

IN ISLES OF THE FAR NORTH



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ESKIMO HUSBAND, WIFE, AND CHILDREN

IN THE ISLES OF THE FAR NORTH

The Story of the Gospel's Entrance
into Greenland, Iceland, Lapland
and Labrador, with Peeps
at the Natives, their
Homes and their
Habits

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GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS

A Snowy Christmas Eve



NOW had been falling thickly throughout the afternoon, and by the time the lamps were lit that Christmas Eve, the earth was robed in her mantle of white. An hour or so later the snow ceased to fall, a sharp frost set in, and the moon began to shine, casting her pale light on the fields of frozen snow, making them sparkle like diamonds.

Groups of boys and girls might be seen hastening along the streets, wrapped in their cloaks and greatcoats, for on that Christmