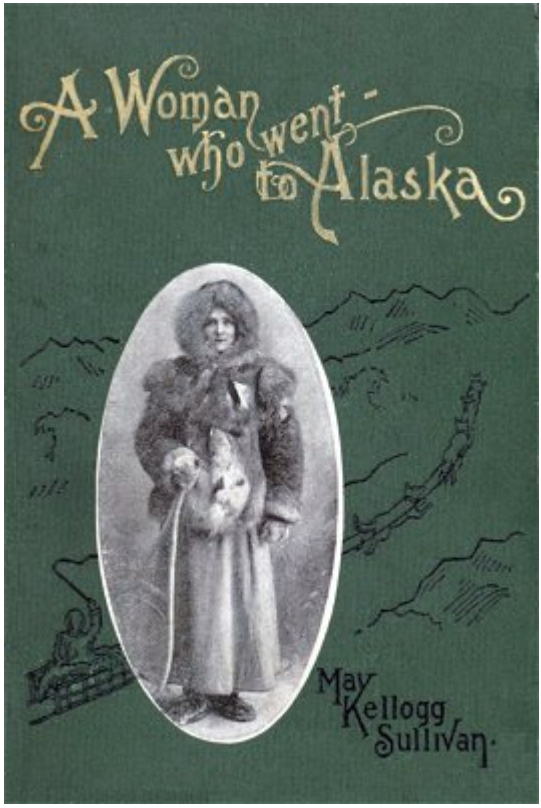
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A WOMAN WHO WENT TO ALASKA ***







MAY KELLOGG SULLIVAN IN ALASKA DRESS.

A Woman Who Went To Alaska

By May Kellogg Sullivan

ILLUSTRATED

Boston:
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CONTENTS.

Chapter		Page
I	Under Way	9
II	Midnight on a Yukon Steamer	19
III	Dawson	28
IV	The Rush	36
V	At The Arctic Circle	48

VI	Companions	58
VII	Going to Nome	78
VIII	Fresh Danger	81
IX	Nome	94
X	The Four Sisters	109
XI	Life in a Mining Camp	131
XII	Bar-Room Disturbances	149
XIII	Off For Golovin Bay	162
XIV	Life at Golovin	184
XV	Winter in the Mission	199
XVI	The Retired Sea Captain	215
XVII	How the Long Days Passed	231
XVIII	Swarming	247
XIX	New Quarters	261
XX	Christmas in Alaska	275
XXI	My First Gold Claims	292
XXII	The Little Sick Child	311
XXIII	Lights and Shadows of the Mining Camp	325
XXIV	An Unpleasant Adventure	340
XXV	Stones and Dynamite	354

XXVI	Good-bye to Golovin Bay	374
XXVII	Going Outside	379

Transcriber's Note

Obvious printer errors have been corrected. All other inconsistencies remain as printed.

A list of illustrations, though not present in the original, has been provided below:

COVER
MAY KELLOGG SULLIVAN IN ALASKA DRESS.
DAWSON, Y. T.
CITY HALL AT SKAGWAY.
PORCUPINE CANYON, WHITE PASS.
MILES CANYON.
UPPER YUKON STEAMER.
FIVE FINGER RAPIDS.
GOING TO DAWSON IN WINTER.
A KLONDYKE CLAIM.
EAGLE CITY, ON THE YUKON, IN 1899.
YUKON STEAMER "HANNAH."
FELLOW TRAVELERS.
ESKIMOS.

UNALASKA.
STEAMSHIP ST. PAUL.
NOME.
LIFE AT NOME.
CLAIM NUMBER NINE, ANVIL CREEK.
CLAIM NUMBER FOUR, ANVIL CREEK, NOME.
MAP OF ALASKA.
ESKIMO DOGS.
WINTER PROSPECTING.
AT CHINIK. THE MISSION.
CLAIM ON BONANZA CREEK.
ON BONANZA CREEK.
SKAGWAY RIVER, FROM THE TRAIN.

PREFACE

This unpretentious little book is the outcome of my own experiences and adventures in Alaska. Two trips, covering a period of eighteen months and a distance of over twelve thousand miles were made practically alone.

In answer to the oft-repeated question of why I went to Alaska I can only give the same reply that so many others give: I wanted to go in search of my fortune which had been successfully eluding my grasp for a good many years. Neither home nor children claimed

my attention. No good reason, I thought, stood in the way of my going to Alaska; for my husband, traveling constantly at his work had long ago allowed me carte blanche as to my inclinations and movements. To be sure, there was no money in the bank upon which to draw, and an account with certain friends whose kindness and generosity cannot be forgotten, was opened up to pay passage money; but so far neither they nor I have regretted making the venture.

I had first-class health and made up in endurance what I lacked in avoirdupois, along with a firm determination to take up the first honest work that presented itself, regardless of choice, and in the meantime to secure a few gold claims, the fame of which had for two years reached my ears.

In regard to the truthfulness of this record I have tried faithfully to relate my experiences as they took place. Not all, of course, have been included, for numerous and varied trials came to me, of which I have not written, else a far more thrilling story could have been told.

Enough has, however, been noted to give my readers a fair idea of a woman's life during a period of eighteen months in a few of the roughest mining camps in the world; and that many may be interested, and to some extent possibly instructed by the perusal of my little book, is the sincere wish of the author.

May Kellogg Sullivan.

A WOMAN WHO WENT—TO ALASKA.

CHAPTER I.

UNDER WAY.



Y first trip from California to Alaska was made in the summer of 1899. I went alone to Dawson to my father and brother, surprising them greatly when I quietly walked up to shake hands with them at their work. The amazement of my father knew no bounds, —and yet I could see a lot of quiet amusement beneath all when he introduced me to his friends, which plainly said:

"Here is my venturesome daughter, who is really a 'chip off the old block,' so you must not be surprised at her coming to Alaska."

Father had gone to the Klondyke a year before at the age of sixty-four, climbing Chilkoot Pass in the primitive way and "running" Miles Canyon and White Horse Rapids in a small boat which came near being swamped in the passage.

My brother's entrance to the famous gold fields was made in the same dangerous manner a year before; but I had waited until trains over the White Pass and Yukon Railroad had been crossing the mountains daily for two weeks before myself attempting to get into Alaska's interior. At that time it was only a three hours' ride, including stops, over the Pass to Lake Bennett, the terminus of this new railroad, the first in Alaska. A couple of rude open flat cars with springless seats along the sides were all the accommodation we had as passengers from the summit of White Pass to Lake Bennett; we having paid handsomely for the privilege of riding in this manner and thinking ourselves fortunate, considering the fact that our route was, during the entire distance of about forty-five miles, strewn with the bleaching bones of earlier argonauts and their beasts of burden.

Naturally, my traveling companions interested me exceedingly. There were few women. Two ladies with their husbands were going to Dawson on business. About eight or ten other women belonging to the rapid class of individuals journeyed at the same time. We had all nationalities and classes. There were two women from Europe with luggage covered with foreign stickers, and a spoken jargon which was neither German nor French, but sounded like a clever admixture of both.

Then there was the woman who went by the name of

Mrs. Somebody or other who wore a seal-skin coat, diamond earrings and silver-mounted umbrella. She had been placed in the same stateroom with me on the steamer at Seattle, and upon making her preparations to retire for the night had offered me a glass of brandy, while imbibing one herself, which I energetically, though politely, refused. At midnight a second woman of the same caste had been ushered into my room to occupy the third and last berth, whereupon next morning I had waited upon the purser of the ship, and modestly but firmly requested a change of location. In a gentlemanly way he informed me that the only vacant stateroom was a small one next the engine room below, but if I could endure the noise and wished to take it, I could do so. I preferred the proximity and whirr of machinery along with closer quarters to the company of the two adventuresses, so while both women slept late next morning I quietly and thankfully moved all my belongings below. Here I enjoyed the luxury of a room by myself for forty-eight hours, or until we reached Skagway, completely oblivious to the fact that never for one instant did the pounding of the great engines eight feet distant cease either day or night.





A United States Judge, an English aristocrat and lady, a Seattle lawyer, sober, thoughtful and of middle age, who had been introduced to me by a friend upon sailing, and who kindly kept me in sight when we changed steamers or trains on the trip without specially appearing to do so; a nice old gentleman going to search for the body of his son lost in the Klondyke River a few weeks before, and a good many rough miners as well as nondescripts made up our unique company to Dawson. Some had been over the route before when mules and horses had been the only means of transportation over the Passes, and stories of the trials and dangers of former trips were heard upon deck each day, with accompaniments of oaths and slang phrases, and punctuated by splashes of tobacco juice.

On the voyage to Skagway there was little seasickness among the passengers, as we kept to the inland passage among the islands. At a short distance away we viewed the great Treadwell gold mines on Douglass Island, and peered out through a veil of mist and rain at Juneau under the hills. Here we left

a few of our best and most pleasant passengers, and watched the old Indian women drive sharp bargains in curios, beaded moccasins, bags, etc., with tourists who were impervious to the great rain drops which are here always falling as easily from the clouds as leaves from a maple tree in October.

Our landing at Skagway under the towering mountains upon beautiful Lynn Canal was more uneventful than our experience in the Customs House at that place, for we were about to cross the line into Canadian territory. Here we presented an interesting and animated scene. Probably one hundred and fifty persons crowded the small station and baggage room, each one pushing his way as far as possible toward the officials, who with muttered curses hustled the tags upon each box and trunk as it was hastily unlocked and examined. Ropes and straps were flung about the floor, bags thrown with bunches of keys promiscuously, while transfer men perspiring from every pore tumbled great mountains of luggage hither and thither.





SKAGWAY.

Two ponderous Germans there were, who, in checked steamer caps enveloped in cigar smoke of the best brand, protested vigorously at the opening of their trunks by the officers, but their protests seemed only the more to whet the appetites of these dignitaries. The big Germans had their revenge, however. In the box of one of these men was found with other things a lot of Limburger cheese, the pungent odor of which drove the women screaming to the doors, and men protesting indignantly after them; while those unable to reach the air prayed earnestly for a good stiff breeze off Lynn Canal to revive them. The Germans laughed till tears ran down their cheeks, and cheerfully paid the duty imposed.

Skagway was interesting chiefly from its historical associations as a port where so many struggling men had landed, suffered and passed on over that trail of

hardship and blood two years before.

Our little narrow gauge coaches were crowded to their utmost, men standing in aisles and on platforms, and sitting upon wood boxes and hand luggage near the doors.

It was July, and the sight of fresh fruit in the hands of those lunching in the next seat almost brought tears to my eyes, for we were now going far beyond the land of fruits and all other delicacies.

"Pick it up, old man, pick it up and eat it," said one rough fellow of evident experience in Alaska to one who had dropped a cherry upon the floor, "for you won't get another while you stay in this country, if it is four years!"

"But," said another, "he can eat 'Alaska strawberries' to his heart's content, summer and winter, and I'll be bound when he gets home to the States he won't thank anyone for puttin' a plate of beans in front of him, he'll be that sick of 'em! I et beans or 'Alaska strawberries' for nine months one season, day in and day out, and I'm a peaceable man, but at the end of that time I'd have put a bullet through the man who offered me beans to eat, now you can bet your life on that! Don't never insult an old timer by puttin' beans before him, is my advice if you do try to sugar-coat 'em by calling 'em strawberries!" and the man thumped his old cob pipe with force enough upon the wood box to empty the ashes from its bowl and to break it into fragments had it not been well seasoned.

Upon the summit of White Pass we alighted from the train and boarded another. This time it was the open flat cars, and the Germans came near being left. As

the conductor shouted "all aboard" they both scrambled, with great puffing and blowing owing to their avoirdupois, to the rear end of the last car, and with faces purple from exertion plumped themselves down almost in the laps of some women who were laughing at them.



WHITE PASS.

We had now a dizzy descent to make to Lake Bennett. Conductor and brakeman were on the alert. With their hands upon the brakes these men stood with nerves and muscles tense. All talking ceased. Some of us thought of home and loved ones, but none flinched. Slowly at first, then faster and faster the train rolled over the rails until lakes, hills and mountains fairly flew past us as we descended. At last the train's speed was slackened, and we moved more leisurely along the foot of the mountains. We were in the beautiful green "Meadows" where pretty and fragrant wild flowers nodded in clusters among the tall grass.

At Bennett our trunks were again opened, and we left

the train. We were to take a small steamer down the lakes and river for Dawson. We were no longer crowded, as passengers scattered to different boats, some going east to Atlin. With little trouble I secured a lodging for one night with the stewardess of the small steamer which would carry us as far as Miles Canyon or the Camp, Canyon City. From there we were obliged to walk five miles over the trail. It was midsummer, and the woods through which we passed were green. Wild flowers, grasses and moss carpeted our path which lay along the eastern bank of the great gorge called Miles Canyon, only at times winding away too far for the roar of its rushing waters to reach our ears. No sound of civilization came to us, and no life was to be seen unless a crow chanced to fly overhead in search of some morsel of food. Large forest trees there were none. Tall, straight saplings of poplar, spruce and pine pointed their slender fingers heavenward, and seemed proudly to say:

"See what fortitude we have to plant ourselves in this lonely Northland with our roots and sap ice-bound most of the year. Do you not admire us?" And we did admire wonderingly. Then, again, nearing the banks of Miles Canyon we forged our way on up hill and down, across wet spots, over boulders and logs, listening to the roar of the mighty torrent dashing between towering, many-colored walls of rock, where the volume of water one hundred feet in width with a current of fifteen miles an hour, and a distance of five-eighths of a mile rushes insistently onward, as it has, no doubt, done for ages past. Then at last widening, this torrent is no longer confined by precipitous cliffs but between sparsely wooded banks, and now passes under the name of "White Horse Rapids," from so strangely resembling white

horses as the waters are dashed over and about the huge boulders in mid-stream. Here many of the earlier argonauts found watery graves as they journeyed in small boats or rafts down the streams to the Klondyke in their mad haste to reach the newly discovered gold fields.

After leaving White Horse Rapids we traveled for days down the river. My little stateroom next the galley or kitchen of the steamer was frequently like an oven, so great was the heat from the big cooking range. The room contained nothing but two berths, made up with blankets and upon wire springs, and the door did not boast of a lock of any description. Upon application to the purser for a chair I received a camp stool. Luckily I had brushes, combs, soap and towels in my bag, for none of these things were furnished with the stateroom. In the stern of the boat there was a small room where tin wash basins and roller towels awaited the pleasure of the women passengers, the water for their ablutions being kept in a barrel, upon which hung an old dipper. To clean one's teeth over the deck rail might seem to some an unusual undertaking, but I soon learned to do this with complacency, it being something of gain not to lose sight of passing scenery while performing the operation.





At Lake La Barge we enjoyed a magnificent panorama. Bathed in the rosy glow of a departing sunset, this beautiful body of water sparkled like diamonds on all sides of us. Around us on every hand lay the green and quiet hills. Near the waters' edge they appeared a deep green, but grew lighter in the distance. Long bars of crimson, grey and gold streaked the western horizon, while higher up tints of purple and pink blended harmoniously with the soft blue sky. As the sun slowly settled the colors deepened. Darker and darker they grew. The warm soft glow had departed, and all was purple and black, including the waters beneath us; and as we passed through the northern end or outlet of the lake into Thirty Mile River we seemed to be entering a gate, so narrow did the entrance to the river appear between the hills.

At night our steamer was frequently tied up to a wood pile along the banks of the river. No signs of civilization met our eyes, except, perhaps, a rude log hut or cabin among the trees, where at night, his solitary candle twinkling in his window and his dogs

baying at the moon, some lonely settler had established himself.

The Semenow Hills country is a lonely one. Range upon range of rolling, partly wooded, hills meet the eye of the traveler until it grows weary and seeks relief in sleep.

Five Finger Rapids was the next point of interest on our route, and I am here reminded of a short story which is not altogether one of fiction, and which is entitled: Midnight on a Yukon Steamer.

CHAPTER II.

MIDNIGHT ON A YUKON STEAMER.



THE bright and yellow full moon drifted slowly upward. The sun had just set at nine in the evening, casting a warm and beautiful glow over all the lonely landscape, for it was the most dreary spot in all the dreary wilderness through which the mighty Yukon

passes.

The steamer had tied up for wood, and now the brawny stevedores with blackened hands and arms were pitching it to the deck.

To the passengers, of whom there were a goodly number, time hung heavily, and the younger ones had proposed a dance. Musical instruments were not numerous, but such as there were, were brought out, and two non-professionals with an accordion and a banjo, were doing their very best.

A small number of sober ones were to be seen on deck pacing restlessly back and forth, for the ruthless mosquito was distinctly on evidence, and threatened to outgeneral the quiet ones, if not the orchestra and the hilarious dancers.

On the upper deck, a lady, clad in warm cloak and thick veil, walked tirelessly to and fro. A big stump-tailed dog of the Malemute tribe at times followed at her heels, but when she had patted his head and spoken kindly to him he appeared satisfied, and lay down again with his head between his paws. Then sounds from the dancers below, the shrill laughter of the women mingled with the strum of the banjo and the wheezy accordion seemed to disturb the dog's slumber, and he would again pace up and down at the lady's heels.

At times there would come a lull in the tumult, and the click of the glasses or crash of a fallen pitcher would make a variety of entertainment for the lady and her dog on the upper deck; but the short and dusky midnight was well passed before the dancing ceased and partial quiet and order were restored.

Two figures remained near the stern of the boat. One, a young woman with a profusion of long auburn hair, the other a man with flushed face and thick breath.

"I cannot tell now which one it will be," said the girl coquettishly, "but if you wait you will see."

"No more waitin' in it," he growled. "I have waited long enough, and too long, and you must choose between us now. You know we will soon be at 'Five Fingers,' and you must be good or they may get you," with a wicked leer and clutch at her arm calculated to startle her as she carelessly sat on the deck rail.

"I'm not afraid of 'Five Fingers' or any other fingers, and I'm not afraid of your two hands either," making her muscles very tense, and sitting rigidly upright, "and you can't scare me a bit; I'll do as I like, so there!"

By this time the moon shone high above the tops of the tall slender pines, and spread its soft light over all the swift and swirling waters. To the west, the hills faded first from green to blue, then to purple, and lastly to black, silhouetted as they were against the quiet sky.

The swift flowing current pushed the waters up among the weeds and bushes along the river's edge and the loose rocks were washed quite smooth. Now and then might be heard the bark of a wood-chopper's dog stationed outside his master's cabin, and the steady thud of the steamer never stopped. At two o'clock it was growing light again, and still the young man pleaded with the girl on the deck. She was stubborn and silent.

Swiftly now the boat neared the "Five Fingers." Only a few miles remained before the huge boulders forming the narrow and tortuous channels called the "Five Fingers" would be reached, and the face of the pilot was stern. It was a most dangerous piece of water and many boats had already been wrecked at this point.

Suddenly above the noise of the waters and the steamer's regular breathing there arose on the quiet air a shrill shriek at the stern of the boat.

The lady on the upper deck had retired. The captain was sleeping off his too frequent potations, and only the pilot on the lookout knew that the scream came from a woman; but it was not repeated.

The pilot's assistant was off watch, and his own duty lay at the wheel; so it happened that a guilty man who had been standing by the deck rail crept silently, unnoticed, and now thoroughly sobered, to his stateroom.

His companion was nowhere to be seen.

A small steamer following next day in the wake of the first boat, came to Five Finger Rapids.

"See the pretty red seaweed on the rocks, mamma," cried a little boy, pointing to the low ledge on the bank of the east channel.

Those who looked in the direction indicated by the boy saw, as the steamer crept carefully up to the whirlpool, a woman's white face in the water, above which streamed a mass of long auburn hair, caught firmly on the rocks.

Standing by the side of his pilot, the captain's keen

eye caught sight of the head and hair.

"It's only Dolly Duncan," he said, with a shrug of his shoulders. "No one else has such hair; but it's no great loss anyway; there are many more of such as she, you know."



STEAMER.

CHAPTER III.

DAWSON.



Y this time we had passed the Hootalingua, Big Salmon, Little Salmon and Lewes rivers, and were nearing the mouth of Pelley River, all flowing into one stream from the east and uniting to form the Upper Yukon. Many smaller rivers and creeks from the west as well as the east empty into this river which gathers momentum and volume constantly until it reaches a swiftness of five miles an hour between Five Finger Rapids and Fort Selkirk.

This latter fort is an old Canadian Post where mounted police and other officers and soldiers are stationed. Never shall I forget my first experience at Fort Selkirk. We arrived about one o'clock in the afternoon and were told that our steamer would remain there an hour, giving us all a chance to run about on shore for a change. Taking my sunshade, and attracted by the wide green fields dotted with pretty wild flowers of various colors, I rambled around alone for an hour, all the time keeping our steamer in plain sight not many hundred yards away. Curious to learn the meaning of a group of peculiar stakes driven into the ground, some of which were surrounded by rude little fences, I made my way in a narrow path through the deep grass to the place, and soon discovered an Indian burial ground. There were, perhaps, twenty little mounds or graves, a few

much sunken below the level as if made long years before, but all were marked in some manner by rude head boards.

These were notched, and had at one time been fancifully stained or colored by the Ayan Indians, the stains and funny little inscriptions being, for the most part, obliterated by the elements. Dainty wild roses here nodded gracefully to each other, their pretty blooms being weighted down at times by some venturesome, big honey bee or insolent fly; both insects with many others, some of them unknown to me, buzzing contentedly in the sunshine overhead.

Daisies and buttercups grew wild. Flowering beans and peas trailed their sprays upon the ground. Blue bells, paint brush, and other posies fairly bewildered me, so surprised was I to find them here in this far Northland. Without this happiness and cheer given me by my sweet little floral friends I might not have been so well prepared to endure the rudeness that was awaiting me.

Upon my return to the steamer I found all in confusion. I could see no signs of departure and no one of whom I cared to make inquiries. Men and women were coming and going, but none appeared sober, while many with flushed faces were loudly laughing and joking. A few Canadian police in red coats scattered here and there were fully as rollicking as any, and the steamer's captain and purser, arm in arm with a big, burly Canadian official, were as drunk as bad liquor could well make them.





Going to my stateroom I sat down to read, and, if possible, hide my anxiety. As there was no window or other ventilator, and it was a warm day, I could not close the door. While sitting thus the doorway was darkened, and looking up I saw before me the drunken Canadian official, leering at me with a horrible grin, and just about to speak.

At that instant there stepped to his side the tall form of the only really sober man on board—the Seattle lawyer, who, in his most dignified manner motioned the officer on, and he went; the gentlemanly lawyer, tossing his half-consumed cigar overboard in an emphatic way as if giving vent to his inward perturbation, marched moodily on. Catching a glimpse of his face as he passed, I concluded that the situation was fully as bad or worse than I had at first feared. Already we had been several hours at Fort Selkirk and should have been miles on toward Dawson.

The captain and crew were too drunk to know what they were doing, and they were hourly growing more so. Many were gambling and drinking in the salon or

dining room and others came from the liquor store on shore a few rods away. The voices of the women were keyed to the highest pitch as they shouted with laughter at the rough jokes or losing games of the men, while red-faced, perspiring waiters hurried back and forth with trays laden with bottles and glasses. Now and then the crash of a fallen pitcher or plate, followed by the shrieks of the women would reach me, and looking through the great cracks in the board partition which was the only thing separating me from the drunken crowd, I could see most of the carousal, for such it now was.

My anxiety increased. I feared the danger of a night on board in a tiny stateroom, without lock or weapon, and entirely alone.

"Mr. H——," said I quietly, a little later, to the man from Seattle, as I stepped up to him while he smoked near the deck rail. "When do you think the steamer will leave this place?"

"Tomorrow, most likely," in a tone of deep disgust.

"Do you not think that the captain will push on tonight?" I asked in great anxiety.

"I doubt if there is a man on board with enough sense left to run the engine, and the captain—look there!" pointing to a maudlin and dishevelled Canadian wearing a captain's cap, and just then trying to preserve his equilibrium on a wooden settle near the railing. "It would be a blessing if the brute tumbled overboard, and we were well rid of him," said the gentleman savagely in a low tone. Then, seeing my consternation, he added: "I'll see what can be done, however," and I returned to my room.

What should I do! I knew of no place of safety on shore for me during the night if the steamer remained, and I dared not stay in my stateroom. I had no revolver, no key to my door. I might be murdered before morning, and my friends would never know what had become of me. There was no one on board to whom I could appeal but the lawyer, and he might be powerless to protect me in such a drunken rabble. With a prayer in my heart I made my nerves as tense as possible and shut my teeth tightly together. It was best to appear unconcerned. I did it. Suggesting away all fright from my face I watched proceedings in the dining room through the cracks in the wall. It was a sight such as I had never before seen. It was six o'clock and dinner was being served by the flushed and flustered waiters. Probably a hundred persons sat at the tables in all stages of intoxication. Hilarity ran high. Most of them were wildly jolly and gushingly full of good will; but all seemed hungry, and the odors from the kitchen were appetizing.

I now hoped that the dinner, and especially the hot tea and coffee would restore some of these people to their senses in order that they might get up steam in the engines and pull out of this terrible place before they were too far gone. Dinner was well over in the dining room and I had not yet eaten. A waiter passed my door. He stopped.

"Have you eaten dinner?"

"No, I have not."

"Don't you want some?"

"Well, yes. I think I could eat something."

"I'll bring you some." And he was gone.

A few minutes later he entered my stateroom with a big tray, and putting it upon the edge of the upper berth he left me. I ate my dinner from the tray while standing, and felt better.

An hour afterward the drunken officials had been coaxed into going ashore; the furnace in the engine room was crammed with wood; the partially sobered pilot resumed his place at the wheel; the captain had pulled himself together as best he could under the threats of the lawyer from Seattle, and the steamer moved away from the bank, going with the current swiftly towards Dawson. Nothing of further importance occurred until next morning when our steamer pulled up alongside the dock at Dawson. It was Monday morning, the thirtieth of July, 1899, and the weather was beautifully clear. I had been fourteen days coming from Seattle. Hundreds of people waited upon the dock to see us land, and to get a glimpse of a new lot of "Chechakos," as all newcomers are called.

Soon after landing I met upon the street an old Seattle friend of my parents, who knew me instantly and directed me to my father. This man's kind offer to look up my baggage was accepted, and I trudged down through the town towards the Klondyke River, where my father and brother lived. I had no difficulty in finding father, and after the first surprise and our luncheon were over we proceeded to find my brother at his work. His astonishment was as great as my father's, and I cannot truthfully state that either of them were overcome with joy at seeing me in Dawson. At any other time or place they undoubtedly would have been delighted, but they

were too well acquainted with conditions to wish another member of their family there in what was probably then the largest and roughest mining camp in the world. The situation that presented itself was this. Instead of finding my relatives comfortably settled in a large and commodious log cabin of their own on the banks of the Klondyke River, as they had written they were, I found them in the act of moving all their belongings into a big covered scow or barge drawn close to the river bank and securely fastened. Cooking utensils, boxes, bags of provisions consisting of flour, beans and meal, as well as canned goods of every description, along with firewood and numerous other things, were dumped in one big heap upon the banks of the Klondyke River near the barge.

The small sheet iron box with door and lid, called a Yukon stove, had been set up close in one corner of the living room, which in size was about eight by ten feet. Two bunks, one above the other in the opposite corner, had been lately constructed by father, who at the moment of my arrival was busy screwing a small drop leaf to the wall to be used as a dining table when supported by a couple of rather uncertain adjustable legs underneath.

The meaning of all this commotion was not long to find. Father and brother had, along with many more as peaceable and law-abiding citizens, been ordered out of their log cabins, built at a great out-lay of time, money and strength, so that their homes should be pulled down in accordance with an order given by the Governor. This land, as the city had grown, had increased in value and was coveted by those high in authority. No redress was made the settlers, no money was paid them, nothing for them but insulting

commands and black looks from the Canadian police enforcing the order of the governor.

"Never again," said my father repeatedly, "will I build or own a home in the Klondyke. This scow will shelter me until I make what money I want, and then good-bye to such a country and its oppressive officials."

Other men cursed and swore, and mutterings of a serious nature were heard; but there was nothing to be done, and the row of comfortable, completed log cabins was torn down, and we settled ourselves elsewhere by degrees. A bunk with calico curtains hung around it was made for me, and I was constituted cook of the camp. Then such a scouring of tins, kettles and pails as I had! Shelves were nailed in place for all such utensils, and a spot was found for almost everything, after which the struggle was begun to keep these things in their places. Then I baked and boiled and stewed and patched and mended, between times writing in my note book, sending letters to friends or taking kodak pictures.

I was now living in a new world! Nothing like the town of Dawson had I ever seen. Crooked, rough and dirty streets; rude, narrow board walks or none at all; dog-teams hauling all manner of loads on small carts, and donkeys or "burros" bowing beneath great loads of supplies starting out on the trail for the gold mines.

"Don't do that!" shouted a man to me one day, as I attempted to "snap-shot" his pack train of twenty horses and mules as they passed us. Two of the animals had grown tired and attempted to lie down, thus causing the flour sacks with which they were loaded to burst open and the flour to fly in clouds

around them. "Don't do that," he entreated, "for we are having too much trouble!"

Some of the drivers were lashing the mules to make them rise, and this spread a panic through most of the train, so that one horse, evidently new to the business and not of a serious turn of mind, ran swiftly away, kicking up his heels in the dust behind him. There were also hams and sides of bacon dangling in greasy yellow covers over the backs of the pack animals, along with "grub" boxes and bags of canned goods of every description. Pick axes, shovels, gold pans and Yukon stoves with bundles of stove pipe tied together with ropes, rolls of blankets, bedding, rubber boots, canvas tents, ad infinitum.

There was one method used by "packers," as the drivers of these pack trains were called, which worked well in some instances. If the animals of his train were all sober and given to honestly doing their work, then the halter or rope around the neck of a mule could be tied to the tail of the one preceding him, and so on again until they were all really hitched together tandem. But woe unto the poor brute who was followed by a balky fellow or a shirk! The consequences were, at times, under certain circumstances, almost too serious to be recounted in this story, at least this can be said of the emphatic language used by the packers in such predicament.

One warm, bright day soon after my arrival in Dawson, and when order had been brought out of chaos in the scow—our home—I went to call upon an old friend, formerly of Seattle. Carrie N. was three or four years younger than myself, had been a nurse for a time after the death of her husband, but grew tired of that work, and decided in the winter of 1897

and 1898 to go into the Klondyke. A party of forty men and women going to Dawson was made up in Seattle, and she joined them. For weeks they were busily engaged in making their preparations. Living near me, as she did at the time, I was often with Carrie N. and was much interested in her movements and accompanied her to the Alaska steamer the day she sailed. It was the little ship "Alki" upon which she went away, and it was crowded with passengers and loaded heavily with freight for the trip to Dyea, as Skagway and the dreaded White Pass had been voted out of the plans of the Seattle party of forty.



IN WINTER.

Now in Dawson I called upon Carrie N. eighteen months later, and heard her tell the story of her trip to the Klondyke. They had landed, she said, at Dyea from the "Alki" with their many tons of provisions and supplies, all of which had to be dumped upon the beach where no dock or wharf had ever been constructed. Here with dog-teams and sleds, a few horses and men "packers," their supplies were hauled up the mountain as far as "Sheep Camp," some ten

miles up the mountain side. It was early springtime and the snow lay deep upon the mountains and in the gorges, which, in the vicinity of Chilkoot Pass at the summit of the mountain are frightfully high and precipitous.

The weather was not cold, and the moving of this large party of forty persons with their entire outfit was progressing as favorably as could be expected. A camp had been made at Dyea as the base of operations; another was made at Sheep Camp. At each place the women of the party did the cooking in tents while men gathered wood, built fires, and brought water. Other men worked steadily at the hauling, and most of their supplies had already been transported to the upper camp; when there occurred a tragedy so frightful as to make itself a part of never-to-be-forgotten Alaskan history.

It was on Sunday, and a snow storm was raging, but the weather was warm. Hundreds of people thronged the trails both going up and coming down the mountain in their effort to quickly transport their outfits over to the other side, and thus make the best possible time in reaching the gold fields. Here a difference of opinion arose among the people of our Seattle party, for some, more daring than the others, wished to push on over the summit regardless of the storm; while the more cautious ones demurred and held back, thinking it the part of discretion to wait for better weather. A few venturesome ones kept to their purpose and started on ahead, promising to meet the laggards at Lake Bennett with boats of their own making in which to journey down the river and lakes to Dawson.

Their promises were never fulfilled.

While they, in company with hundreds of others as venturesome, trudged heavily up the narrow trail, a roar as of an earthquake suddenly sounded their death-knell. Swiftly down the mountain side above them tore the terrible avalanche, a monster formation of ice, snow and rock, the latter loosened and ground off the face of old Chilkoot by the rushing force of the moving snowslide urged on by a mighty wind. In an instant's time a hundred men and women were brushed, like flies from a ceiling, off the face of the mountain into their death below, leaving a space cleared of all to the bare earth where only a few seconds before had stood the patient toilers on the trail.

Only one thing remained for the living to do, and that was to drop all else and rescue, if possible, the dying and engulfed ones. This they did. When the wind had died away the snow in the air cleared, and hundreds of men threw themselves into the rescue work. Many were injured but lived. Some were buried in snow but found their way to light again. One man was entirely covered except one arm which he used energetically to inform those above him of his whereabouts. He was taken out unharmed, and lived to welcome the writer of this to Dawson, where he carted and delivered her trunk faithfully.

But Carrie N. had remained at Sheep Camp and was safe. Then her experience in nursing stood her in good stead; and while men brought the dead to camp, she, with others, for hours performed the services which made the bodies ready for burial. It was a heart-rending undertaking and required a cool head and steady hand, both of which Carrie N. possessed. Two men of her party thus lost their lives, and it was not until days afterward that the last of

the poor unfortunates were found. Nearly one hundred lives were lost in this terrible disaster, but there were undoubtedly those whose bodies were never found, and whose death still remains a mystery.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RUSH.



INCE the discovery of gold by George Carmack on Bonanza Creek in September, 1896, the growth of this country has been phenomenal, more especially so to the one who has visited and is familiar with Dawson and the Klondyke mining section.

As to the entire yield of gold from the Klondyke Creeks, none can say except approximately; for the ten per cent. royalty imposed by the Canadian government has always met a phase of human nature which prompts to concealment and dishonesty, so that a truthful estimate cannot be made.

The Canadian Dominion government is very oppressive. Mining laws are very arbitrary and strictly enforced. A person wishing to prospect for gold must first procure a miner's license, paying ten dollars for it. If anything is discovered, and he wishes to locate a claim, he visits the recorder's office, states his business, and is told to call again. In the meantime, men are sent to examine the locality and if anything of value is found, the man wishing to record the claim is told that it is already located. The officials seize it. The man has no way of ascertaining if the land was properly located, and so has no redress. If the claim is thought to be poor, he can locate it by the payment of a fifteen dollar fee.

One half of all mining land is reserved for the crown, a quarter or more is gobbled by corrupt officials, and a meagre share left for the daring miners who, by braving hardship and death, develop the mines and open up the country.

"Any one going into the country has no right to cut wood for any purpose, or to kill any game or catch any fish, without a license for which a fee of ten dollars must be paid. With such a license it is unlawful to sell a stick of wood for any purpose, or a pound of fish or game." The law is strictly enforced. To do anything, one must have a special permit, and for every such permit he must pay roundly.

The story is told of a miner in a hospital who was about to die. He requested that the Governor be sent for. Being asked what he wanted with the Governor, he replied: "I haven't any permit, and if I should undertake to die without a permit, I should get myself arrested."

It is a well-known fact that many claims on Eldorado,

Hunker and Bonanza Creeks have turned out hundreds of thousands of dollars. One pan of gravel on Eldorado Creek yielded $2100. Frank Dinsmore on Bonanza Creek took out ninety pounds of solid gold or $24,480 in a single day. On Aleck McDonald's claim on Eldorado, one man shoveled in $20,000 in twelve hours. McDonald, in two years, dug from the frozen ground $2,207,893. Charley Anderson, on Eldorado, panned out $700 in three hours. T. S. Lippy is said to have paid the Canadian government $65,000 in royalties for the year 1898 and Clarence Berry about the same.

On Skukum Gulch $30,000 were taken from two boxes of dirt. Frank Phiscator of Michigan, after a few months' work, brought home $100,000 in gold, selling one-third of his claim interests for $1,333,000, or at the rate of $5,000,000 for the whole.

When a man is compelled to pay one thousand dollars out of every ten thousand he digs from the ground, he will boast little of large "clean-ups"; and for this reason it is hard to estimate the real amount of gold extracted from the Klondyke mines.

Captain James Kennedy, an old pioneer and conservative mining man, estimates the output for the season of 1899 as $25,000,000, or fifty tons of dust and nuggets.

The most commendable thing about the Canadian Government is their strict enforcement of order. Stealing is an almost unheard of thing, and petty thieving does not exist. Mounted police in their brown uniforms and soldiers in their red coats are everywhere seen in and around Dawson, and they practice methods, which, to the uninitiated, make

them very nearly omnipresent.

While walking down street in Dawson one morning about nine o'clock, I passed a group of men all wearing sober faces. "They're done for now," said a rough miner, glancing in the direction of the Barracks, where a black flag was fluttering at the top of a staff.

"How so?" asked another, just come up to the group.

"Three men hung over there, an hour ago. They're goin' to bury 'em now," and the speaker twitched his thumbs first toward the Barracks, then farther east, where a rough stretch of ground lay unused. Here could be seen policemen and soldiers, evidently in the midst of some performance not on their daily routine.

A number of prisoners wearing the regulation garb of convicts,—pantaloons of heavy mackinaw, one leg of yellow and the other of black,—were carrying long, rough boxes, while others were digging shallow graves.

Upon inquiry I found that what the miner had said was true. Three prisoners, two of them Indian murderers, with another man notoriously bad, had indeed been hung about eight o'clock that morning in the barracks courtyard. In less than two hours afterward they were interred, and in as many days they were forgotten.

By the middle of July, 1899, the steamers leaving Dawson on their way down the Yukon to St. Michael and the new gold fields at Nome, were well filled with those who were anxious to try their luck in Uncle Sam's territory where they can breathe, dig,

fish, hunt, or die without buying a license.

By August the steamers coming from St. Michael brought such glowing accounts of the Nome gold fields, that while few people came in, they carried as many out as they could accommodate.

By September the rush down the Yukon was tremendous, and of the twelve thousand people in Dawson many hundreds left for Nome.

When, after six weeks spent in curiously studying conditions and things,—not to say people,—in the great mining camp, it was decided that I should accompany my brother down the Yukon to Cape Nome, and so "out" home to San Francisco, I felt a very distinct sense of disappointment. The novelty of everything, the excitement which came each day in some form or other, was as agreeable as the beautiful summer weather with the long, quiet evenings only settling into darkness at midnight.

In September came the frosts. Men living in tents moved their little Yukon stoves inside, and brought fresh sawdust and shavings from the mills for their beds. Others packed their few possessions into small boats, hauled down their tents, whistled to their dogs, and rolling up their sleeves, pulled laboriously up the swift little Klondyke to their winter "lays" in the mines.

Hundreds were also leaving for the outside. Steamers, both large and small, going to White Horse and Bennett, carried those who had joyfully packed their bags and smilingly said good-bye; for they were going home to the "States." How we strained our eyes from our cabin window or from the higher bank above, to see the people on the decks of the out-

going boats. How the name of each tug and even freight-carrier became a familiar household word, and how many were the conjectures as to whether "she" would get through to White Horse Rapids in the low water before a freeze-up!



A KLONDYKE CLAIM.

One day our own steamer came. She was a magnificently equipped river boat called the "Hannah," belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, and had cost one hundred thousand dollars. This was to be her last trip for the season, and with us it was "home now, or here all winter,"

and we made ready to leave. My kodak had been emptied and filled again, calls on acquaintances made, and good-byes said. My battered and broken trunk, which, at the hands of the English customs officials had suffered much, had now to be repaired and put to a good long test. This box was in a state of total collapse; rollers all gone, covering torn and bent, screws and nails lost, sides split, bottom entirely dropped out, but it must go; so my big brother was wheedled into putting it into some kind of shape again, and it came out stronger than before.

No lunches were needed. The cuisine of the Hannah was said to be as perfect as could be in this far away corner of the globe, and we trusted to that.

On September sixteenth the Hannah sounded her whistle—all was hurry and bustle, and such a sight! If hundreds had stood on the docks to welcome us as we entered the city, there were thousands now. It was pleasant. We felt flattered, especially as the band struck up our own national airs, giving us a medley of "Yankee Doodle," "America," "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp," and "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." They felt constrained, however, to wind up with "Sweet Marie," and rag-time dances, one old fellow in slouch hat and with a few drinks too many, stepping the jigs off in lively and comical fashion.

Our pride was perceptibly lessened afterward, when we learned that we had on board a dance hall outfit, and the band belonged to the Monte Carlo saloon!

We were now in the midst of a group, cosmopolitan beyond our wildest dreams. Pushing their way through the crowd to the gangplank came men, women and dogs, carrying grips, kodaks, tin cash boxes, musical instruments, army sacks, fur robes,

and rolls of blankets. Struggling under the weight of canvas tents, poles, Yukon stoves and sleds, as well as every conceivable thing, they climbed the stairway to the deck. Here, and in the main saloon, all was deposited for the time being.

There was a woman with a fine grey cat, for which she had been offered fifty dollars, wrapped in a warm shawl, much to pussy's disgust. A number of women had dogs and were weeping, probably at leaving other canines behind. Several persons carried little grips so heavy that they tugged along—evidently "Chechako," or paper money, was more scarce with them than dust and nuggets.

As freight, there was a piano, many iron-bound boxes containing gold bullion, securely sealed and labeled, and tons of supplies for the consumption of the passengers, of whom there were now five hundred.

Then the whistle again sounded—the gangplank was hauled in, handkerchiefs fluttered, the band struck up "Home Sweet Home"—we were headed down the Yukon River and toward the Arctic Circle.

We had now a journey of seventeen hundred miles before us. We were to traverse a country almost unknown to man. We were two of a party of five hundred persons, the majority of whom, if not actually desperadoes, were reckless and given over to the pursuit of gold regardless of the manner of its getting. There were loose characters of the town by hundreds; there were gamblers running a variety of games both day and night; there were dance house girls and musicians; there were drunks and toughs,

and one prize fighter. No firearms or knives were seen, though many, no doubt, had them.

With the enormous amount of gold on board (for the steamer's safe was overflowing, and the purser's room well packed with the precious stuff), with the numbers of hard characters we carried, and the now increasing remoteness from centres of government, there were dangers, we were forced to confess, but which we only admitted in whispers.

Three hours after leaving Dawson we were taking on wood at Forty Mile. This is the oldest camp on the Yukon River, and the early home of Jack McQuestion. The river banks were lined with canoes; many natives stood looking at us from the shore, and while stevedores handled the wood, many passengers visited the town. It was not long before they came back with hands full of turnips, just pulled from the ground, which, had they been the most luscious fruit, could not have been eaten with more relish.

I then tried to buy one of a young man, but he had evidently been long away from such luxuries, for he refused to sell; afterward, his gallantry getting the better of him, he politely offered me one-half of the vegetable, which I took with thanks.

As my brother peeled the precious turnip, I asked him how long since he had eaten one. "Two years," he promptly replied. Knowing that he was especially fond of such things, I ate a small slice, and gave him the remainder. It is needless to say he enjoyed it.

To the right of the landing at Forty Mile, just across a small stream which runs into the Yukon, is Fort Cudahy, containing the stores and warehouses of one of the large companies, as well as a post-office.





YUKON, IN 1899.

But we were soon off again, steaming along between hills yellow with fading poplar leaves and green streaked with pines. Many rocky spurs towered grandly heavenward, with tops, like silvered heads, covered with newly fallen snow. The Yukon is here very crooked and narrow, and abrupt banks hedged our steamer in on all sides.

Next morning early we arrived at Eagle City, Alaska. We were now in Uncle Sam's land, and breathed more freely. We felt at home. We cheered and waved our handkerchiefs to the blue uniformed soldiers on the river bank who had come to see us.

We went ashore and called upon lieutenant L., lately from his home in Connecticut and campaigning in Cuba. Taking us into a log house near by, he pointed out forty thousand rounds of ammunition and one hundred and fifteen Krag-Jorgensen rifles of the latest pattern.

Here were stationed one hundred and fifteen men, some of them at that time out moose hunting and

fishing. Captain Ray, an old white-haired gentleman, stood outside his cabin door. At Eagle we saw the new government barracks just being finished, the logs and shingles having been sawed at the government saw-mill near by, at the mouth of Mission Creek.

We were particularly struck with the very youthful appearance of our soldiers, and their wistful faces as they watched our preparations for departure.

The lieutenant had said that life in Cuba, or in almost any old place was preferable to that at Eagle, with the long winter staring them in the face, and we could see that the poor fellow longed for home. We were quite touched, but tried to cheer him as best we could.

Circle City, on a big bend of the river from which it derives its name, was reached the following evening. Here all hands crowded over the gangplank and into the stores. In less time than it takes to write it, these places were filled with miners, each man pulling away at his strong, old pipe, the companion of many weary months perhaps; while over the counters they handed their gold dust in payment for the "best plug cut," chewing gum, candy, or whatever else they saw that looked tempting. Here we bought two pairs of beaded moccasins for seven dollars.

As a heavy fog settled down upon us, our captain thought best to tie up the steamer over night, and did so. Next morning by daylight we saw the offices of the United States marshal; both log cabins with dirt roofs, upon which bunches of tall weeds were going to seed. We hoped this was not symbolical of the state of Uncle Sam's affairs in the interior, but feared it might be, as the places seemed deserted.

Many of the one thousand cabins at Circle were now vacant, but it is the largest town next to Dawson on the Yukon River.

During the whole of the next day our pilots steered cautiously over the Yukon Flats.

This is a stretch of about four hundred miles of low, swampy country, where the Yukon evidently loses its courage to run swiftly, for it spreads out indolently in all directions between treacherous and shifting sand-bars, fairly disheartening to all not familiar with its many peculiarities.

We now learned for the first time that we were practically in the hands of three pilots, two of whom were Eskimos, one of them on a salary of five hundred dollars per month. This man was perfectly familiar with the entire river, being an expert pilot, as he proved during this trip to the satisfaction of all.

Owing to the near approach of winter, and the extremely low water at this point, the captain, crew, and many others, wore anxious faces until the Flats were well passed. Should our steamer stick fast on a sand-bar, or take fire, we might easily be landed; but to be left in such a bleak and barren place, with cold weather approaching, snow beginning to fall, no shelter, and only provisions for a few days, with traveling companions of the very worst type, and no passing steamers to pick us up, we would indeed meet a hard fate, and one even the prospect of which was well calculated to make strong men shudder.

CHAPTER V

AT THE ARCTIC CIRCLE.

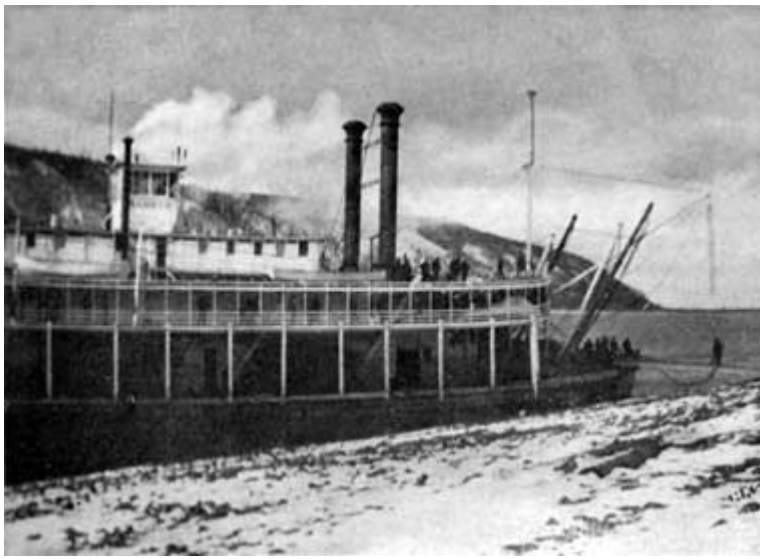


E were now at the Arctic Circle. For three days we had no sunshine, and flurries of snow were frequent. The mountain tops, as well as the banks and sand-bars of the river, were spread with a thin covering of snow; enough at least to give a wintry aspect. This added to the leaden sky above, made the warmth of big coal fires acceptable indoors, and fur coats comfortable on the decks.

At Fort Yukon the low water prevented our landing. We were told, however, that the place contained one hundred log houses, as well as an old Episcopal Mission, in which Mrs. Bumpus had lived and taught the natives for twenty years. Many of the Eskimo girls are trained as children's nurses and make very satisfactory ones.

Into the Yukon Flats empty the Porcupine River, Birch Creek and other streams. Fort Yukon was established by the Hudson Bay Company many years ago, all supplies coming in and shipments of furs going out by way of the McKensie River and the great Canadian Lakes.

Toward evening one day, while the stevedores were busy handling wood, we went ashore and visited an Eskimo family in their hut. It was built on the high river bank among the trees, quite near the steamer's landing. On the roof of the hut, there lay, stretched on sticks to dry, a large brown bear skin. Near by we saw the head of a freshly killed moose, with the hoofs of the animal still bloody.



"HANNAH."

As we stooped to enter the low door of the cabin, we felt the warmth from the fire in the little Yukon stove which was placed in the corner of the room. Next to this was a rude table, on which lay a quarter of moose meat, looking more or less tempting to travelers living on canned goods.

A bed stood in one corner, upon which two or three little children were playing, and upon a pile of rags and skins on the floor sat an old Eskimo woman, wrinkled and brown. These were her children and

grandchildren, and she was spending her life on the floor of the cabin, watching the little ones play around her, for she was paralyzed.

There were no chairs in the cabin, and but few rude utensils and playthings. A box or tin can, which had contained provisions, was now and then utilized.

After a few moments with the Eskimos, we backed out into the open air again, for the atmosphere of the hut was peculiar, and not altogether agreeable to our southern olfactories. It reminded us of Mrs. Peary's description of native smells in Greenland.

The short path back to our steamer lay through a poplar grove, and under our feet was spread a carpet of brown and yellow leaves, which, in the cool night air, smelled ripe and woodsy.

Next came Fort Hamlin, where we again saw some of Uncle Sam's boys, and where we trudged out through the soft light snow and took some kodak views.

Rampart City was reached in the early evening. One long row of houses upon the south bank of the Yukon, near the mouth of the Big Minook Creek constitutes the town. Here empty the Little Minook, Alder, Hunter, and many other gold-bearing creeks, and a bustling town sprung up only to be almost depopulated during the Nome excitement.

By this time several inches of snow had fallen, and the ground was freezing. We managed here to climb the slippery steps of the log store building in the dusk and buy a pound of ordinary candy, for which we paid one dollar.

Again we were in deep water. This time so very smooth that the hills, peaks, trees and islands were

all mirrored on its surface, and very beautiful.

The days were now quite short. About five in the afternoon the electric lights were turned on through the steamer, fresh coal again piled on the fires, and we reminded ourselves how comfortably we were traveling.

Then the dinner bell rang, and we sat down to dinner. Some attempt at decoration had been made, for tall glasses stood in the centre of the tables filled with ripe grasses and pretty autumn leaves, but, strange to relate, we were more interested in the contents of our soup plates and what was to follow. The cold and bracing air during our short walks on deck had given us all famous appetites, and we relished everything.

After hot soup with crackers, we ate of fresh fish, three kinds of canned meats, baked or boiled potatoes, with one other kind of vegetable, canned tomatoes, corn or beans. Side dishes consisted of pickles, olives, cheese, sardines, canned fruits, fancy crackers or biscuits, and afterward came pudding and pie. These last were made from various canned fruits, and with the rice, sago or tapioca pudding, formed most enjoyable desserts. On Sunday nuts and raisins or apples were added to the menu.

If we ate with keen appetites, we were not too much occupied to take note of the passengers around us. Nearly opposite sat a beautiful woman with a profusion of auburn hair piled high on her head. She was fashionably dressed in black silk or satin, and her white fingers were loaded with costly rings. As she handed a dish to the man beside her, her diamonds and other gems sparkled brightly. Her companion, much older, had a hard and villainous

face. A heavy frown of displeasure habitually rested upon his brow, and his glance was shifting and evasive. He was a professional gambler, kept his game running continually, and was going to Nome.

At the end of the table sat a tall and pleasant mannered young Englishman, with blue eyes and ruddy cheeks. He represented mining interests in the Klondyke amounting to millions, and was on his way to London. He was fond of wine, and consorted chiefly with those who were fast bringing him down to their level.

There was the girl with pretty black eyes, lady-like movements, low voice, and exquisite toilettes. A blue-eyed, pretty little blonde, with infantile complexion, small hands and feet, and wearing a tailor-made suit attracted considerable attention. She was fond of cigarettes and smoked many times a day, though she only looked "sweet sixteen." They were both dance-house girls.

There was a young and handsome Englishman in the triggest of dude toggery, but having a squaw wife and three children, as well as older men at the head of similar broods.

The long tables were spread two or three times at each meal, as several hundred people were to be fed.

A different class, and a worst one if possible, was met with at these late meals. Do you see that short, fat woman over there with the bleared eyes, and the neck of a prize fighter? She is a Dawson saloon keeper, and is now on her way to Nome.

But there were a number of people on the steamer not properly belonging to this set, and after supper a

few usually gathered in one corner to listen to each other's experiences in the far Northwest. Some were tales of hardship, sickness and death; some of hair-breadth escapes from the jaws of an Arctic winter, or from shipwreck. One told of having, two years before, paid $175 for five sacks of flour in the Klondyke; selling the same, a few days later, for $500. Stories of rich strikes were related; how one man, while drunk, was persuaded by his associates to trade a valuable claim for one apparently worthless; his indescribable feelings the next day and until he had prospected the so-called worthless claim, when it proved ten times richer than the first one.



A little middle-aged Norwegian woman told her story with great gusto. She had sailed from Seattle two years before with Mayor Woods' expedition, getting as far as a point on the Yukon River two hundred miles below Rampart City. Here the low water prevented their going farther. She, in company with

others, made her way to Rampart as best she could, rested and "outfitted" for a trip to Dawson over the ice. Finally, with sleds and provisions, eight dogs and four men, she started. It was a journey of about eight hundred miles. Before leaving Rampart she experimented with fur sleeping bags, and finally made one in which she could sleep comfortably on the ice and snow. Rice and tea were their staple articles of diet, being more quickly prepared in hasty camps at night, and being found most nourishing. After a perilous trip of thirty-five days in the dead of winter, they reached Dawson in good shape, two days ahead of a party of men with whom a wager had been made. With these, and similar stories, we whiled away the long evening hours by the fire. Many short stops were made along the river. A few little settlements were passed during the night. At Holy Cross and Russian Mission we saw flourishing Catholic schools for the natives.

The Yukon was now getting wider and wider, the water was shallow and more shallow, then suddenly we felt a heavy jar. The big stern wheel refused to move,—we were stuck fast on a sand-bar! Here we remained all day, dreading a hard freeze which was liable to settle down upon us at any time, fixing our boat and us in the ice indefinitely. But we were now in the Aphoon, or eastern mouth of the Yukon, and near enough to Behring Sea to get the benefit of the tides; so that in the early evening we again heard the thud of the big machines,—the steamer quivered,—the stern wheel again revolved,—we had entered the Behring Sea!

By four o'clock next morning we were in St. Michael Bay, having covered the sixty miles from the mouth of the river during the night. Snow was falling

heavily through which we saw the lights of the harbor, and a number of vessels at anchor. By daylight we counted eleven ships and two revenue cutters lying under the lee of the island.

Breakfast was served on board, and an hour later we went ashore. We now sought the steamer company's hotel, and had no difficulty in getting good rooms and seats at table; for we were still in their care, having bought through tickets to San Francisco. Here we were to wait for the ocean steamer "Bertha," which was now nearly due from that place, and we anxiously watched the weather signs hoping all would be favorable, and that she would very soon put in her appearance.

Our hotel was a new frame building of about forty rooms, lighted by electricity, having large halls, pleasant double parlors overlooking the bay, with a good view of incoming ships from the north. Just across the street stood an old block house or fort containing the funny little cannon used by the Russians over a hundred years ago. The antiquated lock on the door, the hundreds of bullet holes in the outer walls, were all quaintly interesting.

Half a mile south were stores, a hotel, another large company's dock, and in good weather we tramped over there or north the same distance to the headquarters of a third company. These three were small settlements by themselves, and constituted, with their employees, natives and dogs, the whole population of St. Michael. Good sidewalks connected these different stations and commanded fine and extensive views of the surrounding water.

St. Michael, as an island, is not large, and is entirely without trees or timber. However, there is deep, wet

moss or tundra everywhere, as one soon discovers to his sorrow if he attempts to leave the plank walks. St. Michael Bay, lying between the island and the mainland on the east, is a fine body of water. The coast line is well defined with ranges of mountains zigzagging their cold and snowy peaks, blue tinted or purple during the day, and pink in the setting sun.

St. Michael is the windiest place on earth. After a few days spent in studying the native dress of the Eskimos, and in trying to adapt my own dress to the freakish breezes I concluded that if I stayed at St. Michael I should dress as they did. If I started for the eating room with my hat properly placed on hair arranged with ever so much care, a heavy beaver cape, and dress of walking length, I was completely demoralized in appearance five minutes later on reaching the mess-house. With a twisting motion which was so sudden as to totally surprise me, my dress was wound around my feet, my cape was flung as if by spiteful hands entirely over my head, causing me to step in my confusion from the plank walk; while my hat was perched sidewise anywhere above or on my shoulder. One unfortunate woman wearing an overskirt covering a striped cambric sham, was seen daily struggling, with intense disgust on her face, up the steps of the eating house, with her unruly overskirt waving wildly in the wind.

But this wind did not keep the Eskimo women and children at home. Dressed in their fur parkies, which are a sort of long blouse with hood attachment, short skirts and muckluks, or skin boots, they trotted down to the beach daily to fish, standing on the wet and slippery rocks, regardless of wind, spray or snow. Here they flung their fish lines out into the water and hauled the little fish up dexterously; when, with a

curious twitch they disengaged the finny fellows and tossed them into a big pan. Little Eskimo children ran on in front of their mothers, and shaggy dogs followed close behind at the smell of the fish.

CHAPTER VI

COMPANIONS.



UT there were passengers arriving at St. Michael each day from different points bound for Nome.

At last the side-wheeler "Sadie" was to leave for Nome, and what a commotion! Men in fur coats, caps and mittens, leading dogs of all colors and sizes, some barking, but all hustled along with no thought of anything except to reach Cape Nome as quickly as possible. At last they were off. A rough, and in some instances a drunken lot, but all hopefully happy and sure that they would "strike it rich" in the new gold fields. Many, no doubt, were going to their death, many to hardships and disappointments undreamed

of, while a few would find gold almost inexhaustible.

Still we waited day after day for the ocean steamer "Bertha." One Sunday morning we looked from the hotel windows to see a clear, cold sky, with sun and high wind. About ten o'clock we heard a steamer whistling for assistance. She was small and used for errands by one of the steamship companies. Still none went to the rescue, as the gale was terrific. A steam tug started out, but she passed by on the other side, not caring to act the part of good Samaritan to a rival. In a few moments the fires of the little steamer were out,—she was sinking. Through a glass we saw three men on the roof of the craft—then they clung to the smokestack. A larger steamer, though herself disabled, finally reached the three drowning men. It was not a moment too soon, for the water was icy, the gale fearful. They were then hauled in, almost exhausted and frozen.

It was a wild day. Soon after noon, one of the two big covered barges in tow by the "Lackme," already loaded for a start for Nome, began to sink. The wind came from the north, and little by little the barge became unmanageable, until at last she was cut loose and deserted. For an hour we watched the barge, until, she too, sank out of sight beneath the waters of the bay.

Small steamers still came straggling in from Dawson crowded with passengers going to the new gold fields, and our tired cooks and stewards in the kitchens were rushed both day and night. Here the price of a meal, to all but those having through tickets to San Francisco, was one dollar, and fifteen hundred meals a day were frequently served.

In this hotel we waited two weeks, patiently at times,

restlessly at other times. What would we do if the Bertha failed to appear? Possibly she was lost, and now drifting, a worthless derelict, at the mercy of the winds! Not another boat would or could carry us, tickets on each one having long ago been sold. If we should be frozen in all winter, with no way of letting our friends at home know of our whereabouts for six months, how terrible would be their anxiety, how hard for us in this exposed spot near the Arctic Sea! Many times a day and in the night did this emergency present itself to us, and we shuddered. Each day we climbed the hill a quarter of a mile away to look, Robinson Crusoe like, over the ocean to see if we could discover the "Bertha."

In the meantime, with note book and pencil in hand I often sat in the parlor; and, while occupied to a certain extent, I gathered sundry bits of information regarding the gold fields in this wonderful new Golconda. Two million dollars, it was said, had already been extracted from the beach at Nome, and no estimate could be made on what was still there. The pay streak ran to the water's edge, and even farther, but just how far, no one knew.

Back of this beach spread the tundra, an expanse of marsh, ice and water, which extends some four miles inland. The size of the claims allowed by law is one thousand three hundred and twenty feet in length, and six hundred and sixty feet in width; or about twenty acres of land. The insignificant sum of $2.50 is required to be paid the recorder.

In the York District the area allowed for claims is smaller, being five hundred feet in width, and the length depending on the geographical formation or creek upon which the claim is situated.

North of Nome there are ninety to one hundred miles of gold-bearing beach to be worked, and again to the south a vast stretch of like character extending to Norton Bay. The tundra, which is nothing but the old beach, follows the present shore, and is fully as rich as the surf-washed sands. More productive and larger than all is the inland region traversed by rivers and creeks that form a veritable network of streams, all bordered by gold-producing soil.

Anvil Creek, Sunset Gulch, Snow Gulch and Dexter Creek, near Nome, are all exceedingly rich; one claim on Snow Gulch having been sold for $185,000, and another for $13,000.

Golovin Bay District is situated eighty-five miles east of Nome City, and is large and very rich. Fish River is the principal one in this section, and has innumerable small tributaries running into it, most of which are also rich in gold.

Casa de Paga is a tributary of the Neukluk River, and very rich. On Ophir Creek, claim No. four, above Discovery, $48,000 was taken out in nineteen days by the Dusty Diamond Company working seventeen men. On number twenty-nine above Discovery on Ophir Creek, seventeen dollars were taken out a day per man, who dug out frozen gravel, thawed it by the heat of a coal-oil stove, and afterward rocked it.

There was much discussion over the rights of those claiming mining lands located by the power of attorney; though the majority of men here seemed to believe they would hold good, and many such papers were made out in due legal form.

At last, on the morning of October ninth, the "Bertha" really appeared. It was a clear, cold day, sunny and

calm. I ran in high spirits to the top of the hill overlooking the bay to get a good view. Sure enough, there lay the "Bertha" on the bright waters as though she had always been there. How rejoiced everyone was! How relieved were those who intended to remain here because of the additions to the winter's supplies, and how rejoiced were those waiting to get away? How we all bustled about, packing up, buying papers and magazines just from the steamer, sealing and stamping letters, making notes in diaries, taking kodak views, saying good-bye to acquaintances, ad infinitum.

All were willing to leave. Finally on the afternoon of the tenth we were stowed into the big covered barge which was to take us out to the "Bertha." It was cold and draughty inside, so we found a sheltered place in the sun on some piles of luggage, and sat there. As the "Bertha" was reached, a gangplank was thrown over to the barge, which came as close alongside as possible, and up this steep and narrow board we climbed, clinging to a rope held by men on both decks.

Our trouble had now begun. We were overjoyed at making a start at last, but under what conditions! The river steamer "Hannah" had been a model of neatness as compared with this one. On deck there were coops of chickens, and pens of live sheep and pigs brought from San Francisco to be put off at Nome, as well as a full passenger list for the same place. On the way here a landing had been attempted at Nome, but the surf had been so tremendous that it could not be accomplished, and passengers still occupied the staterooms that we were to have. However, we were temporarily sandwiched in, and, about four P. M., said good-bye to St. Michael.

It was a lovely day and the waters of the bay were very calm. Along shore in the most sheltered places were numbers of river steamers and smaller craft being snugly tucked up for the winter. From three tall flagstaffs on shore there floated gracefully as many American flags as though to wish us well on our long journey out to civilization.

That night on board was simply pandemonium. Hundreds of people had no beds, and were obliged to sit or walk about, many sitting in corners on the floor, or on piles of luggage or lying under or upon the tables. Every seat and berth were taken. Many of the staterooms below were filled from floor to ceiling with flour in sacks for Nome, as well as every foot of space in passage-ways or pantries. Many men were so disorderly from drink that they kept constantly swearing and quarreling, and one man, in a brawl, was almost toppled into the sea. To make things worse, the stench from the pens of the animals on deck became almost unbearable, and the wind came up, making the water rough.

There was no sleep for us that night. We longed to reach Nome that we might be rid of some of these objectionable things, and hoped for an improvement afterward.

From St. Michael to Nome, the distance is about one hundred and twenty-five miles, and the latter place was reached about eight A. M. A little before daylight we had been startled by a series of four sudden shocks or jars, the first being accompanied by a very distinct creaking of timbers of the ship, so that some of us rose and dressed; but the ship had apparently sustained no injury, and we proceeded on our way. Whether we had struck a rock, or only a

sand-bar, we never knew, for the ship's men laughed and evaded our questions; but the passengers believed that the boat had touched a reef or rock, hidden, perhaps, beneath the surface of the sea.

By daylight the animals had been removed to a barge, and soon after breakfast the Nome passengers were taken ashore in like manner, for the surf was so heavy on the beach, and there being no docks or wharves, it was impossible for a large steamer to get nearer.

Away in the distance to the north lay the famous new gold camp of Nome. Stretched for miles along the beach could be seen the little white tents of the beach miners, back of which lay the town proper, and still back, the rolling hills now partly covered with snow. Not a tree or shrub could be seen, though we strained our eyes through a strong glass in an effort to find them. A few wooden buildings larger than the rest were pointed out as the Alaska Commercial Company's warehouses and offices, near where the loaded barges were tossed by the huge breakers toward the beach.


ESKIMOS.

Passengers now went ashore to visit the camps, but to my great disappointment I was not allowed to do so on account of the tremendous surf. When, after watching others, seeing their little boats tossed like cockle shells upon the sands, and hearing how thoroughly drenched with salt water many of the people were while landing, I gave it up, and remained on board.

For five days we lay anchored outside, while stevedores loaded supplies from the "Bertha" on barges towed ashore by the side-wheeler "Sadie." For hours the wind would blow and the breakers and

surf run so high that nothing could be done; then at sundown, perhaps, the wind would die away, and men were put to work unloading again. The calls of those lifting and tugging, the rattle of pulleys and chains, never were stilled night or day if the water was passably smooth, and we learned to sleep soundly amid all the confusion.

Next morning the steamer "Cleveland" cast anchor near the "Bertha." Presently we saw a small boat lowered over the side and two women were handed down into it, four men following and seating themselves at the oars. The ship on which the women had first sailed had been wrecked on St. George's Island; from there they were rescued by the revenue cutter "Bear," transferred to the "Cleveland," and were now going ashore at Nome, their destination. As they passed us we noticed that they sat upright in the middle of the lifeboat, the hoods of their cloaks drawn quite over their heads. We were told that one of these women had come to meet her lover and be married, and we felt like cheering such heroism.

Next day the bodies of several men were picked up on the beach near town. They had started for Cape Prince of Wales in a small boat and been overtaken by disaster. Many were dying of fever on shore, and nurses, doctors and drugs were in great demand.

Many tales of interest now reached our ears, but not many can here be given.

One of the first American children to open his eyes to the light of day in this bleak and barren place—Nome City—was Little Willie S. His parents lived in a poor board shack or house which his father had built just back of the golden beach sands. Here the surf, all

foam-tipped, spread itself at the rising and falling of the tides, and here the miners toiled day after day washing out the precious gold.

It was here that Willie's papa, soon after the baby came, sickened and died. He had worked too long in the wind and rain, and they laid him under the tundra at the foot of the hill.

For a time the baby grew. The mother and child were now dependent upon the community for support, but the burly and generous miners did not allow them to want. Willie was a great pet in the mining camp; the men being delighted with a peep of his tiny, round face and pink fingers.

The little child could have easily had his weight in gold dust, or anything else, had he wanted it. Big, shining nuggets had already been given him to cut his teeth upon when the time came, but that time never came.

Willie died one day in his mother's arms, while her hot tears fell like rain upon his face.

Then they laid him to sleep beside his papa under the tundra, where the shining wheat-gold clung to the moss roots and sparkled as brightly as the frost and snow which soon covered everything.

When spring came Willie's mamma found the baby's tiny grave, and put wild flowers and grasses upon it, and there they nodded their pretty heads above the spot where Willie and his papa quietly sleep.

Passengers for San Francisco were now coming on board with their luggage. Several men were brought on board on spring beds, being ill with no contagious disease. A box containing the body of a man, who

had shot himself the day before, was placed upon the hurricane deck, lashed down, and covered with tarpaulins. Strong boxes of gold bullion, with long, stout ropes and boards attached in case of accident, were stowed away in as safe a place as could be found. Copies of the first issue of the "Nome News" were bought at fifty cents a copy; size, four pages about a foot square. Beach sand and pebbles, were handed about in many funny receptacles,—pickle jars, tin cans, flour sacks,—any old thing would do if only we had the pleasure of seeing the golden sand.

One night about three o'clock the barge brought the last passengers and freight. The water was smooth, the moon shone brightly, there was no wind, and the captain and his mate gave their orders in quick, stern tones. They were in haste to leave. They had lingered here too long already. All were soon hustled on board; the "Sadie" and her barges moved away; we took a last, long look at Nome as she stretched herself on the golden sands of the beach under her electric lights; the "Bertha" whistled, stuck her nose into the rollers and steamed away.

A more majestic old body of water than Behring Sea would be hard to find; and we remember it with thanksgiving, for we had no storms or rough weather during the eight hundred and fifty miles to Unalaska.

Right glad was I that we were fortunate in having a pleasant little party of eight or ten persons, and our evenings were spent in visiting, spinning yarns, and singing songs, while some hours each day were passed on the hurricane deck. Here we became familiar with the sea phrases commonly used, and watched the old salts "bracing the mast arms," "hoisting the jibs," or "tacking," and could tell when

we had a "cross sea," a "beam sea," or a "sou' wester." As we neared Unalaska on the Aleutian Islands, the sea became rough, and we had more wind, but we joyfully sighted high hills or rocks to the east, and bade good-bye to old Behring. For three and a half days he had behaved well, and never will we quietly hear him maligned.

Unalaska, sweet isle of the sea! How beautiful she looked to our eyes which had only seen water for days! Its bold and rocky cliffs, its towering peaks snow capped; its sequestered and winding valleys, and bright, sparkling waterfalls; its hillsides in all the artistic shades of red, brown, yellow, green, purple, black and white; its water in all the tints of blue and azure, reflecting sky that looked

> "As though an angel in his upward flight,
> Had left his mantle floating in mid-air."

All, all, greeted the eye of the worn voyager most restfully.

Clusters of quaint red buildings were soon seen nestling under the mountain—that was Dutch Harbor, and a mile farther on we arrived at the dock at Unalaska. We would be here twenty-four hours taking on fresh water, coal, and food, they told us, and we all ran out like sheep from a pen, or school children at intermission. We drank fresh water from the spring under the green hillside; we bought apples and oranges at the store, and furs of the furrier; we rowed in a skiff and scampered over the hills to Dutch Harbor; we watched jelly-fish and pink star-fish in the water; we saw white reindeer apparently as tame as cows browsing on the slopes; we visited an old Greek church, and were kept from the very

holiest place where only men were allowed to go, retaliating when we came to the cash box at the door —we dropped nothing in; we climbed the highest mountain near by, and staked imaginary gold claims after drinking in the beauties of the views which encompassed us; we snapped our kodaks repeatedly, and then, having reached the limit of our time and strength, wended our way back to the steamer now ready to sail.

Leaving the harbor, we all stayed on deck as long as possible trying to fix the grandeur of the scenery in our minds so it could not slip away, and then Priest Rock was passed, we had turned about eastward, and were in Unimak Pass. Here the wind blew a gale from the west, on account of which we were obliged to go below to our staterooms after watching the sailors lash everything on the hurricane deck well down in case of storm. After a few hours we left the Pass, with its precipitous cliffs, its barren and rocky slopes, its cones of extinct volcanoes, its rough and deep water, and headed due southeast for "Frisco."

Many unpleasant people and things we found on board as we proceeded, for not all of these had been left at Nome; but with a philosopher's fortitude we studied to overlook everything disagreeable, and partly succeeded. That our efforts were not a complete success was due partly, at least, to our early education and large stock of ideality, and we were really not so much to blame.

The remainder of our journey was somewhat monotonous, broken only by drunken brawls at midnight on deck, waking us from sound slumbers; or the sight of a whale spouting during the day. Sometimes a breeze would spring up from the wrong

direction, rolling us for a few hours, causing us to prefer a reclining posture instead of an upright one, and giving our complexions a still deeper lemonish cast; sometimes we were well inclined to feed the fishes in the sea, and did not; but at all times we were thankful that matters were no worse.

Then, after many days out from Unalaska we began to look for land. Seagulls and goonies had followed in the wake of our ship, and rested themselves each day aloft in the rigging. Sails were now and then seen in the distance, like the spreading white wings of enormous swans gliding quietly over the bosom of the deep, and we realized that we were nearing land. In the darkness one night there came to us a little white boat containing three men,—one was a pilot to guide us safely through the beautiful Golden Gate; the light on Point Bonita was sighted—we were almost home.

We were now six weeks out from Dawson and twenty-one days from Nome; we had no storms, accidents or deaths on board, and carried five hundred passengers, as well as three million dollars in gold. I had been away from home four months without a day's illness, and during my trip through Alaska had traveled seventy-five hundred miles, nearly one-half of this distance alone.





CHAPTER VII.

GOING TO NOME.

O

NE beautiful day in the spring of 1900 I sailed again for Alaska—this time for Nome from San Francisco. An English family consisting of the mother, one son and a daughter were to accompany me, and we had spent weeks in making our preparations. We were taking supplies of clothing, food, tents and bedding sufficient to last until some of our numerous plans of work after our arrival brought in returns. My hope was to meet my father there, for he had written that he thought he should go to the new gold fields, where he could do beach mining.

I was not above doing any honest work, and felt confident that I could make my way if I could gain an entrance into that country. The English people were all workers, and I had known them for ten years or more.

Our steamer was the good ship "St. Paul," belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, and was advertised to sail on May twenty-fifth. When I laughingly called the attention of one of the owners of the ship to the fact that that date fell upon Friday, and many persons objected to sailing upon that day, he postponed the starting of the "St. Paul" to May twenty-sixth, and we left the dock on Saturday afternoon amid the cheers and hand-waving of thousands of people who had come to see the big boat off for Nome.

The steamer was well fitted out, spick and span in fresh carpets and paint, and crowded to the utmost capacity for comfort. Every stateroom was full; each seat at the tables occupied. Not a foot of space above or below decks was left unused, but provision was made for all, and the ship was well manned.

I was now much gratified to learn that there were

many on board whom I had met before; that the steward, stewardess and several of the waiters had been on duty on the steamer "Bertha" during my trip out from Alaska the fall before, while I was upon speaking terms with a dozen or more of the passengers with whom I had traveled from the same place. Of passengers we had, all told, four hundred and eighty-seven. Of these thirty-five were women. There was only one child on board, and that was the little black-eyed girl with her Eskimo mother and white father from Golovin Bay whom I had seen at St. Michael some months before, and who was now going back to her northern home. She wore a sailor suit of navy blue serge, trimmed with white braid, and was as coy and cunning as ever, not speaking often to strangers, but laughing and running away to her mother when addressed.

From the day we sailed from San Francisco until we reached Nome I missed no meals in the dining salon, a pace which my English friends and others could not follow, for they were uncomfortably ill in the region of their digestive apparatus for several days. I slept for hours each day and thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

During the nine days' sail from San Francisco to Unalaska, a distance of two thousand three hundred and sixty-eight miles, I studied well the passengers. We had preachers on board, as well as doctors, lawyers, merchants and miners, and there were women going to Nome to start eating houses, hotels and mercantile shops. There were several Swedish missionaries; one, a zealous young woman from San Francisco, going to the Swedish Mission at Golovin Bay.

This young person was pretty and pleasant, and I was glad to make her acquaintance as well as that of three other women speaking the same tongue and occupying the next stateroom to mine. The last named were going to start a restaurant in Nome. As they were sociable, jolly, and good sailors for the most part, I enjoyed their society. They had all lived in San Francisco for years, and though not related to each other, were firm friends of long standing and were uniting their little fortunes in the hope of making greater ones.

The young missionary was a friend to the other three, and I found no better or more congenial companions on board the ship than these four honest, hard-working women, so full of hope, courage and good sense as well as Christianity. Little did I then think that these people, placed by a seeming chance in an adjoining stateroom, were to be my fellow-workers and true friends, not only for the coming months in that Arctic land to which we were going, but, as the sequel will show, perhaps for years to come.

Not many days had passed when we found that we had on board what few steamers can boast of, and that was an orchestra of professional musicians among the waiters. These were men going, with all the others, to seek their fortunes in the new gold fields, working their passage as waiters on the ship to Nome, where they intended to leave it. Three evenings in the week these musicians, with the help of several singers on board, gave concerts in the dining salon, which, though impromptu, were very enjoyable.

A sweet and trained singer was the English girl of

our company, and she sang many times, accompanied by the stringed instruments of the musicians, much to the delight of the assembled passengers. When she sang, one evening, in her clear sympathetic voice the selection, "Oh, Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight," there was not a dry eye in the room, and the mind of many a man went back to his old home and praying mother in some far distant state, making him resolve to write oftener to her that she might be comforted with a knowledge of his whereabouts and welfare. These evenings were sometimes varied by recitations from an elocutionist on board; and a practised clog dancer excited the risibles of the company to the extent that they usually shouted with laughter at his exhibition of flying heels.

Day after day passed. Those who were continually seasick had diversion enough. It was useless for us to tell them a pathetic tale of some one, who, at some time, had been more ill than they, because they would not believe a word of it, and it was equally useless to recommend an antidote for mal de mer such as theirs. "No one was ever so ill before," they said. They knew they should die and be buried at sea, and hoped they would if that would put an end to their sufferings. We tried at last to give them comfort by recommending out of former experiences ship's biscuit, dry toast and pop-corn as remedies, but only received black looks as our reward. We then concluded that a diet of tea, coffee and soup was exactly such a one as the fishes would recommend could they speak, these favorite and much used liquids keeping up a continual "swishing" in one's interior regions, and causing one to truthfully speak of the same as "infernal" instead of internal. But they were all tree physical as well as free moral agents

and decided these things for themselves.

At last we entered the Japan current and the weather was warmer and more enjoyable. On Monday, June fourth, we saw from the deck a few drifting logs and a quantity of seaweed, and these, with the presence of gulls and goonies flying overhead, convinced us that we were nearing land.

We were not mistaken. After eating an excellent six o'clock dinner we went above to find ourselves between high, rocky cliffs, which loomed up into mountains not far distant, and we knew we were again at the Aleutian Islands and in the rough waters of Unimak Pass. As we drew nearer and entered the harbor so well land-locked, the sun dipped low into yellow-red western waters, thereby casting long shadows aslant our pathway so delicately shaded in greens.

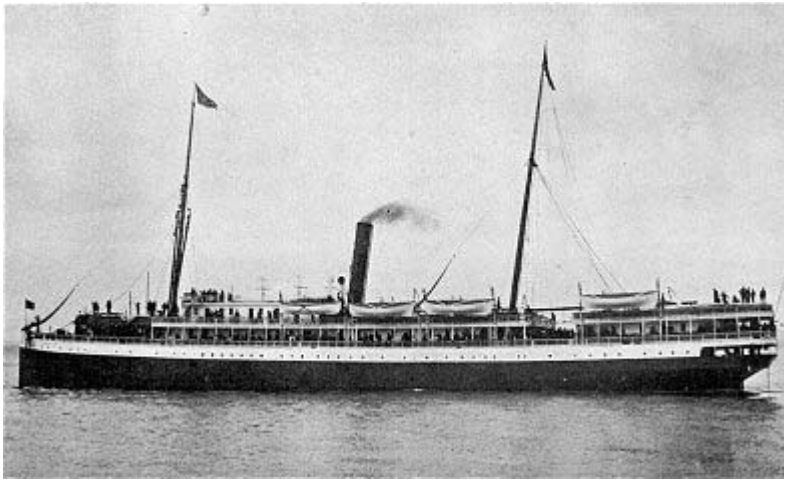
The little hamlet of Dutch Harbor nestled cosily at the foot of the mountains which bordered the bay, and here numbers of ships lay anchored at rest. Passing along easily beyond another high mountain, we were soon at the dock of Unalaska, beside other great ships in port. Both groups of craft were evidently waiting for the ice to clear from Behring Sea before proceeding on their way northward, and we counted sixteen ships of different kinds and sizes, the majority of them large steamers. All were loaded with passengers and freight for Nome. Scout boats had already been sent out to investigate and find, if possible, a passage through the ice fields, and the return of these scouts with good news was anxiously watched and waited for, as the most desired thing at that time was a speedy and safe landing on the supposedly golden beach sands of Nome.

At Unalaska we spent four days taking on fresh water and coal, during which time passengers visited back and forth from the waiting steamers, many persons having friends on other boats and each having a curiosity to see if they were faring as well or ill as he, comparing notes as to the expense of traveling with the different companies, etc. Passengers on the "St. Paul" agreed that they had "no kick comin'," which was one of the commonest slang phrases, intended to mean that they had no fault to find with the Alaska Commercial Company and their steamer "St. Paul." All were well cared for and satisfied, as well they might be, with the service of the ship's men.

Leaving Unalaska the sun shone clear and cold upon the mountains where in places the sides looked black from the late fires started in the deep tundra by miscreants. The tops of the mountains were covered with snow. Down deep gorges dashed mountain waters of melting snow and ice, hurrying to leap off gullied and rocky cliffs into the sea. Their progress was never impeded. No tree nor shrub obstructed the way with gnarled old trunks, twisted roots, or low hanging branches, for none grow in Unalaska, and the bold dignity and grandeur of the mountains is never diminished by these lesser objects.

As our ship sailed out into Behring Sea we were closely followed by the steamer "George W. Elder," whose master, an old friend of our captain, had decided to follow in our wake, he being less familiar than the latter with Alaskan waters, and having confidence in the ability of his friend to successfully pilot both ships to Cape Nome.





CHAPTER VIII.

FRESH DANGER.

AT this plan all the passengers appeared pleased. We were now entering upon the most dangerous part of our voyage. No one knew what was before us. If our

ship should receive serious damage from the ice floes or bergs with which we were almost sure to come in contact, it would be well if we were accompanied by a sister ship which could render assistance. If she were in trouble and we unharmed, we could lend a helping hand to her; and so none murmured at the unique arrangement.

Nothing, however, was seen of the much dreaded ice until about noon on Sunday, June tenth. The air had been steadily growing colder so that woolen clothing and fur wraps were in demand. Men thrust their hands into their pockets, or drew on gloves while they stamped their feet upon deck to keep themselves warm in the open air. Soon to our right lay a great semi-circular field of ice, in places piled high, looking cold, jagged and dangerous. In the distance those having field-glasses saw two clumsy, slow-moving objects which they could easily distinguish as polar bears on floating cakes of ice.

By the latter we were soon surrounded, and were obliged, slowly and cautiously, to pick our way through towards the narrowest spot, or where the nearest open water could be seen beyond. Floating ice now lay all around us, appearing only a few feet above the water; below it the bergs extended many times that distance. Sometimes they were small and looked harmless enough; but many were large, massive, and full of death-dealing power if urged against the sides of a ship by the wind or struck accidentally. Carefully we picked our way along, watched as we were by every soul aboard the "Elder" following, until we had successfully made our way through the ice pack and glided out into the blue waters beyond. Then came a great shout from the throats of spectators on both ships, and praises for

the master and his crew who were doing such good work were loudly sung.

Immediately our manoeuvres were repeated by the "Elder," and we watched her with interest equal to their own; then as she passed the danger point and swung safely through the ice bergs and out, both ships, like fresh, uncaged birds, sped lightly and swiftly over the water northward.

In a few hours we were awakened from afternoon naps by the ringing of the ship's bell and found ourselves again surrounded by floating bergs. A man in the bow was taking soundings with lead and line, calling out every few seconds. "No bottom! No bottom!" and then hauling in the lead again as the ship crept carefully along. From submerged floes there was now the greatest danger, but we gradually drew away from all floating ice and sailed safely away as before.

Each Sunday on board the "St. Paul" had been marked by some religious service conducted by one of the preachers, while an improvised quartet of voices led the singing. June tenth service had been held in the forenoon, when a short sermon had followed the singing of a few familiar old hymns by the assembled passengers. Now in the early evening, while I sat with a few friends in the dining salon rehearsing hymns for the coming service, suddenly the ship's bell rang out upon the still night air. Instantly there came a jar, a quiver, and all rushed out upon deck to see what had happened. We had been rudely jostled by an unseen ice floe while the eyes of the pilot had been occupied by the ones visible. Several times this happened. We were in the midst of a sea of ice floes. There was no visible

egress ahead; we must back out, if possible, as we had come.

Soon our steamer was stopped for the night, and religious services were begun in the dining salon. About one hundred persons were present. Our quartet sang five or six selections, "Rock of Ages" and "Throw Out the Life-line" among others. The preacher offered prayer, read Scripture promises, and spoke feelingly for twenty minutes. He talked of our lives being only short spans, the length of which depends upon the will of God; and it is the duty of each soul, he said, to be prepared to meet its Maker.

It was a solemn moment for all. Outside the ice drifted slowly about, thick fog settled over us, the ship's whistle sounded, and night came on. The loneliness increased.

When the speaker had closed his remarks he asked that the quartet sing "Nearer My God to Thee," and we sang it. Sweet and firm was the voice of the English girl now, and when, with uplifted arm and softly spoken benediction, the minister dismissed us, it was to go upon deck feeling stronger and much comforted.

There was yet no breath of wind stirring. For this we thanked a kind Providence, for, had the wind risen, our lives would have been in jeopardy indeed. In that case the massive ice cakes would have been blown swiftly and heavily about to crush all ships like egg-shells and send them to the bottom of the sea.

For breakfast we ate yellow corn-bread and bacon with a relish such as it never gave at home, and even those who had been seasick for days were beginning

to "get away" with their rations. At eight in the morning the anchor with its rattling chain was dropped and we lay in an open spot. An hour later there was no perceptible motion of the ship, the sea was smooth as a carpet, and our tired captain had gone to bed. For forty-eight hours he had not slept, nor scarcely left the bridge, and the rest was badly needed.

Two days we lay anchored in a dead calm, waiting for the passing ice to open a way for us through to Nome. Three ships lay near us, as well as two larger ones out farther in the ice-fields; but the fog hung grey and persistent over our heads and we could do nothing but wait. Another concert was given by the musicians, and as the steamer lay gently rocking upon the waters of the great sea, through the open front windows there floated out to our sister ship the sweet and pleasing strains of the violins and mandolins.

Were they telling in lively allegretto movements of our safe landing on golden shores, and of our successful achievements followed by a safe and happy return to home and loved ones? Or were the adagios mournfully predicting perils, coming disaster and death? Who could tell? For myself, I felt that whatever came to me would be in accordance with the will and wish of a Higher Power, and it would be all right in any case. My choice was, of course, from the human standpoint, for life, happiness and success in the pursuit of gold; but this with me was not an obstinate nor rebellious sentiment. Should all these good things be denied me, I could say, it is well. I felt satisfied that the way for my going to Alaska had been wonderfully opened by an Unseen Influence which I had been taught from earliest childhood to

recognize, and this belief, which was a firm and abiding one, held me calm and contented. Night after night I slept in my berth as soundly as though at home in my bed, and not even the sudden jolt and quiver of the icebergs coming often into collision with the ship caused me to waken.

The night of June twelfth, about eleven o'clock, just after having retired, but being still awake, I heard a sudden and piercing scream. The English madam with me, being still dressed, rushed upon deck to find out the cause of the disturbance. Rushing towards her with pale and frightened face was her daughter who had been lunching in the dining salon. An iceberg of immense proportions and greater height than usual had struck the ship with a crash, coming up suddenly and most unexpectedly from underneath the fog bank so that the watchful pilot was taken unawares. The English girl said the berg, when alongside the ship, reached the height of the upper deck and appeared like a huge mountain of ice from her place at the window. It was consternation at the sight of what was apparently sure and speedy destruction which had caused the woman's scream.

Investigation was immediately made of the ship's plates, which, though considerably dented by the ice, were still, thanks to a kind Providence, intact; and again I settled myself for the night and slept.

Next day men were restless. They wanted to be on their way to Nome. It was not for this that they had paid a large price for their tickets and assurances that they would arrive early at Nome; and they agreed that there was no more danger in steaming ahead than in lying anchored with the ice bumping into us and liable to break through the ship's sides at

any moment.

"Will you sign a petition to the captain asking that he proceed on his way to Nome without further delay?" asked a friend of me while the "St. Paul" was anchored and the ice still drifting around us.

"They are circulating such a petition, and have a good many signers, or those who are willing to sign it, and I wanted to know how you feel about it," said my friend.

"What is the matter with the captain? Did they not announce their confidence in him by coming aboard this steamer, and has he done anything to cause them to lose faith in his ability to pilot them safely through? Has he not brought them on their voyage thus far without accident?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, certainly."

"Then I, for one, shall abide by the captain's judgment, and remain anchored here so long as he sees fit to order it. You can say to the others that I will sign no petition," said I.

Whether my decision and firmness in the matter had any weight with others, I know not; but the petition was dropped, and the captain probably never knew that such a thing had been proposed.

The morning of June thirteenth the sun shone out clear and bright. Great fields of ice surrounded us, and many other ships were also hemmed in at different places. The "Elder" lay contentedly beside us. It was not so cold when the fog had lifted, and the clearer atmosphere made it possible to see for many miles over the berg-strewn waters. Men were walking restlessly about on deck trying to keep their

impatience down and their hands and feet warm. They feared that other ships with hundreds of passengers would land at Nome before they could, and that would mean loss, perhaps in many ways, to them. We were less than two hundred miles from Nome and could easily make the run in a day if allowed a free sea.

By this time the face of the steward began to show anxiety and he watched the horizon with interest. Serving, as he did, nearly fifteen hundred meals daily, he feared a shortage of supplies if the ship was delayed many days longer. Ten sacks of flour, and fifteen hundred pounds of meat were used daily, and other things in proportion. For breakfast one day ninety dozen eggs were fed to the people.

High overhead the stars and stripes were now hoisted to announce our joy at being delivered from so many dangers, and at leading the way for others to follow. No one could pass us, and we would, after all, be among the first, if not the very first, to reach Nome.

The captain looked jaded and worn, but happy and relieved, being able now to get some of the much-needed rest so long denied him when in the ice fields. When congratulated by the passengers upon his skill, for by this time they had entirely forgotten their discontent of the previous days and were willing to give him and his crew due praise, he smiled and thanked them kindly, then went away to rest.

Early next morning anchor was dropped at Nome. At last we had reached our destination. We had traveled thirty-one hundred and thirty-nine miles in nineteen days and could have done it in much shorter time

had it not been for the ice. Several small ships lay at anchor before us, but we were immediately followed by many large steamers bringing thousands of people to Nome. The weather was splendid. Many of the passengers were in such haste to reach shore than they left without breakfast; but we waited until ten in the morning before boarding the "lighter," and I donned a dress suitable to the occasion. This was cut short, and was worn with high, stout boots, leggings, warm coat, cap and veil, with extra wraps for the trip of two miles to shore.

Certainly we now presented a very unique spectacle. We were really a sort of Noah's Ark collection, with the roof of the Ark omitted. Women in abbreviated skirts, long rubber boots, golf capes, caps and sweaters; men covered in long "raglans," fur coats, "jumpers," or whatever happened to be at hand; and all rushing pell-mell in the direction of the lighter, by means of which they hoped to land on the golden beach of Nome. Baggage there was in stacks. There were boxes, grips, trunks, army sacks; everything but babies, bird cages and band wagons. Passage for an automobile had been engaged in San Francisco, but at the last moment the lady accompanying the big machine was suddenly indisposed and obliged to allow the "St. Paul" to sail without her.

The sea was now quite rough. The lighter was brought close alongside. The rope ladder was thrown over the side of the ship with its lower end dangling upon the lighter's deck, and we were told we could now go ashore.

This was the moment for which we had longed, and all were ready, like Cassibianca, minus the fire and peanuts. The fat widow of the company tied her

bonnet more tightly under her chin, clutched at her pudgy skirts, and grasping the deck rail, placed her foot upon the rope ladder to descend.

"Don't look down!" shouted some one to her, fearing she might grow dizzy if she did so.

"Don't hurry; take your time!" called out another.

"Keep cool and you're all right!" instructed another, at which time the widow, with fluttering veil, pale face and eyes starting from their sockets with fright reached the lowest round of the ladder and stepped to the deck of the lighter. Her bonnet was awry, the belt of her dress had become unfastened, while her skirts were twisted around her in some unaccountable way and her teeth chattering; but she only drew a long sigh as she sank in a limp heap upon an army sack marked with big black letters, and said gaspingly: "This is terrible!" Others followed her example. Some protested they would rather stay on the ship or go back to San Francisco than scramble down that "beastly rope ladder" swaying as it did back and forth with every motion of the ship to which it was attached. For myself, I had never posed as especially courageous, and wondered how I should get on. But I said nothing. From watching the others I had learned that to "make haste slowly" was a good method to follow in the present case, as a misstep without a firm hand grip upon the sides of the ladder while descending would be likely to send one without warning into the yard wide gulf of boiling waters between the ship's side and the lighter, as the barge was literally dancing attendance upon the vessel in the rough sea.

Finally everything was ready. All passengers had left the ship. The lighter was crowded to the last inch of

space; baggage and freight along the sides, and passengers in the middle, sitting wherever they could find a box or bag upon which to sit. A tug boat made fast to the lighter—we said good-bye to the "St. Paul" and moved away.

"We are bidding good-bye to all comforts now!" exclaimed an old Nomeite dubiously, "for we won't find any on shore; leastwise not unless it has improved more in the last ten months than I think it has. It was a tough place enough last summer, and that's no josh either!" looking around him at the ladies of the party and evidently wondering what they would think of the celebrated mining town.

Many by this time looked sober, but it was not a hard camp that they feared. They had expected to find a typical camp with all the attendant evils usual in such a place, and now they were almost there. In fact they looked out over the heaps of baggage towards shore at the long fine of white tents, buildings of every description from a board shack to a hotel or large store, and it seemed good in their eyes—very good. For some unseen reason, as the barge, following as it did at the end of the long line from the tug, rode first upon the top of a big breaker and then below in the trough, there was a decided longing on the part of some to be on land. It did not much matter where it was—Europe, Asia, Africa or "any old place"; but as for this "confounded, zig-zaggin', heavin' old hulk which is tryin' its best to take us to Honolulu sideways—I want no more of it!" growled one man.

"Give me Nome or I die!" gasped another.

"No more big water in mine for two years, and mebbe by that time they will have air ships to fly in,"

muttered a little man as he lay on his back among a pile of bags and gulped at something in his throat he was trying to keep down.

So the barge bobbed up and down among the breakers, riding to the crest of a wave with a gliding, graceful motion, only to reach out beyond it, and then, as the waters underneath receded, dropping heavily with a thud and a splash, making one feel that he was being dealt with most unceremoniously.

The same thing was again and again repeated, until we rode as close to the shore as the tug could take us, then the line was cut, a rope was thrown us from shore, and with a steam windlass or other contrivance, we were hauled upon the sands.

Then a gangplank was speedily pushed out over the intervening watery space which the passengers took their turns in crossing until all stood upon the beach; a few, to be sure, with wet feet, damp clothing and soggy tempers if some vicious, big breaker in parting had dashed its white foam-tipped waters over their heads, but all glad and thankful to arrive in Nome at last.

CHAPTER IX.

NOME.



HE man who had predicted that we would find no comforts in Nome proved himself a true prophet. There were none. Crowded, dirty, disorderly, full of saloons and gambling houses, with a few fourth-class restaurants and one or two mediocre hotels, we found the new mining camp a typical one in every respect. Prices were sky high. One even paid for a drink of water. Having our newly found Alaska appetites with us, we at once, upon landing, made our way to an eating house, the best to be found.

Here a cup of poor tea, a plate of thin soup and questionable meat stew with bread were served us upon nicked china, soiled table linen and with blackened steel knives and forks, for the enormous sum of one dollar a head; which so dumbfounded us that we paid it without a murmur, backed out the door and blankly gazed into each other's faces.

"Such prices will ruin us!" gasped the madam.

"That table linen! Ugh!" shuddered the young man.

"Fifteen cents in California for such a meal!" growled the English girl in her matter-of-fact way, and with wide distended eyes; while I found such amusement in watching the three faces before me that I barely found breath to remind them of the two tons of nice

things in their own packing cases at the landing.

"If only they are soon landed," groaned madam, and we set off at our best gait to find the cases.

But we did not succeed. The freight was being unloaded from the ship, we were told, as rapidly as it was possible to handle it, but one lighter and small tug boat in a very rough sea, unloading a ship two miles off the beach, must have time; and we waited. Only two or three lighters were to be had at Nome. Other large steamers were being unloaded, and hundreds of people were hourly being landed upon the beach. There was no shelter for them anywhere, every building was full, and confusion was badly confounded. To make matters worse it began to rain. If we could only find our freight and get our tents, beds, supplies, etc., we would be all right, but it would be impossible that day we found, after making repeated excursions through the freight house and numberless inquiries at the office.

Something must be done, but what? I now remembered some Dawson acquaintances in town made the fall before while coming down the Yukon River with my brother. To one family of these I made my way. They were in the grocery and bakery business on a prominent corner on First street and their signboard caught my eye.

Blessings on the heads of kind Mr. and Mrs. M. of Nome City! They were delighted to see me. They lived back of the store in one room, which contained their bed, stove, cupboard, baby-organ, table, chairs and trunks; but they also owned a one-room shack next door, which was vacant for a few days, being already rented to a dentist who would make some repairs before taking possession. I could bring my

friends and baggage into this without charge, if I wished, until we secured our freight, Mrs. M. said kindly, and I pressed her hand in real gratitude with many thanks.

"I am almost ashamed to show you the room," said the kind little woman, as she unlocked the door of the shack and stepped inside, "but it is better than no shelter in this rain, and you can have a fire in the stove," pointing to a small and rusty coal heater in one corner. "I wish I had some blankets or fur robes to lend you, but everything I have is in use. You are welcome to bring in as many friends as you like if they will share the poor place with you; and you are quite safe here, too, for you see the barracks are just opposite," pointing across the muddy little alley down which a few boards had been laid for a sidewalk; "and the soldiers are here to keep order, though they do sometimes find it rather a hard job."

Then I thanked the little woman again most heartily, and, as I took from her hands the door-key and stepped outside into the rain to bring my waiting friends and baggage from the freight house, I offered a little prayer of thanks to our good Father, and hurried away.



At the steamer's landing all was hurly-burly and noise. It was now late in the afternoon, still raining at intervals, and muddy under foot, though the weather was not cold. Finding my English friends I told them of Mrs. M.'s kindness and offer of her room, which they were well pleased to accept with me, and we gathered up our luggage and started for the place. Passing through the freight house on our way to the street, madam said, pointing to the figures of two woman huddled in a corner:

"See! Judge R. from the St. Paul has not found a room yet, and Mrs. R. and her friend, the nurse, are sitting there, waiting for the judge to return! His wife is nearly sick, and they have no idea where they can get a room. Judge R. has been looking hours for one without success," she said, in a sympathetic tone.

"Let us speak to them," said I, going over to where the ladies sat.

Hearing their story, and seeing for myself that both women were cold, hungry and disheartened, I decided on the spot to share Mrs. M.'s hospitality

with them; made the proposal, which they very thankfully accepted, and we trailed off up the street laden with luggage.

Then madam's son was found, informed of the situation, asked to bring Judge R. and a few loaves of bread from the shop, along with the remaining luggage, to our new camping place in the little board shack near the barracks.

Seeing us arrive, and that the three elderly ladies looked worn and travel-stained, Mrs. M. urged us to come into her room and take tea and crackers which she had already placed upon the table. This invitation the older ladies gladly accepted, while the English girl and myself looked after our new lodgings.

Here now was a state of things indeed! The entire stock of luggage for seven grown persons was soon deposited in the middle of the floor. The room of which the shack consisted was about eight by ten feet square, set directly upon the ground, from which the water oozed at every step of the foot. Two small windows, a front and back door, with the small stove —that was all. These were our accommodations for the night, and perhaps several nights and days.

Then we two set to work with a will. We swept the floor, we gathered sticks for a fire, we threw boards down outside the door upon which to walk instead of in the mud, a pail of water was brought from a hydrant after paying twenty-five cents for it, and a box was converted into a table. Luggage was sorted, lunch baskets were ransacked, while tin cups, coffee pot, knives, forks and spoons were found, with a fresh white cloth upon which to spread the food.

When Judge R. finally appeared, it was supper time. He carried a tin fry-pan under one arm, a bag containing one dozen eggs, and a few slices of ham on a paper plate, for which articles he had paid the goodly sum of one dollar and seventy-five cents.

Waving the fry-pan above his old grey head, the jolly judge shouted: "See, the conquering hero comes! Oh, but I'm hungry! Say, how in the world did you get this place? I hunted four mortal hours and failed to find a shack, room, or tent for the night. Four thousand people landed here today, and still they come. Jerusalem crickets! What a crowd! Everybody is in from Dan to Beersheba! We will have fifteen thousand people here soon if they don't stop coming, and no shelter for 'em!" Then changing his tone and glancing toward his wife:

"And how is my dear little wifey by this time?" tenderly patting Mrs. R.'s white hand, which belonged to a woman tipping the beam at two hundred.

"Aren't you glad we came? I am." Then rattling on without giving his wife a chance to speak, for her eyes had filled with tears:

"I think I've got a 'case' already. Claim number four on D. Creek jumped last winter while owner was away—jumper won't leave—talked with owner today —think I'll get the job," said the hopeful old judge, sitting on an empty cracker box and eating bread and cheese from his fingers.

"Eat your supper, dear," to his wife, who was taking nothing, "and you shall have a bed tonight—the best in Nome City. See! There it is now," pointing to a big roll of dark brown canvas done up with a few

varnished sticks.

"A folding cot—new patent—good and strong. (It'll need to be strong to hold you up, won't it, dearie?) Now, please take your tea like a good girl, to brace up your courage. Or would you like a drop of sherry?"

To all this Mrs. R. shook her head, but she did not speak, neither did she attempt to eat, for there was a big lump in her throat which prevented.

The rest of our party enjoyed the supper. Some sat on boxes, others stood up, but we ate ham and eggs, bread, butter and cheese, tea and crackers, pickles, jellies and jams, as being the greatest "comforts" we could find in the camp, and we made them speedily disappear.

At last the supper things were cleared away, and remaining food repacked in the baskets. The patent cot was unrolled, set up and made ready for Mrs. R., who was the only one favored with a bed. The others finally faced the proposition and prepared, as best they could, their chosen floor spaces for their beds.

All slept in their clothing, for we had no bedding and the night was cold. The two men were banished to the outer air, where together they smoked and talked of affairs of the day, while we women unbuttoned our shoes, took out a few hairpins, cold-creamed our sunburned faces, and then, between jokes, stories and giggling, we settled ourselves, with much difficulty and hard snuggling, among our bags, raincoats, steamer rugs and wraps on the rough board floor for the night.

Coming in later, the judge spread his borrowed fur

robe upon the floor beside his wife's cot, covered himself with one-half of the same, chuckling as he did so.

"I'm glad my bones are well cushioned with fat, and that I'm old and tough and like this sort of thing. I say, wife, isn't it jolly?" And the portly and sunny old judge dropped off to sleep to keep me awake most of the night by his snoring.

If I slept little that night I did not waste my time. My brain was busy forming plans of action. It was not wise to have only one plan, for that one might fail. Better to have several, and some one of these would probably succeed. I felt a good deal of anxiety to know whether my father or brother had or would come to Nome. If either or both of them came I would have no further difficulty because I would work for and with them, but if they did not come what was I to do?

I had little money. I would not go home. I would work. I was a good cook, though I had never done such work except for our own home folks. I knew that cooking was the kind of service most in demand in this country from women, for my travels in Alaska the year before had taught me that. I could teach music, and I could paint passably in water colors and oils; in fact, I had been a teacher of all three, but in Alaska these luxuries were not in demand. I could not expect to do anything in these directions, for men and women had come to Nome for gold, expected to get lots of it, and that quickly. They had no time for Beethoven's sonatas or water color drawings.

It was now an urgent question of food, shelter and work with all, and the man or woman who could the

quickest devise ways and means, the one who saw the needs of the time and place and was able to supply those needs, was the one who could make the most money. Of course, being a woman, I was unable to do beach mining as could a man, and as many men expected to do. Those who brought large outfits and plenty of money with them were immediately obliged to hire help, but it was generally a man's help, like carpenter work, hauling and handling supplies or machinery, making gold washers and sluice boxes, or digging out the gold in the creeks. None of these could I do. On the steamer all these things had been well talked over among ourselves, for others besides myself were wondering which way they should turn when they found themselves in Nome.

As to there being any disgrace connected with work of any sort—it never entered my head. From a child I had been taught that work was honorable, and especially for a woman housework and cooking were respectable and healthy service. So I had no pride whatever in the matter; it was only a question of finding the work, and I did not doubt my ability to find it somewhere.

On the voyage from San Francisco I had thought well of the three Swedish women, and believed they would succeed in their proposed plan of restaurant work. I said to myself that if I were obliged to seek work I should like to be with them if possible; or, at least, with some of the "lucky Swedes," as the rich Anvil Creek mine owners were usually designated. These miners all hired cooks for their camps, as they kept large numbers of men at work day and night on the Anvil Creek claims, the season being so short for placer mining in this country. Anvil Creek was only

four miles away and the "Star Restaurant," as my friends had already named their proposed eating-house, would be headquarters for all the Scandinavians on Anvil and the entire district. For this reason, and because the three had so many acquaintances who would bring them patronage, and because their pleasant faces and agreeable manners always made friends for them, I felt sure that they would be able to give me work if they chose and I so desired. Then, too, there were the several Dawson families of my acquaintance here, and I would find them; possibly some of them might give me work if I asked them.

However, the first move to be made was to find our freight and baggage, and a spot upon which to pitch our tents, and the sooner that was done the better, as the test and cleanest camping places were fast being appropriated by the newcomers hourly landing. It was not easy to find a clean, dry spot for a tent, as I had found the day before that the black, soggy soil was hardly free from frost a foot down, and this made it everywhere marshy, as the water could not keep down nor run off where it was level. Some one on the steamer who had been in Nome before had advised us to pitch our tents on the "Sandspit" at the mouth of Snake River, as that was the cleanest, driest and most healthful spot near fresh water that we could find; and my mind was made up that it was to the Sandspit I would go. Many had been the warnings from friends before leaving home about drinking impure water, getting typhoid fever and other deadly diseases, and without having any particular fear as to these things I still earnestly desired a clean and healthful camping place.

This, then, was the way I planned during most of the

first night after landing at Nome. If I slept it was towards morning, when I had become accustomed to the regular and stentorian snores of the old judge; or when, for a few moments, after turning in his sleep, his snorts and wheezes had not yet reached their loudest pitch; and when my wishes had shaped themselves so distinctly into plans for work that I felt relieved and full of confidence, and so slept a little.



LIFE AT NOME.

Next day I looked for my father. At the landing, on the streets, in the stores, at all times I was on the lookout, though it was a difficult matter to find any

one in a crowd such as that in Nome. I saw several acquaintances from Dawson the year before, and people from different steamers that I knew, but not my father. At nine o'clock next morning three of us started out to find the Sandspit, with, if possible, a good camping spot to which we could take our freight as soon as it was landed, and part of our number was detailed to stay at the landing while we investigated. Down through the principal thoroughfare we pushed our way, now on plank sidewalk, now in the middle of the street if the walks were too crowded; but going to the west end of town till we came to Snake River Bridge, where we crossed to the Sandspit. At the toll-gate we easily passed, as all women were allowed to go over free, men only being charged ten cents toll. Here we quickly found a clean, dry place on the river bank a hundred feet below the bridge and two hundred feet from the ocean, which we chose for our tents. Now arose the question, would any one have any objection to our pitching our tents temporarily? Seeing some men striking camp near by we asked them. They told us that we could get permission, they thought, from an old captain near by on a stranded boat, now being used as an eating-house, and to him we went. He was not in.

Going back to the Sandspit, it was decided that I should remain upon the spot, while my companions went back to the landing. I was to remain there till some of them came back. This I did, sitting on a box in the sunshine with my kodak, umbrella and lunch basket beside me for hours. When madam returned, saying their search for their freight was still unavailing, I left her in my place and again called upon the captain.

Calling the third time at his boat, I found him and secured his ready permission to temporarily pitch our tents upon the sands, for he was an Alderman with adjoining "town lots," he told us.

By six o'clock that afternoon a part of madam's baggage and freight was found, hauled by dog-team through town to the Sandspit and deposited upon the ground. Then we bestirred ourselves to get a tent up in which we could sleep, as I, for one, was determined not to be kept awake by the judge's snores another night if I had to work till morning. The others shared my feelings, and we worked like beavers till midnight. By that time a small tent had been put up, boxes of bedding unpacked, as well as cooking utensils, oil-stoves and foods, so that we could begin cooking.

At the continuous daylight we were much pleased. Coming gradually into it, as we had done on the steamer, we were prepared for it, but the advantage of a continuous day to a busy, hustling camp like this one, had not presented itself to us until we ourselves attempted to work half the night; then we realized it fully. At nine in the evening a beautiful twilight enveloped all, restful to nerves and eyes, but still light enough to read by.

At ten o'clock it was lighter, and upon the placid waters of Snake River, only fifteen feet away, lay quiet shadows cast from the opposite side, clearly and beautifully reflected. A few small steamers lay further down stream near the river's mouth, row boats were tied along the edge of the water, and on the Sandspit below us was a camp of Eskimos, their tiny canoes and larger skin boats being hauled upon shore beside them for safety. At midnight the sun

was almost shining, the air was salt, fresh and clear, while the sky seemed to hang low and lovingly above our heads.

After eating a midnight lunch of our own getting of bread and butter with hot tea, we deposited ourselves, still dressed, upon the tops of madam's big packing cases, from which had been taken pillows and blankets, and slept soundly till morning, notwithstanding the fact that the hammers of hundreds of carpenters were busy around us all night.

Next morning all felt fresh and invigorated. The sun shone brightly. In the roadstead two miles away lay several newly arrived steamers, their deep-toned whistles frequently sounding over the intervening waters. It was a beautiful sight and welcome sound. How easily the long and graceful breakers rolled and broke upon the sands. With what music the foam-tipped wavelets spread their edges, like the lace-trimmed ruffles on some lady's gown, upon the smooth and glistening beach. How the white tents everywhere looked like doves of peace just alighted, and the little boats danced up and down on the river. I was glad to be there. I enjoyed it. Nothing, not even the hard work, the storms, nor the bitter Arctic winter which came afterwards ever effaced from my memory the beautiful pictures of river, sea and sky repeatedly displayed during those first novel and busy days at Nome.

CHAPTER X.

THE FOUR SISTERS.



IT was during the first excitement of the gold discoveries in the Klondyke that four sisters left their home in Chicago and started for Dawson. They were young, hopeful, ambitious and handsome. They owned a town lot in the city, but they had not the means with which to erect a building upon it, and the money would never be forthcoming if they remained where they were. The ordinary salary of a working woman in office or store was not sufficient to allow them more than a trifle above necessary living expenses, and they could see themselves old, wrinkled and grey before they could hope to attain their desired object.

Reaching Dawson safely, as they did after weeks of peril and many novel experiences, they set to work at what seemed to them at the moment the most lucrative labor of which they were capable. They were fitted for laundry work only by being well and strong physically, and by having a willingness to do whatever they first found to do.

This proved to be work at the wash-tub. Here the

four women labored month after month with a will, with the result that at the end of a year their bank account was not insignificant, they owned several gold claims, and in all the mining camp there were none who did not respect the four sisters.

Then came their first dark days. It was midsummer. Down among the grass roots and between the rocks of the hillside back of the famous camp, there trickled numerous fresh water springs, pure and cold when they left their sequestered sources among the seams and fissures, but gaining nothing of purity when spread out upon the little plain now thickly dotted with cabins.

Here in the hurry and rush of the fast growing camp, when fortunes came quickly, and men lived at a rapid pace, there was little time for sanitary precautions, and so it presently happened that a shadow, like a huge black bird of ill omen, suddenly hovered above the camp, sending a shudder through its entire length. A tiny germ, so small as to pass unnoticed and unheeded by, and yet withal so deadly as to be called a plague, crept along, insinuating itself into the streamlets making their way as best they could to their father, the Yukon; and the fever laid low many victims.

Early and late had the sisters toiled, never in a half-hearted way, but untiringly, day after day, until one of their number, being perhaps less strong, or more weary from work to which she had been unaccustomed, and more susceptible to disease, was stricken with fever, and after only a few days' illness, whispered her loving good-byes.

This happened in the summer of 1899, and rumors of the great gold strike at Nome now reached Dawson.

One sister had been persuaded by a member of the Dawson Bar to make for him a happy home during the remainder of his life, and she was married.

Again their party numbered the original four, though there were now only three sisters.

The excitement in Dawson regarding the new Nome gold fields daily increased, and it was stated by reliable steamer men from St. Michael that the new strike rivaled that of the Klondyke.

The little party of four decided to go to Nome. In a short time their business was arranged, sales made, gold claims placed in charge of agents, and everything made in readiness for their journey to Nome.

It was the middle of September. The last boats were leaving Dawson, both for points on the Upper Yukon and for St. Michael. People leaving Dawson by boat in the fall seldom linger beyond the third or fourth week in September, for then the river may freeze at any time and they be prisoners in the camp indefinitely.

The lower river steamer "Hannah" was about to push from the dock at Dawson when a friend introduced me to the three sisters, and during the following days on board an acquaintance sprung up which I much enjoyed. Little did we know that this friendship would afterwards be renewed nearly two thousand miles away, and under circumstances vastly different from any with which we had before become familiar.

Landing safely from the "Hannah" at St. Michael, a few days were spent by the sisters waiting for stormy weather to subside, and they then sailed for Nome.

Here they landed during the last days of September, amid falling snow, bleak winds and boiling surf, upon the sands of the most inhospitable beach in all that dreary Northland. No tree was to be seen. Not a rock under whose friendly shelter one might hide from the storms. There was almost no lumber in the camp with which to build houses, and no incoming steamers expected. A few rude shacks, tents and saloons, with two or three companies' buildings—of these was the town composed. Many were rushing for the steamers in waiting, determined only upon one thing—to get home to the States. Some carried heavy sacks of gold, others went empty-handed. There was the summer's accumulation of filth in the camp, too young as yet for cleanly conditions, and these brought their sure accompaniment—the fever. Many suffered for weeks with it, and then died.

Again came the dread plague to the sisters. Scarcely had they unpacked their trunks or found shelter for the winter when the younger of the sisters was stricken down. For days she raved in delirium, and all feared she would die. Night and day they watched anxiously by her bedside. Everything was done for her recovery and comfort that could be done in a new and rough camp like the one at Nome; for all who knew the beautiful little sister loved her well.

Then came the time when all the long and heavy yellow hair had to be cut from the lovely head in obedience to the doctor's orders. But the little sister lived. Their prayers were answered, the worst was over, the danger past.

Then followed long and weary weeks of convalescing, while the winter storms raged outside the little cabin, and the sun retreated farther from

the Arctic Circle and Nome, but the sisters thanked God, and again took courage.

Months after came the welcome springtime. With the earliest fine weather and revival of business in the camp the sisters erected a store building and warehouse on the beach near by. Into the latter they moved temporarily, hoping to rent the store to some of the numerous "tenderfeet" sure to arrive on the first passenger steamers.

It was here I found the sisters on my arrival at Nome from San Francisco in June, 1900. Little sister was well and strong again, growing a fresh crop of roses and lilies on her cheeks, and a new head covering of lovely, wavy yellow hair. On her lips she wore the same sweet, old smiles, however, and I knew her well by these. Since her recovery from the fever the hands of the sisters had not been idle, and they had become expert at sewing furs. This had kept them busy as bees all winter, and many were the caps, coats, mittens and capes made by their industrious fingers, which brought them a good income, while their rooms were always the rendezvous of friends than which a jollier lot could not be discovered.

Of the good influence going out through the rough mining camp during the long and dreary winter from the home of these sweet and Christian women, no account has probably ever been kept, except by the recording angel, who never forgets.

The day after we landed at Nome I secured work. Not, however, to begin immediately, which pleased me well, as I should then have a little time to look for father, inspect the camp, study conditions and take notes and kodak views.

"Can you cook for a gang of men?" asked Mr. A. kindly smiling down at me when I had stopped him on the street and asked for work in his camp for the English girl and myself, as we wished to be together.

"Indeed, I can. I will do my very best, Mr. A., and I feel sure we can please you. My friend is an extra good cook, as you will discover if you give us work. Will you try us?"

"I will," he replied.

"At what wages, please?"

"Five dollars per day, each, with board," promptly answered the gentleman whose two gold claims on famous Anvil Creek made him one of the richest men in Alaska.

So it was settled. Claim number nine, Anvil, was about seven miles from Nome, and one of the most noted claims in the district. Mr. A., a former Swedish missionary at Golovin Bay, had, with his doctor brother, voyaged to Nome on the "St. Paul" when we did, so we already had a slight acquaintance with both gentlemen and were pleased to get the work.

Anvil Creek claims had been worked the summer before. Gold had first been discovered in the fall of 1898 by Mr. Hultberg, a Swedish missionary, who learned of the precious metal around Nome from the Eskimos. His mission was stationed at Golovin Bay, and he notified the Swedes, Brynteson, Hagalin, Lindbloom and Linderberg, who in turn saw G. W. Price and induced him to go with them, as he was the only one there experienced in mining. Price was on his way to Kodiak over the ice by dog-team en route to California, as the representative of C. D.

Lane, the San Francisco mining man and millionaire.

The most of Anvil Creek was staked by this party before they returned to the mines at Council City, fifty miles up Fish River from Golovin Bay.

"On July second, 1899, a second cleanup was made on number one above Discovery Claim, Anvil Creek, the property of J. Linderberg. The result of four men shovelling out of the creek bed from a cut five feet to bedrock for twenty hours amounted to fourteen thousand dollars in gold dust. The men shovelled all the gravel from the moss down to bedrock into the sluice box as it was all pay gravel. The owner refused five hundred thousand dollars for the property without considering the offer."

Tierney is authority for the statement that this claim produced four hundred thousand dollars that season.

From this time the discoverers were known by the sobriquet of the "Lucky Swedes," for Anvil Creek was all good, there being no really "poor dirt" in it, and number nine, above Discovery Claim, proved itself, the first summer, also a banner winner.

It was here that we expected to work, as soon as supplies could be hauled to the claim, the monotony of bread making and dish washing to be varied by the new and strange sights on an enormously rich gold claim not far from the Arctic Circle.

Everywhere around us were carpenter's hammers in operation, and tents were rapidly going up. We found great difficulty in reserving ground space enough for another tent, as others found the Sandspit as desirable for tenting as we did, and elbowed us closely. Along the river's edge and the beach near by

many were digging and panning in the sands searching for "colors." Dog-teams were hauling freight and baggage, with their swearing and perspiring drivers at their heels, and while the big black-snake whips flourished in air above the dogs or upon their straining backs, the tongues of the faithful brutes hung from their mouths, and their wide open eyes looked appealingly at bystanders. My heart ached for the animals, but there were no humane societies in Alaska.

About five o'clock on Sunday afternoon it began to snow. This was the first June snowstorm I had ever seen. Our little tent leaked badly, as it had been hastily pitched, and the snow melted as it fell. Small rivers of water were soon dropping upon our heads. Rain coats, oil cloth, and opened umbrellas were utilized to protect the clothing and the bedding.

An hour of this experience would have been enough for one time, but troubles seldom come singly, and so the wind began to blow. Donning her rain coat and rubbers the English girl did her best to tighten ropes and make the tent taut, for madam's son had not returned from town. Presently, to our great joy, we saw him coming with a loaded dog-team of freight, and best of all, with a man friend to assist him, whose strong arms and broad shoulders were well fitted to tent pitching. Hastily the cart was unloaded and the large canvas tent unrolled and laid upon the sand. Stakes were driven, poles adjusted, ropes stretched with much straining, as the wind whistled more vigorously, and snow still fell; and the two men, both wet and cold, huddled into the little tent for a cup of hot tea which was waiting.

Then strong hands opened more boxes and a large oil

stove, carpets, rugs and many other necessary things were hustled into the new tent, as well as trunks, bedding, and the contents of the small tent, with the exception of canned goods and such things as water would not injure. The sands were clean but wet, and if we were thankful for a stout canvas cover over our heads we would have also been glad of a dry place under foot. However, carpets and rugs were spread down, stoves lighted, and the tent door flap fastened as securely as possible.

As well as we could we arranged all for the night, but we expected to sleep little, for the storm was now fearful. Rain, snow and hail, each came down by turns, accompanied by a high wind which drove the surf in roaring rage upon the beach. How thankful we were that we had chosen this spot instead of one directly in reach of the great rollers with their mist and spray; though we had the roar and boom of the surf in our ears continually. Sometimes it seemed that the wind had lulled, and then with increased violence it again screamed above our heads, threatening us each moment with disaster.

At midnight a supper of hot macaroni, cocoa, bread, butter and cheese, with canned meat and jam, was heartily eaten by all, including the visiting friend from Sitka who had assisted. A low box was used for a table and we all sat upon the mats, eating from tin cups and plates with the keenest appetites.

The weather was now awful. The storm had increased until it seemed each moment that the tent would be torn from its fastenings, and we be left without any protection whatever. The ropes and stakes had frequently to be looked after and made

stronger. The snow had turned to rain, which beat heavily upon the stout canvas resisting well the water without leaking.

By one o'clock the wind showed signs of abating, and we were so much in need of sleep, that, all dressed as we were, we rolled ourselves in our blankets and dozed on the rugs close to the oil stoves. For an hour I lay uneasily dreaming, or listening to the royal cannonading of the heavy surf upon the beach. From my diary I quote the following extract:

"Monday, four in the morning, June eighteenth, 1900.—It is four in the morning and we are sitting around the oil stoves in the middle of the tent. We have just had hot cocoa and crackers. The surf still booms, but it does not rain, and the wind has died down. We are better off than many people. Tomorrow we will put up the other tent and get more settled. We are thankful not to be on the sea beach, where so many are camped. A. wishes herself home again. People around our tent all night were talking, moving, afraid of the storm, but the big ships are still here and they would put out to sea if it were necessary for their safety. They say we have smallpox in town from the steamer 'Ohio,' and yesterday Mrs. H., who came up on the 'St. Paul,' was reported to be dying from pneumonia. The nurse, Mrs. Judge R.'s friend, is caring for her. Judge R. and wife are still in Mrs. M.'s shack near the barracks. It has been daylight all night. I hope to hear from father soon, and get my freight. My friends here have all theirs. The two men are smoking and talking while I write, and the Eskimo dogs not far away are howling in their usual interesting nightly manner. I will now try to get a little more sleep."

We had heard much of beach mining at Nome, but saw little of it. Stories were told of men who, in the summer of 1899, had taken hundreds of dollars in gold dust from the beach sands by the crudest methods, and thousands of men were now flocking into the camp for the purpose of doing beach mining. They were sadly disappointed. Not, however, because there was no gold in the beach sands, but because it was so infinitesimally tiny that they had no means of securing it. No hand rocker, copper plate, nor amalgam had been used with success, neither did any of the myriads of prospective miners bring anything with them which promised better results. Great heaps of machinery called by hopeful promoters "gold dredgers" were being daily dumped upon the beach from the ships, signboards were covered with pictures of things similar, while the papers continually bloomed with advertisements of machines, which, if speedily secured by the miners, would, according to the imaginative advertiser, soon cause all to literally roll in riches.

One flaming dodger ran in large letters thus: "Calling millions from the vasty deep. A fortune in one hundred days. Our dredger will work three thousand yards of sand in heavy surf at Cape Nome. It will take out twenty-four thousand dollars in a day. You can make more money with us than by taking flyers in wild-cat oil schemes, etc." The poster was illustrated by a huge machine gotten up on the centipede plan; at least, it resembled that hated insect from having attached to its frame two sets of wheels of different sizes along the sides like the legs of a centipede, but with a steam boiler for a head, and a big pipe for a throat from which the salt water was disgorged to wash out this immense amount of sand and give the gold to the miner. It did not save

the gold.

Thousands of dollars of good, hard-earned money were dumped upon the beach in the shape of heavy machines of different kinds, which were worse than useless, and only brought bitter disappointment to their owners. Men had stripped the beach the summer before of all coarse gold which had, perhaps, been ages in washing up from the ocean's bed, or down the creeks from the hills, and only the fine, or "flour gold," as it was called, remained.

By the newcomers men were cursed for spreading abroad tales of beach mining of the year before, but this was unjust, for conditions were not the same. The waters bringing the gold to the beach could not, in one season, replenish and leave the sands as rich as they had been after long years, perhaps ages of action, and blame could not rightly be attached to any one. Almost without exception, the men who did the cursing were the men who had never been hard workers, and did not intend to be, and so, after becoming satisfied that the nuggets were not there to be simply picked up and pocketed, they turned, looked backward, and went home. It was well for the new camp that they did.

There was also much trouble over real estate. Land was very high in price. Some Swedes, who, the year before, had paid seven hundred dollars for a town lot three hundred by fifty feet in size, now sold one-half of it for ten thousand dollars. It is small wonder, then, where "possession is nine points of the law" that men who rightfully claimed ground were ready to fight to keep it, and those who were wrongfully in possession many times stood guard with firearms.

In pitching our tents upon the sandy beach,

especially after gaining permission of the old captain who told us we would be in the street if ever a street should be opened through on the Sandspit, but that was not likely, and he had given us his full and free consent to our camping temporarily there next his lots, we expected to have no trouble. Here we miscalculated. Though the captain was kind and reasonable, he had a partner who was just the reverse, and this person gave us infinite trouble.

Scarcely had our first load of baggage been put upon the ground when he began to tramp fussily about at all times of day and night. After our stakes were driven he would come quietly in the night and pull them up, so we would find our canvas flapping in the morning breeze when we waked. Or, after we had retired for the night, he would come with some other, stand within hearing distance, and threaten us if we did not move away.

One morning, upon rising, we found that he had moved a long carpenter's bench directly upon the spot next madam's tent, which I was trying to reserve for my own tent as soon as I succeeded in getting my things from the steamer. This disappointed me much, but I said nothing; and when my tent finally came I pitched it on the other side, with my door directly opposite hers and only six feet from her entrance.

As to appearance this old man was a jolly sight. He wore long and tangled hair which had once been curly, but now hung in unkempt and dirty shreds upon his shoulders, while his hat was an antiquated relic of a former life in the States. A pair of old trousers generally hung by one suspender over a colored shirt, which, the summer before, possibly, had had a wash-tub experience, but not later; his

footwear was altogether unmentionable. He was called well-to-do, and there was no necessity for him to cut such an abominable figure, so he soon became a by-word, and was designated as "sour dough." At all events, he was sour enough, and kept up a continual siege of torment until he received a temporary quietus.

We three women were sitting in the tent one morning when there came a voice at the door. Going forward to enquire what was wanted, a man said gruffly, thrusting a piece of paper into my hand.

"A notice from the chief of police."

"For what?" I inquired.

"For you, to vacate these premises without delay."

"Indeed! Are they to open a street? Will the other campers about here move also?" I asked.

"I don't know. My orders are that you shall move immediately. See that you do it," said the man rudely.

While holding the paper in my hands I glanced over it hastily, and saw the marks of a spurious document. It was poorly constructed, and bore no official signs. I recognized it as a counterfeit.

"We have had permission from captain S., one of the aldermen, to put our tents here, and we shall stay unless he orders us away," said I stoutly.

"You have permission from captain S.?" he asked in surprise.

"Yes, sir, from captain S. himself, and you can say to the chief of police that we shall stay here until the

captain orders us to leave," saying which I stepped back into the tent.

The man retreated, muttering to himself as he went, for he was utterly routed, and never returned; neither did we hear any more for some time about moving our tents. It was as I suspected. Mr. Sourdough had thought to frighten us away, and the order from the chief of police was utterly bogus.

Some time afterward, when madam attempted to put a floor into her tent, "Sourdough" again put in an appearance. He threatened, but she held out, when the obstinate and perverse old man trotted off down town and secured an officer and four soldiers to come and put her off. The officer looked the ground over, inquired if there was room for teams to pass if necessary, and seeing her tent in line with many others, he turned to the old man and said:

"This tent takes up no more of the street than the others. This lady has as much right to be here as any one else. What is the matter with you? Let the women alone," and he and his soldiers marched away.

Mr. Sourdough tore his hair. He was wild with anger. The floor of madam's tent went down and stayed.

Each day I was in the habit of giving my Swedish friends a call, and found them finally ready to set up their restaurant tent. A large floor was laid on Second street near the post-office, the large canvas stretched over the frame, tables and seats provided, a corner partitioned off for a kitchen, dishes placed upon shelves, and they began serving meals. At this juncture I happened in one day just before noon and found them rushed with work and unable to fill their

meal orders for lack of help. Mary was peeling potatoes in haste, while trying to do other things at the same time, and Ricka and Alma were flying like bees.

"Let me peel those potatoes for you," said I, taking the knife from Mary's hand; and when she demurred, I told her I really had nothing to do, and would be glad to assist.

When the potatoes were peeled, dishes were heaped up to be cleaned, and I quickly washed them, feeling that I was of some service, and not heeding the surprised looks of a few acquaintances who chanced to catch a glimpse of me at work in the kitchen through the door.

This I did each day, coming over after I had eaten my breakfast, and rolling up my sleeves to my elbows, drove them deep into the dish pan and hot water.

Many were the jolly times we now had. How the jokes flew past each other over the puddings, and the crisp pies needed almost no other seasoning. How cheerfully "the boys" brought wood and water and counted it reward enough if they only received a smile from little Alma. Many a man was glad enough, too, to render such service for a meal or lunch of hot coffee and doughnuts, especially such good, big, motherly ones as Mary made, and there was no lack of men helpers. How the coffee steamed, the hot bread and meats smoked, and the soup odors tantalized the olfactories of hundreds of "tenderfeet" with their lusty Alaska appetites, which were increased by an open air life such as all in those days were living.

When at last we were summoned to our work, on Number Nine, the Swedish women pressed my hand cordially, leaving a good-sized bill in it at the same time, saying: "When you get through on Number Nine come back to us; we need you." I thanked them gratefully and said good-bye.

The English girl and myself were soon settled in our little tent with its clean new floor on the hillside of claim Number Nine. No tree was to be seen on the long, rolling hills, and only an occasional boulder on some summit like Anvil Peak, perched as a sentinel above us. A few wild flowers bloomed on the tundra, and the waters of the little stream gurgled over the soft slate pebbles that strewed its course; but the season so far was a dry one, and more water was needed before much could be done at sluicing. Miners were not happy at the prospect of a dry season, which meant a stoppage of all mining operations, and eagerly scanned the heavens for rain indications. A small force of men were at work night and day. On Thursday, July twelfth, eleven hundred dollars in gold dust was taken from the sluice boxes in the creek, and two days afterwards twelve thousand dollars, with which the owner of the claim was much dissatisfied, calling them small clean-ups.

A few hundred feet up stream, on Number Ten, the machinery of C. D. Lane whirred constantly. On the upper end of Number Nine a small new machine called a separator was put in by some men from New York who had taken a lay on the claim; but this scheme was not successful.

Seeing men at work prospecting along the "benches," as the banks of a stream or hillsides are called by miners, and having a woman's proverbial curiosity,

after my work was done I climbed the hill to investigate. The prospectors had left after digging a hole about six feet deep and four square, evidently having satisfied themselves as to what the ground contained. Into this hole I descended to feel of the cold, wet earth and inspect the walls.

The miners had reached the frost line and gone, taking with them samples of pretty white quartz rock, as much of the debris at the bottom of the hole plainly showed, but whether it contained gold I knew not. As yet I was a tenderfoot; but something satisfactory was without doubt found here and in the vicinity, as quartz claims were staked over the placer claims the whole length of Anvil Creek that summer.

While rambling about in search of flowers during our afternoon rests, we found many interesting spots. To the northwest, over the high, bare ridge, lay Snow Gulch, from which fabulous sums had the summer before been taken, the blue and winding waters of famous Glacier Creek lying just beyond. Walking through the dry, deep tundra over the hills was warm, hard work, though we wore short skirts and high, stout boots, and womanlike, we were always filled to the brim with questions and ready to rest if we chanced to meet any one, which was not often.

Wherever we went, and whatever the hour, we met with no incivility. Hats were lifted, and men rested a moment upon their shovels to look after us as we passed, while frequently some rough miner swallowed the lump in his throat or wiped a tear, as he thought of his wife, daughter or sweetheart far away. We were the only women in the mines for miles around, but felt no fear whatever, and indeed we were as safe there as at home, and there was no

occasion for anxiety.

Life was extremely interesting. Our work was not hard the first few weeks; after that the force of men was increased. Rich pans of dirt (two shovels full to a pan) were daily being brought to light. One pan contained seventy-two dollars and seventy-five cents, one eighty-three dollars and thirty-five cents. Big, fat nuggets already melted into wondrous shapes, but iron rusted, as all Anvil Creek gold is, for some reason, was discovered each day. One nugget tipped the scales at thirty-nine dollars, one at twenty dollars, and one at fifty dollars, with many others of like value.

Wednesday, August eighth, the following entry was made in my diary: "Today has been the banner day for gold dust. The night's cleanup of twelve hours' work was a big one—three pans full of gold. Later—Still more yet. A cleanup of nine thousand dollars and three of the largest nuggets I ever saw has just been made this evening. Two of the nuggets were long and flat, as large as a tree-toad, and much the shape of one. The men took the first load of gold dust to town—seventy-five pounds—but the bank was closed before they could get the remainder there. The foreman says they are prepared to keep it here safely over night, however, and I believe they are, judging by the big protuberances on their hip pockets."

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE IN A MINING CAMP.



S the rains came to facilitate the sluicing, more men were added to the force shovelling in the creeks, and this made our work heavier. An exceedingly cranky foreigner, as head cook, presided over the big coal range in the mess-house, and we women "played second fiddle," so to speak. However, we all had enough hard work, as a midnight supper for the second force had to be prepared and regularly served, and at this we labored alternately.

Strange to relate, the men at the long tables soon began to exhibit a very great partiality for the dishes prepared by the English girl and myself, to the end that the foreign fellow's black eyes snapped with anger, and he swore deeply under his breath.

"He vill eat vat I gif heem. He moose eat it ven he hoongry, else he starve himsel'. I care not he no like it, he get nothing other!" the angry man would exclaim, as the untouched plates of the men were scraped into the waste box. He would then, fearing that we would cook some dish more palatable to the miners, hide the best food, or forbid us to use certain ingredients as we wished.

Of the culinary stores provided there never could be

a complaint. Everything that money could buy in the way of fresh meat, potatoes, onions, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, flour, corn and oatmeals, were stacked up in the greatest profusion. From canned oysters, clams and French sardines, to fine cocoa and cream, all was here found in quantities, after being hauled in a wagon behind powerful horses over the seven miles of heavy roads from Nome. By the time the goods reached camp they were almost worth their weight in gold, but one might have supposed them dirt cheap, for we, as hungry miners and cooks, were never limited.

Week after week the patient animals and their driver were kept measuring the distance between the city and the claim, even though the wet tundra in low places grew sodden and boggy, and the wheels repeatedly sank to the hubs. At times more horses were attached to haul them out of some hole, or if these were not at hand, certain heavy cases were dumped off until the reeking, straining brutes had successfully extricated the load. Covered with mud and sweat, his high-topped rubber boots each weighing a number of pounds, and his stomach too empty to allow of conversation, after a long, hard day's work, the driver of this team would fling himself upon one of the benches alongside our table and say:

"Yes, I'm ready to eat anything. Been caved in for two hours."

This young man, as well as the night foreman, was a cousin of Mr. A., both farmer boys, honest, kind and true. No oaths fell from their lips, and no language was used which their own mothers would ever blush to hear.

The second of these, the foreman, was dressed also in great rubber boots, dark blue sweater, and broad-brimmed felt hat, with a quick eye and ear for all around him, though he was a man of few words, which he weighed well before using. His hip pocket always contained a loaded revolver, and he was obliged to sleep days after being on duty nights.

To eyes so unaccustomed as ours to the sight, how strange it all looked at midnight. From the big tent door which faced south and towards Nome City we could see the blue waters of Behring Sea away in the distance. Great ships lying there at anchor, lately arrived from the outside world or just about to leave, laden with treasure, at this long range looked like mere dots on the horizon. Between them and us there straggled over the beach in a westerly direction, a confused group of objects we well knew to be the famous and fast growing camp on the yellow sands. To our right, as well as our left, rolled the softly undulating hills, glowing in tender tints of purples and greys, or, if the moon hung low above our heads, there were warmer and lighter shades which were doubly entrancing.

Accompanying the low moon twinkled the silver stars with their olden time coyness of expression. Little birds, not knowing when to sleep in the endless daylight, hopped among the dewy wild flowers of the tundra, calling to their mates or nestlings, twittering a song appropriate to the time and place because entirely unfamiliar.

No other sound was to be heard except the picks of the miners at work in the stream. No word was spoken unless the foreman gave some order. Those sleeping in nearby tents must not be wakened, and

besides the men at the shovels and picks did no loitering. There were the long sluice boxes to be filled with what was once the creek bed, from which the water was now turned in another direction to await the morning's cleanup of gold.

At that time the water would be conducted into the long boxes to wash away the dirt and gravel, leaving the heavier gold in the bottom. Either Mr. A. or his brother, with the foreman, attended to cleaning up the gold. When all the dirt and gravel, or rock, had been washed out of the sluices, a whisk broom was used to brush the gold into a corner of the box, a dustpan conveyed it to broad-mouthed gold pans close at hand, and these were carried into the kitchen.

Here the pans were placed upon the iron range, big mush spoons were utilized for stirring, and the precious metal was well dried before being weighed. As soon as possible afterward it was taken to the Bank of Nome. A tall, black horse was purchased for this purpose alone, and after a few such trips the intelligent creature most reluctantly approached the office where the gold was kept, having learned of the grievous burden he would have to bear. Sometimes he would snort, throw himself and pull back, and in every way show his unwillingness to proceed.

But no shirk was allowed here. The horse was led close to the steps of the office tent, and a gunny sack tied in the middle brought out by two men and laid over the back of the unwilling beast. A rain coat or blanket was flung over the sack, and the man at the halter started for town, leading the horse, which walked slowly and resignedly after being compelled to go.

A second man, well armed with revolvers like the first, always accompanied the pair, and when the three had returned to the claim another cleanup awaited them. Enormous sums of money were taken from this claim while we were there, averaging ten thousand to twenty thousand dollars per day. Seventy men worked for a time when the water was at its best, part of that number on the day force and part at night.

In August the west bank of the creek was accidentally pricked and found to be far richer than the bed of the stream. Nuggets worth many dollars were continually unearthed, the largest one that summer amounting to ninety dollars. The richest pans contained sixty-four dollars, seventy-two dollars and seventy-five cents and eighty-four dollars, with others ranging all the way below.

From a bench claim next to Number Eleven on this creek, and only one-fourth of a mile above us, great heaps of gold were taken from the ground, no pan carrying less, it was said, than five hundred dollars.

From seventy men to wait upon when the stream was at high water mark, to twenty-five when it was lower, at any time our lot was hard. We worked with chapped, bleeding hands and aching backs. We worked until our tired limbs sometimes refused to carry us further. By the middle of August the nights began to grow dark at nine o'clock, and a hold-up or two took place on the creek. The weather was rainy and cold, with frosty nights between, and as we were all in tents, and these sometimes leaked, which did not improve the head cook's temper and he grew almost abusive; we retired, went to town, and left him alone to meditate. Here he hastily and angrily

for a few days longer tossed up nondescript messes for the men, which none could eat, and was then discharged in disgrace.

In all there were fifteen placer claims staked on Anvil. Some of these were scarcely touched that summer, but from those operated fully two million five hundred thousand dollars were taken in three months.



ANVIL CREEK.

During the six weeks we had spent at Number Nine, many improvements had been made along the route and in Nome. Where before we had traveled seven miles we now walked only two, riding on the new narrow gauge railroad, spoken of there as Mr. Lane's, the remainder of the way.

At Discovery Claim, instead of a few straggling tents, there were eating houses, saloons, store-houses, a ticket and post-office, and the nucleus of a town. The cars we boarded were open, flat cars, with seats along the sides, to be sure, but they were crowded at one dollar per head to Nome. After waiting a little

time for a start, the whistle blew shrilly, the conductor shouted "all aboard!" and we trundled along behind a smoky, sturdy engine in almost civilized style.

This was the first railroad in Alaska with the exception of the White Pass and Yukon road, and will eventually extend to the southern coast and Iliamna.

Next morning, after spending the night on the Sandspit with madam, I called, bright and early, upon my Swedish friends in their restaurant.

"Good morning, Mrs. Sullivan!" cried Mary in a hearty voice, as she stirred the steaming mush on the kitchen range.

"Good morning!" said Ricka more quietly, but with a pleasant, welcoming smile. "Did you come from Number Nine?"

"Good morning!" from Alma, as she poured a cup of hot coffee for a waiting customer. "Do you want to help us? We have plenty of work."

"That's what I came for," said I, laying aside my hat and coat. "Will you lend me an apron till I get mine?" glancing toward the kitchen sink full of unwashed dishes, and the cupboard shelves quite demoralized.

"I'll lend you six if you will only help us. We are so busy serving meals we cannot take time to get settled," said Mary. "Yes, we moved from the tent last week," she said in reply to my question.

"We like this much better. The tent leaked during the hard rains, and flapped so much in the wind that we were afraid it would come down upon our heads. We

have had this kitchen built on, and shall keep open till the last boats are gone for the winter. That will be two months longer, likely," and Mary talked on as she dished up the griddle cakes and the two others waited upon the tables.

I felt quite happy to have found work so soon, and that too among friends, and without any particular responsibility attached to the position. I would dignify my labor, doing it well and acceptably, carrying always a sunny face and pleasing mood. The work was of a kind despised by hundreds of women, who, after landing at Nome, had not found agreeable and genteel situations, and so had gone back home, or, in some cases, done even worse.

To be sure, the pay was not large, the work tiresome, and I would be snubbed by many persons, but I had not come to Alaska for my health. That was excellent. Then I had good food in sufficient quantities, which was always a thing to be considered in that country. I had a purpose in view which I never lost. I would get some gold claims.

The Swedish people were brave and fearless, as well as patient and strong. I had many acquaintances among them already. I felt they were good people to stay with, and they were congenial. To be sure, a few spoke English with an accent, and there were no small, white hands among them; but if the hearts and lives were clean and true, and so far as I could judge they were so, I was satisfied.

The missionaries from Golovin, including the young lady who had come up on the "St. Paul," had, with my three friends here, called at Number Nine at different times during the six weeks of our stay there. Already a plan had been considerably discussed

which would take a party of us to Golovin to winter, either in the Swedish mission or near it, and of all things in mind so far this prospect most pleased me.

We would then be fifty miles from the rich Council City mines on the Fish River Creeks, and only half that distance from the Topkok diggings, of which we now heard considerable. Every creek within many miles around Nome was entirely staked, but in the vicinity of Golovin we might hope to secure claims, or, at least, be in a good position to learn of new gold strikes if any were made during the coming winter.

"But we will keep a roadhouse if we go there," said Alma, "and be making some money. I am sure there will be many people traveling through Golovin all winter, and we can make a few dollars that way as well as any one else. Then we will not forget how to cook," and the young woman, with eyes always open to the main chance for "making money," as she called it, laughed at the bare possibility of such a thing.

"We might do that and help in the mission, too, there are so many of us. I would like to work in the mission for a change, I think," said Ricka, who was very religiously inclined and quiet generally.

"What would you like to do, Mrs. Sullivan?" asked Mary. "You say so little, and we talk so much. I want to know what you think."

"Well, there are three of you to talk, and I am only one," said I, laughing, as I placed the cups and saucers, all clean and shining, on the cupboard shelves. "I should like the mission plan better than anything, for I have had some experience in mission work; but if they do not need us there, then I should

like the roadhouse well enough, though I think if eight or ten of us, each having enough supplies for himself for the winter, should form a club and live under one roof, we could do so more cheaply and comfortably than any other way, and have a real jolly, good time in the bargain. These young men, many of them, are intending to winter here somewhere, and all hate to cook for themselves, I know, while they would gladly get the wood, water, and shovel snow, if we did the cooking and housework. None need to work hard, and if a rich gold strike were reported, somebody might want to go and do some staking. In that way we might get some gold claims," I reasoned, while all three listened during a lull in the work.

"That's what we all came to Alaska for—gold claims. I want three," remarked Alma with complacency, "and besides, there is plenty of driftwood at Golovin on the beach which we could have for nothing, and save buying coal at three dollars a sack as we do here," glancing at the scuttle near the range reproachfully, as if the poor, inanimate thing was to blame for prices.

Little Alma was keen at a bargain. There was nothing slow about the grey matter in her cranium. If there was buying to do, or a commodity to sell, Alma was the one of the restaurant firm to do it, enjoying well the bargaining, where she was seldom outwitted.

So in the intervals between meals, or at night when the day's work was done, we discussed our plans outside the kitchen door next the sea beach, watching the shipping in the roadstead, admiring the lovely sky tints left by the setting sun, or gazing at the softly rolling breakers under a silver-bowed

moon.

If we had plenty of hard work, with its not altogether desirable phases, we also enjoyed much beside the novelty. Some one we knew was always in from the creeks, principally Anvil, to bring latest news, as well as to collect the same, and the kitchen as well as the dining-room, was the constant rendezvous of friends of one or all of us. Those prospecting among the hills or on the beach at some distance from town came in often for supplies and to visit the post-office, giving the "Star" a call for hot coffee, if not a supper, before leaving. Jokes and stories flew about over the tables, and interesting incidents were always occurring. Good humor and good cheer flowed on every side along with the cordial greeting, and tea and coffee, though nothing stronger in the way of drinks was ever placed upon the tables.

In the kitchen we did not lack voluntary assistants when work pushed, or there was what we called "a rush." One young man would fill the water buckets at a neighboring hydrant, another would bring in coal, and some other would carry away refuse.

Happy, indeed, were the great numbers of dogs fed from the "Star" kitchen. No beggar was ever turned away. No homeless and discouraged soul, whether man or woman, sober or drunken, was allowed to leave as forlorn as he entered. Men often sat down at the tables, who, when filled with good food and hot drink, in a warm and comfortable room fell asleep from the effects of previous stimulants and sank to the floor. When this happened some strong and helpful arm assisted such a one with friendly advice, to the street.

The two sisters were now our nearest neighbors, the

third and married one having gone with her husband to live in a new cottage of their own in another part of the town. The eldest of the two had kindly offered me lodging in the back part of their store building of which our restaurant rooms were a half, and from which we were only separated by a board partition. This was a temporary arrangement until I could find something that suited me close at hand, as I chose to be near my work on account of going to my room in the evening after my duties were done. The sisters themselves still lived in their large warehouse a few feet back from the store, and between it and the surf which rolled ceaselessly upon the sands.

I was now more comfortably lodged than since I had landed at Nome. My canvas cot, placed in the back of the store, vacant except for a few rolls of carpeting, matting and oil cloth on sale by the sisters, stood not far from the large coal heater in which fire was kept during the day, making the room warm and dry when I came in at night. Near the foot of my cot a good window admitted light and sunshine, and a door opened upon a flight of six stairs into a tiny square yard before one entered the warehouse, where lived the sisters. This latter building was made of corrugated iron, on piles, with windows and a door in the south end looking directly out upon the water only a few feet away, and was fitted cosily enough for the summer, but not intended for anything further except storage purposes. A second door in the north end, opposite the one in the store, and only separated from it by the little yard was the door generally used. At this time lodgings without fire were worth dollars a night in crowded Nome, and one's next neighbors might prove themselves anything but desirable.

Meanwhile we worked steadily. Many of the Anvil Creek mine owners and their men took meals at the "Star" whenever in town. Some of their office employees came regularly. Hundreds were "going outside" on boats, and all was bustle and excitement. At least twenty-five thousand people had landed at Nome during the summer, and fully one-half of them had gone home discouraged.

On Sunday, September second, there came up a most terrible storm, which, for the velocity of its gales, tremendous downfall of rain, terrific surf, accompanied by great loss of life, as well as length of duration, had not been equalled for over twenty years. Never before was the property loss so great on the Behring Sea coast.

By nine o'clock Sunday morning the large steamers at anchor had put far out to sea for safety. The wind rose, the rain poured. The surf was growing more rough. At dinner time those who came in reported the dead bodies of nine men picked up on the beach. They had attempted to land from a steamer, and their small boat was swamped. One of the men drowned was the mate of the vessel. For days the storm lasted and our work increased. It was not long before the continuous rain had penetrated our little kitchen roof and walls, roughly built as they were of boards, and from that on we worked in rubber boots and short skirts tucked still higher. With the storm at its hardest, I donned a regular "sou'wester," or water proof hat, rather than stand with the rain dripping upon my head, and a cape of the same material covered my shoulders.

People living in tents when the storm began—and there were thousands—had been washed out, or

been obliged to leave them, and could not get their own meals. The "Star" swarmed with hundreds who had never been there before, as well as those in the habit of coming. Ten days passed. Sometimes there would be a lull in the storm for a few hours and we hoped it was over, but the surf ran high and could not return before the wind again lashed it into fury.

One midnight, when I was sleeping soundly after an unusually hard day's duties in the kitchen, there came a hasty knock at my door.

"Let me in quick Mrs. Sullivan, the warehouse, we fear, is going. We must come in here. We will bring some more of our things," and little sister dropped the armful of clothing she carried and ran back for more.

Sure enough, as I looked, the water surged up under the warehouse to the foot of the steps. When she returned with another load I offered to dress and assist them, but she said they would only bring the clothing and bedding, and I better go back to bed.

Breathlessly the sisters worked for a time, until the tide prevented them from again entering the warehouse, and they made their bed near me on the floor. When, after watching the waters, they felt satisfied that they receded, they retired, weary and troubled, hoping that before another high tide the storm would have subsided and the danger would be past.

By September twelfth the surf was the worst we had ever seen it, and Snake River had overflowed its banks. Most of those on the Sandspit were obliged to flee for their lives. Hundreds were homeless on the streets. The town's whole water-front was washed

away. Tents not only went down by hundreds, but buildings of every description were swept away and flung by the angry surf high up on the sands.

Anchored lighters and barges were loosened from their moorings and came ashore, as did schooners broken and disabled. Dead bodies were each day picked up on the beach, which was strewn with wreckage.

One dark night, when the rain had ceased for a time to give place to a fearful gale which tossed the maddened waters higher and higher, there appeared upon the horizon a dim, portentous shape. At first it was only a form, indistinct and uncertain. As we watched longer, it gradually assumed the semblance of a ship. Keen eyes soon discerned a huge, black hulk, of monstrous size when riding the crest of the breakers, smaller and partially lost to sight when buried at intervals in the trough of the sea.

A ship was drifting helplessly, entirely at the mercy of the elements, and must soon be cast upon the beach at our feet. Approaching swiftly as she was, in the heavy sea, as the violence of the wind bore her onward, lights appeared as signals of distress, telling of souls on board in fearful danger.

In dismay we watched the helpless, on-coming vessel. We were in direct line of her path as she was now drifting. If by chance the mountain of water should, by an awful upheaval, rear the wreck upon its crest at landing, we would be engulfed in a moment of time. No power could save the buildings which would be instantly shivered to heaps of floating debris.

Should we flee for our lives? Or would the wind,

quickly, by some miracle, change its course, and thereby send the menacing vessel to one side of us or the other? Groups of patrolmen and soldiers everywhere watched with anxious eyes, and friends stood with us to encourage and assist if needed.

God alone could avert the awful, impending disaster. He could do so, and did.

When only a few hundred feet from shore, the huge black mass, rearing and tossing like a thing of life in the raging sea, swerved to the west by a sudden veer of the wind, and then, amid the roar of breakers angry to ferocity, she, with a boom as of cannon in battle, plunged into the sands of the beach only a hundred and fifty feet away.

The earth trembled. With one long, quivering motion, like some dumb brute in its death struggle, the ship settled, its great timbers parting as it did so, and the floods pouring clean over its decks. Then began the work of rescuing those on board, which was finally, after many hours, successfully accomplished.

CHAPTER XII.

BAR-ROOM DISTURBANCES.



IRLS, O girls!" shouted Mary from the kitchen door in order to be heard above the waters, "Do come inside!" Then, as we answered her call and closed the door behind us, she said: "The danger is over now, and you can't help those poor people in the wreck. There are plenty of men to do that. See! it is nearly midnight, and we shall have another hard day's work tomorrow. Go to bed like good children, do."

"How about yourself, ma?" said Ricka, carrying out the farce of mother and children as we often did, Mary being the eldest of the four.

"I'm going too, as soon as I get this pancake batter made, for I'm dead tired. We will hear the particulars of the wreck at breakfast," replied Mary.

"Poor things! How I pity them. What an awful experience for women if there were any on board," said sympathetic Ricka, and I left them talking it over, to roll into my cot, weary from twelve hours of hard work and excitement.

No anxiety, and no thundering of the breakers could now keep me awake, and for hours I slept heavily.

Suddenly I was wide awake. No dream or unusual sound had roused me. Some new danger must be impending. My pulses throbbed. The clock at the

head of my cot ticked regularly, and its hands pointed to four. The sisters slept peacefully side by side. The whole town seemed resting after the intense and continued anxiety caused by the storm, and I wondered why I had wakened.

However, something impelled me to get up, and, rising quietly from my cot in order not to arouse the others, I went to the south window and peered out.

My heart fairly stood still.

The waters were upon us! They had already covered the lower steps at the door not six feet from the cot on which I had slept. I stood motionless. If I knew that the waters were receding, I would go quietly to bed, allowing the others to sleep an hour longer; but if they were rising there was no time to lose. None could reckon on the tides now, for all previous records had been recently broken. I would wait and watch a few minutes, I decided, and I wrapped a blanket around me, for my teeth chattered, and I shivered.

How cruel the water looked as I watched it creep closer and closer. How quietly now it swept at flood tide up through the piles under the warehouse, covering the little back yard and the kitchen steps of the restaurant. With the cunning of a thief it was creeping upon us in the darkness when we were asleep and helpless.

Would the resistless waters persist in our destruction? Where should we go in the storm if obliged to fly for our lives?

Twenty minutes passed.

Another step was covered while I watched—the tide

was rising.

Crossing the room now to where my friends lay sleeping, I touched little sister upon the shoulder.

"Wake up! Wake up! The tide is coming,—the water is almost at the door! I have been watching it for twenty minutes, and I'm sure we ought to be dressed," said I, trying to keep my voice steady so as neither to betray my fright nor startle them unnecessarily.

Springing from their bed they hurried to the window and looked out.

"I should say so!" exclaimed the younger lady in dismay.

"These treacherous waters will not give us up. They want us, and all we possess, and are literally pursuing us, I believe," groaned Miss S., the older sister, struggling to get hastily into her clothing. "But we must waken the girls," she said, rapping on the intervening wall, and calling loudly for the three other women who still slept soundly from fatigue.

With that, we all dressed, and began to pack our belongings; I putting my rubber blanket upon the floor and rolling my bedding in that. This I tied securely, and dragged to the street door, packing my bags and trunk quickly for removal if necessary.

In the restaurant none knew exactly what to do. The water had covered the back steps, and the spray was dashing against the kitchen door. Underneath, the little cellar, dug in the dry sand weeks before, and used as a storing place for tents, chairs, vegetables and coal sacks, was filled with water which now came within a foot of the floors. From sheer force of

habit, Mary began building a fire in the range, and I to pack the spoons, knives and forks in a basket for removal. Ricka thought this a wise thing to do, but Alma remonstrated.

"The water will not come in. You need not be afraid. If it does, we will only run out into the street, leaving everything. Let us get breakfast now, the people are coming in to eat," and this very matter-of-fact young woman began laying the tables for the morning meal. It was six o'clock. The men soon began to pour into the dining room hungry, wet, and cold. Many had been out all night assisting in the rescue work or patrolling the beach, inspecting each heap of wreckage in search of dead bodies and valuables, for many among the missing were supposed to have perished in the storm.

Three men engaged in rescuing the survivors of the big wreck of the night previous, had been swept from the barge alongside, and gone down in the boiling surf. Searching parties were out trying to locate a number of men who had started two days before, during a lull in the storm, against the warnings of friends, for Topkok to the east. They were never again seen.

I had now to find other lodgings, for the sisters needed their room. Leaving my work for an hour in the forenoon I tramped about in the mud looking everywhere within two blocks of the "Star," for I did not wish to go further away.

After calling at a number of places, I was directed to a small hotel or lodging house across the street from the "Star," and about one and a half blocks further east. A man and his wife kept the house, which consisted of eating room and kitchen on the east side

of the lower floor, and a big bar-room or saloon on the west side. The second floor was divided by a long narrow hall into two rows of small rooms for rent to lodgers. The woman showed me a little room with one window on the west side.

"I wish to rent by the week, as I am expecting to leave town before long," said I, after telling her my business, and where I was at work. "What rent do you charge?"

"Five dollars per week, unfurnished," said she.

I caught my breath. The room was about eight feet square, and as bare as my hand. Not even a shade hung at the window. It was ceiled with boards around and overhead. I asked if she would put up a window shade. She said she would when her husband returned, as she expected him in a few days from Norton Sound.

After talking with the little woman she seemed to wish me to take the room, assuring me that there were only quiet, decent people in the house, and the saloon below was closed each day at midnight. There was a billiard table and piano in the bar-room; but no window shades, shutters nor screens of any sort, she said. Her own room was next this one, and she was always there after nine o'clock in the evening, so I need not feel timid.

Upon reflection, I took the room, and paid the rent. My things could not stand in the street, and I must have a place in which to sleep at night. It was high and dry, and far enough away from the surf, so that I need not fear being washed out. I would not be in my room during the day, and it was only for a few weeks anyway. It suited my needs better than

anything I could find elsewhere, and as for furnishings, I could do without.

I went back to my work, and had my baggage and cot sent to the room. I could settle things in a few minutes in the evening before retiring.

The surf still boomed upon the beach, and rain and mist continued all day, but without wind. For hours the waters kept close to our floors, but did not quite reach them. Floating wreckage washed up at our feet, and two lighters, loose from their moorings, lodged beside the warehouse at the mercy of the surf. We were in constant fear that they would shove the warehouse off the piles against our buildings, and that would be, without doubt, the finale.

In the meantime there was "a rush" indoors such as we never before had. Many carried hearts saddened by the loss of friends or property. Some had not slept for days. At the tables, at one time, sat two beggars, and a number of millionaires. Some who had reckoned themselves rich a few days previous were now beggared. The great wreck of the night before was going rapidly to pieces. With a mighty force, the still angry breakers dashed high over the decks of the ship. Masts and rigging went down hourly, and ropes dangled in mid-air, while men unloading coal and lumber worked like beavers at windlass and derrick, which creaked loudly above the noise of the waters.

More and more was the ship dismantled. When the storm cleared, and the sun came out next day, the scene was one of wondrous grandeur. Nothing more magnificent had I ever before beheld. Great masses of water, mountain high, rolled continually landward, their snowy crests surmounted by veils of mist and spray, delicate as the tracery on some

frosted window pane. As the sun lifted his head above the horizon, throwing his beams widely over all, each mist-veil was instantly transformed into a thing of surpassing beauty. It could only be compared to strings of diamonds, rubies and pearls. With a fairy's witchery, or a magician's spell, the whole face of the waters was changed. Each wrecked craft along the shore, partially buried in sand, masts gone, keel broken, and anchor dragged, with the surf breaking over all, was transformed under the brilliant sunshine, until no painting could be more artistically beautiful. Under the fascination of it all we forgot the anxiety, the labor, and suspense of the last days and weeks, and every moment of interval between work we spent at our door next the beach, or after the falling of the tide, further out upon the sands.

Many wrecks lay strewn along the beach. Schooners, barges, and tugs lay broken and helpless. Untold quantities of debris, lumber, pieces of buildings, tents, boxes, and barrels, all testified to the sad and tremendous havoc made by this great storm.

In my little room I rested quietly when my day's work was done. The landlady had taken down an old black shawl I had pinned to the window, and hung a green cloth shade of ugly color, and too wide by several inches. It was better than no shade, and I said nothing. For a bed I had my own cot; for a washstand, a box. At the head of my cot stood two small boxes, one above the other, and upon these I placed my clock, matches, pincushion, brush and combs, while below were stowed away other little things. A few nails on the wall held my dresses, but my trunk remained packed. A candle, tin wash basin, and bucket completed my room furnishings, simple

and homely enough to satisfy the asceticism of a cloistered nun or monk.

On September twenty-seventh there fell the first snow of the season. A little had for days been lying upon the hilltops of Anvil, but none nearer. The only fire in my room was an oil lamp upon which I heated water upon going home at night; but with plenty of blankets and wool clothing I was comfortable with the window open.

One evening while going to my room I heard some one singing in the bar-room. I hurried up the stairs on the outside of the building, which was the only way of entrance to the second floor, and entered my room. Depositing my lighted lantern upon the floor, I listened. The singing continued. It was a youthful woman's voice. I would see for myself. Going quietly out the door, and down part way to a window crossed by the stairs, I sat down upon a step and looked into the room below. It was the big bar-room. It was pleasant and warm, with lights and fire. Upon the bright green cloth of the billiard table lay a few gay balls, but no game was then in progress. The big piano waited open near by. The bartender stood behind the bar, backed by rows of bottles, shining glasses and trays. A mirror reflected the occupants of the room, some of whom were leaning against the counter in various attitudes, but the central figure stood facing them.

It was a beautiful young girl who was singing.

A few feet from, and directly in front of the girl, was her companion, a well dressed and good looking young man a little older. Both were intoxicated, and trying to dance a cake walk, accompanying themselves by singing, "I'd Leave my Happy Home

for You."

She was singing in a tipsy, disconnected way the senseless ditty, swaying back and forth to the imaginary music. Beautiful as a dream, with dark hair, and great melting eyes, her skin was like lilies, and each cheek a luscious peach. Her tall, graceful figure, clad in long, sweeping black draperies, with white jeweled fingers daintily lifting her skirts while she stepped backward and forward, made a picture both fascinating and horrible.

I sat gazing like one petrified. The girl's laugh rang through the room. "I'd Leave my Happy Home for You, ou—ou," she was singing still, weaving and swaying now from side to side as if about to fall. Her companion approached and attempted to place his arm about her shoulders, but she gave him a playful push which sent him sprawling, at which she shouted in great glee, dropping her drapery and flinging her lovely arms above her head. How the diamonds sparkled on her little hands I How the men in the bar-room clapped, swearing she was a good one, and must have another drink. Someone gave an order, and the bartender handed out a small tray upon which stood slender-necked amber-colored glasses filled to the brim.

As the girl quickly tossed off the liquor, I groaned aloud, awaked from my trance, and fled to my room, where I bolted the door, and fell upon my knees. God forgive her! What a sight! I wanted to rush into the bar-room, seize the young girl, and lead her away from the place and her companions, but I could not. I had barely enough room for myself. I had little money. What could I do for her? Absolutely nothing. If I went in and attempted to talk with her it would

do no good, for she was drunk, and a drunken person cannot reason. The men would jeer at me, and I might be ejected from the place.

Finally I went to bed. At midnight the singing and shouting ceased, the people dispersed, the bartender put out the lights, and locked the doors.

For the first time since reaching Nome, my pillow was wet with tears, and I prayed for gold with which to help lift these, my sisters, from their awful degradation.

It was well towards midnight, and I had been asleep for some time. My subjective mind, ever on the alert as usual, and ready to share enjoyment as well as pain with my objective senses, began gradually to inform me that there was music in the air. Softly and sweetly, like rippling summer waters over mossy stones, the notes floated upward to my ears. The hands of an artist lay upon the keyboard of the instrument in the room beneath.

I listened drowsily.

With the singing of brooks, I heard the twitter of little birds, the rustle of leaves on the trees, and saw the maiden-hair nodding in the glen. I was a little child far away in the Badger State. Again I was rambling through green fields, and plucking the pretty wild flowers. How sweet and tender the blue skies above! How gentle the far-away voice of my mother as she called me!

They were singing softly now,—men's voices, well trained, and in sweetest harmony:

"I'm coming, I'm coming,
My ear is bending low.

I hear the angel's voices calling
Old Black Joe."

They sang the whole song through, and I was now wide awake.

Familiar songs and old ballads followed, the master hand at the keys accompanying.

"We are going outside on the Ohio tomorrow," said one in an interval of the music, "and then, ho! for home again, so I'm happy," and a momentary clog dance pounded the board floor.

"Have a drink on it, boys?" asked a generous bystander who had been enjoying the music.

"No, thanks, we never drink. Let's have a lively song now for variety," and the musician struck up a coon song, which they sang lustily. Then followed "America," "Auld Lang Syne," and "'Mid Pleasures and Palaces," the dear old "Home, Sweet Home" coming with intense sweetness and pathos to my listening ear. No sound disturbed the singers, and others filed quietly out when they had gone away. "God bless them, and give them a safe voyage home to their dear ones," I breathed, with tears slipping from under wet lashes, and a great lump in my throat.

"Thank God for those who are above temptation, even in far-away Alaska," and again I turned, and slept peacefully.

CHAPTER XIII.

OFF FOR GOLOVIN BAY.



BY October twelfth the weather began to be quite wintry, with snow flurries, cold wind, and a freezing ground. All now felt their time short in which to prepare for winter, change residence, and get settled. After many days of planning, in which eight or ten persons were concerned, it was finally decided that we should go to Golovin Bay. The head missionary, and one or two of his assistants from that place, had been with us part of the time during the great storm, so we were quite well acquainted, and we would be near the Mission.

The "boys," as we called the young men for short, would build a cabin in which the funds of the women were also to be pooled. Three of the boys had gone, some weeks before, to Golovin to assist in the erection of a new Mission Home, twelve miles further down the coast; but as a shipload of mission supplies had been lost at sea, including building materials, their work was much hampered, and it was not expected that the new home would be completed, though sadly needed for the accommodation of the constantly increasing numbers

of Eskimo children for which it was intended.

In this case, no new helpers could be added to the missionary force, though Miss L., a tall, intelligent young woman, was to be placed in the Home kitchen as cook, and would accompany us to Golovin. It was decided, then, that the restaurant be closed immediately before the last boat left Nome for Golovin, as it would be impossible to get there after the last steamer had gone until the ice was solid, and winter trails were good over the hills. Most of us did not care to remain so long where we were, and made ready to sail on the small coast steamer "Elk," scheduled to leave Nome October eighteenth.

On the evening of the sixteenth the doors of the "Star" were formally closed. We had had a rush up to the last moment, and all hands were completely tired out. It had been a long pull, and a steady pull, and the thought uppermost in the minds of us four women was to get to Golovin and rest. Even Alma sighed for a vacation from hard work, feeling that the roadhouse, if they opened one, must wait until she was rested.

Mary wished to remain at Nome for a while, and come later by dog-team when the trails were good. She would take a day after we had gone to finish storing away the "Star" outfit for the next summer, and make the rooms tidy, afterwards visiting acquaintances, and doing shopping.

For two days after closing the "Star" we were busy as bees, but at a change of occupation. We bought food supplies, coal-oil, and warm clothing, receiving parcels of the latter, including yarns for winter knitting, at the hands of the stewardess of the "St. Paul," who had kindly made our purchases in San

Francisco at better prices (for us) than we found at Nome. Some bought furs, when they could find them, though these were scarce and costly, and each person carried his own bedding. Letters to the outside were written and posted, mails collected, freight and other bills paid, and tickets secured on the steamer.

For my own part, I now found some kindly helper with strong arms whenever I had a trunk, bag, or box to lift or transfer, and no remuneration for services thus rendered beyond a smiling, "thank you very much," was ever accepted.

What a strong, hearty, clean, and good-natured lot were these Swedes. How helpful, sympathetic, and jolly withal. It was easy for them to see the clear, bright side of everything, and to turn an innocent joke on themselves occasionally; for one told on another is never so effective and enjoyable as a joke on oneself; but there were often those with tears in their eyes, and a homesick feeling at their heart upon bidding farewell to friends who were leaving for the outside.

With the approach of a long, hard winter in the Arctic, so unknown and untried by many, with a distance of thousands of miles of ocean soon to roll between them, it was many times difficult to say a careless good-bye. For those remaining in Alaska, who could foresee the future? Was it to be a fortunate and happy one, or would it disclose only misfortune, with, perchance, sickness and death? Would these partings be followed by future happy meetings, or were they now final? Who could tell?

Among those constantly sailing for the outside were those who left regretfully, and those who left

joyfully; there was the husband and father returning to his loved ones with "pokes," well filled with nuggets, and the wherewithal to make them more happy than ever before.

There were those returning to sweethearts who daily watched and waited longingly for their home-coming which would be more than joyful. There were those leaving who would come again when the long winter was over, to renew their search for gold already successfully begun; and they were satisfied.

There were many who left the gold fields with discouragement depicted upon their every feature. They had been entirely unable to adapt themselves to circumstances so different to any they had before known, and they had not possessed the foresight and judgment to decide affairs when the critical moments came. Perhaps a fondness for home, and dear ones, pulled too persistently upon the heartstrings; nothing here looked good to them, and they went home disgusted with the whole world. Unless a man or woman can quickly adjust himself or herself to changed conditions, and has a willingness to turn his or her hand to any honorable labor, he would better remain at home, and allow others to go to Alaska.

If a man goes there with pockets already well lined, intending to operate in mining stocks, he still needs the adjustable spirit, because of the new, crude, and compulsory manners of living. He must be able to forget the luxury of silver spoons, delicate hands, soft beds, and steam heat; enjoying, or at least accommodating himself to the use of tin spoons, coarse food, no bed, and less heat, if his place and circumstances for a time demand such loss of memory.

A bountiful supply of hopefulness is also necessary, in order, at times, to make the darkness and discomfort of the present endurable, and this will wonderfully cheer and create patience. Thousands of persons who were ill qualified in these and other respects had journeyed to Alaska, only to return, homesick, penniless, and completely discouraged, who never should have left their home firesides.

Not so with the Swedish people. They are accustomed to a cold climate, hard work, and conditions needing patience and perseverance, without great luxuries in their homes, and being strong and hearty physically, they are well fitted, both by nature and practice, for life in the new gold fields of Alaska. There were more reasons than one for their success in the far Northwest, and a little study of cause and effect would disclose the truth, when it will be found that it was not all "luck" which made so many successful.

Our last day at Nome is a confused memory of trunks, boxes, bags, barrels, dog-teams, tickets, bills, lunches, tables, dishes, and numerous other things. Tramping hurriedly through busy, dirty streets, and heavy, sandy beach, with arms loaded with small baggage (we had neither parrots nor poodles) making inquiries at stores and offices, doing innumerable errands, saying good-byes, and having good-luck wishes called after us; and then, when the sun had disappeared for the day, and night was almost upon us, we turned our backs upon our summer camp, and hastened to our winter home.

At the water's edge small pieces of ice washed up and down with a clicking sound upon the sands, as if to give us notice of approaching winter, but the ocean

was almost as smooth as a floor. No breath of wind disturbed the surface, and only a gentle swell came landward at intervals to remind us of its still mighty, though hidden, power.

Then we were all in readiness to leave. A little boat was drawn upon the sand. Into it all small baggage was tossed. It was then pushed out farther by men in high rubber boots standing in the water.

"I cannot get into the boat," laughed Little Alma, "I will get my feet wet."

"Not if I can help it," answered a stalwart sailor, who immediately picked her up bodily and set her down in the boat, repeating the operation three times, in spite of the screams and laughter of Miss L., Ricka and myself. Ricka and I were only of medium height, but Miss L. was a good six-footer, and when we were safely in the boat, and she had been picked up in the sailor's strong arms, if she did not scream for herself, some of us did it for her, thinking she would certainly go head first into the water; but no, she was carefully placed, like the rest of us, in the boat.

After getting settled, and the final good-byes were waved, the men sprang in, those on shore pushed the boat off; we were again on the bosom of old Behring Sea. Smaller and fainter grew all forms upon the shore. Darker and deeper grew the waters beneath us. The lights of a few belated steamers, twinkled in the distance, their reflections, beautiful as jewels, quietly fixed upon the placid waters. Like a thing of sense, it seemed to me, the great ocean, full of turmoil, rage, and fury so recently, it would show us, before we left, how lamblike, upon occasions, it could be; and all old scores against it were then and there forgotten.

A dark form soon lay just before us. "Where is the 'Elk,'" I asked of a sailor rowing, looking about in the gathering darkness which had rapidly fallen.



FOUR, ANVIL CREEK, NOME.

"There it is," pointing to a black hulk which lay sullenly, without a spark of light visible, close to us.

"But do they not know we are coming? Have they no light on board? How can we get upon deck?" we asked anxiously.

"O, they will bring a lantern, I guess," laughed the sailor, then thinking to put us at our ease, he called lustily as he rested himself at his oars. Not getting a reply, he shouted again.

Presently two men appeared with as many lanterns.

"Here, you fellows, get a move on, and help these ladies on board, will you? Were you asleep, hey?"

"Wall, no, not 'zactly, sah, but I'se done been working hard today," it was the colored cook replying, as he rubbed his sleepy eyes.

"Haul up alongside this dory," said the other man as he put his lantern down, "and let the ladies get into that first, then we'll help 'em up here."

With that we climbed out as we best could in the darkness, one after another, the boys assisting, until we all stood laughing in the little cabin, and counted noses.

"Are we all here?" asked Mr. G., who, as usual had a thoughtful care over all.

"All here, I think, but the baggage. How about that?" said I.

"I'll see to that," and he was already on deck, while I continued counting.

"Alma, Ricka, Miss L., Mr. G., Mr. L., Mr. B., and myself—the lucky number of seven. How fortunate we are. We are sure to have good luck. Too bad Mary is not here, but then we would not be seven," and we were all laughing and talking at the same time.

In the cabin there was only one lamp, and that was swung over the table, looking in all its smoky smelliness as if it had hung there for ages without a scrubbing. The table was covered with dirty dishes scattered upon an oilcloth spread. The room smelled of fish, tobacco, and coal-oil, and we were obliged to go to the door now and then for fresh air. There was no fire, nor heat, neither was there a place for any. Rows of berths in two tiers lined each side of the cabin, but they were supplied with mattresses only. Dark curtains hung on wires before the berths, and these would furnish us with our only privacy on the trip.

Finally we selected our berths, assorted our luggage,

and sat down to rest. We were disappointed in the "Elk." She was not a "St. Paul," that was certain. The colored cook soon entered. His apologies were profuse.

"Hope de ladies will 'scuze de state ob dis year room, but I'se done been mighty busy today, and will hab tings fine tomorer."

"That's all right, Jim, if you only give us a good dinner tomorrow. Can you do it?" asked Mr. L.

"Yas, sah, dis chile good cook when de tings are gibben him to cook, but when dere's no taters, no fresh meat, no chicken, no fruit, den it's mighty hard to set up fine meals. Dat's de truf!" and Jim nodded his woolly head emphatically at the frequent undesirable state of his larder.

"Prices high heah, sah, but dis old man almos' fru wid de business; de las' trip ob de 'Elk' dis summah, an' I'se glad of it," and he disappeared in the galley carrying his arms full of dishes.

When the table was cleared and Jim had spread an old and much rumpled red cover over it, I took from my basket a small square clock, and winding it up with its little key, started it going. It was a musical clock I had purchased when in Nome, of a small boy about to leave for the outside. It had been given him by a lady, and he had grown tired of it, his mind being so much upon his contemplated long journey. He would sell it for three dollars, he said, and I paid the money, needing a time piece, and having none. So now the little music box ticked off its music to the entertainment of all.

However, we were all tired and the place was cold,

so after we had taken our last look at the lights of Nome, scattered as they were along the shore for miles in the darkness, we turned in for the night, all dressed as we were, and drew the curtains around us. The long, deep-toned whistle of the "Elk," had sounded some time before, and we were headed east, making our way quietly over the smooth waters.

Another chapter of our lives had begun. What would the end be, I wondered.

During the night I was awakened by men running and shouting on deck. The steamer stopped. Somebody went out to inquire the cause. In a little while he returned, saying that four men had been picked up, nearly frozen, in an open boat which was leaking badly, and they were found just in time. Dry clothes, with food and hot drinks, and they would be all right again; so I turned over and tried to sleep, but the men lounged about, smoking and talking with the captain a good share of the night, so that sleep was almost out of the question.

How I wished for fresh air! How I hated the tobacco smoke! But we could say nothing, for the men had no beds, no other place to sit, and it was too cold on deck. We must be patient, and I was patient, feeling thankful that the lives of the four men had been saved, if each one did smoke like a volcano and come near choking us to death.

After a while there was another commotion. What now? Their five dogs had been left in the leaking dory, which was trailing behind us, the boat was swamping, and the animals were almost drowned. They were whining, crying, and soaking wet; so the "Elk" was again stopped, the dogs taken on board, along with some of the miners' outfits, and we again

started on our way.

The men said their dory had been blown ten miles out to sea by a wind many hours before, and had then sprung a leak, wetting their food, and threatening them with destruction, when the "Elk" appeared and took them aboard in the night.

"Wall, yes, we had given ourselves up for lost, though none said much about it," remarked one of the saved men next day, in speaking of their experience. "Some one mentioned God Almighty, I believe, and I could almost have spoken to Him myself, but it does look like He had done something for us, don't it?" said the miner, laughing quietly, in a pleased, relieved way as he finished.

We were exceedingly glad for their deliverance from a watery grave, but we pitied ourselves for our discomforts, until we pictured ourselves in their forlorn condition, far out from land, at night, in a leaky boat, without food and freezing; then I found myself feeling really grateful for the privilege of sailing on the "Elk," and not discontented as at first. We would get fresh air enough this winter, no doubt, to drive away all remembrances of the air in the little steamer's cabin, which was cold as well as foul. There were no windows or ports that we could see; there was doubtless a closed skylight somewhere, but to keep warm even in our berths required management. In my hand luggage I carried a bright woolen Indian blanket, a souvenir of St. Michael the year before, in which I now rolled myself, already dressed in my warmest clothing and heavy coat.

A light-weight grey blanket was loaned me by the cook, who had purloined it from the pilot's bunk, he being on duty and not needing it that night. This I

was rather chary of using, for reasons of my own, but it was that or nothing, only the mattress being underneath. On my head I wore a pink crocheted affair, called sometimes a "fascinator," which was now used simply and solely for service, I assured my friends, and not from any lighter motive,—but my feet! How I should keep them comfortable while on board was a question. With my feet cold I would be perfectly miserable, and although I wore wool hose and high, stout laced boots, I soon found on going aboard the "Elk" that to be comfortable I must make a change.

I said nothing, but turned the situation well over in mind. At last I found a solution. Going to my bags once more, on the aside I drew out my new reindeer skin muckluks, or high fur boots, and looked at them. What enormous footgear, to be sure. Could I wear those things? I had put five good, hard-earned dollars into them, and they were said to be warm and very comfortable when worn properly, with hay in the bottoms, and Arctic socks over one's hose, but I had no hay and could not get any.

I had the socks in my trunk, but that was in the hold of the ship, or somewhere out of my reach. I held the muckluks in my hands, and slowly turned them round. Suddenly a bright thought came. I would pull them on over my shoes. I did it. They went on easily. I drew the strings attached at the back of the ankle forward over the instep, crossed them, carried them back, crossed them a second time and tied them in front, in order to use up the strings so they would not trip me in walking. Just below the knees I pulled a woolen drawstring which was run into the green flannel, inch-wide heading, and tied this loosely; then I studied them. Shades of my buried ancestry!

What a fright! My own mother would never know me. I wanted to scream with laughter, but could not, for I had performed the operation in a most surreptitious manner, behind closed doors (bunk curtains), after the others had retired.

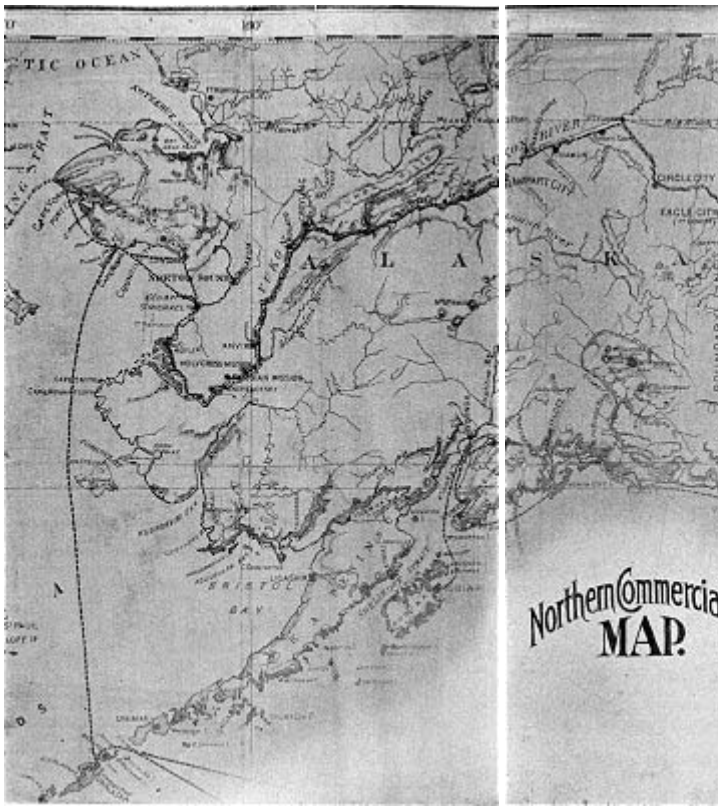
I had no compunctions of conscience as to putting my shoes upon the bed, for the mattress was both sombre and lonely, and as for the muckluks, they had never been worn by man (and were surely never made for woman). The most that I could do was to lie back upon my bed, cram my fascinator into my mouth, and struggle to suppress my risibles.

After a time I succeeded, and lay enjoying the new sensation of feet and limbs warm and cozy as if in my mother's warm parlor at home; and then I slept.

Next morning I kept my berth late. My sleep had been much broken, and the place was cold. The bad air had taken my appetite, and there were already too many in the small cabin for convenience. Four or five men and three women besides our own party of seven, crowded in between the dining table and the berths, filled the small cabin quite beyond comfort.

The main question in my mind, however, was how to prevent the company from seeing my feet. I would put off the evil hour as long as possible, for they were sure to laugh heartily when they saw my muckluks, and to take them off—I would not. Some one brought me a sandwich finally, inquiring at the same time for my health, but I assured them it was first class,—I was only resting. Watching my opportunity, toward noon I slipped out of my berth quietly and made myself ready for dinner, keeping my feet well out of sight, for cook Jim had promised a fine spread for the two o'clock meal.

When it came I was ready. It is said that hunger is a good sauce, and I believe this is true, for otherwise I could never have eaten the dinner that day. Upon a soiled and rumpled white (?) cloth Jim placed his "big spread," which consisted of whole jacketed boiled and baked potatoes, meat stew (no questions allowed), dried prunes stewed, biscuits, and fourth rate butter, with tea and coffee.



At only one camp was there a stop made. There were two or three passengers on board for Bluff City, a new and prosperous mining camp, composed chiefly, though so late in the season, of tents. Lumber and

supplies of different kinds had to be put off. As the entrance to the hold of the ship where the stores were kept was in our cabin, we had plenty of fresh air while the doors were all open, along with the mustiness from below, for several hours. However, I managed to keep pretty comfortable and snug in "fascinator" and muckluks, enveloped as I was in my Indian blanket.

Hearing a bluff, hearty voice which sounded familiar, I looked around, and in walked a man whom I had seen at St. Michael the fall before. He had charge of the eating house there, where my brother and I had taken our meals for two weeks. I had not forgotten his kindness in giving me sore throat medicine when there had been nothing of the sort to buy, and I was suffering.

This man remembered me well, and sat down to chat for a little while with us. He was a miner now, and a successful one, he said, for he was taking out "big money" from his lay on Daniels Creek, only five minutes' walk from the beach. I had been informed of his good fortune before meeting him, so was ready with congratulations.

He told me of his cabin building, his winter's stores and fuel, and seemed in high spirits. Of course I could not ask him what he meant by "big money," or what he had taken from his claim, although it would not here, as in the Klondyke, be a breach of etiquette to inquire. After a few minutes chat the man bade us good-bye, and descended to the small boat alongside, which was to carry him and his freight ashore.

It was nearly dark by this time, and another night must be passed on board. Some were complaining of the cold. Others were shuffling their feet to get them

warm.

"My feet are awfully cold," said Alma, moving them uneasily about. "Aren't yours, Mrs. Sullivan?"

"Not at all," I replied, trying to look unconcerned, at the same time putting my feet further under my skirts, which were not the very short ones I had worn at Nome. "You know what having cold feet in this country means, I suppose, Alma?"

"O, I am not in the least homesick, if that is what you mean. I am perfectly happy; but—" (here she glanced down upon the floor in the direction of my feet) "what have you over your shoes, any way, to keep so warm, Mrs. Sullivan?"

There was no help for it, and the muckluks had to come to light, and did. At sight of them they all shouted, and Alma laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"And you have had these on all day without our seeing them? Where have you kept your feet, in your pocket?" she persisted.

"Well, no, not exactly, but of course, under the circumstances, you could hardly expect me to hang a signboard out to call attention to them, could you?" I laughed.

"I should say not. Will we all look like that in muckluks? Is there nothing else we can wear this winter? They will make our feet look so awfully large, you see?"

"That's the way we will all look, only a good deal worse, for some of us have no skirts to cover them with, as you have," spoke up Mr. G. for the first time.

"I thought the 'Elk' leaned to the land side more today than usual," said Mr. B. with a twinkle, "but now it is explained."

"Bad boy! My muckluks were on that side of the ship from the first, only they were in my bag for a while. They are no heavier now than they were then. You shall have no supper," said I, with mock severity.

So I kept the fur boots on, in spite of their jokes, wondering what they would say when I arrived at Golovin and removed my fascinator (another surprise I was keeping for them), and contented myself by thinking I had the laugh on them, when they complained of cold feet, and my own were so perfectly comfortable.

At last, on the morning of October twentieth, with the sun just rising over the snowy hills surrounding the water, the cliffs on both sides of the entrance standing out clear and sharp in the cold morning light, and with one ship already there, we dropped anchor, being in Golovin Bay. The settlement, a score of houses, a hotel, a flagstaff or two, and the Mission.

I now waked the girls, who turned out of their bunks, dressed as they had been since coming on board the "Elk," and we made ready to go ashore. We were out in deep water, still some distance from the beach, and must again get out into a small boat, probably for the last time this year. Not all could get into the boat; we must take turns, but we were bundled into it some way, and soon we were upon the sands, a dozen feet from dry land. Again we were transferred by one man power, as at Nome, to the sands, which were here frozen quite hard, and upon which I had the sensation, at first, of walking with a gunboat attached to each foot.

Some one conducted us to the Mission House, only a few hundred yards from our landing place, while the boat went back to the "Elk" for the others. Miss E., who had come up on the "St. Paul" with us, and now the housekeeper here, came running out to welcome all cordially. By her we were shown into the cozy little parlor, so tidy, bright and warm that we immediately felt ourselves again in civilization. Soon Mr. H., the head missionary, whom I had already met in Nome, came in with Miss J., the teacher of the Mission children. She also had spent some days with us at Nome. These all made us very welcome, and our party of seven was soon sitting together before a good, smoking hot breakfast, to which we did real justice.

When entering the house I had, upon first removing my wraps and "fascinator," given my friends another surprise equal to the one of the muckluks on the steamer. The day before leaving Nome I had (surreptitiously again) made a visit to the hairdresser, and when I left her room I appeared another woman. My head now, instead of being covered with long, thin hair, done up hastily in a twist at the back, had short hair and curled all over, a great improvement, they all voted, when the first surprise was over.

My hair, all summer, had been like that of most women when first in Alaska, falling out so rapidly that I feared total baldness if something was not done to prevent. This was the only sure remedy for the trouble, as I knew from former experience, and as I again proved, for it entirely stopped coming out. Ricka soon followed my example, and we, with Miss J., who had been relieved of her hair by fever the year before, made almost a colony of short-haired

women, much to the amusement of some of our party.

After we had eaten our breakfasts, several of us set to work at writing letters to send out to Nome by the "Elk," which would remain a few hours unloading freight, as this might be our last opportunity for many weeks, or until the winter mails were carried by dog-teams over the trails. We fancied our friends on the outside would be glad to hear that we had arrived safely at Golovin, and our pens flew rapidly over the paper. These letters, finally collected, were placed in the hands of one of the "Elk's" crew for mailing at Nome, and the steamer sailed away.

Not all, however, wrote letters. The business head of the "Star" firm had not been idle, nor writing letters, and while I wrote Alma was deeply engaged, well seconded by Ricka, in making arrangements with Mr. H. by which we could remain in this Mission House all winter. Before noon it was decided that we should stay, assisting the missionaries all in our power until such time as they could move to their new station, as soon as the ice was firm enough in the bay to travel upon and the Home was far enough toward completion. It was impossible to finish the building now, but so far as practicable it would be made habitable, and all necessary and movable articles of furniture would be carried to the Home, though many large pieces would be left for our use.

This arrangement included our party of seven, Mary at Nome, and the three boys at work at this time on the new Home building, and would do away with all necessity for building a cabin, lumber being expensive and good logs scarce.

This intelligence came just in time for insertion in

our home letters sent away on the "Elk," and it was a day of rejoicing for at least seven persons (Miss L. was to go to the Home, but Mary was to come to us from Nome), who already considered themselves a "lucky number."

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE AT GOLOVIN.



UR first duty after arriving at Golovin was to look up our freight, which seemed to be in a general mix-up. Each person was searching on the beach and in the warehouse for something. For my part, I was greatly concerned over the probable loss of a case of coal oil, and a box containing wool blankets, feather pillow, and other things too precious to lose after paying freight, especially as some of the articles could not be replaced, and all were useful and necessary. The "Elk's" crew had dumped the freight promiscuously upon the frozen sands, considering their duty at that point done, and no assurance was given us that the

freight was all there, or that it was in good condition. The risk was all ours. We could find it or lose it—that did not concern the "Elk." As we had no idea as to the honesty of the community in which we had come to reside, and little confidence in some of the "Elk's" passengers who were also receiving freight, we visited the beach a number of times during the first two days. While at Nome and packing up to leave I had remembered the story of the person who, going to market, put all the eggs into one basket, and for that reason, when an accident occurred, she lost the whole lot; while, if she had placed them in two baskets, one-half might have-been saved. For this reason I then packed my blankets in two boxes, and now as one was missing I was glad I had done so, for to be entering upon a cold, long winter without woolen blankets would be hard lines indeed.

The first day was spent by the boys in hauling baggage and freight into the old school house, near the mission, which was to be our store room for a time. This building was made of logs, sod and mud plaster, with small doors and windows, and thatched roof, now overgrown with grass and weeds.

It had long-been deserted, or given over to storing purposes, as the new school and church building was put up alongside, and was being used at the present time. We would unpack as little as possible, while the Mission family remained, as their house was too small to accommodate comfortably so many. Mr. H. was like the old woman who lived in a shoe, for he really had such a family that he was puzzled as to what disposition he should make of them. However, the men were all lodged in the new school building, as it was vacation time, and no session; trunks and

baggage, except bedding, were put in the store house.

The Eskimo children and the women occupied the second floor of the mission. Mr. H. had his room on the first floor, oftentimes shared with some visiting missionary or friend, and I was the best lodged of all. The big velvet couch in the sitting-room by the fire was allotted to me, and I slept luxuriously, as well as comfortably. The newest and most modern article of furniture in the establishment, this couch, was soft, wide, and in a warm, cozy corner of the room.

From being lodged above a bar-room in Nome, I had come to a parlor in the Mission, and I was well pleased with the changed atmosphere, as well as the reduction of charges; for, whereas I had paid five dollars per week for my small, unfurnished room there, I now paid nothing, except such help as I could give the women in the house.

I felt, too, that I had earned, by my hard work during the summer, all the rest and comfort I could get, and I thoroughly enjoyed the change. Where among the drones and laggards is one who can find such sweets as well-earned rest and comfort after labor? What satisfaction to feel the joy all one's own. None assisted in the earning, and consequently none expected a division of reward. It was all my own. If this is selfishness, it is surely a refined sort, and excusable.

I was not, however, the only one in the Mission who enjoyed a well-earned rest. Each one of our party of seven had worked for months as hard and harder than I, and all found a vacation as pleasing, while the Mission people had the same round of work and as much as they could accomplish all the year round.

The day after our arrival at Golovin was Sunday. The weather was clear and sunny, but cold. We were now not only to have a vacation ourselves, but could give our working clothes a rest as well, and I took great pleasure in unearthing a good black dress which was not abbreviated as to length, surprising my friends by my height, after being in short skirts so long. It was really Sunday now, and we wore our Sunday clothes for the first time in months, not having had an opportunity for Sabbath observance in the work we had done at Nome.

To complete our enjoyment of the good day, there was the organ in the sitting-room, and upon my first entering the room, and seeing the instrument I had drawn a deep sigh of inward delight. To find an organ, yes, two of them, for there was also one standing in the schoolroom, or little church, was to feel sure of many bright and happy hours during the coming winter, and I felt more than ever that for strangers in the Arctic world we were, indeed, highly favored.

It was not long before I discovered that with at least two of our party of seven music was a passion, for Ricka, as well as Mr. B., could never have enough, and it was a pleasure to see the real and unaffected delight upon their faces when I played. We were really quite well supplied with musical instruments, for there were now in the Mission two guitars, one mandolin, a violin and a few harmonicas, besides the two organs, while as for vocalists everybody sang from Mr. H. down to the Eskimo boys, girls and the baby.

But this day's climax was the three o'clock dinner, prepared by Miss E. Could anything be more restful

to three tired restaurant workers than to sit quietly in easy chairs, allow others to prepare the meal and invite them to partake, without having given a thought to the preparation of the same, gaining, as we did, a knowledge of what was coming only by the pleasant odors proceeding from the kitchen? Certainly not, and the increased appetite that comes with this rest is only a part of the enjoyment. So when we were seated at the table on Sunday, the second day of our arrival at Golovin, before us fresh roast mutton, baked potatoes, stewed tomatoes, coffee, bread and butter, with pickles, and a most delicious soup made of dried prunes, apricots, raisins and tapioca for dessert, we were about the happiest people in Alaska and appreciated it immensely. What bread Miss E. did make, with slices as large as saucers, not too thin, snowy, but fresh and sweet. What coffee from the big pot, with Eagle brand cream from the pint can having two small holes in the top, one to admit air and the other to let the cream out. Nothing had tasted so good to us since we had come home, as hungry children, from school. As then, we were care-free, if only for a little while, and we were a jolly, happy crowd.

In the evening, when the children were once in bed, we all gathered in the sitting-room for music, stories and plans for the future, including the placing of a few new strings on the musical instruments and tuning of the same. Mr. H. had gone to the Home the afternoon before, so there had been no preaching service as ordinarily in the little schoolhouse across the road. The boys were talking of going to the Home across the bay next day in a boat, but a wind came up which finally developed into a stout southwester, and Monday was a most disagreeable day. Alma worked on a fur cap, to practise, she said,

on some one before making her own. Ricka mended mittens and other garments for the boys, while I sewed on night clothes for the little Eskimo baby.

The child was probably between three and four years old, but nobody knew exactly, for she was picked up on the beach, half dead, a year before, by the missionary, where she was dying of neglect. Her mother was dead, and her grandfather was giving her the least attention possible, so that she was sickly, dirty and starved. She had well repaid the kind people who took her into the Mission, being now fat and healthy, as well as quite intelligent. She was a real pet with all the women immediately, being the youngest of this brood of twenty youngsters and having many cunning little ways. In appearance she looked like a Japanese, as, in fact, all Eskimos do, having straight black hair, and eyes shaped much like those of these people, while all are short and thick of stature, with few exceptions.

Among this score of little natives there were some who were very bright. All were called by English names, and Peter, John, Mary, Ellen and Susan, as well as Garfield, Lincoln and George Washington, with many others, became familiar household words, though the two last named were grown men, and now gone out from the Mission into houses of their own.

As to the dressing of these children, it was also in English fashion, except for boots, which were always muckluks, and parkies of fur for outside garments, including, perhaps, drill parkies for mild weather, or to pull on over the furs, when it rained or snowed, to keep out the water. As the weather grew more severe, heavy cloth or fur mittens were worn, and

little calico and gingham waists and dresses were discarded for flannel ones.

The children, for weeks after our arrival, ran out often to play, bareheaded and without wraps, having frequently to be reminded when the weather was severe, to put them on. In the kitchen they had their own table, where they were separately served, though at the same time as their elders at another table in the room. To preserve the health of the little ones, not taking entirely away their native foods of seal meat and oil, tom-cod (small fish), reindeer meat and wild game, these were fed to them on certain days of the week, as well as other native dishes dear to the Eskimo palate, but they were well fed at all times, and grew fat and hearty as well as happy.

As we sewed contentedly in the sitting-room on Monday the storm continued, snowing and blowing a gale from the southwest, which, though not disturbing us even slightly, we felt sure would be bad for those at sea and at Nome; our own experiences at that place giving us always a large sympathy for others in similar plight. Long afterwards we learned that in this storm the "Elk" had been blown ashore at Nome, and was pretty thoroughly disabled, if not entirely wrecked, and we wondered if poor cook Jim had "done been mighty busy, sah, gittin' tings fixed" ever since.

When evening came the children and Baby Bessie were put to bed; work, indoors and out, was finished for that day, and we were twelve in the sitting-room, as merry a crowd as one could find in all Alaska. Miss J. had taken a lesson on the organ in the afternoon and was all interested in making progress on that instrument, assuring her friends who

declared she would never practise her lessons, that she certainly would do so, as they would afterwards learn.

The winds might sigh and moan, and whirl the falling snow in the darkness as they liked; waters congeal under the fingers of the frost king, closing the mouth of innumerable creeks, rivers, and bays; but here under cover we had light, health, warmth and food, without a single care. In my cozy, soft bed under the blankets, the firelight playing on the walls, the fine organ open and ready for use, I lay often with wide open eyes, wondering if I were myself or another.

In one corner of the room stood a case containing books enough to supply us with reading matter for a year, those printed in Swedish being, of course, of no use to me, but a variety of subjects were here presented in English, ranging from Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" to nursery rhymes for the children. Volumes on medicine, law, science, travels, stories, ethics and religion—all were here for the instruction and edification of inmates of the Mission. In another corner there was a large case of medicines, and here were remedies in powders, liquids, salves and pills, drawers filled with lint, bandages, cotton, and books of instruction teaching the uses of all. Even surgical instruments were found here, as well as appliances for emergencies, from broken and frozen limbs, mad-dog bites, and "capital operations," to a scratched finger or the nose-bleed.

This outfit was for the use of any and all, without charge, who should be so unfortunate as to require assistance of this sort in this region. Without money and without price, the only case of remedies for

many miles around, this Mission provided for all suffering ones who applied, and during the winter many were relieved and assisted toward recovery.

In the third corner of this room stood the large cabinet organ, nearly new, and in good condition. Instruction books, hymnals, "Gospel Hymns," small collections of words without music, Swedish songs—all were here in abundance.

The fourth corner contained my couch-bed. A heating stove, made of sheet iron, a table with its pretty spread, a large student lamp, easy chairs, a pretty ingrain rug covering the floor, window shades and lace curtains, with pictures and Scripture texts upon the wall, completed the room furnishings, making a homey place, which for years had been a haven of refuge for the homeless Eskimo children. Besides these, it had given food, shelter and clothing to many a white-faced wanderer, who came penniless, hungry and cold, perhaps ill and starving.

About seven years before this unpretending, now weather-beaten house had been erected, and the kindly little dark-eyed man put in charge was at once at home. He was blessed with rare versatility and patience, as well as a great heart of love for all mankind, including the dark-skinned, seal-eating races of the Arctic.

From a door-latch to a baby's cradle, from a log-house to a sail-boat rigged with runners on the ice, he planned, contrived and executed, principally for others, for years. Here we found, in one room, from his hands a bedstead, a table, and a washstand commode, all made in white wood, of regulation size, shape and pattern, though without paint or staining. Relegated now to an upper room, since the

velvet couch had arrived, was a long, wooden settle, with back, ends and sliding seat, the latter to be pushed forward upon legs and made into double bed at night.

One day in the winter, when searching for open places under the roof through which the snow was sifting, wetting the ceiling of the room below, I found in the attic a number of curious things, and among them a child's cradle. Not all the thought of the good man had been given to the needs of the "grown-ups," but the small, weak and helpless ones of his flock had received their equal share of attention. The cradle was well made with solid high sides and ends, and curved upper edges, swinging low and easily upon its two strong rockers. All was smooth, well finished, and rounded, though there was no paint nor varnish, these articles being doubtless unprocurable and not deemed strictly essential. Near by were the remnants of a white fox robe fitting the cradle. It was made of baby fox skin, fine, soft and pretty. A flannel lining with a pinked-out edge completed what had once been a lovely cover for baby, whether with white face or black, and I fell to wishing I might have seen the complete outfit in its former days.

From the rafters of the attic hung articles of wearing apparel of curious make and pattern, sometimes of skins of the wild reindeer or spotted seal. Of old mittens and muckluks there were numbers, still preserved for the good they had done or might yet do at piecing out somewhere. There were things for which I had not yet learned the uses, but might do so before the cold winter had passed. There were also many fur skins, and new articles of value stored in the attic.

Tuesday, October twenty-third, the weather was not cold, but snow fell part of the day, and it grew dark about half-past four in the afternoon. The gale of Monday had subsided, and the sky was overcast. The steamer "Sadie" of the Alaska Commercial Company surprised us by coming into Golovin, and again suddenly we fell to letter writing in order to send them out by her, remaining several hours as she always did to unload freight and baggage, for this would positively be our last steamer. Outside the boys worked as industriously as we women. In the old log-house, a hundred feet from our door, was the building now used for a woodshed. Here, upon a big "double-decker" saw-buck, two of the boys, with the big saw between them, worked away, hour after hour, at the great logs of driftwood brought from the beach, as this was the only kind of fuel here used, and much was needed for the winter fires.

When I had finished my work of sewing, and it grew too dark to thread needles, between that hour and the one for the lamp lighting, I was usually seated at the organ, and our music was not all Hymns from the Hymnals, certainly. There were marches and polkas, and sprightly waltzes, too, and nothing was ever tabooed, though these classic selections were always omitted on Sunday. None ever minded how long I sat at the organ, or how many times a day a certain piece was played, and a few could never be sated; but I took good care that my work never lagged, and a duty was never neglected for such pleasure, thereby making it always the recreation and enjoyable exercise it was intended to be and not tiresome.

Miss J. now took a lesson on the instrument each day for a half hour after the lamps were lighted, and as

she had already had a few lessons, and could play a few hymns, she was much interested in acquiring a further knowledge which would be helpful in church and Sunday school services. Miss E., too, thought of beginning lessons if she could find time from her manifold duties as house-mother of the numerous flock, and did take a few lessons before they moved away.

In the evening there was always singing, for some were sure to be present then, who had been absent during the day. Perhaps Mr. H. had arrived with a Christian native from the Home, to spend the night before going back on the morrow, with supplies of some sort for the completion of his new house. He now headed the two establishments and vibrated between them, simply camping at the new place and enjoying everything of home life possible in the Mission. At jokes and repartee he was as good as the best of them, and always enjoyed a laugh like the youngest.

A level head and firm hand had this Swedish missionary of long experience. From a dozen or more years at Yakutat, in southern Alaska, where he had done invaluable work for that Mission, he had come about two years before to Golovin Bay, and now had, besides the Eskimo children in that place, over four hundred government reindeer in charge. For these he kept a number of experienced and trusty native drivers, and these either lived in his Mission or with their families near at hand, as a few of them now were married.

This herd of animals was kept upon the hills where the reindeer moss grew in plenty, for they could not, and would not, eat anything else if they literally

starved to death, and they were now five miles away. To remove this great family of a score and more with their belongings over the ice, a distance of twelve miles in winter by dog-team, getting settled in a large frame building, unplastered, and upon a bleak, unprotected shore, was an undertaking which would have discouraged most men; especially as a shipload of needed supplies for their new Home, including furniture, had been lost at sea, leaving them short of many such necessities. But this was not all. The whole reindeer herd and their drivers, with their several families, were also to be moved near the new Home, and to fresh moss pastures.

Near the Home was a good-sized creek of fresh and pure water, which ran singing along through the hills to the ocean, and for this reason the site had been selected and built upon.

CHAPTER XV.

WINTER IN THE MISSION.



HE first few garments I made for Little Bessie were not a great success. I had told Miss E. that I would be delighted to assist her in any way that I could, never dreaming what would come; and she being more in need of warm clothing for the children than anything else, with rolls of uncut flannels, and baskets piled high with materials to be made into underwear, said immediately that I might help with their sewing.

She then brought a piece of Canton flannel, and the shears, and put them into my hands, saying that I might make two pairs of night-trowsers for the baby. My heart sank within me in a moment. I made a desperate effort to collect myself, however, and quietly asked if she had a pattern. No, she had none. The child, she said, kicked the cover off her in the night so often, and the weather was growing so cold, that she and Miss J. thought a garment of the trouser description, taking in the feet at the same time, would very well answer her needs, and this I was requested to originate, pattern and all. Whatever should I do? I could more easily have climbed Mt. McKinley! If she had told me to concoct a new pudding, write an essay, or make a trip to Kotzebue, I should not have been so much dismayed; but to make a garment like that, out of "whole cloth," so to speak, from my own design—that was really an utter

impossibility.

"O, well," she said, "I am sure you can do this well enough. It is not such a very particular job; just make something in which to keep the child warm nights, you know. That is all I care for," kindly added she, as she closed the door behind her and went back to the kitchen.

Finally I appealed to Alma. She was busy. She had never cut out anything of the sort, neither had Ricka nor Miss L., but I being a married woman was supposed to have a superior knowledge of all such things. I admitted that I might have a theory on the subject, but a "working hypothesis," alas, I had none.

Still I hung around Alma, who was an expert dressmaker of years' standing in San Francisco.

"No, I can't cut them out, really; but why don't you make a pattern from some garment on hand?"

Here was an idea. Something to build upon.

"But there are the feet, and the waist?" I said still anxiously.

"O, build them on to your pattern," she said carelessly; as if anyone with half an eye and one hand could do that sort of building, and she left the room for more important matters.

There was nothing else for me to do. I secured a suit of the baby's clothing throughout, and, taking the cloth, the shears, and an old newspaper, I went upstairs to Miss J.'s room and closed the door. I wanted to be alone. I longed to have my dear old mother there for just one short hour, for in that time I felt certain she would have cut out these as well as

other garments, enough to keep us for weeks sewing, as her own babies had kept her at one time.

However, there was no help for me, and I went to work. For an hour I cut and whittled on that old newspaper, along with a number of others, before I got a pattern that I fancied might do. Then I submitted it to Miss J. herself, who told me to go ahead and cut it out. It appeared all right, so far as she could see. Then I cut, and basted, and tried the garment on Bessie. It was too wide across the chest, too short in the legs, and the feet were monstrosities. What was to be done, I asked of the others?

"Make new feet, and sew them on around the ankle," said Miss J., thoughtfully, surveying her little charge from all sides, as the child stood first on one foot, then on the other, "then you can lengthen the legs a little if you want to," careful not to offend by criticising abruptly, but still feeling that the height of the gearing should be increased.

"Dear me, that's easy enough," suggested Alma, "just put a wide box plait down the front, like that in a shirtwaist, and it will be all right."

"The back can be taken out in the placket," and Ricka folded and lapped the cloth on the little child's shoulders, and then we called Miss E. from the kitchen. After making a few suggestions in a very conservative way, as if they did not come readily because the garment was just about right; she left the room hastily, saying her bread would burn in the oven; and I thought I heard her giggling with Miss L. in Swedish until she ran away out into the woodshed, ostensibly for an armful of wood; though if her bread were already burning I wondered what she wanted of more fire.

I did not blame her; I laughed too. The little child looked exceedingly funny as she stood there in that wonderful garment, with black eyes shining like beads, and face perfectly unsmiling, as she nearly always looks, wondering why it was we were laughing.

October twenty-fourth the boys worked all day at making the house more comfortable for winter, nailing tar paper upon the north side, where some clapboards were missing, putting on storm or double windows outside of the others, and filling the cracks with putty. A couple of the boys also worked at hauling supplies of apples and potatoes from the warehouse by dog-team, putting the eatables into the cellar under the kitchen, which was well packed in with hay. This cellar was a rude one, and in summer frequently filled with water from the surface and the hill above the house, making it not altogether wholesome at times, but by management, it was still being used for some things, and of course, in cold weather, it made no difference, for everything was solidly frozen.

Snow enough had fallen by this time, a little coming quietly down every few hours, to make fair roads for the sleds, the ground being quite hard; while Fish River and adjoining creeks were fast freezing over, as were also the waters of the bay.

In the evening Mr. H. came in, and we all gathered in the sitting room, some sewing, some mending, but all chatting pleasantly. The missionary had just been informed, he told us, of a gold strike on the Kuskokquim River, some one having only recently returned from St. Michael, and brought the report. From that place men were leaving for the new

diggings each day, and it might or might not prove a bona fide strike. With reindeer, on a good winter trail, this distance would not be a formidable trip, Mr. H. told us.

This was the information we wanted to hear, and it probably started a train of golden dreams that night in more than one head, which was long in stopping, especially when he informed us that every acre of land around us was then staked out in quartz claims, though no extensive prospecting had yet been done, and we were pleased at finding ourselves "so near" even though we were "yet so far."

Today was a birthday for Mr. G., and he was teased unmercifully for his age, but would not give it, so those who had known him the longest tried their best to figure it out from incidents in his life and from narratives of his own, and made it out to their satisfaction as about thirty-two years, though he refused (like a woman) to the very last, to tell them if they were guessing correctly.

The next day it still snowed a little at intervals between clouds and sunshine, and all "tenderfeet" were more comfortable indoors. Miss E. and Ricka had gone the day before with the boys and Mr. H. to the Home on a scow-load of lumber, though we feared it was pretty cold for them without shelter on the water; but with the wind in the right direction, they wanted to attempt it, and so started. They were to look the new building over for the first time, Miss E. being much interested in the inside arrangement of rooms, naturally, as it was to be her home and field of labor, and rightly thinking a womanly suggestion, perhaps, might make the kitchens more handy.

In their absence the rest of us continued our sewing, Miss L. taking Miss E.'s place in the kitchen, with help from the larger Eskimo girls at dish washing. The latter were docile and smiling, and one little girl called Ellen was always exceedingly careful to put each cup and saucer, spoon and dish in its proper place after drying it, showing a commendable systematic instinct, which Miss E. was trying to foster.

Between times, their school not yet being in session, they played about, either up in their rooms if it was too stormy outside, or out of doors if the weather permitted; though, for that matter, they seldom hesitated to do anything they wished on account of the weather, as it was not so cold to the natives as to us. They played with balls, both large and small, and sleds of all descriptions; and if the latter were not to be had, or all in use, a barrel stave or board would be made to answer the same purpose. It was a rush past the window down the hill, first by a pair of muckluked feet, then a barrel stave and a boy, sometimes little Pete, and sometimes John. One barrel stave would hold only one coaster, and there were usually enough for the boys, but if by chance the little girls laid hands upon the sleds before they did, the staves were then their only resource. If a child rolled, by accident, upon the ground, it never seemed to matter, for in furs he was well protected. The snow was soft, and he, being as much at home there as anywhere, seemed rather to like it.

If he was seen to fall, it was the signal for some other to roll and tumble him, keeping him under as long as possible, and it was a frequent sight to see three or four small boys tumbling about like kittens, locked in each other's arms, and all kicking and shouting good-

naturedly. Snowballing, too, was their delight, and their balls were not always velvety, either, as the one stopping its course could affirm.

These children did little quarreling. I cannot remember seeing Eskimo boys angry or fighting, a thing quite noticeable among them, for nowhere in the world, perhaps, could the same number of white children be found living so quietly and harmoniously together as did these twelve little dark-faced Eskimos in the Mission.

Our days were now growing much shorter, and it was necessary to light the lamps at four o'clock in the afternoon, the sun having set some time before. The sunset skies were lovely in bright and tender colors, reflecting themselves as they did in the water of the bay, and tinting delicately all surrounding hilltops. What a beautiful sight it was, and how sadly we remembered that very soon the water would have disappeared under the solid ice, there to remain for long months imprisoned. Little did we then know that the heavenly beauty of the Arctic sky is never lacking, but close upon the departure of one season, another, no less beautiful, takes its place.

Diary of October twenty-sixth: Alma and I called today upon two neighbors in the old schoolhouse next the church, by name Dr. H. and wife. They claim to have come from Dawson not very long ago, being shipwrecked on the way, and losing their outfit. She seems a chatty, pleasant little body, and inclined to make the best of everything, her hard lot included, and she is baking and selling bread to the miners. She is a brave little woman, and could teach many a pampered and helpless one lessons of great usefulness and patience. Miss L. is ill with quincy

and suffering very much, so Alma makes the bread.

I have just made four large aprons for Miss J., cutting them out and making them, and they look really well, so I am quite proud of myself, especially as Ricka has "set up" my knitting on needles for me, and I am going to make some hose. I usually knit evenings, between times at the organ, for my new yarn received from San Francisco is very nice, and will make warm winter stockings.

Saturday, October twenty-seventh: We have four inches of snow on the ground, and more coming. Miss L. is quite ill with her throat, and did not get up today. Alma, too, is very pouty, with a swollen, pudgy face, and feels badly. They both say they think they took cold coming from Nome on the "Elk," and I don't doubt it, for I would have done so myself only for my great caution in taking care of my newly shingled head and in applying a thorough dose of fur muckluks to my feet, but, thanks to them, I am the most "chipper" one at present.

Miss J. had Dr. H. examine Bessie today, and he says she has bronchitis, but told the teacher what to do for her.

The two girls came back from the Home with Mr. H. and Mr. L. about four o'clock after we had begun to be worried about them. They were hungry, and Alma and I got dinner for them, when Mr. H. started back immediately in a small boat alone, after it had begun to grow dark. We begged him not to attempt it, but he insisted on going, as he must be there tomorrow to push the work on the building, and the ice is floating, so he fears it will freeze the bay over. The sun shone out beautifully for three or four hours, and it is just one week today since we landed in Golovin,

a most pleasant week to us all (pattern making not included).

Later.—I helped with the housework and made two more aprons for Miss J. There is nothing like feeling of some use in the world, is there?

Sunday, October twenty-eight: A clear, bright morning, growing cloudy about noon, and dark at four in the afternoon, when lamps were lighted. We had a long, restful day indoors, both Miss E. and Ricka being very lame from their long walk of fifteen miles over the stony beach and tundra covered hills from the Home, Mr. H.'s boat being too small for four persons. By water the distance is called a dozen miles, but by land and on foot it is much farther, as the girls have found by sad experience; and they were very glad it was Sunday, and they could rest. Miss E. said laughingly that we would play we were at home in the States again, and so she spread the breakfast table daintily in the sitting-room, with white cover, pretty embroidered centre-piece, and snowy napkins, bringing real comfort to our hearts, accustomed as we had been for so many months to bare necessities and none of the luxuries. A fashionable breakfast hour for Sunday in the States was also affected in order to make the plan complete, and because the mornings, growing darker as they are continually doing, nobody felt in haste to leave their beds. Of course every one wore his Sunday clothes and I put on my very best waist of olive green satin with a good black skirt, which had a little train, thereby effectively hiding my uncouth feet, still clad as they are in the ungainly muckluks.

The ice is moving in the bay, and we hear that still another steamer may come in, so we can send mail

out to Nome, and write to have in readiness. There have been no church services today, as Mr. H. is away at the Home, but we had music and singing frequently, and Swedish hymns all evening, which I play, but do not understand.

Monday, October twenty-ninth: This has been a bright, sunny morning until a little after noon, when it grew cloudy, as it often does. Miss E. was still very lame from her long tramp of last Saturday, and Ricka and I assisted in the kitchen. Alma has cut out a pretty brown cloth dress for Miss J. and is making it. Miss L.'s throat is better, and she is out of her room again, after a siege of severe suffering with quinsy, which caused a gathering. About nine in the evening Mr. H. came in from the Home, having walked the whole distance, a boat being now unsafe in the floating ice. After drinking some hot coffee, he related to us his adventure of Friday night in the Peterborough canoe. He had left us quite late in the afternoon of that day to go to the Home, and it was already beginning to grow dark. For a while, he said, he found open water, and made good time at the paddle, but presently found himself alongside of and soon after crowded by floating ice.

It was young ice, and he did not have much fear of it. He kept on paddling, but finally found himself entirely surrounded, and manage as he would, he could not free his canoe. A breeze came up from the north, which pushed him along with the ice out toward sea, for he was near the mouth of the bay. There was nothing to do but wait. For an hour he waited.

It was well on towards midnight, and he could see no escape. The missionary, in relating the incident to us,

did not dwell upon this part of his story, but he said he had given himself up for lost, and only prayed and waited. By and by the breeze died away, the ice quietly parted, and drifted away from him, and he paddled safely ashore.

Tuesday, October thirty: A brand new experience today—that of watching the natives and others fish through the ice. Little holes are made in the ice, which is now quite strong in the north end of the bay near the cliff, and the Eskimos sit there patiently for hours, fishing for tom-cod. These are small fish, but quite tasty, one of the principal means of subsistence for the natives, and are also much used by others. No pole is needed on the line except a short one of three or four feet, and when a bite is felt by the fisherman, the line is quickly drawn out, given a sudden twitch, which frees the tom-cod, and he is summarily dispatched with a few raps from the fishing stick kept at hand for the purpose.

Several river boats, including small steamers, are laid up under the cliff for the winter, dismantled of loose gear and light machinery, and I did get a few views which should prove of some value. The weather was good all day, the sun setting at three in the afternoon, and it being nearly dark an hour later. Mr. H. dressed himself from top to toe in furs, hitched three dogs to a sled, took a lunch for himself, a few supplies of eatables for the Home camp to which he was going, and started out, on a longer, but we trusted a less venturesome and dangerous route than by Peterborough canoe. Our evening was pleasantly, and at the same time more or less profitably spent by our party in the sitting-room, Alma sewing on Miss J.'s new dress, Ricka and I knitting, and the others either mending or busying themselves at something.

This something frequently covers a good deal of ground, for with one or two of the boys it means pranks or roguishness of some sort, which really enlivens the whole household and keeps our risibles from growing rusty by disuse.

Wednesday, October thirty-one: I find no difficulty in running the sewing machine here, which is a new and good one, and I like to use it very well. Just how they could get along without it is more than I can tell, with so much sewing to do for each of the children, not to mention the others who are waiting to come into the Mission at the earliest possible moment. During the day Mr. L. busied himself usefully in several ways as he always does, and finally mended Miss J.'s guitar. After supper we counted ourselves and found six women and a lot of children, but he was the only man in the establishment, the others being at the Home, and we hazed him considerably, all of which was taken most good-naturedly. The bay is freezing more and more each day, with an increasing depth of snow upon the ground.

A very unpleasant day as to weather was Friday, November second. Snow, high tide, and wind from the south, which blew the water further yet upon the beach; but we sewed all day, though I did not get much accomplished. I gave Miss E. her first lesson on the organ today. Alma is making herself a new dress skirt, as she has Miss J.'s wool dress nearly finished, and it looks exceedingly well, fitting, as some one remarks, "like the paper on the wall." Alma likes dressmaking, and does it well, but draws the line at baby clothes.

Each day Miss J., the teacher, is now holding a little

prayer meeting in the kitchen for the natives. When the supper is cleared away, one of the boys goes out and rings the bell, which is only a big, iron triangle hung under three posts in the ground. A piece of iron is picked up and put through the triangle, hitting it on both sides, and making a ringing, vibrating sound which calls in the natives, who come immediately, just as they are, and range themselves on the benches along the walls. Those who can sing sit at the long table upon which are the lamps and English song books, those used being principally Gospel songs. One of the grown boys called Ivan is a very fair singer, and loves music of all kinds. He is the interpreter for all meetings, understanding English and speaking it quite well. None of the Eskimos are taught Swedish—nothing but English.

Miss J. reads a song which she wishes them to learn, and Ivan interprets it into Eskimo, verse by verse, afterwards singing it. Tunes are learned more quickly than words, but they get the meaning from Ivan. Then Miss J. reads the Scripture, Ivan interpreting verse by verse. She next offers prayer in English, and calls upon some older native Christian to pray in his language, after which they sing several songs with which they are familiar. Having selected beforehand some passage from the Bible, she reads and expounds that, being interpreted by Ivan; there is a short benediction and the meeting is over. They seem to like very well to come, and are never eager to go, but say little, not being great talkers, even in their own tongue.

When the last Eskimo has departed, and the children are settled in bed, the cozy hour of the day has arrived. For a good, old-fashioned tale of love, fright and adventure, there is no time like a winter's night,

when the wind shrieks down the chimney and whirling snow cuddles into corners and crannies. When supper is over, and the kitchen is well cleared, the women of the house may take their yarn and bright needles, while the men toast their feet at the fire and spin—other yarns, without needles, which are, perhaps, not so essential, but far more entertaining to listeners.

This is what we did that winter at Chinik, the home of the Eskimo, in that far away spot near the Arctic Sea. There were tales of the Norsemen and Vikings, told by their hardy descendants sitting beside us, as well as the stories of Ituk and Moses, the aged, called "Uncle," Punni Churah, big Koki, and "Lowri."

To the verity of the following narrative all these and many others can willingly vouch.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RETIRED SEA CAPTAIN.



ANY years ago, close under the shadow of old Plymouth Rock, there was born one day a fair-skinned, blue-eyed baby. Whether from heredity, or environment, or both, the reason of his spirit will perhaps never plainly appear, but as the child grew into manhood he seemed filled with the same adventurous aspirations which had actuated his forefathers, causing them to leave their homes in old England, and come to foreign shores. Scarcely had he passed into his teens before he was devouring tales of pirates, and kindred old sea yarns, and his heart was fired with ambition to own a vessel and sail the high seas. Not that he thirsted for a pirate's life, but a seafaring man's adventures he longed for and decided he must have.

Under these conditions a close application at his desk in the village school was an unheard-of consequence; and, having repeatedly smarted under the schoolmaster's ferule, not to mention his good mother's switches plucked from the big lilac bush by her door, he decided to run away to the great harbor, and ship upon some vessel bound for a foreign land.

This he did. Then followed the usual hard, rough life of a boy among sailors in distant ports; the knotted rope's end, the lip blackening language and curses, storms, shipwrecks and misfortunes; all followed as a part of the life so hastily chosen by the adventurous young lad, until he acquired familiarity with all that appertained thereto, and he was a man.

Years passed. To say that fortune never came to him would not be true, because she is always a fickle dame, and cannot change her character for sailor men. So it came about that he finally stood on the captain's bridge of different sorts of craft, and gave

orders to those beneath him.

And a typical sea captain was he. Gruff when occasion required, rollicking as any when it pleased him, he was generous to a fault, and a man of naturally good impulses. If he drank, he was never tipsy; if he swore, he always had reason; and thus he excused himself when he thought of his good old mother's early Bible teaching.

From Montevideo to Canton, from Gibraltar to San Francisco, from Cape of Good Hope to the Arctic Ocean; thus ran his itinerary year after year. Crossing Behring Strait from Siberia in the summer of 18—, he landed, with his little crew, at Cape Prince of Wales, for the purpose of trading with the natives. The furs of the animals of this region were found to be exceptionally fine, thick and glossy, and the Eskimos easily parted with them. For flour, tobacco and woolen cloth they willingly gave their furs to the sailors, who looked admiringly upon the skins of the polar bear, sea otter, beaver, silver, black and white fox, as well as those of many other animals. These furs were sold in San Francisco, and other trips were made to the Arctic Northwest.

Along the south coast of the Seward Peninsula there are few bays or natural harbors. Golovin Bay is one of them. Here for many years the Eskimos have subsisted upon the fine fish and game. The flesh and oils of the white whale, seal and walrus being principally sought for, the natives came to this bay from all directions.

After many years of wandering, and when the ambitions of the captain for a seafaring life had been satisfied, an incident occurred which changed the current of his life and decided him to settle

permanently at Golovin Bay.

During his visits on the peninsula his attention had been directed to a bright and intelligent young Eskimo woman, lithe and lively, a good swimmer, trapper and hunter. Like a typical Indian, she had a clear, keen eye, steady nerves and common sense. She was a good gunner and seldom missed her mark. She was fearless on land or sea, loved her free out-door life, and was a true child of nature. Her name was Mollie.

One day in the early springtime, nearly a dozen years ago, when the winter's ice was still imprisoned in the bays and sounds of Behring Sea, though the warm sun had for weeks been shining and already seams appeared upon the ice in many places, the captain attempted the trip by dog-team from St. Michael to Golovin Bay. With him were four trusty natives, and three dog-teams, the animals being of the hardy Eskimo breed, and well-nigh impervious to cold, their long, thick hair making an effective protection.

His men were experienced, knowing the country perfectly, including a knowledge of winter trails and methods of traveling such as all Eskimos possess, and though the weather was not just what the captain might have wished, he decided to make the start, and left St. Michael in good shape for the long trip. The strong sleds with high-back handle bar and railed sides were firmly packed with freight, which was securely lashed down. The dogs were driven in pairs, eleven to a sled, the eleventh being in each case a fine leader and called such, besides having his own Eskimo name, as did also the four men who were warmly dressed in furs from head to foot. These natives were familiar with little English, but as the

captain had made himself acquainted with their language they had no difficulty in making each other understood.

Early in the evening of that day they reached the Mission station of Unalaklik, on the mainland, about fifty miles northeast of the island, where they spent the night. In this settlement were white traders, as well as missionaries and numbers of Eskimos, it being an old port of considerable importance.

In the cold grey morning light Punni Churah and the men called to the malemutes, patting their furry heads and talking kindly to them, for many a weary, long mile of snow trail stretched northward for them that day before they could rest and eat. Only at night, when their day's work was done, were these faithful creatures ever fed on seal, fish, whale, or walrus meat, for otherwise they would be drowsy, and not willing to travel; so they were called early from their snow beds in a drift or hollow, where they liked best to sleep, and made ready for the start.

Dressed in their squirrel skin parkies, with wide-bordered hoods upon their heads, reindeer muckluks on their feet and mittens of skin upon their hands, stood Ah Chugor Ruk, Ung Kah Ah Ruk, Iamkiluk and Punni Churah, long lashed whips in hand, and waiting.

On one of the sleds, dressed and enveloped in furs, sat the captain, before giving the order to start. At the word from him, the dogs sprang to their collars, the little bells jingled, and away they all dashed. Team after team, over the well-trodden trail they went, keeping up a continuous and sprightly trot for hours, while behind at the handle bars ran the natives, and rocks, hills and mountains were passed

all unnoticed.

That night another Eskimo village was reached, and sixty miles of snow trail were left behind. Shaktolik lay on the shore southeast of a portage which would have to be made over a small point of land jutting out into Norton Bay.

During the night a storm came up which would necessarily much impede their progress, being called in the western world a "blizzard." This storm fiend, once met, is never forgotten. None but the man in the Arctic has seen him. None know so well how to elude him. Like a Peele, or a "tremblor" this Arctic king gathers his forces, more mighty than armies in battle, and sweeps all opponents before him. To resist means death. To crouch, cower or bow down to this implacable lord of the polar world is the only way to evade his wrath when he rides abroad, and woe to the man who thinks otherwise.

Not long had the wind and snow been blowing when the little train prepared to move. Ahead they could see the sled tracks of other "mushers" (travelers by dog-team), and the captain concluded to hurry along, notwithstanding that Ah Chugor Ruk shook his head, and spat tobacco juice upon the ground, and Ung Kah Ah Ruk demurred stoutly in few words. Punni Churah thought as the rest, but would go ahead if the captain so ordered, and they headed northwest for the portage.

On the dogs trotted for hours. The snow and sleet were blinding, the wind had risen to a gale. The dogs traveled less rapidly now, and their faces were covered with frost, the moisture freezing as they breathed.

By this time the natives wanted to camp where they were, or head about northeast for another Eskimo village called Ungaliktulik, which would make the journey longer by twenty-five miles, but the captain decided to keep on as they were going.

By the middle of the afternoon the gale had increased to fury, causing the thermometer to fall with great rapidity, while the snow was blinding. The dogs were curling up in the wind like leaves before a blaze.

Ah Chugor Ruk was ahead with his team. His leader suddenly halted.

"Muk-a-muk!" cried the Eskimo.

"Muk!" echoed Punni Churah, running up alongside to look, and then back to the captain's sled, where he shouted something loudly in order to be heard above the storm.

An ice crack crossed their trail. There was no help for it. There it lay, dark and cold—the dreaded water.

In the blinding blizzard they could not see the width of the chasm. It was too wide for them to bridge; it was death to remain where they were—they must turn back, and they did so. The wind was not now in their faces as before, which made traveling some easier, but they had not gone far when: "Muk-a-muk!" from Punni this time, who was ahead.

Again the dogs stopped. Again Punni Churah came back, and reported.

They were adrift on a cake of ice. Wind from the northeast was blowing a hurricane, carrying them on

their ice cake directly out to sea; but the snow was drifting in hummocks, and in one of them the natives began digging a hole for a hut. When this was of sufficient size, they pitched a sled cover of canvas over it, made the sleighs fast outside, and crawled underneath. Once inside their temporary igloo, they made a fire of white drilling and bacon, taken from the sled loads of merchandise; melted snow for water, and boiled coffee, being nearly famished. Then for hours they all slept heavily, the dogs being huddled together in the snow, as is their habit, but the blizzard raged frightfully, and drove the dogs nearer the men in the hut.

Crawling upon the canvas for more warmth, the poor, freezing creatures, struggling for shelter, with the weight of their bodies caused the hut to collapse, and all fell, in one writhing heap, upon the heads of the unfortunates below. Howling, barking, struggling to free themselves from the tangle, the pack of brutes added torment to the lot of the men; but the storm raged with such terrific force that all lay as they fell, until morning, under the snow.

None now disputed the storm king's sway. All were laid low before him. With the united fury of fiends of Hades, he laughed in demoniacal glee at the desperation of the Arctic travelers under his heel. The whole world was now his. Far from the icy and unknown wastes of the interior, around the great Circle and Rockies, riding above the heads of rivers and mountains, he came from the Koyuk and Koyukuk. Like a child at play, as if weary of so long holding them in his cold embrace, he drove the massive ice floes out into ocean, only, perhaps, in childish fitfulness, to bring them back directly, by gales quite contrary.

When morning dawned, the captain and his men crawled out of the crushed snow hut, and, with hard work, made a new cave in the snow drift, burying the sleighs in the old one. The dogs were starving, and, to appease their appetites, were purloining bacon from the sled's stores; but Providence, for once, was kind to them, and a large, fat seal of several hundred pounds weight was shot that day on the edge of the ice cake upon which they were camped, and this gave them food and fuel. Dogs and natives were then well fed on the fresh seal meat and blubber, their natural and favorite viands. From tin dishes upon the sleds, the natives made little stoves, or lamps, using drilling for wicks, seal oil for fuel, and their coffee was made. Among the stores on the sleds were canned goods, beans, sausages, flour and other things, and on these the captain subsisted.

Day after day passed. The storm gradually died away, and the sun came out. Then watches were set to keep a lookout, and the captain took his turn with his men. Walking about in the cold morning air, he could see the mainland to the northwest, many miles away, and his heart sank within him. Would he ever put his foot upon that shore again? How long could they live on the ice cake if they floated far out in the Behring Sea? To him the outlook was growing darker each day, though the natives seemed not to be troubled.

Nearly two weeks passed. One night the captain was awakened by a hand on his shoulder. It was Ung Kah Ah Ruk. The wind, he said, was blowing steadily from the southwest, and if it continued they might be able to reach the shore ice and the mainland. Anxiously together then they watched and waited for long, weary hours, getting the sleds loaded, and in

readiness for a start; then, with bitterest disappointment, they found the wind again changed to the southwest, which would carry them out to sea as before.

What were they to do? This might be their best and only chance to escape. The shore ice lay near them, but, as yet, beyond their reach. This treacherous wind might continue for days and even weeks. From experience they knew that the wind blew where he listed, regardless of the forlorn creatures under him, and with the thermometer at forty degrees below zero, as it was, swimming was out of the question. The crack appeared a dozen or so feet in width, and escape was only possible by reaching the other side.

Their strait was a desperate one. The captain decided to make the leap. Removing his furs, he rolled them tightly, and threw them across the chasm. It was now a positive dash for life, as without his furs he would soon perish with the cold.

He made the run and leaped. At that instant one of the natives, from intense interest, or from a desire to assist, gave a loud Eskimo whoop, which startled the captain, and he missed his footing, falling forward upon the ice, but with his lower limbs in the water.

The natives now bestirred themselves and threw to the captain a large hunting knife and rifle, attached to their long sled lashings. With a good deal of exertion, the captain crawled upon the ice, and with the knife he chopped a hole, and inserted the rifle barrel, fastening the lashings to it and holding it firmly in place. The natives then pulled with united strength on the line, bringing the ice cake slowly up toward the captain until within a few feet of the shore ice, when, using a sled for a bridge, they and

the dogs crossed safely over, without so much as wetting their feet. To all, this was a matter for great rejoicing, and no regretful farewells were given to the ice floe which had been their prison house so long. They were not yet out of danger, however, for the shore ice upon which they stood might, in the gale, at any moment be loosened and carry them, like the other, out into the ocean. So with all haste possible, they proceeded to get away. Punni Churah brought the captain's fur sleeping bag and robes, in which he was stowed away in one of the sleds, though his wet clothing was now frozen. There was no time nor place to make a change, with the thermometer nearly forty degrees below zero.

Hours afterward they reached the mainland. How good once more to step foot on terra firma! The dogs barked, and the natives hallooed cheerfully to each other, for they were now going home. A deserted native village was soon entered, an igloo in passable condition taken possession of, and the dogs tied up for the night.

The natives now worked rapidly and cheerfully, two putting up their camp stove, another bringing snow for water with which to make the coffee, and Punni Churah looking after the captain, who tried to remove his clothing, but to no purpose. Muckluks and trousers were frozen together, and as fast as the ice melted sufficiently they were cut away. Contrary to his expectations, he was not severely frozen, a white patch, the size of his hand, appearing upon each limb above the knee. With these they did the best they could, and dry clothing from the sleds was put on.

Their supper that night was a feast of rejoicing. They

were now on the home trail, and would soon be among friends. One more day of travel and their long, hazardous, and eventful trip of two hundred miles over an Arctic waste would be successfully accomplished. As they rolled themselves in their furs at midnight for a few hours of needed rest and sleep, they could almost fancy themselves at home again and happy. The dogs huddled in the snow outside, now and then barking in their usual way, but the tired men in the igloo did not hear them, for their sleep was oblivion, after the strain of the last two weeks.

Next morning, after traveling for several hours, a halt was made, and a lunch was taken in an Eskimo camp; but the captain, by this time, was suffering from exposure and frosted limbs, the trail was bad, and he concluded to hurry on ahead of the teams. The way was familiar, and only one low mountain, called the Portage, was to be crossed. It was early in the day, and his teams would follow immediately; so on his snowshoes the captain hastened toward home.

God help the man who travels alone in the Arctic in winter! Little matters it if the sun shines brightly at starting, and the sky appears clear as a summer pool. In one short hour the aspect of all may be changed, heavens overcast, snow flying, and wind rapidly driving. Under the gathering darkness and whirling snowflakes the narrow trail is soon obscured, or entirely obliterated, the icy wind congeals the traveler's breath and courage simultaneously, he becomes confused and goes round and round in a circle, until, benumbed by the frost, he sinks down to die. This was what now happened to the captain.

Another storm was upon him when he reached the

hill portage, and as he expected his natives momentarily, and beyond this point the trail was good, so that he could ride behind the dogs, he waited until they should come up to him. Hour after hour he waited. Night came on, and the blizzard increased in severity. Hungry, cold and already frost-bitten, he must spend the night on the mountain alone. Still he listened for the bells on the malemutes, and the calls of his Eskimo drivers.

They did not come. Nothing but snow, and the shriek of that storm king whose rage he had so recently encountered while drifting to sea on the ice floe, and from whom only cruelty was ever expected, now whistled in his ears.

He knew he must keep on walking, so removing his snowshoes he stuck one in the snow drift and fastened a seal rope at the top. Taking the end of this in his hand, he circled round and round for hours to keep himself moving. At last he grew weary, and closed his eyes, still walking as before. It was more pleasant to keep his eyes closed, for then he saw visions of bright, warm rooms, blazing fires and cozy couches, and smelled the odors of appetizing foods. There were flowers, sweet music and children, and he was again in far-off sunny lands.

He grew drowsy. He would only rest a little in a soft white drift, and then go on again. Making a place in the bank with the snowshoe, while the wind whistled horribly and the whirling snow bewildered him, he lay down to——

Some men, one night, drove their dog-teams into Chinik. They had come from St. Michael, two hundred miles over the trail. They said the captain and his party left there many days before them, and

by this they were surely dead, unless drifted out to sea, which really meant the same thing, as no man could live upon the ice during the recent great blizzard. An Eskimo woman heard what they said. She was a cousin to Punni Churah, but she said nothing.

An hour later, the woman and two men with dogs and sleds left Chinik for the Portage, going east. It was storming, but it was not dark, and they knew each foot of the way. At first, on the level, the woman rode in one of the sleds, but when it grew hilly, she trudged behind. Her sharp eyes now keenly searched every dark or obscure spot along the hillside trail. The wind lessened somewhat, and the moon came out behind the clouds.

The dogs finally stopped, throwing back their heads and howling; then, in more excitement, gave the short, quick bark of the chase.

The natives began poking about with sticks in the drifts, and Mollie (for it was she) soon found the unconscious man in the snow.

Quick work then they made of the return trip. They were only a few miles from home now, and the malemutes seemed to comprehend. Every nerve in their bodies tingled. Every tiny bell on their harnesses jingled, and the fleet-footed natives sped rapidly behind. The dogs needed no guidance, for they were going home, and well knew it. The voice of big Ituk, as he gave out his Eskimo calls, the sleigh-bells, and the creak of the sled runners over the frosty snow, were the only sounds heard on the clear morning air.

The life of the captain was saved.

The sequel of his story is not long. With the best care known to a native woman, brought up near and inside a Mission station, the captain was tended and brought back to life, though weeks passed before he was well. In fact, he was never strong again, and, needing a life-long nurse, decided, with Mollie's consent, to take her for his wife, and so the missionary married them. Then they settled permanently at Golovin Bay, where a trading post was already established, and where they are living happily to this day.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE LONG DAYS PASSED.



ON Saturday, November third, began a great sewing of fur caps, children's clothes, and also garments for the teacher. For the caps, a pattern had to be made before beginning, but Alma and not I did it. About four in the afternoon Mr. H., Mr. G. and Mr. B. came in from the Home, having worked all day at

collecting driftwood as they came along, piling it upon end so it will not be buried in the snow, for that is the only fuel we will have this winter, and it must be gathered and hauled by the boys.

While in the sitting room after supper three gentlemen and the wife of one of them called to spend the evening from the A. E. Company's establishment. One was the manager and head of the company's store here, another was his clerk, and the man and his wife were neighbors.

We soon found out that the young clerk had been up the Koyuk River prospecting, and wanted to go again. The boys want to go there themselves, and we gathered considerable information from our callers regarding the country, manner of getting there, the best route, etc., and spent a pleasant evening, as they seemed also to do.

Sunday, November fourth, was marked as the first time of holding church service in the schoolhouse since our arrival, and a good number were present. Twenty-two Eskimos and ten white people made a cozy little audience for Mr. H. and his interpreter, Ivan. I played the organ, and they all sang from Gospel songs. For some reason a lump would come up in my throat when I played the old home songs that I had so many times played under widely differing circumstances, thousands of miles away; but under the current of sadness there was one also of thanksgiving for protection and guidance all the way.

It was a motley crowd listening to the preacher that day, from various and widely separated countries, Sweden, Norway, Finland, United States, Alaska and possibly some others, were represented at this

service as well as at the one of the evening held in the Mission House which needed no extra lights nor warming. A few more natives came in at this time, and Mollie, the captain's wife, was there with her mother. Again I played the instrument, while the rest sang. The little sitting-room and hall were crowded, seats having been brought in from the kitchen, and some were standing at the doors. One old Eskimo woman seemed in deep trouble, for she wiped her eyes a great deal, and she, with some others, were very dirty, at least if odors tell stories without lying.

Monday, November fifth: This has been a fine day, and brought with it a new lot of experiences. I took a few kodak views of a dog-team and fur-dressed people in front of the Mission. After supper four neighbors came (the same who called on us the other evening) with their horse to take us out for a moonlight ride, and it proved a very novel one. A big, grey horse, with long legs supporting his great hulk, and carrying him away up above us as we sat on the sled; the conveyance, a home-made "bob" sled upon which had been placed rough boards piled with hay and fur robes for the comfort of passengers, and the harness home-made like the "rig," was ingeniously constructed of odds and ends of old rope of different colors which the men assured us, when interrogated upon the point, were perfectly strong and secure.

In it were knots, loops, twists, and coils, with traces spliced at great length in order to keep us clear of the horse's heels, but which frequently got him entangled, so that he had to be released by the footman (the clerk). When this occurred, the latter, with an Indian war-whoop, leaped off the sledge, flourished and cracked his big "black snake" whip in

air to encourage the animal to run faster, and I, sitting with the driver on the front seat, gripped for dear life the board upon which I sat. No Jehu, I feel sure, ever drove as did our driver tonight, assisted by the whooping footman with his black snake. Through drifts and over the pond, which was frozen, down steep banks to the beach, through snow deep and still deeper, helter-skelter they drove, skurrying, shouting, urging the poor beast on until he was wild of eye, short of breath, weary in limb, and reeking.

Overhead the air was clear as crystal, stars bright, and a perfect full moon shining with brilliant whiteness over all. Only the jingle of the bells upon the horse, the shrieks of our footman and driver, and the laughter of the passengers on the "bob" broke the stillness of the quiet, frosty air, which, in its intense purity and lightness seemed fairly to vibrate with electricity as we breathed.

November sixth: I have spent the day at making a warm winter hood for myself. Finding that Mr. H. had grey squirrel skins, I bought six of him for twenty-five cents apiece, for a lining for hood and mittens. The hood I made pretty large every way, sewing two red fox tails around the face for a border to keep the wind off my face, as is the Eskimo fashion.

During the day G. and B. went out over the beach to collect driftwood for winter, and G. came home finally without his companion. It was thought that B. went on to the Home, as he found himself not so far from that as from the Mission, where he would probably remain all night, and come over next day. Two natives, with as many reindeer and sleds, came for flour and other things, taking Mr. H.'s trunk of

clothing with them for the missionary. The little Eskimos were delighted to see the deer, and ran out to them, petting and talking to them. Then they rattled on among themselves about the animals, inspecting and feeling of their horns, patting their fat sides, calling their names, and showing their pleasure at seeing the pretty creatures in various ways. I did not know which were of most interest, the deer with long, branching antlers, sleek spotted sides and funny heads, or the group of odd little Eskimo children, with their plump dark faces, dressed in furry parkies and boots, tumbling gleefully around in the snow.

Wednesday, November seventh: The weather is beautifully clear and sunny today, with charming sky effects at sunrise and sunset. Red, yellow and crimson lines stretched far along the eastern horizon, cut by vertical ones of lighter tints, until a big golden ball climbed up higher, and by his increased strength warmed the whole snowy landscape. A few hours later, this great yellow ball, looking bright and clear-cut, like copper, sank gently beneath the long banks of purple-red clouds massed in artistic and majestic confusion. Everything, at this time, was enveloped in the cooler, quieter tints of purple and blue, and hills, peaks, and icy bay all lay bathed in exquisite color.

The two Eskimos brought the reindeer back from the Home today, stopped for lunch, and then went on their way to the herd again. Ricka, Alma and Miss J. went out as far as the cliff for a ride on the sleds behind the deer, but I felt safer indoors. Ricka says when the animals dashed over the big bank, out upon the ice near the cliff, she thought her last hour had come. At first the deer trotted steadily along on the trail, but going faster and faster they rushed

headlong through the drifts, dragging the sleds on one runner, and tearing up the snow like a blizzard as they went, until it seemed to the two girls, unused to such riding as they were, that the animals were running away, and they would be certainly killed.

Miss J. was quite used to this kind of traveling, and made no outcry, but Alma and Ricka finally got the natives to stop the deer and let them get off and walk home, saying it might be great fun when one was accustomed to it.

The sleds used by the natives are called reindeer sleds because made especially for use when driving deer. They are close to the ground, and very strongly built, as they could not otherwise stand the wear and tear of such "rapid transit." Side rails are put on, but no high handle-bar at the back, and when a load is placed upon the sled it is lashed securely on with ropes or thongs made of seal or walrus hide; otherwise there would be no load before the journey was completed.

Mr. H. says he has long experience with them, but never feels quite sure that an animal will do what is wanted of him, though when driven by natives who are well used to their tricks and antics, especially if the animals have reached mature age, they make good travelers, and get over the ground very fast. A hundred miles a day is nothing to them if the snow is not too deep and their load reasonable.

Men and dog-teams are coming into camp from Nome each day now, and say that the trails are in first-class condition. We hope for mail soon from Nome. Mr. H. came, bringing with him a Swedish preacher who is wintering here, though not officially connected with the Mission. He is a sweet singer,

liking well to accompany his Swedish songs upon the guitar or organ, for he plays both instruments.

Mr. L. left at six in the morning for the Home, walked there and back, and arrived at six in the evening. He went to ask Mr. H. if he and the others could have reindeer with which to go to Koyuk River on a prospecting trip. He gave his consent and they think of starting next week. They think there may be some good creek up there that would do to stake, and the clerk is going with them.

We have jolly times each evening singing, visiting and knitting. My black stocking grows under my needles a few inches each day, and will be warm and comfortable footwear under my muckluks surely.

November eighth: Some ptarmigan were brought in today, which are the first birds of the kind I have seen, and they are beautiful. They look like snow-white doves, only larger, with silky feathers and lovely wings. They are soon to be cooked, for they are the Arctic winter birds and make good eating. We are all blessed with ravenous appetites.

A man was killed with a club last night in a drunken brawl, in a hotel near by. He only lived a few hours after getting hurt, but it is said that the other killed him in self defense. Both the United States marshal and the commissioner were away at the time. It is a pity they were not at home, for the affair, perhaps, would then have been prevented. There are probably not more than one hundred white persons in the camp altogether, but there must be fully half as many Eskimos, and they are always coming and going. There are several saloons (one kept by a woman), a large hotel and one or two smaller ones, besides two or three company's stores and a few log

cabins and native huts, besides the Mission.

The boys want to get off as soon as possible for Koyuk, but fear they will have to go to Nome for camp stoves and pipe, as there are none to buy here. They brought wood from the beach today on the sleds, and there is no lack of fuel here, nor of strong, willing arms to gather it. It seems a long, long time to wait without hearing from the home folks. I wonder how it seems to them. I only wish they could see how comfortably and happily we are situated, and what jolly times we have, for it would do their hearts good. Few are so favored in all Alaska, of that I am certain.

Saturday, November tenth: I have sewed all day on a canvas coat for Mr. B., Alma helping with the cutting. He wants it to put on over his fur parkie to keep the snow and rain off it, and has himself made the loops and fastenings. He whittled out the buttons from small pieces of wood, twisted cord to loop over them, and put them all firmly on the coat so that it looks well, and will be serviceable. I put a good-sized hood of the same, with a fur border around the face, on the coat, and it will be a good garment to hunt ptarmigan in, for it is the color of snow, and the birds cannot see him.

The visiting preacher has had an experience in being in the water, and from it has contracted rheumatism in one limb, which he is nursing, so he sits by the fire and plays and sings for us while we sew. He is very pleasant, and all seem to like him. The weather is not cold and Miss J. and Mr. H. started out with reindeer for the Home at seven in the morning. It was a singular sight to see them when leaving. All the little natives in fur parkies stood around,

watching. The two sleds were loaded with baggage, and Miss J. sat on the top of one of them, holding the rope that went under the body of the deer and around his Head and horns for a harness. This deer was tied to the back of the sled in front of him, and Mr. H. went ahead having hold of the rope that was fastened to the first deer.

Sunday, November eleventh: We are having a heavy and wet snow storm. All stayed in until three in the afternoon, when we attended church service in the schoolhouse. I played the organ, the Swedish preacher read the Scriptures, and Ivan interpreted. We sang hymns and songs, and the hour was enjoyed by all, though the preacher did not feel quite well enough acquainted with the English to preach in that tongue, and Mr. H. was away. There were about twenty natives present, and ten or twelve white people, Miss E. remaining at home to get the dinner. I went in thought over the great waters to my southern home, where today the churches are decorated with palms and floral beauties, and I saw the friends in their accustomed seats—but I was not there. Thousands of miles away to the frozen north we have come, and little do we know if we shall ever see home again. Tears came to my eyes, but I kept them hidden, for none shall say I am homesick; I am glad to be here. I have faith to believe that the Father's loving watch-care will be still further extended, and I shall reach my homeland and friends some time in the future.

November thirteenth: Weather is warm, wet, and sunny. Water is running in the bay and snow is soft under foot. I worked this afternoon on a mitten pattern for myself, assisted by Alma. Evidently pattern making was intended for others to do, for

though my spirit is as willing as possible, the flesh is very weak in that direction; but I did finally get a mitten, thumb and all, that looks not half bad. This was banner day for my laundry work, and my handkerchiefs have been ironed for the first time since I sailed from San Francisco. Heretofore I was in luck to get a time and place in which to wash them. At half-past four o'clock in the afternoon, when it was too dark to sew longer, Alma, Ricka and I went out upon the beach to meet the boys who had been gathering wood, and we walked a half mile over the rough trail of ice blocks, drifts and hummocks.

We floundered on through all until we saw them coming, and then sat resting on some logs until they came up. Two of Mr. H.'s dogs, Fido and Muckaleta, had followed us, and ran at our heels playing in the snow, which was more than one foot deep in places. The boys had found a long ladder on the beach, probably from some wreck, and they had brought it on the sled with the wood. It was most difficult work hauling the sled over the uneven trail, and all were puffing and perspiring when they reached home.

A little prayer meeting was afterwards held in the kitchen during which Mr. H. and Miss J. came in from the Home with reindeer, tired and hungry. We spent a pleasant evening visiting, singing and knitting.

A man has come from Nome, and says that the steamer bringing Mission supplies from San Francisco was obliged during the last hard storm to throw some of its cargo overboard, and part of the Mission's stores were thus lost. All are sorry to hear this, as it means a shortage of necessary things, like furniture for the Home, where much is needed.

November fourteenth: Miss J. has taken in two more little Eskimos, a girl and a boy. First of all, she cuts their hair close to their heads, then each has a good bath in the tub, and they are dressed in clean clothing from head to foot, and fed plentifully. This was their program, and they look very happy after it, and evidently feel as well and look better. This boy seems to be about ten years old, and the girl a little older, but it is not customary among the Eskimos to keep account of their ages, and so nobody really knows how old any one is.

Alma has cut over a big reindeer skin parkie for the visiting preacher, and a fur sleeping bag for Miss J., while Ricka has made a fine cap for Mr. H. of dog's skin, lined with cloth. This morning when the men went out to the hills where their two reindeer had been tied in the moss, the animals were gone, and Ivan returned fearing that they had been stolen, but when Mr. H., G. and B. went to look, they found no men's footprints, and concluded that they had broken away and gone back to the herd, as their tracks went in that direction. Mr. H. went on after them, and the two boys came home wet with perspiration from floundering about in the deep, soft snow, and wearing their heavy rubber boots. I gave them coffee when they got back.

I have sewed on my new mittens, and done some knitting, besides tending the baby, who runs quickly from one thing to another like any other mischievous child, getting into first one thing, and then some other, which must be coaxed away from her by management. I usually do this by giving her some new plaything, if I can possibly find any article she has never yet had. A box of needles, buttons and thread she likes best of anything I have yet found,

and a grand reckoning day will come before long when Alma finds the little Eskimo has been amusing herself with her property.

Mr. G. found a part of somebody's outfit, consisting of clothing and tin dishes, on the beach today. Miss J. held a little meeting again in the kitchen for the natives after supper, and is very happy over having the two new little Eskimos.

This is our fourth week in the Mission, and pleasant and happy ones they have been, at least, if there have been vexations to some, they have succeeded admirably in keeping them out of sight.

November fifteenth: The weather is still warm, wet and slippery under foot. This morning a young man called from Nome, with a letter from Mary, saying she is coming by dog-team as soon as the trails are good.

The commissioner called today to get the preacher to officiate at the funeral of the man who was killed, but it was postponed until tomorrow, because the grave could not be finished before dark. The commissioner sat for half an hour, and chatted in the sitting room.

November sixteenth: All hands are at work now for the children, and overalls, waists and shirts for the little boys as well as garments for the girls are on the docket. The big boys fished, and got smelt and tom-cod. B. sewed at mittens for himself, and G. took the church organ to pieces to clean and repair it. Mr. M., who has been at work on the Home, has come here to spend the winter. I wish he would set to work and catch some of the mice which infest the house, and run over me when I am asleep in the night time.

A meeting for the natives in the house again tonight, and the doors had to be left open on account of the pungent seal oil perfume from the garments of the Eskimos.

The man who was killed was buried today in the edge of the little graveyard on the hillside. The Swedish preacher was asked to go to the grave, and he did so, reading a Psalm, and offering a prayer. Only four or five men were present. It is a stony, lonely place, without a tree in sight; the few scattering graves having only wooden slabs for head boards. Being just above the beach, the spot commands a view of the bay in front, but it is now all a snow and ice desert, and the most dreary place imaginable. Very little was known of the murdered man, and no good could be said of him, but it is supposed that he has a wife and children somewhere.

What a dreadful ending! Will his family ever know what has become of him, and is his mother still living? If so, I hope they may never learn of his horrid death and worthless life in Alaska. He was never conscious for a moment after being hurt, so they know nothing as to where to write to his relatives. It makes one shudder to think of it! He may have been a good and bright child, beloved by parents and brothers, but the drink curse claimed him for its own.

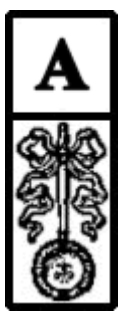
The weather is clear, with sunshine and frost. The visiting preacher has been making himself useful for a few days by helping us in cutting out overalls and blouses for the Eskimo boys. Down on his knees upon the floor, with shears, rolls of denim, and a pair of small trousers to pattern by, he has wielded the little steel instrument to good purpose, and encouraged

and assisted us greatly.

With their new clothes, the children are all quite well pleased, for they are fresh and sweet. The missionaries are trying very hard to teach them cleanliness among other things, and they sometimes come and stand in the doorway and look at us sewing, their faces always good natured, and showing more or less curiosity. When told to run away to play, they obey quickly, and little Pete and the others like to keep the wood boxes filled to help us. The older girls being from ten to twelve years of age, are often caring for and amusing Bessie, and she is fond of them, until, like any other child, she cannot have her own way, and then she disapproves of them by kicking and screaming till Miss J. comes to settle the business.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SWARMING.



RCTIC explorers have always found it a difficult matter to keep pleasantly and profitably employed during the long winter months, and I have often wondered how it would be with ourselves. So far, there seems to be no scarcity of employment for all hands, neither is there any prospect of it. For the men there is always the beach-wood to collect, haul and saw up into firewood, not to mention the splitting with an axe, which is, I believe, as hard work as any of it, and there is water to bring in barrels each day or two from Chinik Creek, a mile away, for drinking and cooking purposes. The barrels are put upon sleds and hauled by the men themselves, or by the dogs if they happen to be here, and are not at work. As to the reindeer, of course there can be no such thing as making them haul either wood or water, for none could be found steady enough, and should the experiment be tried, there are ten chances to one that not a stick of wood would remain upon the sleds, nor a drop of water in the barrels, while the distance between creek and Mission was being made.

Of course there is always enough for women to do if they are housekeeping, and with sewing, knitting and what recreation we take out of doors, we fill in the time very well. It is much better and pleasanter to be employed, and the time passes much more rapidly than when one is idle, and I for one enjoy the change of work and the winter's outlook immensely. Compared to what we have done in Nome during the summer, this is child's play, and the boys who have worked at real mining say the same thing.

November seventeenth: We have had our first lady visitor today who came from White Mountain about fifteen miles away. She is the lady doctor who

brought Miss J. through typhoid fever last fall, and is much at home here. She was sent for by a sick woman in the hotel, and will spend the night with Miss J., who is very kind to her. The visiting preacher left for the Home this morning very early, going with a native and reindeer. Mr. L. and B. were called in to the jury trial of the murderer who killed the man in the hotel the other night, and they got home late. The girls were out upon the ice in the evening for exercise, getting tired of being indoors all day long, and needing fresh air. When all were in at half-past eleven in the evening, coffee and crackers were taken by all but me, but I have had to leave off drinking coffee, taking hot water with cream and sugar instead. B. says he thinks the latter too stimulating.



This has been a bright and cold Sunday for November eighteenth. Mr. H. walked in to nine

o'clock breakfast from the Home, coming by dog-team, and looked well dressed and smiling. No service was held until evening, so we went out for a walk upon the hill behind the house. B. and L. left us to go and examine some wood that natives were hauling away from the beach, thinking it was some of theirs, for each stick is marked, so they know their own; but it proved not to be their wood, and the two then came home another way.

While out, we walked through the small burial ground, and saw the new-made grave of the murdered man. O, how desolate was that spot! A few mounds, stones, snow and bleak winds forever blowing. Here we read a headboard, upon which was the name and age of good old Dr. Bingham of New England, who died here years ago, and whose wife planted wild roses upon the grave. I wonder if we will see them in bloom next summer, or will we be under the snow ourselves like these others.

For our dinner today we ate fried tom-cod, baked potatoes, tomatoes, pickles, bread and butter, and rice pudding. I feel positive that nothing could have tasted better to our home folks in the States who have more fruit and vegetables than did this plain and homely meal to us, eaten with the heartiest appetites gotten out of doors while walking in the snow. The ice in the bay is getting firmer, and will continue to grow thicker all winter, being in the spring at breaking-up time many feet through, no doubt, as it was in Minnesota in the Red River of the North when I lived there. I am glad that I am a cold climate creature, and was born in winter in a wintry state, for I will be sure to endure Alaska weather better than I otherwise would.

This evening we had service again in the church or schoolhouse, and the room was quite filled. The woman doctor was there, also the storekeeper and the United States Marshal, besides our own family, and a good many natives. Mr. H. preached, and was interpreted in Eskimo as usual. I wish some of my fastidious friends on the outside could have seen the cosmopolitan company of tonight.

The refined and serious face of the storekeeper, the black-eyed doctor (woman), the fair-faced Swedes, and the square-jawed, determined official, made a striking contrast to the Eskimos dressed in fur parkies, and smelling of seal oil. Many of the latter continually carry small children on their backs underneath their parkies, a heavy belt or girdle of some sort keeping the youngster from falling to the ground, but the smaller ones are seldom brought out in the evening. These women squat upon the floor as often as they sit upon a chair, and when a baby cries from hunger he is promptly fed on ahmahmuk, (mother's milk,) regardless of the assembled company. With an Eskimo mother nothing comes before the child's wishes, and if the latter only succeeds in making his desires known to her, she will obey them to the letter. That there are unruly Eskimo youngsters, goes without saying, as a child does not need a white skin to help him understand this, and arrange his tactics accordingly.

The Mission is crowded to its utmost, but I believe the hearts of the good missionaries are made of elastic.

When we reached the house after service this evening we heard that a mail was expected, and would leave for Dawson tomorrow, so we set to work

to write letters, and then found it all a mistake, for it is only going to Nome from Unalaklik, and we were all disappointed.

The weather today, November seventeenth, is a great surprise to us. It is raining, and so icy underfoot as to be positively dangerous to life and limb. I had occasion to go out for a while this forenoon, and knew no better than to wear my muckluks, which are smooth as glass on the bottoms. To make things more lively, the wind blew a gale from the northeast.

When I left the house, I was going in the same direction as the wind, and though I nearly fell many times I kept stubbornly on, determined not to be vanquished. On my return—then came the "tug of war." Near the warehouse a gust of wind took me unawares, and, whisk! in a minute I was sprawling flat upon the ice. I had gone out with my Indian blanket over my head and shoulders, and this blew out like a sail, upsetting my tall and slippery footed craft, and bumping me ignominiously.

I now tried to rise, but could not. Turn as I would, using my hands to steady me, I only made a vain effort to get upon my feet, as I slipped each time quite flat again. Thinking to turn first, and get upon my knees, I tried that, but rolled like a fuzzy caterpillar in a ball upon the ice. Then, alas, I regret to relate it, but I really began to feel a little vexed. I began calling loudly, supposing that someone in the house would hear me, and come to my assistance; but the wind carried my voice away faster than I could throw it, and that availed me nothing. At no other time since my arrival at the Mission I felt certain had there been so long a lull between the passing of its inmates through its doors; but now,

because of my present strait, they all remained indoors.

In the meantime I had thrown my hands out suddenly into water which stood in little pools in depressions of the ice around me, and I lay there getting more vexed than ever. Again I tried to rise, but failed. A stranger would suppose me tipsy, to be sure, and I glanced around to make certain no one saw me. Finally the door opened, and Miss L. came out.

"What is the matter?" and she began laughing at my predicament.

"Matter enough!" I shouted. "Can't you see? I can't get up to save my life. Do come and help me," and I began struggling upon my slippery bed again to convince her.

Still she only laughed, standing in the wind with her hands upon her hips in order to keep her balance.

"Do come and help me," I begged, "or go in and send one of the boys, for I shall stay here all day if you do not."

When she had her laugh out, she came forward and assisted me to my feet, and into the house, where I finally smoothed my ruffled feathers, and recovered my equanimity, telling Miss L. I would pay her back in her own coin when I got the opportunity.

A native has come with reindeer to carry a load of goods to the Home, but cannot leave on account of the icy trail until tomorrow, or whenever it freezes again.

Today is November twenty-first, and the weather is

still soft and bad under foot, so the family cannot move to the Home until the trail is in better condition. B. shot more ptarmigan, and we had a dinner of them, which was excellent. They almost seem too pretty to kill, but fresh meat is scarce nowadays, and we must take it when we can get it.

November twenty-second has come, and with it colder weather. It is five degrees below zero, and the sun shines. The doctor from White Mountain has been helping Miss J. pack her large medicine chest ready for moving, as many of these supplies will be left in this house.

Since the days are colder we have most beautiful skies at sunrise, though we now keep the lamps burning until half-past eight in the morning.

We have heard that the Nome mail is in, but it brought nothing to me. We are writing letters to send out the first chance we get, whenever that will be, but nobody knows so far.

The Commissioner called today and told us of a new strike at the headwaters of Fish River; a man and woman coming down to record a bunch of twenty claims having given the information. The woman runs a roadhouse on the Neukluk River, and wants to take an Eskimo boy to raise, and teach to work—probably it is mostly the latter, though she seemed a kindly person. Miss J. told her that she had no boy to give away.

The Marshal and the man in the old schoolhouse started with dogs to Norton Bay today for a short trip, so we hear. The wife of the man went with small Eskimo boys to the bay to fish for tom-cod.

Alma is making a fur sleeping bag of reindeer skins for the teacher, so when she travels she can have it to sleep in nights. It is very heavy to hold and handle while sewing.

Two men called who have been shipwrecked in Norton Bay, and told of the H. family, consisting of the father, mother, and little daughter whom I have seen in Nome. They lost all their clothing, but saved part of their "grub," and we have made up a package of clothing to send to the woman and child by the men who are going back there. In the darkness, one night, they say the schooner "Lady George" went aground on the mud flats of Norton Bay, the tide rising soon after, and all having to flee for their lives to nearby ice, from which they went ashore to a log hut long ago deserted. The child, who is about twelve years old, is now without clothing, and winter is coming on.

The fates are hard on some people, surely, and this little girl lately from San Francisco, the public school, and piano lessons, is left with her parents in an Arctic wilderness in winter without clothing or shelter, except a poor broken hut, and a few men's garments generously donated. The men say that her mother is almost wild over it, and they thought at first that she would go insane, but the brave little child does all she can do to comfort her mother, and the men begged us to send them some things. Among the clothing we sent I put in a few school books, a slate, some pencils, and a Bible, which may be of use in lonely hours. They may read the good book now if they never have before. They are Swedish people.

It is three degrees below zero today, November twenty-fifth, clear, bright and cold. Mr. H. came with

a man and his dog-teams to move the whole family tomorrow to the Home. All are delighted to go there, as we are to remain here. The shipwrecked men called again to tell us more fully about their experiences, and are now going back to their camp. They certainly had an awful time, but they are glad and thankful to have come out alive, and we are also glad for their sakes.

Two of the Commissioners have been here, one from fifty miles away, wanting to buy a reindeer for his Thanksgiving dinner, but Mr. H. would not sell one. He has been very urgent, and called a number of times, but Mr. H. is firm in refusing. Our good dinner today was made up of mutton stew with onions, baked potatoes, tomatoes, fruit soup, bread, butter and coffee. I have taken a few kodak views today of Miss J. and the Eskimo baby, Bessie, and hope they will be good.

November twenty-sixth: It is ten degrees below zero, but the whole household was up early this morning to move over the ice to the new Home. Four big dog sleds were piled high with household things, the baby was tucked into a fur sleeping-bag with only her head out, at which she howled lustily, Miss J. running beside the team to comfort her, while Mr. H., his assistant and Ivan, with Mr. G. of our party, ran ahead of the dogs. Breakfast was eaten at eight o'clock in the morning, and all was hurly burly and excitement till they had gone. Ricka, Alma and I ran out to the beach to see them off upon the ice, as then they would have fair traveling, but we were afraid they would tip everything over at the bank where the drifts are high, and blocks of ice piled in places. Everything was lashed tightly down, however, and no accident occurred. All the children but Bessie ran

alongside the sleds to keep warm, and they had lunches with them to eat when they were hungry. When the smaller ones grew tired, I suppose they rode for a while on the sleds. It was eleven o'clock in the morning, and the bright sun shone directly in our faces as we stood waving good-bye to them, really sorry to see them leave us. The hills, almost bare of snow, lay pink and lovely under the sunshine.

After lunch M. went out, slipped on the ice and fractured his collar bone. The Dawson man in the old schoolhouse, (who claims to be a doctor), brought him indoors, but poor M. was pretty pale. The man, with G.'s help, attended to his hurt, put his arm in a sling, and he is lying on the lounge looking serious, but not discontented nor suffering severely.

We were not to have so small a family many hours, as we found at about five o'clock in the afternoon today, when there was a great commotion at the door. There were men's voices, a woman's jolly laughter, and the quick barking of dogs, glad to reach their journey's end, and when we opened the door to those knocking, there were Mary and two friends from Nome with their dog-teams. In they came, laughing, talking and brushing the frost off their parkies, glad to get here, and hungry from traveling, so we gave them a warm welcome, and good hot coffee and supper.

Then Mary, (real Viking that she is, and from Tromso, in Norway,) related the story of her journey by dog-team. Eighty-five miles, they call it, from Nome by water to Chinik, but overland it is probably farther. Nights were spent in the roadhouses, she said, but there was little sleep to be had in them, for they were crowded and noisy, and she was thankful

the trip was now ended, and she had safely arrived.

The two young men who came with her seem nice, honest fellows, and I am acquainted with one of them from seeing him at the "Star" many times, where he often ground coffee to help evenings, or chatted in the kitchen when we worked.

From Nome they had brought two sled loads, on one of them a cook stove for the winter, as the big range in use here now will go later to the Home, besides which they had food supplies and stove pipes.

At night Mr. L. came back from the reindeer station, saying that they can have four reindeer for their prospecting trip to the Koyuk River, and they are making up their party to go there.

November twenty-seventh: I was washing the dishes this morning in the kitchen, when Mr. L. came quietly to say he will take my attorney paper and stake a gold claim for me. He will do his best, he says, for me as well as the others, for which I cordially thanked him, and flew on wings to get the desired paper made out, as the others were also doing.

At half-past three o'clock in the afternoon today the lamps were lighted, and at four o'clock in the afternoon a mail got in from Nome, but brought no letters for me, as all steamers have long since stopped running, and I am not corresponding with any one at Nome. I wonder when I will hear from my home folks?

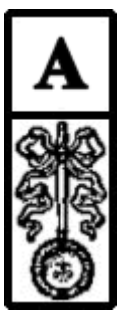
Our legal documents cost us each $2.50.

November twenty-eighth: This has been a fine day out of doors, and a busy one indoors. Mr. H. with a

man and two natives came with the dog-teams to take what household stuff they could carry, and they took the organ with the rest. I hated to see it go, but we are to have the one in the church, which G. has just cleaned and brought into the house, as the frost in that building is bad for it. They loaded their sleds, then ate a lunch at half-past eleven o'clock in the morning, and started. The two boys from Nome also left for that place, they being quite rested, as well as their dogs. Drilling parkies they wore to "mush" in, their furs and other traps being lashed to the sleds; and bidding us good-bye, one ran ahead, and the other behind the dogs.

CHAPTER XIX.

NEW QUARTERS.



FTER thinking for some time of doing so, I finally decided to call at the hotel and ask the captain and his wife if I might not teach their little black-eyed girl English, as Miss J.'s leaving deprives her of a

teacher. The woman was not in when I called, but the child's father seemed to think favorably of my plan, and said he would consult with his wife, so I hope to get the child for a pupil.

B. and G. have moved all their things into the house from the schoolroom, and Ricka hung the clothes she has been all day washing out there to dry. There is a small stove in which a fire is often made to dry them more quickly. It is most convenient to have such a place for drying clothes, as it is impossible to get them dry outside on the lines in the frost and snow.

We spent the evening pleasantly together in the sitting room, listening to B.'s jokes, and Mary's stories of Nome and the "trail."

For our Thanksgiving dinner we had canned turkey, potatoes, tomatoes, pickles, fruit, soup, bread, butter, and coffee, trying hard not to think of our home friends and their roast turkeys and cranberries. However, the dinner was a good one for Alaska, eaten with relish, and all were jolly and very thankful, even M., with his sore collar-bone, laughing with the rest.

November thirtieth: Mr. H. came with a man, two natives, seven reindeer and four sleds to take more furniture away. They all ate dinner here, and I took some kodak views of the animals with Alma, Ricka, Mary, G. and a native driver in the sunshine in front of the Mission. Mary goes up to the animals and pets them, as does Ricka, but I keep a good way off from their horns, as they look ugly, and one old deer has lost his antlers, with the exception of one bare, straight one a yard long, which, with an angry beast behind it, would, however, be strong enough to toss a person in mid-air if the creature was so minded.

There has been some hitch in the arrangements of the men going to the Koyuk River, and there is a delay, but they will get off some day, because L. never gives up anything he attempts to do, and I like him for that. If more people were like this, they being always certain that they were started in the right direction, the world would be the better for it.

December first: Mr. B. is making bunks in two rooms upstairs, as the house is so full all the time. This will give quite a little more lodging room, for cots cannot be provided for all, neither is there room for so many, but with bunks, one above another, it will furnish lodgings for all who come.

Our two fisher women went out again this afternoon, and got tom-cod through the ice by the cliff, near the snow-buried river steamers.

About four o'clock in the afternoon I called on the captain's wife, and found her sewing furs. For her helper she had her cousin Alice, the coy, plump Eskimo girl, who traveled to San Francisco with her last year. Both women sat upon fur rugs on the floor, as is their custom when sewing, and they were sorting bright beads, and cutting moosehide into moccasins and gauntlet gloves, to be decorated with beads in the fashion of the Yukon River Indians.

I had no difficulty in arranging for lessons with the captain's wife, who would also study with her little girl, she said, and she showed me school books, slates, etc., they had already been using. If their piano were only here, the child, who is a pretty little thing, with a sweet smile, might take music lessons, but it cannot be brought over the winter trail.

We had snow today, but no church service. We

rested, sang, read, ate and slept. A fine dinner of reindeer roast, with good gravy, mashed potatoes, etc., for our two o'clock meal, was eaten and well relished; but in spite of all the day seemed a long one for some reason. We wonder how things are going on the outside and if the friends we love but cannot hear from are well, happy, and think sometimes of us.

The Commissioner came to say that he would bring the Recorder, or Commissioner, from the Koyuk district with him to call this evening, and he did so. The latter is a middle-aged man, whose family lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he himself being a native born Norwegian, but having lived in the States for twenty years. They brought two United States marshals with them, and one of them played on the guitar quite well, though I thought I detected a scent of the bottle when he sang his songs. He has a good voice, but untrained.

Yesterday it was fifteen degrees below zero, but grew warmer toward night, and began snowing. Today it snowed quite hard until dark. Along the shore huge blocks of ice lay heaped promiscuously, and deep drifts rolled smoothly everywhere. When I grew tired walking I stopped a moment and listened. There was no sound but the beating of my own heart. This then was our new Arctic world. How wonderfully beautiful it was in its purity and stillness. Look whichever way I would, all was perfect whiteness and silence. When I walked the snow scarcely creaked under my feet. Above, beneath, around, it was everywhere the same. It was a solemn stillness, but ineffably sweet and tender. It was good to live. A feeling of sweetest peace and happiness swept over me, and tears sprang to my eyes. Was this heaven? It

almost seemed like it, but glancing toward the grave of the murdered man on the hillside I remembered that this could not be. Farther down the shore line, when I started to go home, I saw the smoke of the cabins, through the veil of the snowflakes.



WINTER PROSPECTING.

While giving Jennie her lessons this afternoon the Commissioner came in to say that he would like me to do some copying for him, for as yet he has no clerk, and needs one. I told him I would do the work if I might take it home, and could get a quiet corner by myself. I hardly see how I am to manage that

while there are so many people in the house, but I shall try it, for I would like to earn the money.

This morning it was three degrees above zero; yesterday it was fifteen below.

A full moon hung high in the sky this morning until nine o'clock. Weather is warm and beautiful, with rosy clouds at sunrise, but it grew colder by noon.

Among other things Mary has brought from Nome is her little hand sewing machine, which is an old-fashioned thing, to be fastened to a table and the wheel turned by hand. It was brought from the old country, and looks quite well worn, but is still useful and far better than no machine, if it does have a chain stitch which is liable to rip easily. We have a lot of amusement with this machine, for when Alma is sewing and one of the boys happens to be idle about her she makes him turn the wheel while she guides the cloth and watches the needle.

Others besides myself are wearing muckluks by this time, though not all have come to them, the felt shoes being worn in the house some by the girls until severe cold forces them into the native boots of reindeer skin.

In her rooms at the hotel Mollie sits with Alice each day on the fur rugs, cutting, sewing and beading moccasins and moosehide gloves. A regular workshop it is. Boxes of thread, beads, scraps of fur, whole otter skins, paper patterns, shears, bits of hair and fur scattered upon the floor, and the walls covered with hanging fur garments; this is the sewing-room of the captain's wife as it is now each day when I go there. The room contains two large windows, one on the north side and one on the west,

at which hang calico curtains tied back with blue ribbons in daytime. These women work very rapidly, with the thimble upon the first finger and by pushing the three-cornered skin needle deftly through skins they are sewing. The thread they use for this work is made by them from the sinews of reindeer, and takes hours of patient picking and rolling between fingers and palms to get spliced and properly twisted, but when finished is very strong and lasting. Their sewing and bead work is quite pretty and unique, and is done with exceeding neatness and care, though not much attention is bestowed upon colors.

Friday, December seventh, has been a busy day all round. L. and B. started off early after breakfast on a prospecting trip, and the girls kept at their sewing. Mr. H. came from the Home to get the sewing machine and some lumber, and was packing up nearly all day, so that we are still quite unsettled, but it is much pleasanter for him to come to a warm house and where he gets hot meals after his twelve miles over the ice with the deer or dogs.

He left here at four in the afternoon and had been gone only an hour when Mr. F. and another man came from Nome, on the way to the Koyuk. Getting well warmed and eating a hearty supper, which was much enjoyed after some days on the trail, they started with two reindeer and as many sleds for the Home, which is on the way to Koyuk. Another hour passed and two women and their guide from White Mountain came in, these belonging to the same party as the last men going to the Koyuk, and these three had to remain over night as it was too late to push on further. The men brought their fur robes and blankets from their sleds, threw them into the bunks in the west room, and called it a good lodging place

compared to the cramped and disorderly roadhouses upon the trails.

December eighth: We had a fire fright this morning, which was not enjoyed by any one in the Mission. Mary had gotten up early, and two fires were already going, one in the kitchen range and one in the sitting room heater near my bed. It was still dark at half-past seven and I was awake, thinking seriously of dressing myself, though there was no hurry, for Mary was the only one yet up, when I saw a shower of large sparks of fire or burning cinders falling to the ground outside the window. I rushed into the kitchen telling Mary what I had seen, and she ran outside and looked up toward the chimney. Fire, smoke and cinders poured out in a stream, but she satisfied herself it was soot burning in the sitting-room chimney.

Coming in, she pulled most of the wood from the heater, scattered salt upon the coals, and by this time all in the house were down stairs, asking what had happened.

M. says he will also take my attorney paper and stake a claim for me, as he has decided to go to the Koyuk with the men who came last night from Nome. They have a horse, but as it is almost worn to the bone and nearly starved, they hardly think he can travel much farther. M. wants me to get him some location notices from the Commissioner when I see him. When coming home from Jennie's lesson this afternoon I was turning the corner of the hotel when the wind took me backward toward the bay for thirty feet or more, and deposited me against an old wheelbarrow turned bottom upwards in the snow. To this I clung desperately, keeping my presence of

mind enough to realize my danger if blown out upon the ice fifty feet away and below me, where I would be unable to make myself either seen or heard in the blinding storm and would soon be buried in the snow drifts and frozen.

In my right hand I carried my small leather handbag containing a dozen or more deeds and other documents to be recorded for the Commissioner, and if the wind blew this from my hand for an instant I was surely undone, for it would never be recovered. I now clung to the barrow until I had regained my breath and then made a quick dash for the lee or south side of the hotel out of the gale, and into the living-room again. Here I sat down to rest, trembling and breathless, to consider the best way to get home. It was now dark, the snow blinding, and the gale from the northeast fearful. A stout young Eskimo sat near me, and I finally asked him to take me home, to which he consented.

The Mission was only a few hundred feet away, but to reach it we had to go directly into the teeth of the storm, which was coming from the northeast.

Not six feet ahead of us could we see, but I trusted to the sense of my Eskimo guide to lead me safely home, and he did it. Motioning me to follow him, he proceeded to pass through the building and out the east end entrance, notwithstanding that he led me directly through the bar-room of the hotel, where the idlers stared wonderingly at me. Once outside the door, he grasped my right arm firmly and we started, but he kept his body a little ahead of me, and with side turned from the blizzard instead of facing it.

In this sidelong way we struggled on with all our strength, through snow drifts, against the elements in

the darkness, with breath blown from our bodies, and eyes blinded by whirling snow. Now and again I was forced to stop to gain breath for a fresh struggle, and when we reached the Mission we staggered into the door as if drunken. I now found that all my clothing was blown so full of fine snow that the latter seemed fairly a part of the cloth, would not be shaken out, and only a thorough drying would answer. A good, hot cup of coffee was handed to each of us, and my Eskimo guide sat until rested, but I think I shall take Alma's sage advice, and in future remain at home during blizzards.

Of course M. and the other men could not leave for the Koyuk as they intended, but they do not appear to be discontented at having to remain under our roof longer, as they seem to be enjoying themselves very well, and say it is all really home-like here in the Mission.

I am working on the Recorder's books, and like the work fairly well.

This is a stormy Sunday, December ninth, but the weather is not so bad as yesterday, and B. and L. came back from the Home. We have eight men here today, including the two young fellows who have been at work on the Home building, and who came over from Nome weeks before the rest of us. This is the first time they have been here since we arrived. They, too, are Swedes, as are all these men but M., who is a Finlander.

For dinner we had reindeer roast with flour gravy, potatoes, plum butter, rye and white bread and butter, coffee and tapioca pudding. The potatoes taste pretty sweet from being frozen, but are better than none. We have had music from the guitar,

mandolin and organ, besides vocal exercise without limit, and with all this I found time to do some Sunday reading in Drummond's Year Book, and have well enjoyed the day.

The thermometer registers thirteen degrees below zero, and at half-past eight in the evening the wind was not blowing much; enough blizzard for this time certainly.

While talking with one of the men from Nome I asked if he supposed there was gold in the Koyuk country, and he thought there was. As he was up there all last summer, he ought to know the prospects. It appears that there is a split in his party, or a disagreement of some kind, as is quite the fashion in Alaska, and some of the men are to remain behind. As soon as the weather clears sufficiently they will go to the Home, and from there leave for Koyuk River.

Monday, December tenth: The Commissioner, the Marshal, and three of their friends came in to spend the evening with us, and one of the strangers sang well, accompanying himself on the organ. He also belongs to a party made up to go to Koyuk, but failed to reach that point, and they are staying in Chinik.

I bought two red fox skins today for ten dollars, but will have to pay five dollars more for their cleaning by a native woman, to whom I have given them for that purpose. It is the only kind of fur I can find of which to make a coat, and I must have one of skins, as the wind goes straight through cloth, no matter how thick it is.

Six of our household went out today to get wood with the old horse and sled, but the poor creature

would not go, probably because it could not. They had to unload a good many times and were gone five hours. Alma and Ricka went with the four boys for an outing, but all came home tired and voting the horse a great failure.

This morning our house was astir very early, and the men were getting ready to "mush on" towards the Koyuk. Mr. L. goes with the Marshal, the clerk, and two others, taking seven dogs and sleds loaded with provisions. It is a sight to see the preparations. There are sacks of frozen tom-cod for the dogs, tents, Yukon stoves, tin dishes, snow shoes, sleeping bags and robes, coffee pots, axes, picks, gold pans and boxes, cans and bags of grub, ad infinitum.

G. and B. stay behind to make another camp stove but will leave soon for Nome. B. cleaned his gun today, and looked after his ammunition.



MISSION.

Wednesday, December twelfth: Our sunset was very

lovely today at one in the afternoon, and at three o'clock, when I began with little Jennie's lessons, we had to light the lamp. I usually go into the sewing-room for a little while either before or after the lesson to watch the women sew furs.

Alice, the younger, is as quiet as a mouse, but the captain's wife is a little more talkative, though not particularly given to conversation. Now and then, while she sews, something is said with which she does not agree, and she bites her thread off with a snap, with some terse remark offsetting the other, or with a bit of cynicism, which, with a quick glance of her black eyes and curl of the lip, is well calculated to settle forever the offender; for the captain's wife is as keen as a briar, and reads human nature quickly. I should say she is gifted with wonderful intuitive powers, and these have been sharpened by her constant effort to understand the words and lives of those around her, these being to such an extent English speaking people, while she is an Eskimo. Let none flatter themselves that they can deceive Mollie, for they would better abandon that idea before they begin. She impresses me as a thoroughly good and honest woman, and I am getting to respect her greatly.

Two of the boys from the Home spent the night in the Mission, and helped with sawing wood all forenoon today. They went from Nome to assist at building the Home, and came over here for the first time yesterday. They are jolly fellows, and used often to assist us in the "Star" at Nome, one always lightening our load of work by his cheery voice and pleasant, hopeful smile. He, too, is a sweet singer, and a great favorite with all. After a lunch they started to mush back to the Home over the ice,

promising to come again at Christmas. B. and G. finally got started on their long, cold trip to Nome on business.

CHAPTER XX.

CHRISTMAS IN ALASKA.



THURSDAY, December thirteenth: The old Eskimo whom I call "grandpa" came from the Home with one of Mr. H.'s assistants for a load of supplies for the place, and arrived in time for breakfast at half-past nine. They loaded up the sleds, took hot coffee, and started back at eleven in the morning. Mr. M. came back alone before noon, having given up his trip to the Koyuk because his shoulder hurts him. The old horse had finally to be killed, and Mr. M. decided that he did not want to take his place at hauling, so turned back after selling part of his supplies to the others. The weather is fine indeed. A little snow is falling this afternoon, but there was a beautiful sky at sunrise and sunset, the latter at half-past one

o'clock.

While giving Jennie her lesson today I was introduced for the first time to little Charlie, who spends a good deal of time with Jennie. He is four years old, and a bright and beautiful child. His papa is an Englishman, and his Eskimo mother is dead. After the lesson I read stories to the two children, holding the little boy upon my lap, while Jennie sat beside us in the lamplight, her big black eyes shining like stars. She wore a brown serge dress, trimmed with narrow red trimming, her hair neatly braided in two braids down her back, and tied with red ribbons. Both children wore little reindeer muckluks on their feet, the boy being dressed in flannel blouse waist and knee pants. They are a very pretty pair of children.

Such a charming, soft-tinted, red, purple and blue sky today, stretching along in bars above the snow-topped mountains. It makes one glad to be here, and feel full of pity for those who cannot enjoy it with us. It is good to enjoy everything possible as one goes along, for nobody knows how long anything will hold out and what will come next. At noon two hungry Eskimo children came, dirty, forlorn and cold, and we fed them.

Mr. H. came again toward evening with reindeer to get a load of supplies, and the girls and M. went fishing. They had great sport, all dressed in fur, with short fish poles, hooks, bait and gunny sack for the game, coming in frosty and rosy after dark, and calling for hot coffee.

I am quite interested in getting the fox skins for my coat. I have paid the Eskimo girl five dollars for tanning my fur skins, and hope to have a warm coat.

My first three skins cost me twelve dollars, the next two ten dollars, and now five dollars for tanning, but I have a lining, and Mollie will make it for me next week.

After supper we had a caller who has been here once before with others. He is a finely trained baritone singer, and comes from one of the Southern States. He sang and played entertainingly on the organ for an hour, while we sewed and knitted as we do each evening.

Saturday, December fifteenth: Eight weeks today since we landed at Golovin Bay. Weather good, skies beautiful, but days are short. Sunset at half-past one in the afternoon; sunrise about ten in the morning.

The Commissioner came with legal documents and customary jokes, and I try to get the copying done in between times. He is going to Nome for Christmas, and wants the papers all finished before he leaves. He is considered a very "rapid" young man, and looks like it.

Sunday, December sixteenth: We had breakfast today at sunrise (ten in the morning) and I went for a walk alone upon the ice in a southerly direction, where the natives were fishing. There was a good trail which has been made by a horse-team hauling wood from the other shore, and the air was fine, so that I enjoyed it very much, though my hood was soon frosty around my face. For a while I watched the natives haul tom-cod up through the ice holes, but having no place to sit except upon the ice, as they did, I returned after having been gone two hours, and was soon dressed for dinner in Sunday suit.

After dinner Mr. H. arrived with the teacher to hold

an evening service in the kitchen, the latter taking Ricka and Mary with her to call upon some native families, two of whose members were sick. When they returned Ricka was full of laughter at the way they had entered the native igloos, especially Mary, who is a large woman and could barely squeeze in through the small opening called by courtesy a door. Ricka says it was more like crawling through a hole than anything else, and at one time Mary was so tightly jammed in that she wondered seriously how she was ever to get out.

"Ugh!" said Ricka, when Mary related the incident, "that was not the worst of it. I wanted to keep the good dinner I had eaten, but the smell of the igloo almost made me lose it then and there, and as I was inside already, and Mary stuck fast in the door so I could not get out, we were both in a bad plight. When I tried to help her she would not let me, but only laughed at me."

"Next time we will send Mrs. Sullivan," said Alma, laughing.

"And you go along with me," said I, knowing that I could stand as long as Alma the smell of the Eskimo huts and their seal oil. So that was settled, Miss J., I presume, thinking us all very foolish to make so much fuss over a little thing like that in Alaska.

This evening, when the kitchen was filled with natives, their service had begun, and while some of us sat in the sitting-room to leave more chairs for the others, there came a knock at the door, and in walked the Commissioner and the young baritone singer, who was persuaded to sing a few solos after the meeting was through in the kitchen.

Monday, December seventeenth: Mollie is cutting my fur coat for me, but says I must have one or two more skins to make it large enough. She says she is too busy to study before Christmas, but will afterwards. The Commissioner brought more copying for me to do, and told me I could have the money for my work at any time. Some tell me he never pays anything he owes, and that I must look sharp or I will not get anything. The other Commissioner has invited me to go to a New Year's party at Council, fifty miles away, saying he will take me there and back behind his best dogs, but I refused, telling him that I never dance, and that I am a married woman. At that he laughed, said he was also married, with a wife in the States, but that does not debar him from having a good time.

Word comes of a new gold strike not far away, but I think we are not really sure that it is bona fide, and must not put too much dependence on what we hear. The Commissioner comes with his copying, and is full of jokes.

Wednesday, December nineteenth: A man came from the Home yesterday who has persuaded M. to go with him on a short staking expedition. They think they know of a new "find" very near home, and I ran over to the Recorder's to get two attorney papers made out for them to take as they say they will stake for the girls and me. The Commissioner paid me twenty dollars on copying, and said he would settle the remainder when he got back from Nome, as he and the other Commissioner were just setting out with a dog-team for that place. I have had to buy another fox skin for my coat, making twenty-seven dollars paid out on the garment thus far.

Right sorry I was today that Mr. H. carried away the big velvet couch yesterday that I have slept on nights since coming here, and I tried last night the wooden settle brought down from upstairs to the sitting-room. I found it a most uncomfortable thing to sleep on, as my feet hung at least six inches over the end of the lounge, and they were icy when I wakened in the morning. I then decided to go upstairs to one of the canvas bunks in the northeast room, and I find it much better every way. The bunk is long, wide and warm enough with a reindeer skin under me, and all my blankets and comforters over me, while I have the room alone, temporarily, at least.

Saturday, December twenty-second: This is the middle shortest day of winter, and a fine one, too, though we had not more than three and a half hours daylight. The skies are beautiful, with many bright colors blended in a most wonderful way.

The girls are hard at work cooking for Christmas, and while the boys were all away today and we needed wood brought into the house, I rigged myself in rag-time costume and fetched several loads in my arms. How the girls laughed when they saw me, and declared they would fetch the kodak, but I ran away again.

This afternoon M. and the other man returned from their little trip, looking bright and happy over having staked some claims for themselves and us not very far away. These are our first claims staked, and we naturally feel more than usually set up, though the men say of course there may be nothing of value in them.

When I went to give Jennie her lesson I heard her father and another man talking of a party of five

persons who have been taken out to sea on the ice, near Topkok. They started about three days ago from here, and one was the sick woman who has been at the hotel, all on their way to Nome by dog-team.

There were two women and three men, two dog-teams and sleds. They were crossing the ice between two points of land while upon the winter trail to Nome, the wind had loosened the ice, and when they tried to get upon shore again they found it impossible, and they were blown directly out to sea. Without food or shelter, and with the nights as cold as they are, how can they live on the ice at sea? Some men have arrived bringing the news, and say that two men went out in a boat to their rescue, but broke their oars, the ice closed in on them, they were soaked through, and were obliged to use their best efforts to save themselves.

The following night was very cold, and all think the unfortunates must have perished. What a terrible fate, and one that may happen to any one traveling in this country, though it does seem as if this ice should soon freeze solidly.

Sunday, December twenty-third: Soon after breakfast today a man came to our door asking for iodine, or remedies for a dog bite. A mad dog had rushed upon a man sleeping in a tent in the night and bitten him quite severely upon the hands and leg. Mary and I put on our furs immediately and started out with the man, who piloted us into a small saloon, where the poor fellow sat by the stove with a white and pinched face.

Several other men were standing about, after having done all they could for the injured man, but Mary washed the torn flesh in strong carbolic acid water,

and tied it up in sterilized bandages, for which he seemed very thankful.

The little saloon was neat and clean, containing a big stove, six or eight bunks across the back end, and a long table, upon which were spread tin plates, cups and spoons. A short bar ran along one side by the door. The men said that the mad dog had been shot immediately after the accident, but there were others around in the camp, they feared.

I could easily see that the injured man was badly frightened as to the after-effects of the dog bite, and both Mary and I did all in our power to suggest away his fear, knowing well that this was as harmful as the injury. I told him that the missionary, Mr. H., had had a great deal of experience with such accidents, but never yet had seen a person thus bitten suffer from hydrophobia, which appeared to comfort him greatly.

When we left the place he seemed more cheerful, though still very pale, and Mary promised to come again to see him. He belongs to a party of three men bound for Koyuk River. The young man who sings so well sometimes at the Mission is one of the three, but the other I have not yet seen.

Later on Mary and I called upon Alice, the Eskimo girl, who lives with her mother, near the hotel, and who is suffering with quinsy. I found Jennie and Charlie there, and took them out for a walk down on the beach, where the little girl's aunt was cutting ice. As we passed the A. E. Store I noticed a dog lying on the porch having a bloody mouth, but as he lay quietly I did not think much about it. After we had passed down the trail for a block or so, I heard a commotion behind us, and looking back saw a young

man rush out into the trail and shoot a dog, the one, as I afterwards learned, that I had seen on the porch. It had been mad, and snapping around all day, but the men could not find it earlier, and the two little children and I had passed within a few feet of it without being conscious of danger.

Mr. H. came in to supper, also two others from the camp of the shipwrecked people, thirty miles away to the east of us. At supper one of the men offered to stake some claims for us over near their camp, where they think there is gold. They took our names on paper, and said that after prospecting, if they found gold, they would let us into the strike before any others. They will remain over night, and leave early in the morning. Mr. H. and Mary called after supper to see the man who was bitten by the mad dog, and found him looking better, and not so worried as this morning. His friend was playing on the banjo, and all were sitting quietly around the fire.

Monday, December twenty-fourth: The two boys, G. and B., came in late last evening, tired and hungry, from the Nome trail, glad to arrive at home in time for Christmas.

Early this morning Mary dressed herself up hideously as Santa Claus, bringing a big box of presents in while we sat at the breakfast table and distributing them. Of course there were the regulation number of fake packages, containing funny things for the boys, but each one had a present of something, and I had a souvenir spoon just from Nome, an ivory paper knife of Eskimo make from the girls, and later a white silk handkerchief.

Going into the sitting-room after breakfast, we were met by the fumes of burnt cork, hair or cotton, and

upon inquiry were told that Santa Claus had had a little mishap; his whiskers had been singed by coming into contact with the lamp chimney and that it had delayed matters somewhat until Ricka, his assistant, could find more cotton on the medicine shelves; but the end of all was hearty laughter and a jolly good time; an effort to forget, for the present, the day in our own homes thousands of miles away.

This morning, before noon, all in the Mission went to the Home to the Christmas tree and exercises, leaving me alone to keep house, the first time this has happened in Alaska. Mr. H. had left the dog-teams, two reindeer, and three sleds, with which they were to drive over, and a merry party they were. When they had gone I worked for some time at getting the rooms in order, and making all as tidy and snug as possible, but I had no holly berries nor greens with which to decorate. All was snowy and white out of doors, and a cheerful fire inside was most to be desired. In the afternoon I gave Jennie her lesson as usual. I am invited to eat Christmas dinner tomorrow with Mollie, the captain and little Jennie, and shall accept. A good many in camp have been invited, I understand, and I am wondering what kind of a gathering it will be.

Tuesday, December twenty-fifth: Christmas Day, and I was alone in the Mission all night, so I had to build my own fires this morning. I did not get up until ten o'clock, as it was cold and dark, and I had nothing especial to do. There is plenty of wood and water, and everything in the house, so I do not have to go out of doors for anything.

By noon I had finished my work, put on my best dress, and sat down at the organ to play. I went over

all the church music and voluntaries I could find at hand, read a number of psalms aloud, and as far as possible for one person I went through my Christmas exercises.

If a certain longing for things and people far away came near possessing me, I would not allow it to make me miserable, for longing is not necessarily unhappiness, and I had set my mind like a flint against being dissatisfied with my present state. With what knowledge I possess of the laws of auto-suggestion, I have so far since my arrival in Alaska managed the ego within most successfully, and tears and discontent are not encouraged nor allowed.

We are creatures of voluntary habits, as well as involuntary ones, and habitual discontent and discouragement, gnawing at one's vitals are truly death-dealing. The study of human nature is, in Alaska, particularly interesting in these directions, to the one with his mind's eye open to such things, and I am resolved, come what will, that I will keep the upper hand of my spirit, that it shall do as I direct, and not harbor "blues" nor discouragement.

About two in the afternoon in came M. and one of the visiting Swedes, after having walked from the Home, where they had attended the Christmas party, and they were well covered with icicles. I prepared a hot lunch for them, and ate something myself. Later a native was sent by Mollie to fetch me over to the hotel to dinner, it being dark, and as I was already dressed for the occasion, I went with him.

When I arrived at the dining-room they were just seated at table, and the waiters were bringing in the first course. Twenty-five persons sat at the Christmas board, at one end of which sat the captain as host

with his wife and little Jennie at his left. At his right sat the young musician, who had entertained us at the Mission several times with his singing, and the storekeeper, but with a place between them reserved for me.

After a quiet Christmas greeting to those around me, I took my seat, and the dinner was then served. A bottle of wine was ordered by the host for me, and brought by the waiter, who placed it with a glass beside my plate. At each plate there had already been placed the same accompaniments to the dinner, with which great care had been taken by the two French cooks in the kitchen, and upon which no expense had been spared by the captain, who was host. While the waiters were serving the courses, and conversation around the table near me became quite general, on the aside I studied the company. It was cosmopolitan to the last degree. Opposite me sat the hostess (Mollie) with her little Jennie, dressed in their very best, the woman wearing a fashionable trained skirt, pink silk waist and diamond brooch, while the little child wore light tan cloth in city fashion, and looked very pretty. Below them sat the regular boarders at the hotel, hotel clerk, the bartender, miners, traders and the woman who kept the saloon. The latter appeared about thirty years of age, dark, petite and pretty, richly and becomingly gowned in garments which might have come along with her native tongue from Paris. On our side of the long table, and opposite this woman, sat the only other white woman besides myself present, and she, with her husband, the two neighbors who had given us our first sleigh ride behind the grey horse. On this side sat more miners and the few travelers who happened to be at the hotel at this time. The clerk, next his employer, who sat at my right, and the

musician on my left, completed the number of guests, with the exception of the one at the farther end of the board, opposite the host. This was a young man in a heavy fur coat, his head drooping low over his plate.

"Don't let H. fall upon the floor, boys," said the captain, as he saw the pitiable plight of the young man. "Poor fellow, he has been celebrating Christmas with a vengeance, and it was too much for him, evidently. It don't take much to knock him out, though, and this wine," taking up his wine glass and looking through the liquid it contained, "won't hurt a baby."

"Do you never take wine?" politely inquired the musician of me, as he noticed that my wine glass remained untouched, and a glass of cold water was my only beverage.

"I never do," said I firmly, but with a smile, as I noticed that both he and the gentleman at my right barely touched theirs, while others drank freely.

"Waiter, bring Mellie another bottle of that wine," called the bartender, from the other side of the table, "those bottles don't hold nothin' anyway, and a woman who can't empty more'n one of 'em ain't much," and a second bottle was handed the female dispenser of grog, a connoisseur of long standing, and one who could "stand up" under as much as the next person. By this time the woman opposite her was considerably along the road to hilarity, and shouts and laughter came from both, called forth by the jests of their companions alongside.

Meanwhile the dinner progressed. The turkey was bona fide bird, and not a few gull's bones from a tin

quart can, while the cake and ice cream with which my meal was ended, were all that could be desired in Alaska. All voted that the cooks had "done themselves proud," and no one could say that Christmas dinners could not be served in Chinik.

Before rising from the table, at the close of the meal, toasts to the host and hostess were drunk by those at the bottles, and Christmas presents were distributed to many, principally to members of the family and from boarders of the house. There were silk handkerchiefs, red neckties, "boiled shirts," and mittens, and in some instances moosehide gloves and moccasins, made by the Eskimo hostess herself, while "Mellie" came in for a share, including a large black bottle of "choice Burgundy."

Upon leaving the dining table, the company separated, most of the men going into the bar-room and store, while the family and invited guests repaired to the living-room. Here a good-sized Christmas tree had been arranged for Jennie and Charlie, and their presents were displayed and talked over. In the meantime, the long dining table was cleared and spread again for the Eskimos, who soon flocked into the room in numbers.

Some one proposed that we go to the Mission and have some songs by the musician, to which all assented, and nine of us, including the captain, his wife and Jennie, started over about half-past eight o'clock. There we found the rooms bright and warm, the two men keeping house in my absence having escaped to the upper rooms on hearing the party approaching. Here a pleasant hour or two were passed in listening to the songs of the musician, who always accompanies himself on his instrument,

whether banjo or organ. He sang the "Lost Chord," "Old Kentucky Home," and many other dear old songs, closing with "God Be With You Till We Meet Again," and the doxology. After that they pulled on their parkies and fur coats and went out into the snow storm (for by this time the snow was falling heavily), and to their homes, while I sat down alone in the firelight to review the events of the day—my first Christmas Day in Alaska. How different from any other I have ever spent. What a disclosure of the shady side of human nature this is,—and yet there is some good intermingled with it all.

Many here cannot endure the stress of the current, nor pull against it, and so float easily on towards the rapids and destruction. Here is a field for the Christian worker, though Mr. H. says he moved his little flock twelve miles across the bay in order to get it farther away from this iniquitous camp.

CHAPTER XXI.

MY FIRST GOLD CLAIMS.



HRISTMAS is over for another year, and this is December twenty-sixth with its daily winter routine. After I had given the two men their breakfast, I went out for a walk upon the beach. A few snowflakes fell upon my face as I walked, and it was not cold but pleasant. There was a red and glowing, eastern sky, but no sunshine, and I looked out over the ice to see if possibly the girls were returning. Seeing nothing of them, I went home again. About two o'clock M. came in, saying that they could be seen far out upon the ice, and we must build the fires and get dinner started, which we then did. Soon Alma came riding on a reindeer sled, with a native driver, getting in ahead of the others, who arrived half an hour later.

Mr. H. has come with two of his assistants and Miss E. by reindeer team from the Home on their way to the station, where the animals are herded in the hills, and all had a good lunch. After spending two hours in packing, talking and resting, they left again, Miss E. on a sled behind a reindeer, which was driven by a native, and which tore up the snow in clouds as he dashed over the ice northward to the hills. I ran out upon the cliff to see them on their way, being quite contented that it was not myself.

I have learned that the five persons who drifted out to sea on the ice were brought back by the wind and

tide, and escaped safely to land, after being at sea several days, but were unharmed, and went on to Nome. I was very glad to hear this, as they have had a narrow escape from death.

Friday, December twenty-eighth: The musician and his friend who was bitten by the mad dog called this forenoon at the Mission to get the man's wounds dressed by Mary, the nurse. His hands are much better, but the wounded leg may yet give him trouble. Mary did her best for the man, who seems to be growing more cheerful, and we do all possible to encourage and help him, lending him reading matter of various kinds with which to pass his time. A good many are going to the New Year's party at Council, among them the captain and his wife, and the musician; but I shall not go, though both commissioners have urged me to accept their invitations, and did not enjoy overmuch my refusals. I was playing ball with Jennie and Charlie before our lessons today when the party started out with the dog-teams, for the nights are very moonlight and clear, and they can travel for many hours. A cousin of Mollie's, by name Ageetuk, went with her. Jennie is to stay with her auntie until her mamma's return, and I will give her the afternoon lessons just the same, only at her auntie's house. When the lesson was finished I led Charlie to Ageetuk's house, where her mother cares for him in the night time, and left Jennie with her auntie, Apuk. This woman has a neat little cabin of three small rooms, furnished in comfortable fashion, with a pretty Brussels rug covering the floor of her best room, in which is a white iron bedstead, a good small table with a pretty cover, a large lamp, white dimity curtains at the windows over the shades, and in the next room there are white dishes upon the shelves.

Sunday, December thirtieth: It is ten weeks yesterday since we arrived at Golovin, or Chinik, as is the Eskimo name for the settlement, and pronounced Cheenik, a creek of the same name flowing into the bay a mile east of this camp. During the day I went to look after Jennie and brought the child home with me, giving her candy and nuts, and playing for her on the organ.

This evening we all went out upon the ice for a walk. We took the trail to White Mountain, going in a northwesterly direction, and enjoyed it very much. We passed the cliff, and the boats, the snow creaking at every step, and the moonlight clear and beautiful. We were out for two hours, and felt better for the fresh air and exercise. All old timers say that it is bad for one's health to remain indoors too much in Alaska, and people should get out every day for exercise. There is far more danger of getting scurvy by remaining in the house too much than from any kinds of food we have to eat, and none of us wish to be ill with that troublesome disease.

About five o'clock Miss E. came in with a native from the station where the reindeer are kept, having grown tired of staying in a native hut with the Eskimo women while the missionary was busy at work. She started early this morning when the weather was fine. Lincoln, the experienced native who came with her, knew the way perfectly, and they expected to make the twelve or fifteen miles and get into the Mission early, but the weather suddenly changed, as it knows so well how to do in this country, the wind blew, snow fell and drifted and though they came safely through the hills, they lost their way upon the bay while crossing to Chinik, and wandered for hours in the snow storm.

Having no lunch, tent, nor compass, and no extra furs, they found themselves in a disagreeable plight, especially as the snow was very soft and wet. They kept on traveling, however, until they were satisfied that they were going in circles, as do all when lost in a snow storm, and were making no progress; then they halted.

Here they were overtaken by two white men, lost like themselves, who, when the matter had been talked over, would not follow the native, thinking they knew better than he the way to Chinik, and they went off by themselves. Miss E. says that both she and Lincoln had given up hope of getting here today, but she knelt upon the ice and prayed that they might find their way safely, then trusted that they would do so, and started. After going on for a time in the storm, they saw a small, deserted cabin not far from them which Lincoln instantly recognized as one upon the point of land only a quarter of a mile west of Chinik, and they were happy.

They soon came into the Mission, full of gratitude, though wet, tired and hungry, for it is so warm that there is water on the ice in places, and the snow is very heavy. They had only one deer with them.

The two lost men came into camp an hour after Miss E. arrived, having gone past the cabin and camp, and southward too far in their reckoning. It is never safe to travel without a compass of some sort in this country. Mr. H. and his two men have, besides attending to the herd, staked some gold claims while away, not far from our claims. The wind has died down, and there is no snow falling tonight at half-past eight.

This is New Year's Eve, and the girls and boys are

singing, and having a good time in the sitting-room while I write. We are going to sit up to watch the old year out and the new year in, and have a little song service at midnight.

This is the last day of nineteen hundred, and a memorable year it has been. How many new scenes and how great the changes through which we have passed! What will the New Year bring? Where will we be next year at this time? It is probably better that we do not know the future.

New Year's Day, nineteen hundred and one. This has been a good day all around, after our midnight watch meeting, when seven of the eight persons present took a part, and we sang many songs with the organ. At half-past twelve I retired, but the others remained up until two o'clock.

This evening the storekeeper and two others from White Mountain called to see if we did not care to go out coasting on the hill behind the Mission, and five or six of us went. When we got to the top of the hill the wind was so strong that I could hardly stand, and after a few trips down the Hill we gave it up, part of our number going out to walk upon the ice, and the rest of us going indoors. The men were invited into the Mission, and stayed for an hour, chatting pleasantly, as there is no place for them to go except to the saloons. It is a great pity that there is no reading room with papers and books for the miners, with the long winter before them, and nothing to do. There is a crying need for something in this line, and if they do not employ their time pleasantly and profitably, they will spend it unprofitably in some saloon or gambling place. I wish I had a thousand good magazines to scatter, but I have none.

I gave Jennie her lesson, and amused both children for a time this afternoon. Yesterday the snow drifted badly, and I fear the people who went to Council will not have a good trail on the way home.

January second: It is pleasant to have a corner by myself in which to write and be sometimes alone. The little northeast corner room where I sleep has a tile pipe coming up from the kitchen, making the room warm enough except in the coldest weather. It has a north window with no double one outside, and when the wind comes from the north I expect it will be extremely cold. From this window I can see (when the glass is free from frost) out upon the trail to Nome and White Mountain. Today there is water on the ice, and it has been raining and blowing. Three of the boys returned from a four days' prospecting trip to the west, and as two of them had been sick the whole time since they left here, they came in wet, tired and hungry, without having much good luck to relate. I told them it was something to get back at all again, and they agreed heartily, while eating a hot supper. An hour later and Mr. H. with the visiting preacher came in from the reindeer station, and their staking trip, in the same condition as the three boys had been; so a supper for them was also prepared.

Our kitchen looks like a junk shop these days, and a wet one at that, for the numbers of muckluks, fur parkies, mittens, and other garments hung around the stove to dry are almost past counting, and the odor is stifling; but the clothing must be dried somewhere, and there is no other place. An engine room would be the very best spot I know for drying so many wet furs, and I wish we had one here.

In speaking to one of the men today about prospecting my claim, I told him I would furnish the grub, but he said very kindly, "I wouldn't take any grub from you. I've got enough, and shall be at work there any way, so it won't take long to sink some holes in your claim," which I thought was very good of him. I hope they will "strike it" rich.

January third: A wet, sloppy, snowy day, our "January thaw," Mr. H. says. I took the two children out on the sled upon the ice and pushed at the handle-bars until I was reeking with perspiration, afterwards giving Jennie her lesson at her auntie's.

There are twelve of us under the Mission roof tonight, including Miss E. and the native.

January fourth: These are great days. We have a houseful of men, nine in all, and some are getting ready to leave tomorrow to do some staking of claims up near the station. M. said if the musician were only here, and they could get a dog-team, he would like to get him to go with him on a staking trip not far away. This man returned soon afterward, and M. wanted me to ask him if he would go. I did so, and he replied that he would go, and furnish dogs if possible; but the ones he tried to get were engaged, and that plan fell through, much to his discouragement. Learning this, I determined to go to the captain at the hotel, and see if I could procure dogs from him for the trip. He said yes, I could have his best dogs, and that a mail carrier is here resting who will lend us his dogs, so that was all arranged.

Location papers then had to be written out, grub boxes packed, a tent looked up, and many things attended to before they left, so that others in camp got an inkling of what was being done and wanted to

go along. Then M. and the musician decided to put off going until midnight, when they would sneak quietly out of camp with their dogs and scamper away among the hills without the others knowing it, but it could not be done, and two or three sleds followed them at midnight in the moonlight, as is the custom with Alaska "stampeders."

January fifth: Mollie asked me today to go with her to visit her fox traps, and I immediately decided to go. We started about half-past one in the afternoon, on foot past the cliff, but when we had gone a short distance Mollie stopped to call back to the house. Some native boys were cutting wood at the north door, and she motioned one to come to her. When he came, she spoke to him in Eskimo, and he, assenting to what she said, ran back again.

"I tell Muky to come with dog-team, bring us home, you get tired by and by," she said thoughtfully, as we trudged on again over and through the snow. The woman wore a reindeer parkie, short skirt, and muckluks, and carried a gun on her shoulder. The snow was quite a foot deep, with a crust on top which we broke at almost every step, and which made it hard walking. On we "mushed," past the cliff, the boats, and out upon the ice. The traps had been set by Mollie a week before on the northeast shore of the bay among a few low bushes, and this was our objective point. When we reached the first trap, which was buried in snow, but found by a certain shrub which Mollie had in some way marked and now recognized, I threw myself upon the snow to rest and watch her movements.

Around us we saw plenty of ptarmigan tracks, but no signs of foxes. A foot below the snow's surface,

Mollie found her trap, and proceeded to reset it. Carefully covering the trap with a very little light snow and smoothing it nicely over, she chipped off bits of reindeer meat from a scrap she had brought with her, scattering them invitingly around.

The scene about us was a very quiet one and wintry in the extreme. Long, low hills stretched out on every side of the bay, and the whole earth was a great snow heap. The sky and cloud effects were charming, fading sunshine on the hilltops making them softly pink, and very lovely; but with deep reddish purple tints over all as the sun-ball disappeared.

One after another, four fox traps in different places were reset by Mollie, while I mushed on behind her.

At last we saw the dog-team and Muky coming on the bay. Five dogs he had hitched to his sled, and each wore a tiny bell at its throat, making a pretty din as they trotted. When the woman had finished her trapping, we both climbed into the sled, the native running and calling to the dogs, and they started for home. It was not a long ride, probably not more than a mile and a half as we went, but while tramping through the snow crust to the traps it seemed much longer.

I now thoroughly enjoyed the novel ride. In the dusky twilight the dogs trotted cheerfully homeward, obeying the musical calls of their driver, and the little bells jingled merrily. Darker and more purple grew the skies until they tinted the snow over which we were passing, and by the time we had halted before the hotel door it was really night.

By the clock it was fifteen minutes past four and the thermometer registered fifteen degrees below zero.

Then we toasted our feet before the big heater, removed and shook out our frosty furs, and answered the two children's questions. To these Mollie gave her explanations in Eskimo, and I told of the ptarmigan tracks I had seen on the snow drifts.

Sunday, January sixth: Yesterday I moved into the little southeast room which was formerly Miss J.'s. It has pretty paper on the walls, and a small heater in one corner, besides a single cot, and I soon settled quite comfortably. The room with the bunks was needed for the men, of whom there are so many most of the time. The room I now have has a south window, but not a double one, and gets heavy with frost, which remains on the panes; but I can have a fire when I want one, as the stove burns chips and short wood, of which there are always quantities in the shed. B. tells me to use all the wood I want, as there is no shortage of fuel, nor men to haul and cut it, which I think is very kind. A little fire while I am dressing nights and mornings, however, is all I shall try to keep burning.

Miss J. came with Ivan, bringing several native children to visit their parents for a few hours, but took them back with her after supper when the meeting was over, which she had held in the kitchen. We had sixteen to supper, including natives. Afterward we went down to the beach to see the party off for the Home. Ivan led the dogs, five in number, hitched to the big sled. Miss J. ran alongside, the visiting preacher at the handle bar, and the little children on the sled. After watching them off, we came home and then took a walk of a mile out upon the ice on the White Mountain trail, which was in fairly good condition. There were six of us. When we got back to the house, I played by

request on the organ, for the three Swedish visitors from Council.

The weather is bright and beautiful, and sixteen degrees below zero.

Monday, January seventh: The boys came in from their stampede to the creeks, and M. says they staked us all rich if there is anything good in the ground. My claim is Number Ten, below Discovery, on H. Creek, and sounds well, if nothing more. Of course we women are all much elated, and talk of "our claims" very glibly, but a few sunken prospect holes will tell the story of success or failure better than anything else.

This has been a busy day in the house until I went at half-past two in the afternoon to Mollie's to find her ill in bed with a very bad throat. I gave Jennie and Charlie two hours of my time, and went home, to return in the evening at Mollie's request. The poor woman was suffering severely, and I did what I could for her, rubbing her throat with camphorated oil and turpentine and wrapping it in thick, hot flannels. Then I assisted her to bed, rubbing her aching bones, and left her less feverish than when I went in. The thermometer is above zero, and the weather is pleasant.

Two men from Topkok came in to see the Recorder's books, and searched all through them without finding what they wanted and expected to find, and then went away with sober and disappointed faces. "Curses not loud but deep" come to our ears each day about the Commissioner's work of recording, and many say he is now deep in dissipation at Nome, instead of attending here to his business as he should. Miners declare him unfitted in every way for

his position, and affirm that they will depose him from office.

I went out this morning and bought a student lamp at the store, paying six dollars and a half for it. This, with my case of coal oil, will light my room nicely, besides giving a good deal of heat.

The Marshal and men are home from the Koyuk River, after four weeks of winter "mushing," and say nothing about their trip. They did not manage to pull harmoniously together, and Mr. L. returned before them.

January ninth: When I went today to the hotel to teach my pupils, I found the men in the room cleaning the big heater, and ashes and dirt drove us out of the place, so we went upstairs to another room in which Mollie sometimes sews, and where we found her at work on a white parkie for the musician. I played with Jennie for a time before the lesson, and Ageetuk came in on an errand, while Polly, the Eskimo servant, jabbered in a funny way and wabbled over the floor like a duck, as is her habit when walking. This girl is short, fat and shapeless, with beady black eyes, and a crafty expression, certainly not to be relied on if there is truth in physiognomy.

At the hotel all is excitement and bustle, getting the men off for the Kuskokquim River, where the new strikes are reported. Strong new sleds have been made by the natives, grub is being packed and dogs gotten into condition, besides a thousand other things which must be done before the expedition is ready to start. Seeing them make such extensive preparations reminded me that perhaps I might get the men to carry my paper and stake something for

me, so, plucking up my courage, I asked the promoter of the expedition, whom I know, if I could do this, and was readily given permission. In a few minutes paper, pen and ink were brought in, a clerk was instructed to draw up the paper in proper shape, which he did, and it was signed and witnessed in due form, Mollie subscribing her name as one of the witnesses. For this I tendered my heartiest thanks, and ran home with a light heart, already imagining myself a lucky claim owner in a new and rich gold section on the Kuskokquim. The party of five men are to leave tomorrow morning for the long trip of several hundred miles over the ice and snow.

Mollie advises me to have another pair of muckluks made smaller, and to keep these I am wearing for traveling, when I will wear more inside them, so I will take my materials over tomorrow and she will have Alice cut and sew them for me. I hope they will not make my feet look so clumsy as do these, my first ones.

January tenth: This was a cold and windy morning, so the men at the hotel could not start out for the Kuskokquim as they intended. Some men came to the Mission to see if they could rent the old schoolhouse to live in, the doctor and his plucky little wife having left some weeks ago for a camp many miles east of Chinik. After looking it over, the men have concluded to take it, and move in soon. There are no buildings to buy or rent in this camp, nor anything with which to build, so it is hard lines for strangers coming to Chinik. This afternoon Alma went over with me to the hotel to stitch on Mollie's sewing machine, and I carried the deerskin for my new footgear which Alice will make acceptably, no doubt, as she is very expert.

Mr. H., two natives and two white men, were here to supper tonight on their way to Nome by dog-team, and are wishing to start at three in the morning in order to make the trip in two days. M. and L. are also here, so we had seven men to supper. We had fried ham, beans, stewed prunes, tea, and bread and butter.

This morning it was two degrees below zero, with a strong, cold wind; tonight it is fourteen degrees below zero with no wind, and is warmer now than then. No moonlight till nearly morning, but the stars shine brightly.

January eleventh: Mary sat up all night baking bread, and starting the men off for Nome between three and four in the morning. I got up at nine o'clock and enjoyed the magnificent sunrise. I went out with Ricka while she tried at the three stores to find a lining for her fur coat, but one clerk told us that no provision for women was made by the companies, and they had nothing on their shelves she wanted. At the hotel store she found some dark green calico at twenty-five cents a yard, which she was obliged to take for her lining.

While I gave Jennie her lesson her mother came from her hunting, and had shot six ptarmigan, having hurt her finger on the trigger of the gun. Mollie studies a little while each day, when Jennie has finished her lesson.

There is a sick Eskimo woman here now who was brought in from the reindeer camp yesterday, and Mollie has her upstairs in the sewing room on a cot. Mary, the nurse, went over with me to see her, and says she has rheumatic fever. She seems to be suffering very much, and cannot move her hands or

limbs.

January twelfth: At eight o'clock today the thermometer stood at forty-one degrees below zero, but registered thirty-two degrees during the middle of the day, and the houses are not so warm as they have been.

When I called for Jennie at the hotel today I found her crying with pain in her leg, so she could not take a lesson, but I sent out for little Charlie who came running to me with outstretched arms. He is a dear little child, and I am getting very fond of him. It is some weeks since Jennie first began crying occasionally with pain, and her parents cannot understand it, unless it is caused by a fall she had on the steamer coming from San Francisco last summer, and of which they thought nothing at the time. I sincerely hope she is not going to be very ill, with no doctor nearer than White Mountain. The sick woman still suffers, though they are doing what they can for her. The captain requested me to bring our medical books over, or send them, that he can look up remedies and treatment of rheumatic fever, for that is what she no doubt has.

While seated at the organ an hour later, in came the storekeeper and his clerk, followed soon after by the captain and musician. Then we had music and solos by the last named gentleman, and the knitting needles kept rapidly flying. At eleven o'clock they went out into the intense cold, which sparkled like diamonds, but which pinched like nippers the exposed faces and hands.

Here is another cold, quiet day, with the thermometer at thirty-five degrees below zero, and it is a first class one to spend by the fire. We have read,

slept, eaten, and fed the fires; with only one man, three girls and myself in the house. At ten in the evening G. and B. came in from a five days "mushing" trip on the trails, being nearly starved and frozen. They were covered with snow and icicles, their shirts and coats stiff with frost from steam of their bodies, as they ran behind the sled to keep warm. A hot supper of chicken (canned), coffee, and bread and butter was prepared in haste for them, and they toasted themselves until bedtime.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LITTLE SICK CHILD.



HE winter is rapidly passing, and so far without monotony, though what it will bring to us before spring remains to be seen. Little Jennie has been suffering more and more with her leg of late, and her papa sent for the doctor at White Mountain, who came today by dog-team. The child's mother has had a spring cot made for her, and she was put to bed by the doctor, who says the knee trouble is a very serious one, and she must have good nursing, attention being also paid to her diet. The Eskimos are all exceedingly fond of seal and reindeer meat, and Jennie's Auntie Apuk or grandmother will often bring choice tidbits to the child at bedtime, or between meals, when she ought not to eat anything, much less such hearty food. When the little child sees the good things, she, of course, wants them, and having been humored in every whim, she must still be, she thinks, especially when she is ill. A problem then is here presented which I may help to solve for them. Jennie and I are growing very fond of each other, and she will do some things for me which she will not do for others who have obeyed her wishes so long. I begin by round-about coaxing and reasoning, and get some other idea into her mind, until the plate of seal meat is partially forgotten, and does not seem so attractive at nine in the evening as when

presented with loving smiles by her old grandmother, who does sometimes resent the alternative, but is still exceedingly solicitous that the little girl should recover. As grandmother understands English imperfectly, Mollie is obliged to reiterate the doctor's orders in Eskimo, making them as imperative as possible, and the poor old Eskimo woman goes home with the promise that Jennie shall have some of the dainties at meal-time on the morrow.

In appearance grandmother is still somewhat rugged, being a large woman, with an intelligent face, which expresses very forcibly her inner feelings, and being, probably, somewhere between sixty and seventy years of age. Her husband, who has been dead only a year or two, was much beloved by her, and no reference to him is ever made in her presence, without a flow of tears from her eyes. Her love of home and kindred seems very strong, and her devotion to little Jennie amounts almost to idolatry, so the solicitude expressed by the good woman is only a part of what she really feels, but which is shown in hundreds of ways. When the doctor settled the little girl in her bed she adjusted a heavy weight to the foot on the limb which has given her so much trouble, and now the grief of Mollie and her mother is unbounded. Poor old grandmother wipes her eyes continually, leaving the house quickly at times to rush home and mourn alone, as she is so constrained to do, her sorrow for her darling's sufferings being very sincere. Later she comes in after doing her best at courage building, tiptoes her way in to see if her pet is sleeping or awake, and bringing something if possible, with which to amuse or interest the invalid. However great is the grief of the women, that of the child's papa is equally sad to see, and he, poor man,

is forced to face the probability of a long and dreary winter, if not a lifetime of suffering for his darling child. One cannot help seeing his misery, though he tries like a Trojan to hide it, and keeps as cheerful as possible to encourage others. He is always an invalid himself.

The main topic of interest to Jennie now is the little stranger who has come to live with her Auntie Apuk, and whom she is so desirous of seeing that she almost forgets her trouble and suffering, asking constantly about its size, color, eyes, hair, hands and feet. She counts the days before she can see it, and puzzles greatly over the fact of its not possessing a name, her big black eyes getting larger and blacker as she wonders where one will be found. Little Charlie is allowed in to see Jennie at times, and wonders greatly to find her always in bed, asking many questions in his childish Eskimo treble, and patting her hand sympathetically while standing at her side.

"Mamma," said he the other day to Mollie in Eskimo, with a pleased smile on his face, and when the two were alone, "the ladie loves me."

"How do you know?" asked Mollie.

"Because," he said shyly, putting his little arms about her neck, "because she kissed me." Whereupon Mollie did the same, and assured him of her own love, always providing, of course, that he was a good boy, and did what papa and mamma told him to do.

This conversation Mollie reported to me a few days after it took place, and I assured her with tears welling up in my eyes that the little child had made no mistake. Strange action of the subjective mind of

one person over another, even to the understanding by this Eskimo baby of a stranger heart, and that one so unresponsive as mine. The child, deprived as he was of an own mother's love, still hungered and thirsted for it, and he was quick to discern in my eyes and voice the secret for which he was looking. How I should enjoy giving my whole time to these two children, and they really do need me to teach and care for them; but I am dividing myself between them and the Mission, and the winter days are very short.

The thermometer today registered fourteen degrees below zero, against twenty-eight yesterday and thirty below the day before that.

Mr. H. has returned from Nome, bringing me a package of kodak films sent from Oakland, Cal., last August, and which I never expected to receive after so long a time. I was delighted to get them, and now I can kodak this whole district, above and below.

Mollie is trying to study English a little, but with many interruptions on every hand. The big living room is light and warm, our only study place, and yet the rendezvous of all who care to drop in, regardless of invitations, making it somewhat difficult for us to concentrate our attention on the lessons. The Marshal, the bartender, the clerks, cooks, miners, natives, strangers and all come into this room to chat, see and inquire for Jennie, play with Charlie, and get warm by the fire. Here is an opportunity of a lifetime to study human nature, and I am glad, for it is a subject always full of interest to me, though I frequently feel literally choked with tobacco smoke, and wish often for a private sitting-room.

Sunday, January twentieth: We are snuggled indoors by the fires under the most terrible blizzard of the season so far, with furious gales, falling and drifting snow, and intense cold. It is impossible to keep the house as warm as usual, and I have eaten my meals today dressed in my fur coat, my seat at table being at the end with my back close to the frosty north window. Though this is the place of honor at the board, and the missionary's seat when he eats in the Mission, still it is a chilly berth on occasions, and this is decidedly one.

The dining-room contains, besides the north window, one on the south side as well, and though both are covered with storm windows, the frost and ice is several inches thick upon the panes, precluding any possibility of receiving light from either quarter unless the sun shines very brightly indeed, and then only a subdued light is admitted. During the night the house shook constantly in the terrific gale, rattling loose boards and shingles, and I was kept awake for several hours.

At night I am in the habit of tossing my fur coat upon my bed for the warmth there is in it, as I am not the possessor of a fur robe, as all persons should be who winter here. Furs are the only things to keep the intense cold out in such weather as we are now having, but with some management I get along fairly well.

A reindeer skin not in use from the attic makes my bed soft and warm underneath, my coat over my blankets answers the same purpose, and the white fox baby robe from the old wooden cradle upstairs makes a soft, warm rug on the floor upon which to step out in the morning. Wool slippers are never off

my feet when my muckluks are resting, and I manage by keeping a supply of kindlings and small wood in my box by the stove, to have a warm fire by which to dress.

These days we do not often rise early, and ten o'clock frequently finds us at breakfast, but we retire correspondingly late, and midnight is quite a customary hour lately. Today we passed the time in eating, sleeping, singing, and reading. A visiting Swedish preacher came over a few days ago from the Home, and is storm-bound in the Mission. He is a large, heavy man, with a hearty voice and hand grip, and is a graduate of Yale College, using the best of English, having filled one of the vacant Nome pulpits for several weeks last fall before coming to Golovin.

Today he has read one of Talmage's sermons to us, and we have sung Gospel songs galore, in both Swedish and English, with myself as organist. When this is tired of, the smaller instruments are taken out, and Ricka has the greatest difficulty in preventing Alma from amusing the assembled company with her mandolin solo, "Johnny Get Your Hair Cut," the young lady's red lips growing quite prominent while she insists upon playing it.

"Good music is always acceptable, Ricka, and on Sunday as well as on any other day, so I cannot see why you will not let me play as I want to. I do not think it a sin to play on the mandolin on Sunday. Do you, Pastor F.?" asked Alma of the preacher, appealingly, and in all innocence.

What could he say to her? He laughed.

"O, no," said Ricka, "I do not say that mandolin music is sinful on Sunday, and if you would play 'Nearer

My God to Thee,' or some such piece, and not play 'Johnny,' I should not object." And she now looked at the preacher and me for reinforcements.

Alma is not, however, easily put down, and the contest usually winds up with Ricka going into the kitchen where she cannot hear the silly strains of "Johnny," which Alma is picking abstractedly from the strings of the instrument, while the preacher continues his reading, and I go off to my room.

Mr. Q., a Swedish missionary, and his native preacher called Rock, have arrived from Unalaklik, with the two visiting preachers at the Home, and they held an evening service in the schoolhouse, which was fairly well attended. There were seven white men, the three women in this house and myself, besides many natives of both sexes. Grandmother was there with Alice, Ageetuk and others, and the missionary spoke well and feelingly in English, interpreted by Rock into Eskimo. One of the preachers sang a solo, and presided at the organ. Some of the native women present had with them their babies, and these, away from home in the evening, contrary to their usual habit, cried and nestled around a good deal, and had to be comforted in various ways, both substantial and otherwise, during the evening; but the speakers were accustomed to all that, and were thankful to have as listeners the poor mothers, who probably could not have come without the youngsters.

Considerable will power and auto-suggestion is needed to enable me to endure the fumes of seal oil along with other smells which are constantly arising from the furs and bodies of the Eskimos, made damp, perhaps, by the snow which has lodged upon them

before entering the room. Fire we must have. Those who are continually with the natives in these gatherings do get "acclimated," but I am having a hard struggle along these lines.

The three Swedish and one Eskimo preacher left today for the Home, after I had taken a kodak view of them, and their dog-team. As the wind blew cold and stiffly from the northwest, they hoisted a sail made of an old blanket upon their sled.

There are many who are ingenious, and who are glad to help the sick child, Jennie, pass her time pleasantly, and among them is the musician. Being a clever artist as well as musician, he goes often to sit beside Jennie, and then slate and pencils are brought out, and the drawing begins. Indian heads, Eskimo children in fur parkies, summer landscapes, anything and everything takes its turn upon the slate, which appears a real kaleidoscope under the artist's hands. Jennie often laughs till the tears run down her face at some comical drawing or story, or the musician's efforts to speak Eskimo as she does, and both enjoy themselves immensely.

Yesterday Mollie went out to hunt for ptarmigan. She is exceedingly fond of gunning, has great success, and she and the child relish these tasty birds better than anything else at this season. Ageetuk also is a good hunter and trapper, and brought in two red foxes from her traps yesterday, when she came home from her outing with Mollie. Little Charlie ran up to Mollie on her return from her hunt, and cried in a mixture of Eskimo and English:

"Foxes peeluk, Mamma?" meaning to ask if she did not secure any animals, appearing disappointed when told by his mamma (for such she calls herself

to the child) that she did not find anything today but ptarmigan.

It was twenty degrees below zero this morning, and the sun was beautifully bright. The days are growing longer, and it is quite light at eight o'clock in the morning. The short days have never been tiresome to me because we have not lacked for fuel and lights, and have kept occupied.

One of the Commissioners and two or three other men have been trying for a long time to get their meals here, but the girls have pleaded too little room, and other excuses, until now the Commissioner has returned, and renewed his requests. Today he came over and left word that he and two others would be here to six o'clock supper, at which the girls were wrathy.

"I guess he will wait a long time before I cook his meals for him," sputtered Alma, who disliked the coming of the official to the house, and under no consideration would she consent to board him.

"My time is too short to cook for a man like that," declared Mary, with a toss of her head, as she settled herself in the big arm chair in the sitting room, and poor Ricka, whose turn it was this week to prepare the meals, found herself in the embarrassing position of compulsory cook for at least two of the men she most heartily despised in the camp, and this too under the displeasure of both Alma and Mary.

"What shall I do?" groaned Ricka, appealing to me in her extremity. "Will you sit at table with them tonight, Mrs. Sullivan? because Alma and Mary will not, and I must pour the coffee. O, dear, what shall I have for supper?" and the poor girl looked fairly

bowed down with anxiety.

"O, never mind them, Ricka," said I, "just give them what you had intended to give the rest of us. I suppose they think this is a roadhouse, and, if so, they can as well board here as others; but if Alma refuses to take them, I do not see what they can do but keep away," argued I, knowing both Alma and Mary too well by this time to expect them to change their verdict, as, indeed, I had no desire for them to do.

"I'm sure it is not a roadhouse for men of their class," growled Alma, biting her thread off with a snap, for she was sewing on Mollie's dress, and did not wish to be hindered. "I'll not eat my supper tonight till they have eaten; will you, Mary?"

"Indeed, I will not," was the reply from a pair of very set lips, at which Ricka and I retired to the kitchen to consult together, and prepare the much-talked-of meal.

Then I proceeded to spread the table with a white cloth and napkins, arrange the best chairs, and make the kitchen as presentable as I could with lamps, while Ricka went to work at the range. We had a passable supper, but not nearly so good as we usually have, for the official had not only taken us by surprise, but had come unbidden, and was not, (by the express orders of the business head of the restaurant firm), to be made welcome.

At any rate, Ricka and I did the best we could under the circumstances, the meal passed in some way, and the official then renewed his request to be allowed to take all his meals in the Mission, meeting with nothing but an unqualified refusal, much to his

evident disappointment.

I doubt very much now the probability of my getting any more copying to do for him, as he says I could have persuaded Alma to board him if I had been so inclined; but then I never was so inclined, and have about decided that I do not want his work at any price.

January twenty-fifth: This has been a very cold, windy day, but three of the men came in from prospecting on the creeks, and have little to report. To think of living in tents, or even native igloos, in such weather for any length of time whatever, is enough to freeze one's marrow, and I think the men deserve to "strike it rich" to repay them for so much discomfort and suffering. Mr. L. and B. walked to the Home and back today—twenty-four miles in the cold. I bought two more fox skins of the storekeeper with which to make my coat longer.

Mr. H. and Miss J. came to hold a meeting in the kitchen for the natives, and Mollie interpreted for them, as Ivan was not present. They all enjoy singing very much, and are trying to learn some new songs. Contrary to my expectations, they learn the tunes before they do the words, which are English, of course.

Later the musician came over and sang and played for an hour and a half at the organ, which all in the house enjoyed; but he is worried about his friend, who was bitten by the mad-dog, and is in poor health, he told us tonight. They have lately moved into the old schoolhouse, and like there better than their former lodgings, which were very cold. There are three of them in the schoolhouse, or rather cabin, for it is an old log building, with dirt roof, upon

which the grass and weeds grow tall in summer, and under the eaves of the new schoolhouse, a frame structure with a small pointed tower.

Sunday, January twenty-seventh: The missionaries held a meeting in the sitting room this forenoon at which the Commissioner was present, not because he was interested in the service, Alma says. I suppose he had nothing else to do, and happened to get up earlier than usual. I presided at the organ, and Miss J. led the singing. The day was a very bright one, but the thermometer registered thirty degrees below zero.

The missionaries have taken Alma with them to visit for a few days, and do some sewing at the Home. We all ran out upon the ice with them, but did not go far, as it was very cold. For a low mercury these people do not stay indoors, but go about as they like dressed from top to toe in furs, and do not suffer; but let the wind blow a stiff gale, and it is not the same proposition.

Four men came from the camp of the shipwrecked people, the father of Freda, the little girl, being one. They say the child and her mother are well, and as comfortable as they can be made for the present, but in the spring they will go back to Nome.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF THE MINING

CAMP.



GAIN the boys are starting for the Koyuk River country. Although it is the twenty-eighth of January, and between twenty-five and thirty degrees below zero, nothing can deter Mr. L., who has made up his mind to go to the headwaters of the big river regardless of weather. L., B. and a native are to compose the party, and this time they are going with reindeer. They will take with them a tent, stove, fur sleeping bags, matches, "grub," guns and ammunition, not to mention fry pans and a few tins for cooking purposes. Then they must each take a change of wearing apparel in case of accident, and make the loads as light as possible. B. has made it a point to look well at his guns and cartridges, and has been for days cleaning, rubbing and polishing, while hunting knives have also received attention. The party may have, in some way, to depend upon these weapons for their lives before their return.

January twenty-ninth: Twenty-five degrees below zero, but without wind, and the boys have started off on their long trip up the Koyuk. The reindeer were fresh and lively, and when everything was loaded and lashed upon the three sleds, the animals were hitched to them, when, presto! the scene was

changed in a moment. Each deer ran in several directions at the same time as if demented, overturning sleds and men, tossing up the snow like dust under their hoofs, and flinging their antlers about like implements of battle. Now each man was put to his wit's end to keep hold of the rope attached to the horns of the deer he was driving, and we who had gone out upon the ice to watch the departure feared greatly for the lives of the men interested.

At one time Mr. H., who was kindly assisting, was flung upon the ground, while a rearing, plunging animal was poised in mid-air above him; and I uttered a shriek of terror at the sight, thinking he would be instantly killed. However, he was upon his feet in an instant, and pursuing the animals, still clinging to the rope, as the deer must never, under any consideration, be allowed to get away with the loaded sleds.

When one of the boys attempted to sit upon a load, holding the rope as a guide in his hands, there would be a whisk, a whirl, and quicker than a flash over would go the load, sled and man, rolling over and over like a football on a college campus.

At this time the sun shone out brightly, tinting rosily the distant hills, and spreading a carpet of light under our feet upon the ice-covered surface of the bay. The clear, cold air we breathed was fairly exhilarating, sparkling like diamonds in the sun-beams, and causing the feathery snowflakes under our feet to crackle with a delightful crispness.

When the elasticity of the reindeer's spirits had been somewhat lessened by exercise, a real start was made, and we watched them until only small dots on the distant trail could be distinguished.

Something unpleasant has happened. M., the Finlander, told me this morning that he wants the room I occupy upstairs, and, of course, I will have to give it up. As the other rooms upstairs must be left for the men, of whom there are such numbers, there is no place for me except on the old wooden settle in the sitting room. To be sure, this is in a warm corner, but there are many and serious inconveniences, one being that I must of necessity be the last one to retire, and this is usually midnight.

For some time past I have been turning over in my mind the advisability of asking for the situation of nurse and teacher to Jennie and Charlie, and living in the hotel. Supplies are growing shorter in the Mission as the weeks go by, and my own are about exhausted, as is also my money. The children need me, and there is plenty of room in the hotel, though I am not fond of living in one.

I have consulted Mr. H., who sees no harm in my doing this if I want to. Meals are one dollar each everywhere in Chinik, and most kinds of "grub" one dollar a pound, while for a lodging the same is charged. To earn my board and room in the hotel by teaching and taking care of the two children I should be making an equivalent to four dollars a day, and I could have a room, at last, to myself. This is the way I have figured it out; whether Mollie and the Captain will see it in the same light remains to be seen.

Later: I ran over to see Mollie and her husband, and to present my plan to them. They both assented quickly, the Captain saying he does not want Jennie to stop her studies, and she is fond of having me with her. Besides, her mother wants to spend a good deal of time out hunting and trapping, as she thinks it

better for Jennie, Charlie and herself to have fresh game, of which they are so fond, than to eat canned meats. I think it is better for them, and shall not object to some of the same fare myself when it is plenty. I am very glad, indeed, of the opportunity to earn my board and room in this way, for my work will only be with and for the two children, and I love them very much.

January thirtieth: A bad storm came up this afternoon with wind and snow. At the Mission one of the newcomers is making two strong reindeer sleds. He says he is used to Alaska winters, has been up into the Kotzebue Sound country, and is now going again with reindeer as soon as his sleds are finished. He is exceedingly fond of music, and enjoys my playing. I wonder if he will offer to stake a claim for me! I will not ask him.

January thirty-first: This terrible storm continues with snow drifting badly, and with wind most bitter cold. What about the boys on the Koyuk trail? I fear they will freeze to death. I have finished six drill parkies for the storekeeper, but cannot get them to him in the blizzard.

February first: I found when calling upon Jennie today that her mother was sick in bed with a very bad throat, so I spent most of the day and evening there. I did all I could for Jennie as well as Mollie, doing my best to amuse the child, who is still strapped down on her bed, and must find the day long, though she has a good deal of company. I had a first-class six o'clock dinner at the hotel tonight,—that is, for Alaska, at this season of the year.

February second: This is my birthday, and I have been thinking of my dear old mother so far away,

who never forgets the date of her only daughter's birth, even if I do. I should like to see her, or, at least, have her know how well I am situated, and how contented I am, with a prospect before me which is as bright as that of most persons in this vicinity. If I could send my mother a telegram of a dozen words, I think they would read like this: "I am well and happy, with fair prospects. God is good." I think that would cheer her considerably.

It is beginning to seem a little like spring, and the water is running down the walls and off the windows in rivers upon the floors of the Mission, which we are glad are bare of carpets; the snow having sifted into the attic and melted. The warm rain comes down at intervals, and we are hoping for an early spring.

Mollie is really very sick, and must have a doctor, her throat being terribly swollen on one side. The pain and fever is intense, and though we are doing all we know how to do, she gets no better. Some men started out for the doctor at White Mountain, but there was too much water on the ice, and they returned.

February sixth: The man who made the two reindeer sleds for his Kotzebue trip has gone at last with two loads and three reindeer. He wanted his drill parkie hood bordered with fur, as I had done some belonging to others, and I furnished the fox tails, and sewed them on for him.

"Shall I stake a claim for you?" asked the man with a smile the day before he left the Mission.

"O, I would like it so much!" said I, really delighted. "I did not wish to ask you, because I thought you had promised so many."

"So I have," he replied, "but I guess I can stake for one more, and if I find anything good I will remember you."

"Shall I have a paper made out?" I inquired, feeling it would be safer and better from a business point of view to do so.

"You may if you like. I will take it," said he; and I thanked him very cordially, and hastened to the Commissioner to have the paper drawn up. It did not take long, and the man has taken it, and gone. Being an old mail carrier and stampeder of experience in this country, he ought to know how to travel, and, being a Norwegian, he is well used to the snow and the cold. He says he always travels alone, though I told him he might sometime get lost in a storm and freeze to death, at which he only laughed, and said he was not at all afraid. Two years afterwards he was frozen to death on the trail near Teller City, northwest of Nome. He was an expert on snowshoes or ski, both of which he learned to use when a boy in Norway.

February tenth: The two young men, B. and L., have returned from the Koyuk trip, having been able to travel only three days of the eleven since they left here on account of blizzards, but they will not give it up in this way.

Mollie and Jennie are better, the doctor having been here two days. For the little invalid there is nothing of such interest as Apuk's baby, and as the child is well wrapped and brought in often to see her, she is highly delighted. She holds the baby in her arms, and hushes it to sleep as any old woman might, lifting a warning finger if one enters the room with noise, for fear of waking it. Little Charlie cries with whooping

cough a great deal and is taken to Ageetuk's house when he gets troublesome, as he worries both Mollie and Jennie. Under no consideration is Charlie to come near enough to Jennie to give her the whooping-cough, for she coughs badly already. She and I make paper dolls by the dozen, and cloth dresses for her real dolls, which, so late in the season, are getting quite dilapidated and look as though they had been in the wars.

Many natives are now bringing beautiful furs into camp for sale, and among others one man brought a cross fox which was black, tipped with yellow, another which was a lovely brown, and a black fox valued at two hundred dollars which the owner refused to sell for less, though offered one hundred for it. I have never seen more lovely furs anywhere, and I longed to possess them.

It seems almost like having a hospital here now, for we have another patient added to our sick list. Joe, the cook, is ill, and thinks he will die, though the doctor smiles quizzically as she doses him, thinking as she does so that a few days in bed and away from the saloons will be as beneficial as her prescriptions.

Today the hills surrounding the bay were lovely in the warm sunshine both morning and evening, pink tinted in the sunrise and purple as night approached.

Mail came in by dog-team from Nome, going to Dawson and the outside, so I mailed several letters. I wonder if they will be carried two thousand miles by dogs—the whole length of the Yukon, and finally reach Skagway and Seattle.

What a wicked world this is anyway! My two fox skins were stolen from the living room of the hotel

last night, where I hung them, not far from the stove, after having had them tanned, and forgetting to take them to my room. I can get no trace of them, and am exceedingly sorry to lose them. The captain thinks the skins will be returned, but I do not.

The Commissioner from Council came into the hotel, and he, with the resident official, proceeded to celebrate the occasion by getting uproariously drunk, or going, as it is here called, "on a toot," which is very truthfully expressive, to say the least.

February eighteenth: The doctor went home several days ago. Mollie is better, and wore, at the Sunday dinner yesterday, her new grey plaid dress made by Alma, which fits well and looks quite stylish. I sat with her at the long table which was filled with guests, employees and boarders—a public place for me, which I do not like over much, but what can I do? The two Commissioners are sobered, look sickly, and more or less repentant; the resident official declaring to me he would now quit drinking entirely, and buy me a new silk dress if he is ever seen to take liquor again.

I had nothing to say to him, except to look disgusted, and he took that as a rebuke. The other Commissioner was exceedingly polite to me when he came into the living room to bid all good-bye, and said if, at any time, there was anything in the way of business transactions he could do for me, to let him know; he would be delighted—as if I would ever ask any favor of him!

The weather is blustery, like March in Wisconsin. Mollie asked me to go upstairs with her, look at rooms, and select one for myself, which I did, deciding to take a small unfurnished one (except for

a spring cot, mirror, and granite wash bowl and pitcher), as this will be easily warmed by my big lamp, and it has a west window, through which I will get the afternoon sun.

I cleaned the floor, and tacked up a white tablecloth which I had in my trunk, for a curtain; spread my one deer skin rug upon the floor, made up the cot bed with my blankets, opened my trunk, hung up a few garments, and was settled. This is the first spring bed I have slept upon since Mr. H. took the velvet couch away from the Mission. I found the boarded walls very damp, as was also the floor after cleaning, but my large lamp, kept burning for two hours, dried them sufficiently, and I am quite well satisfied.

Ageetuk has been papering the sewing-room with fresh wall paper, and it looks better, but it has made a good deal of confusion all round, and there are numbers of people, both native and white, coming and going all day long.

February twenty-third: Yesterday was Washington's Birthday, but quiet here. Today Mollie and I took Jennie and Charlie out on a sled with Muky to push behind at the handle-bar through the soft, deep snow. Mollie sat upon the sled, and rode down hill twice with the children, Muky hopping on behind; but I took a few kodak views of them, which I hope will be good. I also received some mail from the outside which was written last November.

Some of the men in the hotel have tried to play what they call "a joke" on me. The steward of the house has a key which unfastens the lock on my door, as well as others; so they went into my room and tied a string to the foot of my bed, first boring a hole through the boards into the hall, and running the

string through it. This string, I suppose, they intended to pull in the night and frighten me; but Mollie and I happened to go up there for something and found it.

I was indignant, but everybody of whom Mollie inquired denied knowing anything of it, and I said very little. Going to my trunk afterwards, I found that the lock had been picked and broken,—a pretty severe "joke," and one I do not relish, as now I have no place in which to keep anything from these men. If they enter my room whenever they choose in the daytime, what is to prevent them when I am asleep? I took Mollie upstairs and showed her the broken lock, and she stooped to brush some white hairs from her dark wool skirt.

"Where they come from?" she asked suddenly. Then, picking at the reindeer skin upon the floor under her feet, she said, nodding her head decidedly, "I know. He—Sim—come to me in sewing-room,—hair all same this on two knees of blank pants. I say, 'Where you get white reindeer hair on you, Sim?' He say, 'I don't know.' Sim make hole in wall, and string on bed for you, Mrs. Sullivan. He make lock peeluk, too," and Mollie's face wore a serious and worried expression.

"O, well, Mollie," said I, "don't worry. I shall say nothing to any of the men as they are mad at me now."

Mollie nodded significantly and said: "Your fox skins peeluk, Mrs. Sullivan. Sim knows where—he never tell—sell for whiskey, maybe," and Mollie turned to go, as though he were a hopeless case, and beyond her government.

"Yes, Mollie, I think so; but you can not help what these bad men do. I know that, and do not blame you."

"My husband very sorry 'bout fox skins. He cannot find—he no blame," and she seemed to fear that I would attach some blame to the captain.

"No, indeed, Mollie, I don't think your husband can help what they do. I should not have left my fox skins hanging in that room, and will be careful in future, but if they come into my room they may steal other things, and I do not like it."

"I know, I know,—Sim no good—Joe no good—Bub no good," and she went away in a very depressed state of mind to Jennie and Apuk's baby.

Of course Mollie told all to the captain, who immediately accused the men in the bar-room, and they all swore vengeance upon me from that on, so I suppose they will do all they can to torment me.

We are having a sensation in Chinik. The "bloomin' Commissioner" is about to be deposed from office, for unfitness, neglect of duty, and dissipation; and a petition is being handed around the camp by the Marshal, praying the Nome authorities that he be retained. The honest storekeeper refused to sign it, as have many of the Swedes. The Commissioner swears by all that is good and great to quit drinking, and be decent. Time will tell—but I have no faith in him.

Mollie goes often these days to look for foxes and to shoot ptarmigan, taking with her a dog-team, and a native boy or two with their guns. When it is bright and sunny, I take the two little children out in the fur robes on the sled, with a native to push the latter,

and I enjoy the outing fully as well as they. Jennie is put to bed again on her return, and the weight—a sand bag—attached to her foot, according to the doctor's orders.

The weather is very springlike, and we have wind "emeliktuk," as little Charlie says when he has a plenty of anything. Snow storms are sandwiched nicely in between, but many "mushers" are on the trails. Mollie gets now and then a fox, either white or crossed, and one day she brought in a black one.

Liquor is doing its fiendish work in camp each hour of the twenty-four. Some are going rapidly down the broad road to destruction; a few turn their backs upon it, and seek the straighter way. Some half dozen of the men headed by Sim and Bub are drinking heavily most of the time, gambling between spells for the money with which to buy the poison.

Very late one night a party of drunken men pounded with their fists upon my door.

"She's in—hic—there, boys," said one of the men in a halting way customary with tipplers.

"Bust in the door!" blurted another.

"Drive her out'n here, Bub, ye fool!" yawned another, almost too sleepy for utterance.

In the meantime I lay perfectly still. Not a sound escaped me, for although my heart beat like a sledge hammer, and I was trembling all over, I knew it was best not to speak. After a little more parleying they all went off to finish their "spree" elsewhere. Next day I reported the affair to the captain, who, with his wife, in their ground floor apartments in the farther end of the building, had not heard the noise of the

night before. Of course the men were now furious, denying everything, calling me a "liar," ad infinitum.

A fine-looking young man, a dentist and doctor, claiming to come from an eastern city, while sitting at the table last evening, after much insane gibberish, fell back intoxicated upon the floor, and lay insensible for some time. He was finally, when the others had finished eating, dragged off to bed in a most inglorious condition, to suffer later for his dissipation. O, how my heart ached for his dear old mother so far away! If she had seen him as I saw him, I think she would have died. It is better for her to believe him dead than to know the truth.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN UNPLEASANT ADVENTURE.



HEN Sunday comes, Jennie and I always wear our best clothes, neither sewing, studying, nor doing any work, but we read Bible stories, learn verses, look at

pictures, and keep the big music box going a good share of the time. Sometimes if it is bright and warm, I take the two children out for a ride, and Jennie likes to call upon her grandmother.

The long front porch of the hotel has been opened again, the sides having been taken off, and the ice and snow cut away from the steps, so the little ones often play upon the porch in the sun for an hour or two. There are now a number of little puppies to be fed and brought up, some of them of pure Eskimo breed, and Charlie likes to frolic with them by the hour. They are very cunning, especially when Mollie puts a little harness which she has made upon each one, making them pull the sticks of wood she fastens behind in order to teach them to haul a load. Mollie is frequently gone for two days hunting, and if she does not find what she looks for the first day she sleeps upon her sled a few hours rolled in her furs, then rises and "mushes" on again.

Far and near she is known and respected, and the name of "Mollie" in this country is the synonym of all that is brave, true and womanly; hunting and trapping being for an Eskimo woman some of the most legitimate of pursuits. The name of Angahsheock, which means a leader of women in her native tongue, was given her by her parents, as those who know her acknowledge.

In severe contrast to the character of Mollie is Polly, who has developed an insane jealousy of me on the children's account, and who never loses an opportunity to annoy and insult me, much to my surprise. One day she will hide my books, pour soup over my dress in the kitchen, slam the door in my face, and make jeering remarks in Eskimo, causing

the native boys to giggle; and worst of all, telling Charlie in her language that I will kill and eat him, thus making him scream when I attempt to wash or dress him.

However, there is another and principal reason for her ill treatment of me, which is far reaching, for Polly and Sim are cronies, and the girl does what he tells her to do, and that is to torment me as much as possible.

For these reasons and others I decided some time ago to carry my meals into the living room on a tray when I give the children theirs; especially when Mollie is away, and the rough element does not feel the restraint of her presence at table. There are no other white women in the house, unless, perhaps, one comes in from the trail with the men for a day, and these are, as a rule, not the kind of women to inspire the respect of any one. So I spread Charlie's and my food upon a small table, and Jennie's on her own tray, for after each little outing she is strapped and weighted down in bed as before, and we would be very happy if it were not for Polly, Sim, and a few other "toughs" in the hotel and vicinity.

Each day I manage, when Jennie is busy with Apuk's baby, O Duk Dok, the deaf girl, grandmother, and her other numerous Eskimo friends, to slip away and run out for a little fresh air, and into the Mission for a few minutes. Then I sit down at the organ for a while, or hear of those coming and going on the trails, perhaps climbing the hill behind the Mission for more exercise before going back to Jennie.

The first week in April has been pleasant, and sunny for the most of the time, but last night the eighth of the month, the thermometer, with a high wind, fell

to thirty degrees below zero, and froze ice two inches thick in my room upstairs.

Mr. L. and B. have returned from their Koyuk trip, having staked one creek upon which they found colors, and which they were informed by natives was a gold bearing creek. Their supply of grub would not allow them to remain longer. They have staked a claim for me, with the others. Number Fourteen, above Discovery, is mine, but they do not give out the name of the creek until they have been up there and staked another stream near the first one. When I get my papers recorded I shall feel quite proud of this, my best claim, perhaps, so far; and I am thankful and quite happy, except for the disagreeable features of hotel life, which I am always hoping will be soon changed. So long, however, as the deadly liquor is sold in almost every store and cabin, the cause of disturbances will remain, and men's active brains, continually fired with poison as they are, will concoct schemes diabolical enough to shame a Mephistopheles.

Today, after due deliberation regarding the matter, I asked B., on the aside, if he would lend me a revolver. He gave me a quick and searching look.

"Do you want it loaded?" he asked.

"Yes, please, and I will call after supper for it," said I, in a low tone, while going out the door.

Early this morning, putting on my furs and carrying a small shoe box under my arm, I ran over to the Mission. In the hall I was met by B., to whom I handed the box. He took it quietly and went directly to his room, reappearing in a moment and handing it back to me, saying significantly as he did so: "Three

doses of that are better than one, if any are needed," which remark I understood without further explanation.

I have brought the box to my room and have placed it under the head of my cot upon the floor, where, in case of emergency, it may be of service. It is not a pretty plaything, and will not be used as such by me, but I shall feel safer to know it is near at hand.

Little did I know when I selected my room the day Mollie brought me upstairs that on the other side of the board partition slept the man who had killed another in the early winter; and, though the murderer has so far never molested me in any way, still he sometimes gets what they call "crazy drunk," and is as liable to kill some other as he was to kill the first; then, too, thin board walls have ears, and I have heard the mutterings and threats of these wretches for a number of weeks.

I have been exceedingly sorry for a month past to see the preparations my friends, the Swedish women in the Mission, are making to go to Nome, and now they expect to start tomorrow. They must be in town to put everything in readiness for the opening of the "Star" when the first steamers arrive from the outside. The weather is bright and pretty cold today, making the trails good, but in a thaw they are bad and are now liable to break up at any time. Quite a party will go to Nome, Mr. L., M. and others, and they will travel with dogs. I dread to see my Swedish friends, the only white women in this camp with whom I can be friendly, leave Chinik, for I shall then be more alone than ever. If this tiresome ice in the bay would only move out so the boats could get in, we should have others, but there is no telling when

that will be. Many are now betting on the breaking up of the ice, and all hope it will be very soon.

May second: My Swedish friends left very early today for Nome, and only Miss L. from the Home is there, sweeping out the place; but B. and the visiting preacher will go with her to the Home today, closing the hospitable doors of the Mission for a time. This evening they held a meeting for the natives in camp, and I attended, but it seemed like a funeral without the friends now "mushing" on the Nome trail.

A woman has come to live at Mellie's, and is a study in beaver coat, dyed brown hair (which should be grey, according to her age), and with, it is reported, a bank account of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, after having lived in Alaska nearly five years. She is called a good "stampeder," has a pleasant, smiling face, but is usually designated "notorious."

May tenth: Mollie went out early with Muky, her dog-team and guns, to escort Ageetuk, Alice and Punni Churah, with their mother, who is Mollie's aunt, to their new hunting camp in the mountains. At seven in the evening Mollie returned with wet feet. Tomorrow she will take a net, and some other things they have forgotten. They have gone to take their annual spring vacation and hunt grey squirrels for a month, living in a hut in the meantime. The weather is warm and springlike.

May thirteenth: The captain has been obliged to go to Nome on business, weak and ill though he is, and has been for months. It did not seem to me that he could live through the winter, and he is far too weak to take this long trip over the trail, but he says he is obliged to go, and will return at the earliest possible moment. He has taken Fred, the Russian boy, and a

team of nine dogs, leaving after supper, and intending to travel night and day, as we now have no darkness.

The dissipated men around camp, idle and drunken most of the time, with nothing to occupy their attention after the long, tedious winter, still spend their hours in gossiping, swearing, drinking, and gambling, knowing no day and no night, but making both hideous to those around them. As a destroyer of man's self-respect, independence, and dignity, there is nothing to compare with the accursed liquor. There are numbers of instances in camp proving the truth of this statement. There is the English clergyman's tall and handsome son, well educated, musical and of agreeable manners—fitted to grace the best society, but—liquor is to blame for his present condition, which is about as low as man can sink.

It is ten in the evening and I am in my little room upstairs, the only white woman in the camp except Mellie and two like her. Down stairs in the bar-room the men are singing, first coon songs and then church hymns, with all the drunken energy they can muster. The crash of broken glass, angry oaths, and the slamming of doors reaches my ears so frequently as to cause little surprise, the French cooks in the kitchen adding their share to the disturbance. In a distant part of the hotel lies the little sick girl, her cot rolled each night close to the bedside of her mother, who tries to soothe her in her pain, Mollie and the wicked little Eskimo servant being the only women besides myself in the house. The noise and confusion increases down stairs, and I shall sleep little tonight. I will look at my revolver and see that its contents have not been removed.

May fifteenth: Here I am alone with the little children, a bad native girl, and a gang of the worst men in Alaska, Mollie having gone out hunting. At midnight Sim, Mellie and several others left for a dance at White Mountain, but it was two o'clock in the morning before the house was quiet. While I lay perfectly still, and trying to sleep, a man's stealthy footstep passed my door. He walked in his stocking feet—bare floors and walls echo the slightest sound, and my ears are keen. Was it a friend or foe? What was his object? My heart beat with a heavy thud, but I remembered the loaded revolver under my bed, and thanked God for it.

After a long time I slept a fitful, uneasy sleep for an hour, and dressed myself as usual at half-past six o'clock, feeling badly for want of needed sleep. Afterwards I washed, dressed and fed the children, amusing and entertaining them in my accustomed way. Ageetuk's house being closed, little Charlie is kept here all the time, Polly looking after him nights. A saloon keeper named Fitts, villainous in reality as well as in looks, is hanging around continually, wearing the blackest of looks at every one, having been in trouble nearly all winter, and closing out his saloon a few weeks ago. A big Dutchman, burly as a blacksmith and well soaked in whiskey, lounges about in blue denim and skull cap, winking his bleared eyes at Polly and swearing soundly at his native wife when she steps inside the doors to look after him.

All went well for a while today after Mollie's leaving, Jennie coaxing to be carried to her grandmother's for a visit, to which I consented, until Charlie and I sat down to supper, which I had spread, as is my habit, in the living room. During the day I had turned

matters well over in mind, and decided, with Mollie's advice, to sleep in her bed alongside of Jennie's cot, and to have grandmother stay with us, locking the doors of the rooms, as they should be. To my consternation, when I chanced to look for the keys in the doors, there were none, showing plainly that they had been removed.

This looked like a trap. There was nothing to do, much as I disliked it, but to ask for the keys, as I would never spend the night in the house without them. Soon afterward the steward entered, and I very calmly and politely asked for the door keys of the two rooms, saying that I would spend the night with Jennie. With cool insolence he replied that he would lock them himself.

Again the trap. I made no reply. I saw that he had been drinking—that he was not himself, and that it was useless to argue with him.

After waiting for an answer, and getting none, the man went out carelessly, leaving the door ajar behind him. At that moment the supper bell rang and he, with others, sat down to the table.

"She wants the keys to the doors, she says," drawled the man I had spoken with regarding them.

"What did ye tell her?" demanded one of the ruffians.

"I told her I would lock the doors myself," said the fellow.

"What does she want of keys? Who is she afraid of? It must be you, Bub; 'tain't me," said one.

"You're a liar!" shouted Bub. "It's the genial dispenser of booze here beside me she's afraid of."

"I'll see to her after supper, you bet!" shouted an official voice, at which I shuddered. A general hubbub now ensued; among others I could distinguish the word "black-snake whip," but I had heard enough.

I was planning as I listened. Leaning forward I kissed the little child beside me, and said softly, "Eat all your supper, dear, and then go to Polly. 'Sully' is going to grandma's."

Throwing a light wrap over my head, I ran out of the front door, and around the west end of the house, careful not to pass the dining-room windows, where the men would see me, and hastened to grandmother's cabin, knowing that I should there find Jennie. Grandmother lived alone except for O Duk Dok, the deaf girl, and they must give me shelter for the night.

Here I found Jennie quite happy, with her deaf friend sitting on the edge of the bed beside her, while her grandmother was busy with her work.

In a few words I explained to the old woman the situation, and I was made welcome, Jennie being pleased to remain in the cabin all night. I knew Polly would put Charlie to bed when the time came, and the boy was safe enough where he was. I did not believe the gang would disturb me in grandmothers' cabin, but I feared they would loot my room in my absence.

Here Jennie could assist me. I now asked her to have O Duk Dok go out for the native named Koki, and bring him to me, which she did, the deaf girl understanding by the motion of the child's lips what was being said.

O Duk Dok then drew on her parkie, and went out.

"Koki," said I, when the native had entered the room a few minutes later, and closed the door behind him, "will you go to my room—Number three—in the hotel, and get some things for me?"

"Yes," was the laconic reply of the man.

"Here is the key of the door. Between the mattresses of the bed you will find two books, and in the shoe box on the floor there is a revolver. Bring them to me under your parkie so no one shall see what you have. Take this little key, lock my trunk and be sure you fasten the door behind you. You won't forget?"

"All right. I no forget," and Koki grinned, and went out.

He did not forget. In about twenty minutes he returned, bringing the keys, revolver, and diaries which I had kept hidden for fear the lawless fellows might find and destroy them.

I now felt much relieved. I did not think the gang would come to the cabin, but in case they did there was the revolver, and grandmother's two doors had locks, which if not the very strongest, were better than none, and I fastened them immediately after Koki's departure.

May eighteenth: The night I slept in grandmother's cabin with Jennie passed quietly for us. I slept in my clothes and muckluks, an old quilt and fur parkie on some boards being my bed, though grandmother finally gave me a double blanket for covering when I asked for it.

It was long past midnight before we slept. The child

was restless, and urged her grandmother to tell her Eskimo stories. O Duk Dok slept heavily, unconscious of all around her. My own senses were on the alert. I listened intently to catch every sound, but we were too far away from the hotel to hear the carousal that I well knew was there in progress. The mushers from the dance were hourly expected home, and would then add their part to the midnight orgies. The low droning of the old Eskimo woman, telling her tales of the Innuits, of the Polar bear, the seal and the walrus, of the birds, their habits and nestlings; this was the only sound I heard.

After a time the others slept and I went to the window and looked out. At my right, only a stone's throw away, was the Mission, its windows and doors all fastened, and its occupants gone. I felt a heart-sinking sensation as I thought of the friends who were there lately. Across the way was the old schoolhouse, in which were the musician, his partner and the deaf man, who had been bitten by the mad dog. They were within calling distance, and for that I felt thankful. I had dreaded the night in the cabin for fear that I should suffer for fresh air, but seeing a broken pane of glass into which some cloth had been stuffed, I removed the latter, and allowed the pure air to enter. Of course the place was scented with seal oil, but grandmother's cabin was comparatively tidy and clean.

Next morning, when we knew that breakfast was over, we went in a body to the hotel, grandmother carrying Jennie on her back, according to Eskimo custom. Some of the men were still sleeping off their dissipation of the night before. Nothing was said about our remaining away, and the Eskimo women spent the day with us. Others also came, called

quietly in to see Jennie, and remained to the meals I was glad to give them for their company.

When six o'clock arrived, and still we saw nothing of Mollie, I felt anxious. If she did not return it meant another night in the native hut for us. Eight, nine, ten o'clock—thank God! She had come at last. I could have hugged her for joy. She had nearly one hundred ptarmigan, enough to last till the captain came home, and would not leave us again alone.

Later: The captain returned from Nome, having made the trip of eighty-five miles and back by dog-team in four days and nights, a very quick trip indeed. The "toughs" have subsided, and are on their good behavior for the present, at least, fearing what the captain will say and do when their last doings are reported, but I understand that most of them are mortally offended at my remaining at grandmother's, as no one takes offense so easily as a rogue when his honesty is doubted.

CHAPTER XXV.

STONES AND DYNAMITE.



HE last week of May has finally come, and with it real spring weather. The children play out in the sand heap on the south side of the house for hours together, enjoying the warm sunshine and pleasant air, the little girl clothed from head to foot in furs. Never has a springtime been so welcome to me, perhaps because in striking contrast to the long, cold winter through which we have just passed. From the hillside behind the Mission, the snow is slowly disappearing, first from the most exposed spots and rocks, the gullies keeping their drifts and ice longer. Mosses are everywhere peeping cheerfully up at me in all their tints of gorgeous green, some that I found recently being tipped with the daintiest of little red cups. This, with other treasures, I brought in my basket to Jennie when I returned from my daily walk upon the hill, and together we studied them closely under the magnifying glass.

To examine the treasures brought in by Mollie, however, we needed no glass. They are sand-pipers, ptarmigan, squirrels, and occasionally a wild goose, shot, perhaps, in the act of flying over the hunter's head, as these birds are now often seen and heard going north. In the evening I see from my window the neighboring Eskimo children playing with their sleds, and sometimes they light a bonfire, shouting

and chattering in their own unique way. All "mushers" now travel at night when the trail is frozen, as it is too soft in the daytime, and the glare of the sun often causes snow-blindness. Then, too, there is water on the ice in places, which we are glad to see, and pools of the same are standing around the Mission and schoolhouse. I can no longer go out in my muckluks, but must wear my long rubber boots and short skirts.

Today I went out for an hour, walking to Chinik Creek over the tundra, from which the snow has almost disappeared, and returned by the hill-top path. The tundra was beautiful with mosses, birds were singing, and the rushing and roaring of the creek waters fairly made my head swim, they were such unusual sounds. The water was cutting a channel in the sands where it empties into the bay. Here it was flowing over the ice, helping to loosen the edge and allow it to drift out to sea.

There is little change in the manners and dispositions of the rough men in camp. There are the same things with which to contend day after day, the same annoyances and trials to endure, with new ones in addition quite frequently.

June has come at last, and all the world should be happy, but, alas, there is always some worm in the bud to do the blasting. This morning about three o'clock I was wakened by the sound of drunken voices outside my window, followed by stones hurled against the side of the house. Quickly rising, I cautiously peeped out from behind the curtain, but was not surprised at what I saw. There, about a hundred feet away, were four men, all well known to me as members of the gang, and all in the most

advanced stages of intoxication. On the step of a neighboring cabin sat the murderer, Ford, hugging in a maudlin way a big black bottle.

On the ground, in the dirt, there rolled two young men, the Englishman underneath, and Big Bub over him. Sim, the leader, had aimed four stones at my window, but missed it, and felt the need of more stimulant, so he took the bottle from Ford, carried it to the lumber pile, a few feet away, sat down, put it to his lips and drank heavily. Again and again he tipped up the bottle while he drank, but finally threw it away empty. Then, with much exertion, he stooped to pick up a stone.

He was aiming at my window. I dodged into a corner, but the box washstand stood partly in my way. Would he hit his mark? I did not believe it. He was too drunk. Crack! came the stone against the house.

I waited. Another followed. In the meantime the other men had paid no attention to him, as Ford was watching the two tumblers, the lumber pile being between them and Sim; and the three started for the front door around the south side of the house. Sim followed them. I now hoped he would forget his stone throwing. When they were all out of sight I breathed more freely. Surely now the trouble was over, I thought, and I threw off my fur coat which I had hastily pulled on over my wrapper, crept into bed and covered my head with the blankets.

I now thought quickly. Even if Sim should forget to throw more stones, would he not soon come upstairs and perhaps give me more trouble? Would it not be better to dress myself and be prepared for any emergency? I was hurriedly deliberating upon the

matter—my head still covered with the blankets—when there was a loud crash and shivered glass covered the floor and the bed clothes. Instantly throwing the latter back, I looked around me. I could see no stone, and I had heard none fall upon the floor, but it must be there somewhere.

I now stepped carefully out of bed, in order to avoid the glass, my feet being already in knit, wool slippers, with thick, warm soles—and again looked out.

There was no one to be seen. Sim had done his dastardly work, and gone indoors. Would this end it? My teeth shattered, and I felt cold. I must keep my nerve, however, and I did so, dressing myself carefully even to my stout shoes which I laced up in front and tied. Then I drew on my fur coat and sat down to wait.

Below the four men were poking around in the kitchen, trying to find something to eat or drink. It was not long before I heard them coming upstairs, and all tumbled into the next room, which was occupied by Ford.

If they came to molest me further there was yet one way of escape which I would try before using my revolver. The weapon I did not want to use unless driven to it. There was the staging outside my window which had never been removed since the house was built, the year before. I could very easily step out upon it, and walk to the end of the house, but then I must either jump or remain, for there was no ladder. This staging was, perhaps, twenty feet from the ground, and the latter frozen. To slide down a post would tear my hands fearfully.

I had not long to wait. To go peaceably to bed seemed to be the last thing these men thought of, and one picked up a gun, which, for hunting purposes, every man in the house kept close at hand.

"I zay, now, Bub, put up zat gun. Zis ain't no place for shootin'," drawled a thick, sleepy voice which I recognized instantly.

"Shut yer gab! Who's hurtin' you?" answered Bub, the biggest of the four, and one of the ugliest when intoxicated.

"Mrs. Sullivan's in the next room. You wouldn't shoot her, would you?" asked Sim sneeringly in a loud tone, for he could stand up under great quantities of liquor.

"Sh! Keep still a minute, you fool!" in a harsh whisper from Bub.

I was now thankful that I was dressed. I waited no longer. Opening the door I ran down stairs to Mollie and the captain, knocking loudly upon their door.

"Hang those brutes!" exclaimed the captain angrily, when I had finished telling him what had happened. "What is the matter with them, any way?"

"Whiskey," said I. "They are all as drunk as pirates."

"Show me your room and window," demanded the captain, who by this time had gotten into some of his clothing, and stepped into the living room where I was.

I then led the way upstairs, and threw open my door. What a sight! Broken glass covered the floor and bed, the cool morning air pouring in through the broken pane of which there was little left in the sash.

That was enough for the captain. He made straight for the next room, where all was now perfectly still, only Ford remaining in it, the others having had sense enough to sneak off to their own places, after hearing me run down stairs to report.

Seizing my blankets I closed and locked the door and made my way down stairs to Mollie. Above we could hear the captain's voice in angry altercation with the men, they denying everything, of course, even the stone throwing, with the window as evidence against them. It was half-past four and I had slept little. There was no fire in the house, and I was cold; so, throwing down a few skins in a corner of the sewing-room, with my blankets upon them, I covered myself to get warm.

At last the house was once more quiet, and I slept for an hour, only to meet black and angry looks from the men all day, accompanied by threats and curses, though I said nothing to them. I picked up the stone from my reindeer rug, where it had fallen after shattering the window pane, and it lay only two feet from my head. It was about the size of an egg.

Of course it is impossible for me to leave Chinik, as the winter trails are broken up, the ice has not left the bay, and no steamers can enter; so we are practically prisoners. O, how I long to get away from this terrible place! Never since I came to Chinik have I given these men one cross word, and yet they hate me with a bitter, jealous hatred, such as I have never before seen. Some weeks ago I pinned a slip of paper into my Bible, upon which I have written the address of my parents, in case anything should happen to me. O, to be once more safe at home with them! God grant that I may be before many months shall have

passed.

A splendid warm, bright day, June thirteenth, the most of which the children and I have spent upon the sandy beach in front of the hotel. Little Jennie lies and plays on the warm, dry sand, though, of course, she does not stand on her feet nor walk. Other small Eskimos come to play with them, for Charlie is always on hand for a play spell on the sand, and I doze and read under my umbrella in the meantime, with an eye always upon them. They make sand pies, native igloos, and many imaginary things and places, but more than any other thing is my mind upon the coming of the steamers, when I hope to get away.

Mollie came in last night from a seal hunt upon the ice, and she, with the three native boys, secured a white seal, and eight others, but did not bring all with them. There is a great deal of water on the ice at this time, and none but natives like to travel upon it. Ducks and geese are flying northward in flocks above our heads, and we feast daily upon them. They are very large and tasty, and the cook knows well how to serve them.

We now see a line of blue water out beyond the ice, and even distinguish white breakers in the distance. Today I took a field glass, and climbing the hill behind the Mission to look as far out as possible, strained my eyes to see a steamer. As I stood upon the point to get a better view, the whole world around seemed waking from a long, long sleep.

At my left was Chinik Creek, pouring its rushing waters out over the bay ice with a cheerful, rapid roaring. Farther away south stretched the Darby Cape into blue water which looked like indigo, surmounted by long rolling breakers with combs of

white, all being fully fourteen miles away. To the northwest of the sand-spit upon which Chinik is built, and which cuts Golovin Bay almost in two, the Fish River is also emptying itself, as is Keechawik Creek and other smaller streams. Over all the welcome sunshine is flooded, warming the buds and roots on the hillside, and making all beautiful.

June seventeenth: This is Bunker Hill Day in New England, and the men have been celebrating on their own account, setting off a fifty pounds box of dynamite in the neighborhood to frighten the women, I suppose. The shock was terrific, breaking windows, lamp shades, and jarring bottles and other articles off the shelves. Jennie was dreadfully frightened, and screamed for a few minutes, while the living room soon filled with men inquiring the cause of the explosion. By and by a man came in saying that another box of giant powder would be set off, but with that the Marshal left the room with a determined face, and we heard no more dynamiting. The men, as usual, were intoxicated.

I have just had a pleasant little outing at the Home, going with Mollie, who invited me to go with her. She was going out seal hunting on the ice, would leave me at the Home for a short visit, and pick me up on her return. Ageetuk and grandmother would take good care of Jennie for so short a time, and I needed the change, so I ran up to my room, threw some things hastily into a small bag to take with me, locked my trunk, (I had long ago put a package consisting of papers and diaries into the safe in the kind storekeeper's care), dressed myself in my shortest skirts and longest rubber boots, and we started. The weather was too warm for furs in sunshine, or while running behind a sled, so I wore a

thick jacket, black straw hat with thick veil, and kid gloves.

We left the hotel about half-past seven o'clock in the evening, but with the sun still high and warm. Mollie had her small sled and three dogs, with Muky and Punni Churah and their guns. The other sled was a large one, and to it were hitched seven good dogs, accompanied by Ituk and Koki. Upon the sleds were furs, guns, bags and fishing tackle. Along shore there was considerable water on the ice, in a few spots the latter had disappeared, and we could see the sandy beach, but farther east the ice was firmer, and Mollie, who made for the best looking places, led the way, I running closely in her footsteps.

Behind us came the men and teams, the calls of the Eskimos to their dogs sounding musically on the quiet evening air. Mollie and I were now leaping over water-filled cracks or lanes in the ice, she having assured me that after getting away from the shore it would be better traveling, and we could ride on the sleds when we were tired, but I felt considerable pride in keeping up with her, and soon grew very warm from the stiff exercise, unaccustomed as I was, while she was well used to it.

After we had left the shore some distance behind us we halted for the sleds to come up, Mollie seating herself upon the small one, I waiting for the other a little later. There I ran at the handle-bars for a time, but at last I threw myself upon the sled among the furs, and pulled a parkie over me. We were now in the water a foot deep most of the time, the dogs picking their way along over the narrowest water lanes, Ituk and Koki shouting to them to gee and haw, and with Eskimo calls and whip-snapping,

urging them on continually.

Soon we left the smaller sled behind; Mollie, Muky and Punni making the air ring with laughter and Eskimo songs. As we started out from home the sun shone brightly upon us, but as we left the land at our backs, and made our way farther out upon the bay, the sun dropped lower and lower, the sky became a mass of crimson and yellow, and the whole world seemed modestly blushing.

Along the east shore the rolling hills lay almost bare of snow, the brown tundra appearing softly and most artistically colored. To the north the mountains were still tipped with snow, as was also the promontory—Cape Darby, at the extreme southeast point. This was spotted and streaked with white, its rocky cliff black in shadow by contrast. Our eyes eagerly scanned the horizon for steamers, and a schooner had been reported off Darby loaded with fresh fruits and vegetables, but we could not see it.

By and by we were past most of the water lanes, and the ice was better. At half-past nine o'clock in the evening the sky was exceedingly grand, and a song of gratitude welled up in my heart, for this was another world from the one we had just left, and I no longer wondered at Mollie's love of hunting in the fresh air, under the beautiful skies, and with her freedom to travel wherever she liked.

With her I felt perfectly safe. No harm could come to me when Mollie led the way, and my confidence in the native men was equally strong; for were they not as familiar with ice and water as with land? I soon saw that we were headed toward the island, though I did not know why, and by this time Mollie was far ahead, also that we were being followed by a dog-

team from Chinik, which puzzled me, for I had not heard that others were going out hunting for seal, or starting for the Home, which was my destination.

When we reached the north end of the small island Mollie ran up the path like a deer, I following, as did the natives, leaving the dogs to rest upon the ice. From a hole in the rocks Koki now hauled his kyak or small skin boat, where he had left it from a former trip, and dragging it down upon the ice, he lashed it upon the small sled to be carried still farther.

The dog-team, which I had seen following in the distance, had now come up with us, and I heard one man say to the other: "There is Mrs. Sullivan," but I did not recognize the voice. When they came nearer, we found it to be two men from camp who were going out to the schooners to buy fruit and vegetables, and they wanted to get a dog belonging to them which Mollie had borrowed and had hitched into her team. A change of dogs was then made, and we started—Mollie and I on her big sled, the other two following.

We now skirted the rocky cliffs, and found the ice hummocky between great, deep cracks where the water was no longer white, but dark and forbidding. Sometimes Koki suddenly started the dogs to one side to avoid dark-looking holes in the ice, the dogs leaping over seams which quickly lay beneath us as the fore and hinder parts of our sled bridged the crevasse of ugly water.

Now the sled swayed from side to side as the dogs made sudden curves or dashes, then a big hummock of ice and snow had to be crossed, and one end of the sled went up while the other went down. I was holding to the side rails with both hands, and

knowing that the sled was a good, strong one, I had no fear of its breaking, but my feet were cold in my rubber boots, and I had drawn some furs over me.

Mollie is not a great talker, she seldom explains anything, and one has only to wait and see the outcome of her movements, and this I did, when she suddenly with Ituk left the sleds and climbed the rocks of the island again on the south side. Then I saw them gathering sticks and small driftwood, and knew that they would make a fire upon the ice at midnight, while preparing to hunt for seals.

Coming to a rough place, with high-piled ice between great, ugly seams over which the sagacious dogs dragged the sleds always in a straight line, not slantwise, I climbed out, and Mollie and Ituk came with their driftwood, which they threw upon the sled; the two men making for the schooner forging ahead in the direction of Cape Darby.

Ituk and Muky now made ready to go with me to the Home, a half mile away to the east where they were also to get some bread, this important item having been forgotten in the hurry of departure from Chinik. In the meantime Mollie, not to lose a moment of time, as is her method, had gotten out her fishing tackle and was already fishing for tom-cod through a hole in the ice. Bidding her Beoqua (good-bye), we started for the Home, Ituk politely taking my little bag, and Muky leaping lightly over the rocks toward the mainland. Along the shore of the island I was fearful of cutting my boots on the jagged rocks and rubble thickly strewn over the sands, and had to proceed cautiously for a time, but Ituk, perceiving my difficulty, led to a smoother path, and we were soon on the mainland, and upon the soft tundra,

when it was only a few minutes walk to the Home.

It was eleven o'clock in the evening, and we found the missionaries just returned from a trip to the schooner, where they had secured fresh potatoes and onions. The smell and taste of an onion was never so good to me before, and the potatoes were the first we had seen in six months.

I had been in the Home in the early spring for a day, and now, as then, met with a warm welcome from the missionaries. They now had double the number of native children they had in Chinik, and their house is large and commodious, though unfinished.

I was assigned the velvet couch upon which I had spent a good many nights, and the two natives returned to Mollie after securing some bread from Miss E. for their lunches.

Next day we visited, and I rested considerably, finding again how good it was to be in a safe and quiet place with no fear of stone throwers or giant powder.

About half-past ten o'clock in the evening, just after the sun had set, we started on our return trip, Mollie having arrived with her dog-teams and natives. The sunset sky was exceedingly beautiful, but beneath our feet we had only very bad ice and water. Near the island great ice cakes were floating, interspersed with dark seams and lanes wider than we had before seen. Sometimes I rode on one of the sleds or walked, ran or leaped over the water holes to keep up with the rest until too tired and heated, when I threw myself upon a sled again; but as we proceeded we found firmer ice and less water. Mollie and I had both to ride upon one sled now, for Ituk had lashed

the kyak upon the little one, and they were one dog short, as an animal had run away while they were eating supper at the Home. Finally, pitying the dogs upon the large sled, who seemed to have a heavy load (although only one seal, as they had met with little success in hunting), I motioned to Ituk to wait for me, which he did.

"Ituk," I called, as I came nearer, "let me ride in the kyak, will you?"

"You ride in kyak?" asked the man in surprise.

"Yes, let me get in, I will hold on tight," and, as he made no objection, I climbed upon the boat, crept into the hole made for that purpose and sat down.

"All right, Ituk; I am ready," I said.

The man laughed, cracked his whip, and the dogs started.

I had not before realized that I would be sitting so high up, and that at each dip in a crack or depression of the ice, when the sled runner ran a little higher than the other, I should stand a grand chance of being spilled into the water, but my feet were so cold in my rubber boots that I was thinking to get them under cover would be agreeable, and though Ituk probably well knew what the outcome of my ride would be, he very patiently agreed to allow me to try it.

We had not gone far when our dogs made a sudden dash or turn, the right-hand runner slipped lengthwise into a seam, and over we went, sled, kyak, woman and all upon the ice in a sorry heap. The dogs halted instantly, and Ituk, who had been running on the left-hand side of them, came back at

my call.

"O, Ituk, come here and help me! I cannot get out of the kyak," I cried lustily. "I will not get into it again," and I rubbed my wrist upon which the skin had been slightly bruised, and he assisted me to my feet.

The native laughed.

"Kyak no good—riding—heap better run," he said.

"That's so, Ituk, but my feet are very cold."

"Get warm quick—you running," was his reply, and we started on again.

When five or six miles from Chinik the water became more troublesome, and our progress was slow. We were wading through holes, leaping over seams, and treading through slush and water. It was colder than the night before, a thin skin of ice was forming, but not firm enough to hold one up. I was cold and cuddled into the sled with Mollie, but the two natives running alongside were continually sitting upon the rail to get a short ride instead of walking, thus loading the sled too heavily upon one side, and we were soon all tumbled into water a foot deep.

As I went over I threw out my arm to save myself, and my sleeve was soaked through in an instant. Koki and Muky thought it great fun, and laughed and shouted in glee, but to me it was a little too serious. My clothes were wet through on my right side, and I was now obliged to run whether I wanted to do so or not, for we were fully a mile from home. My gloves and handkerchief were soaked with water, and I threw them away, thrusting my hands into my jacket pockets and running to keep up with the others.

We were now wading and leaping across frequent lanes, and were more in the water than upon the ice. The sharp eyes of the natives had discerned the shore line well bordered by open water, and they were wondering how they would get across. Finally we could get no farther, and were a hundred feet from the beach.

"Dogs can swim," said Mollie, sententiously, as was her habit.

"How will you and I get on shore, Mollie?" I asked anxiously.

"Ituk, big man,—he carry you, may be," answered Mollie, roguishly, with a twinkle.

"But," I continued seriously, "how deep is the water, anyway, Koki?" seeing that he had been wading in to find out.

"Him not much deep. We walk all right,—'bout up here," and the native placed his hand half way between his knee and thigh to show the depth, then walking a little farther down towards the hotel he seemed to find a better place, and called for all to follow, which we did.

The men waded across to the shore, stepping upon stones which now and then, at this point, were embedded in the sand, Mollie boldly following their example. All wore high-skin boots, coming far above their knees, and water-tight, but my rubber-boots had never been put to a test like this, only coming a little above my knees, where the soft tops were confined by a drawstring, and this water was very cold, as I had good reason to know.

However, there was nothing to do but go on, first

watching the others, and then plunging boldly in. I drew my boot-tops higher, fastened the strings securely, picked up my short skirts and wound them closely about me, but not in a manner to impede my progress, and stepped in.

By this time the dogs and men were upon the sands, and making for home, only a few rods away, but I took my time, walking slowly in order that the water should not slop over the tops of my boots, and we finally reached the beach and the house safely.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOOD-BYE TO GOLOVIN BAY.



ON the morning of the twenty-sixth of June I awoke to find that the ice had drifted out to sea in the night, eight days after Mollie and I had taken our twelve miles trip across the bay and return. Then came hard rain and wind, that, for several days, blew the ice back into the bay, first to one side, and then to the

other, so that the steamers waiting to come in could not do so for fear of the drifting floes. By the thirtieth of June schooners were coming into the bay with passengers and freight, and the coast steamers, "Elmore" and "Dora," had begun to make regular trips to and from Nome.

With them came mails from the outside, with newspapers and tidings of friends in the States. Then our fingers trembled at opening our letters until we found that all our dear ones were well, and we heartily thanked the Lord. There were other white women in camp by this time, and many strangers at the hotel, among others, officials, and those in authority.

Since the stone-throwing episode the Marshal had been doing duty as watchman, sleeping during the day and guarding the house nights, the heavy iron "bracelets" in his inner coat pocket weighing scarcely more than the loaded revolver in his belt.

Our little sick girl being obliged now to keep her bed continually, with no more playing in the sand and sunshine, although her cough had left her, was still the same sweet, patient child she had been through all her illness, and my whole time was given to her. Before one of the sunny south windows of the living room we placed her cot each morning, and here she received her numerous friends, both Eskimo and white, and their names were legion. They came from the east, west, north and south, all sorry to know of her illness, and bringing presents with them.

Sometimes it was a little live bird or squirrel, a delicious salmon trout or wild fowl for her supper; sometimes it was candy, nuts, or fresh fruit from Nome, and with everything she was well pleased and

joyous. Friends soon came in from the outside, bringing city dolls dressed in ribbons and laces; there were tiny dishes, chairs, tables,—a hundred things dear to a little girl's heart, and all pleased her immensely, but all were laid quickly aside for a basket of wild flowers or mosses, for a fish, bird, animal or baby, showing plainly her taste for the things of nature in preference to art. Her love for her birthplace, with its hills, streams and ocean is a sincere one, and, young as she is, and having seen the great city by the Golden Gate, with many of its wonders, she is happiest in Chinik.

Here lives her dear, old grandmother, her cousins and aunts, not to mention the little calico-capped baby belonging to Apuk, for which she has a whole heartful of love, and the sight of which is better to her than medicine.

During the month of July we eagerly watched the incoming steamers, and welcomed all new comers who landed in Chinik. Many were simply passing through on their way up Fish River to the mines, and praise of the land of the "Ophir" gold was sung on all sides. A few remained for the summer. Here men built boats, and rowed away to Keechawik and Neukluk, carrying supplies for hunting or prospecting.

The captain's vegetable garden in the sand was growing rapidly, and was watched with eager eyes by everyone. We ate lettuce and radishes, picked fresh from the garden beds where they had been sown by the captain's own hands, and we found Ageetuk and Mollie to be quite famous cooks. Nothing so delicious as their salads (for the French cooks had long ago gone, the hotel management

being changed, and Mollie had a nice little kitchen of her own), and with fresh salmon trout, wild fowl, fresh meats and vegetables, we made up for many months of winter dieting.

All this time I longed to get away. I was going each day to the hill-top to watch for the steamers which would bring the letters for which I waited. Affairs connected with my gold claims were, with much anxiety and trouble, arranged as well as possible, and when I boarded the steamer, I would carry with me, at least, three deeds to as many claims, with a fair prospect of others; but I could not decide to remain another winter. I was determined to go to St. Michael, up the Yukon to Dawson, and "outside," and laid my plans accordingly. Letters from my father and brother in Dawson had been received.



CREEK.

How my heart ached when I thought of leaving the little sick girl and Charlie, the latter now grown wilful, but still so bright and pretty. I wanted to take both with me, but, no, I could not.

The little girl's work was not ended. Hers is a wonderful mission, and she is surely about to fulfill it. Born as she was in a rough mining camp at the foot of the barren hills, she was given the Eskimo name of Yahkuk, meaning a little hill, and she, like an oasis in a desert place, is left here to cheer, love, and help others.

Many times I have seen evidence of the sweet and gentle influences going out from the life of little Yahkuk as she lies upon her cot of pain. A tall, brown miner enters the living room, goes to the little bed by the window, speaks softly, and, bending over the tiny girl, kisses her. Then her big, black eyes glance brightly into blue ones looking down from above, full red lips part in a cordial smile, while the one solitary dimple in the smooth, round cheek pricks its way still deeper, and small arms go up around his neck. When the man turns, his face wears a soft and tender expression as though he were looking at some beautiful sight far away, and, perhaps, he is. God grant that the sweet memory of that little child's kiss may be so lasting that all their lives, he and others, may be purer and better men.

When August came I sailed away. The "Dora" had entered the bay in the morning and found my trunk packed and waiting; it was then only the work of a little time to make ready to leave. To my good missionary friends I had already said good-bye, and the captain and Mollie were kindly regretful. With tears in my eyes, but with real pain in my heart I bade Jennie good-bye, and stepped into the little boat which was to carry me to the "Dora."

Farewell, then, to Chinik, the home of the north wind and blizzard. Farewell to the ice fields of

Golovin, so tardy in leaving in summer, and to Keechawik and Chinik, whose clear rushing waters so cheered us in spring time. Farewell to the moss-covered hills and paths thickly bordered with blossoms. Farewell to my white-faced friends, and to the dark-skinned ones, "Beoqua."

CHAPTER XXVII.

GOING OUTSIDE.

"Do I sleep? Do I dream?
Do I wonder and doubt?
Are things what they seem?
Or are visions about?"



was now actually on my way home. It was not a dream, for here I was on board the snug little ocean steamer "Dora," belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, and I was on my way to St. Michael and Dawson. For ocean travel our steamer was a perfect one in all its appointments, being staunch and

reliable, with accommodating officers. After taking a last look at Chinik, I went to my stateroom. Only one stop was made before we reached St. Michael, that being at Port Denbeigh, a new mining camp where for some hours freight was unloaded. In about twenty-two hours from the time we left Chinik we were in St. Michael harbor, climbing down upon a covered barge which took us ashore.

It was nearly two years since I had first landed at this dock,—then in a snow storm, now in the rain,—then with my brother, now alone. Not at all like Nome is this quiet little hamlet of St. Michael by the sea. Neither saloons nor disorderly places are allowed upon the island. What was formerly a canteen for soldiers was now a small but tidy restaurant, where I ate a good dinner of beef-steak with an appetite allowable in Alaska.

Upon the streets and about the barracks were many boys in blue, while the hotel parlors swarmed at dinner time with officers and their wives and daughters, all richly and fashionably attired. At the parlor piano two ladies performed a duet, while the silken skirts of others rustled in an aristocratic manner over the thick carpet, and gentlemen in dress suits and gold-laced uniforms gracefully posed and chatted.

For my own part, a little homesick feeling had to be resolutely put down as I pulled on my old rain coat, and with umbrella and handbag trudged out in the darkness and rain to look for my baggage. I had already secured my transportation at the steamship office, where, at the hands of the kindly manager of the Alaska Commercial Company's affairs in this country I had received the most courteous treatment

I could desire. With little delay I found my trunk and went on board the Yukon steamer T. C. Power.

Some months before a consolidation of the three largest transportation companies in Alaska had been effected, including the Alaska Commercial Company, and I was now traveling with the latter under the name of the Northern Commercial Company, but I felt a security like that of being in charge of an old and trustworthy friend, and was quite content.

I had a long journey before me. We should reach Dawson in fourteen days unless we met with delays, but a fast rising wind warned us that we might encounter something of the sort where we were, and we did. For two days and nights our steamer lay under the lee of the island, not daring to venture out in the teeth of the gale which buffeted us. Straining, creaking, swaying, first one way and then the other, we lay waiting for the storm to abate. No river steamer with stern wheel and of shallow draught, could safely weather the rough sea for sixty miles to the Yukon's mouth, and we tried to be patient.

Early on the morning of the third day we started, and for twelve hours we ploughed our way through the waters with bow now deep in the trough of the sea, now lifted high in mid-air, to be met the next moment by an uprising roller, which, with a boom and a jar, sent a quiver through the whole vessel.

When at last the Yukon was reached, another obstacle appeared and we stuck fast on a sand bar. Soon two other steamers lay alongside, waiting, as did we, for a high tide to float us.

By night we lay in a dead calm. Indians in canoes came with fish and curios to sell, and we watched

the lights of the other steamers.

When the high tide came, we floated off the bar, but the scene was one of dull monotony, and it was not until the day following that we came into the hill country, and I was permitted to again see the dear trees I loved so well, not one of which I had seen since leaving California.

At Anvik there came on board a little missionary teacher bound for Philadelphia, who had spent seven years with the natives in this Episcopal Mission without a vacation, and her stories were interesting in the extreme.

Our days were uneventful. A broken stern wheel, enforced rests upon sand bars, frequent stops at wood yards with a few moments run upon shore in which to gather autumn leaves, and get a sniff of the woods, this was our life upon the Yukon steamer for many days. After a while the nights grew too dark for safe progress, and the boat was tied up until daylight.

Russian Mission, Tanana, Rampart, Fort Yukon and the Flats were passed, and the days wore tediously on. We were literally worming our way up stream, with low water and dark nights to contend with, but a second summer was upon us with warm, bright sunshine, and the hills were brilliantly colored.

One morning we approached the towering Roquett Rock, so named by Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka in his explorations down the Yukon years before, and connected with which is an Indian legend of some interest.

This immense rock (so the story runs) once formed a

part of the western shore of the Yukon, and was one of a pair of towering cliffs of about the same size, and with similar characteristics. Here the two huge cliffs lived for many geological periods in wedded bliss as man and wife, until finally family dissensions invaded the rocky household, and ended by the stony-hearted husband kicking his wrangling wife into the distant plain, and changing the course of the great river so that it flowed between them, to emphasize the perpetual divorce. The cliff and the rock are still known as "the old man" and "the old woman," the latter standing in isolation upon a low, flat island with the muddy Yukon flowing on both sides.

At this time of the year the days in Alaska grow perceptibly shorter, and we were not surprised to find dusky twilight at five in the afternoon, and to notice the eerie loneliness of the dark, sweet scented woods a few hours later, when the steamer lay tied to the river's bank.

One night after dinner a number of passengers sat idly about in the saloon of our steamer. Many had grown tired of cards, or had lost their money, and, finding themselves pitted against more lucky players, had called a halt and looked for other occupation. Miners lounged about, chatting of the gold mines, their summer's work and experiences. Big Curly and his little black-eyed wife listened attentively for a time.

The old miner was a born story teller, and knew a good yarn when he heard it. The boat was tied up for the night, and all was quiet around us. It was the time and place for a story.

At last Big Curly hitched his chair out farther from

the wall, and placed his feet comfortably upon the rungs; then, shifting his tobacco from one cheek to the other, he asked if any one present had heard the story of Nelson and the ghost. No one had heard it, and, after some coaxing, this is the tale he told.

The Ghost of Forty Mile.

Alaska has long smiled over old Indian legends, but Yukon men are still puzzling over the nocturnal rambles of the ghost of a murdered man in the Forty Mile District. Following the excitement of the discovery of Bonanza Bar and the sensational riches of Franklin Gulch came the murder of an old Frenchman named La Salle. Tanana Indians committed the crime in 1886. They crossed the mountains to Forty Mile, and killed La Salle in his cabin at the mouth of O'Brian Creek. With axes and bludgeons the old Frenchman's head was crushed beyond recognition.

Three months later the snow lay thick upon the ground. Upon the branches of trees it persistently hung, each added layer clinging tenaciously because there was no breath of wind to send it to the ground. Occasionally a dead twig, weighted too heavily by the increasing fall of snow, broke suddenly and dropped noiselessly into a bed of feathery flakes, thus joining its sleeping companions, the leaves.





ON BONANZA CREEK.

It was in January that two men might have been seen following their dog-teams down a frozen stream emptying into Forty Mile River. They wished to reach the mouth of the creek before they halted for the night. They had heard of a cabin in which they planned to spend the night, although it was a deserted one, and they were almost at the desired point.

The men were Swedes. They were strong and hardy fellows, and although frost covered their clothing and hung in icicles about their faces, they ran

contentedly behind the dog-teams in the semi-darkness, as only the snow-light remained.

"Hello!" called out Swanson finally to his companion. "Is that the place, do you think?" pointing to the dim shape of a log cabin a little ahead.

"Guess it is, but we'll find out. I'm nearly starved, and must stop soon, any way," said Nelson decidedly. "It's no use for us to travel further tonight."

"So I think," was the reply, as the dogs halted before the door, and the men entered the cabin. Here they found a good-sized room, containing one window. There was evidently a room on the other side, but with no connecting door, the two cabins having been built together to save laying one wall.

"This is good enough for me, and much warmer than a tent—we'll stay here till morning, and take the dogs inside," said kind-hearted Nelson, already unhitching the dogs from a sled.

Swanson did the same. The next moment their small store was carried into the cabin, wood was collected, and a cheery fire soon roared up the chimney.

After the men had eaten their supper and the dogs had been fed, pipes were brought out; and, stretching themselves upon their fur sleeping bags before the fire, the miners smoked and chatted while resting their weary limbs.

Suddenly, in the midnight stillness they heard a strange noise in the other part of the cabin. Some one was moaning and crying for help. There was no mistaking the sound, and both men were wide awake and intently listening.

It was the cry of some one in distress. The sounds grew more blood curdling. Nelson, unable to restrain himself longer, ran outside to investigate. Going to the window he looked inside. The sight he beheld congealed his blood, and fastened him to the spot as in a trance. This was the image of a man surrounded by a cloud of white, mist-like phosphorescent light, a deep scar standing out like a bleeding gash down the side of the head. Then the forgotten story of the murdered La Salle came to his mind, and for several minutes he was chained to the spot by the terror of the spectacle.

The apparition was half lying upon the floor, with arm uplifted, as if warding off a blow from some deadly instrument. Finally, in the desperation of his terror, Nelson called his partner to come to his assistance. Upon the approach of his companion he summoned enough courage to step to the door at the other end of the cabin, and try to open it. It was held fast by some superhuman agency, which allowed the door to be only partly opened.

Swanson, at sight of the ghostly visitor, was not so badly overcome as his friend, and having an inquisitive turn of mind, wished to find if the apparition really existed. He called out, demanding to be told who was there, but no answer came.

Still the mysterious, unearthly noises came through the cabin door. No soughing of the wind could make such sounds had a tempest been blowing, but a deathly stillness prevailed, and no breath of air stirred.

Then it was that Swanson gathered all that was left of his fast disappearing courage, and said: "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are you

demon, man or ghost?"

Suddenly the door opened and in the uncertain, misty light the apparition raised its hands to the stars as if in prayer, then it grew dark and the ghostly visitor vanished as if the earth had engulfed it forever.

While turning this tale over in mind later, I came to the conclusion, which seems a reasonable one, that some fortunate miner had, in all probability, hidden an amount of golden treasure in or about the cabin on the creek, and wishing to keep others away, had circulated the ghost story with good effect.

When Eagle City was reached I telegraphed my brother to meet me at the steamer's dock in Dawson, and my message was sent by one of Uncle Sam's boys in blue in charge of the office.

The town had grown considerably in the two years since I visited it, and now boasted new government buildings, officer's quarters, and a Presbyterian church, besides new stores and shops.

After Cudahy and Forty Mile, came Dawson, and we steamed up to the city's dock in the morning fog, and were met by the usual multitude of people, I having been seventeen days out from Golovin Bay. There, among others, waited my brother and his little son, and my joy at meeting them was great. Landing, it was only a walk of a few minutes to my kind old father, and my brother's wife was not far away.

I was now practically at home, for home is where our dear ones are, and surroundings are matters of small moment.

Three happy weeks followed, I went everywhere and

noted well the improvements in the camp since I last saw it. It was now a cleaner town every way, with better order, good roads and bridges, new government buildings, post-office and fine large schoolhouse. New frame churches replaced the old log ones in most cases. There was the governor's new palatial residence which would never be graced by the presence of its mistress as she and her babe had gone down to death a few weeks before in the Islander disaster in Lynn Canal; and there was the same steady stream of gold from the wondrous Klondyke Creeks, which I was now determined to visit.



SKAGWA

FROM THE TRAIN.

One bright, warm day, taking the hand of the small boy of the family, my sister and I started for Bonanza Creek. We were bound for the house of a friend who had invited us, and we would remain over night, as the distance was five miles. My kodak and three big red apples weighed little in our hands, and we turned toward the Klondyke River in high spirits.

For a mile the road was bordered with log cabins on the hillside, with the famous little river flowing on the other. We crossed the fine Ogilvie Bridge, and soon found ourselves upon Bonanza Creek, the stream which, with the Eldorado, had given to the world perhaps the major part of golden Klondyke treasure up to this date. Following the trail by a short cut we crossed shaky foot bridges, rested upon logs along the trail, and picked our way over boggy spots until our limbs were weary.

Everywhere there were evidences of the industry of the miners, but the claims and cabins looked deserted. Only in a few instances were men at work near the mouth of the creek. Many people were going to and from Dawson, and bicycles and wagons were numerous.

When we reached our destination we had walked five miles in the hot sunshine, and were hungry and warm, but a warm welcome from Mr. and Mrs. M., as well as a good dinner, awaited us.

After resting a while we were shown around the premises. Three log cabins were being built in a row upon the hillside, the one finished being already occupied by the M. family. Tunnels were being made in the mountain by Mr. M., as well as other claim

owners near by, and across the gulch mining operations were in full blast. On the M. claim preparations were being made for winter work, and it was expected that a valuable dump would be taken out before spring. For three hundred feet one tunnel entered the mountain back of the cabins, and we were invited to go into it.

Putting on our warmest wraps, with candles in hand, we followed our guide, the proprietor, for some distance. It was like walking in a refrigerator, for the walls and floor of the tunnel were solidly frozen and sparkled with ice. Whether the bright specks we saw were always frost, we did not enquire, etiquette forbidding too much curiosity, but from the satisfied nods and smiles we understood that it was a good claim, though only recently purchased by Mr. M., a handful of pudgy gold nuggets being shown us which fairly made our eyes water (because they did not belong to us).

Here we lodged all night, enjoying a graphophone entertainment in the evening. The next morning my kodak was brought out, and before leaving for home I had several views to carry with me.

Our walk back to Dawson was much easier than the one out to the claim.

From this on, we made ready to leave Dawson for Seattle, and were soon upon our way. Again I was forced to say good-bye to my father and brother, though they would follow us a month later, and together, my sister and I, stood with the little boy on the deck of the steamer, waving our good-byes.

We now traveled in luxury. We occupied a large and elegant stateroom, ate first-class meals, and had

nothing to do but enjoy ourselves. To change from steamer to steam cars at White Horse, which was now a good mining town, was the work of an hour's time, while a day's ride to Bennett and over the White Pass to Skagway was a real pleasure.

We found the quiet little port of Skagway swarming with people rushing for the steamers, and as if to give us variety we had considerable difficulty in finding our trunks in the custom's house, and in getting upon the steamer in the darkness of the late evening; but at last it was all successfully accomplished, and we took our last look at Skagway.

Eleven days after leaving Dawson we reached our journey's end, and landed in Seattle, our home coming being a source of delight to our dear waiting ones, as well as to ourselves; our safe arrival being another positive proof of the mercy and goodness of God.



*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A WOMAN WHO WENT TO ALASKA ***

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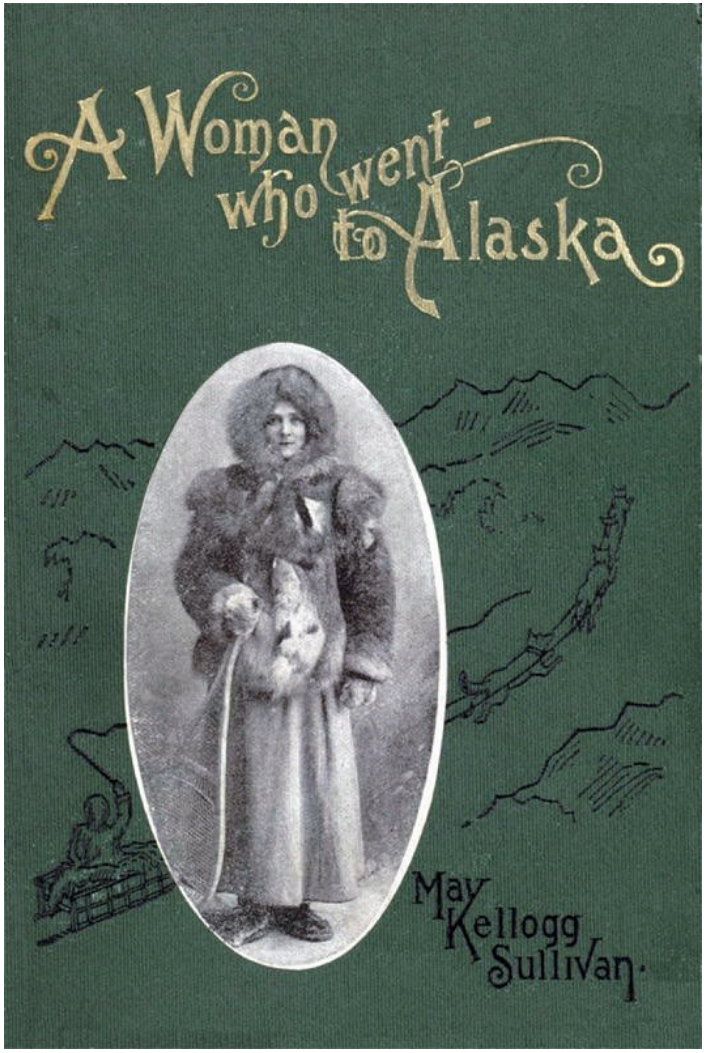
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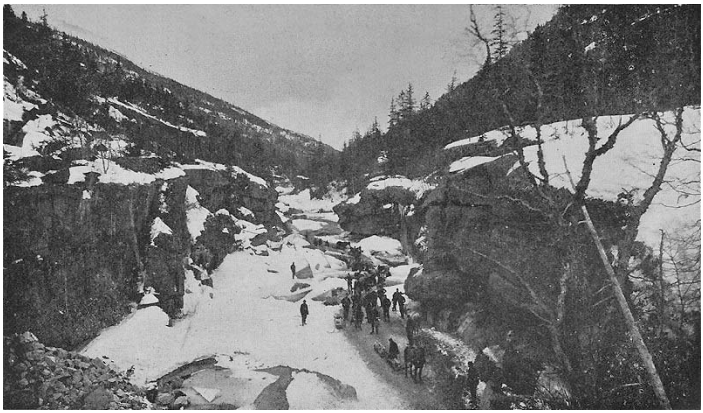
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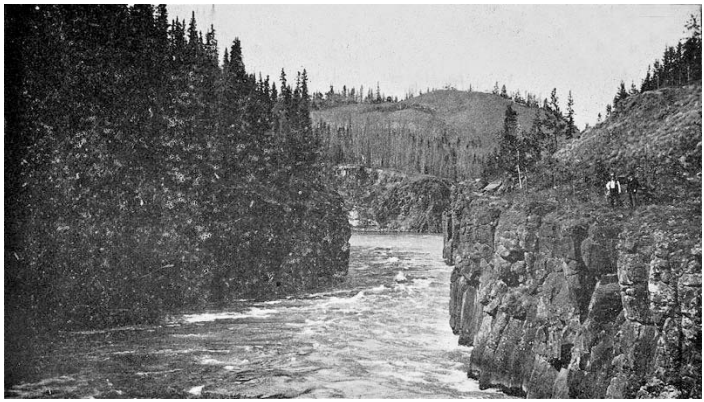
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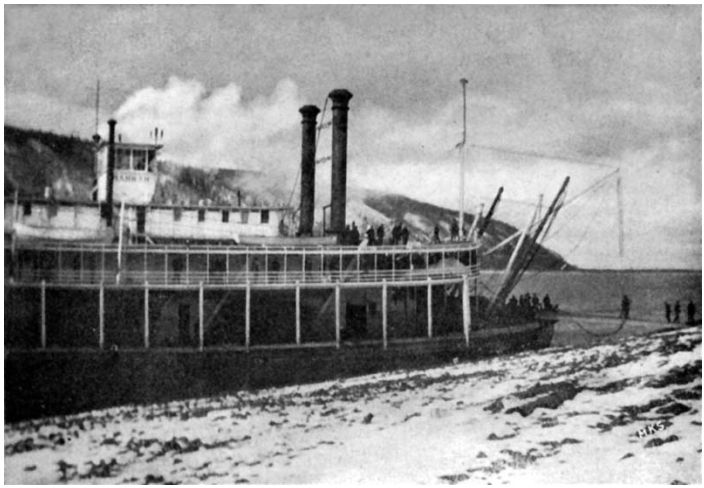
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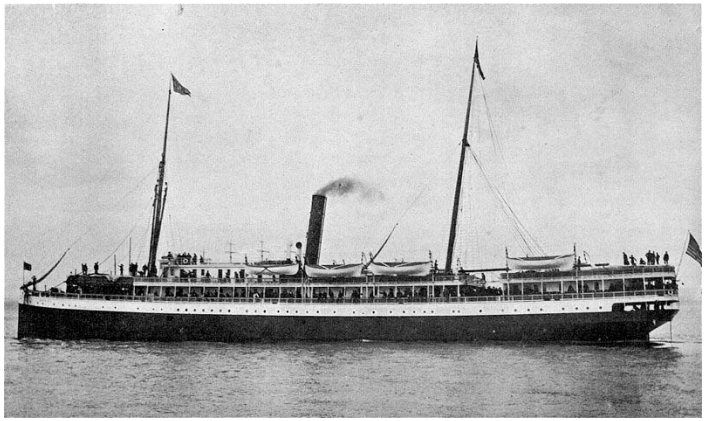
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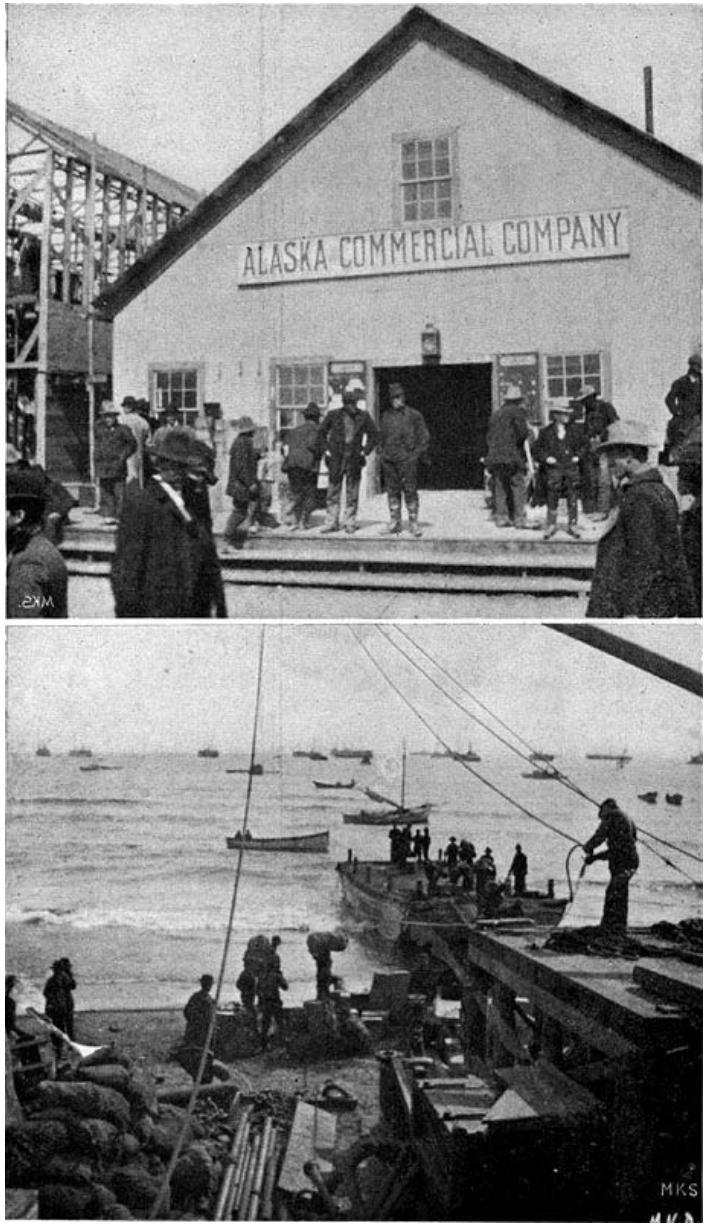
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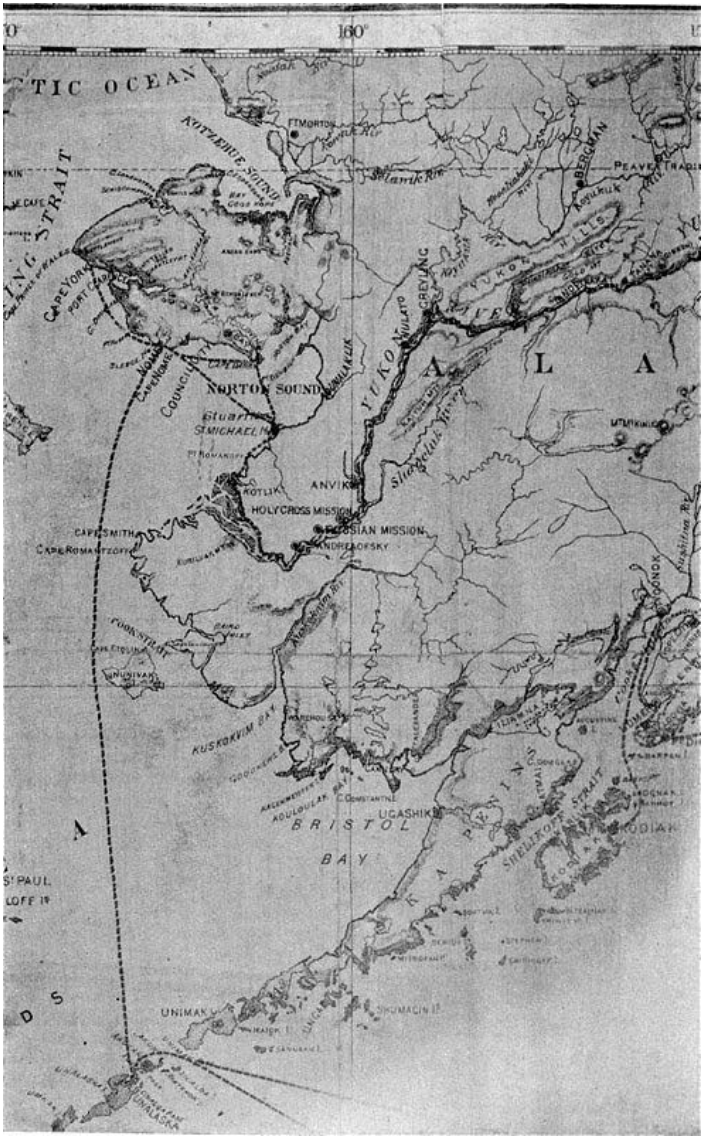
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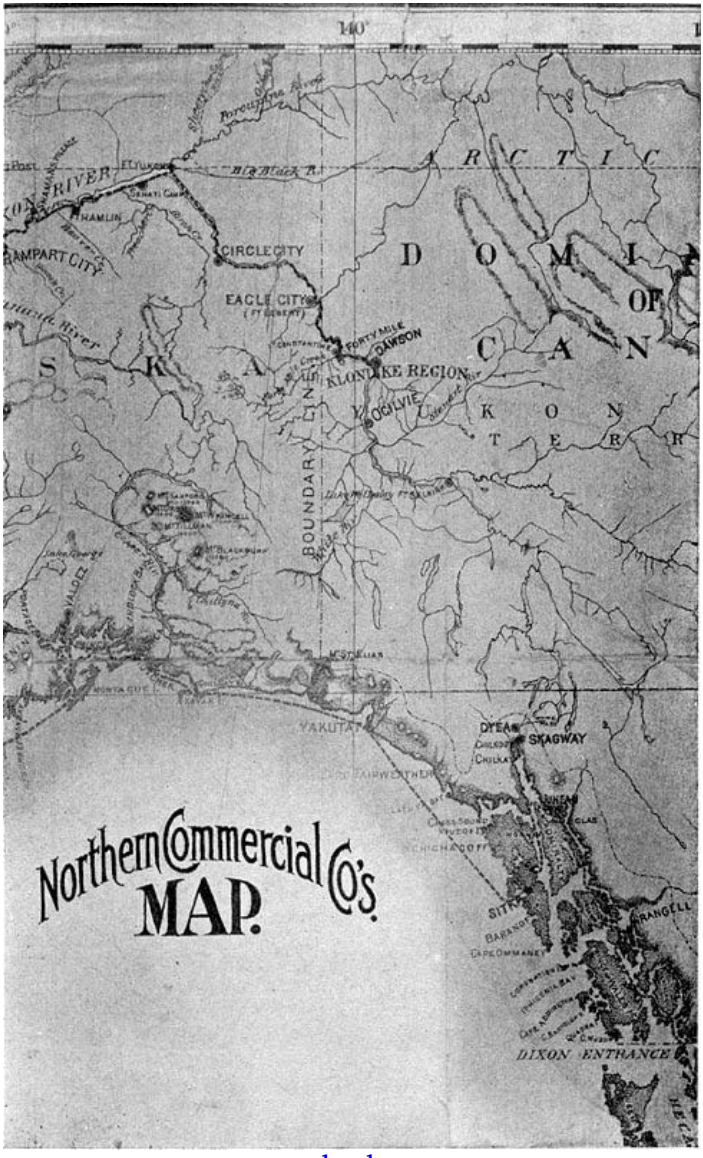
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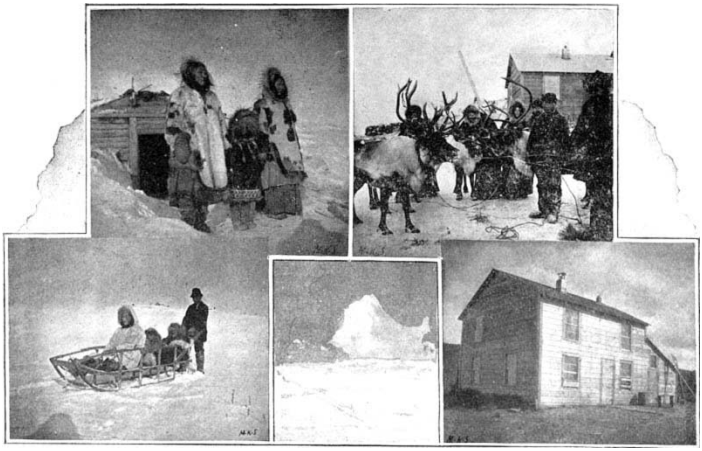
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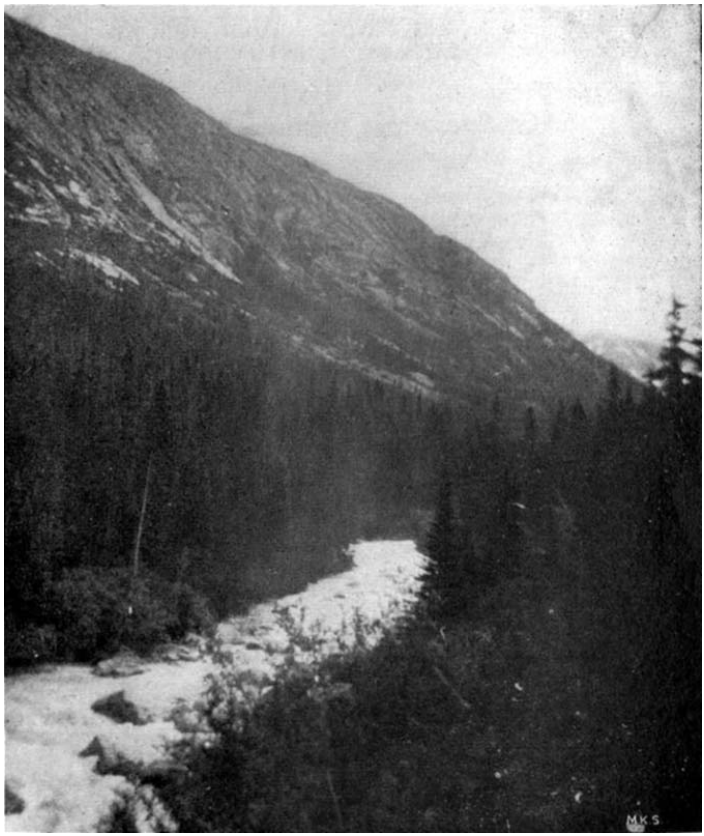


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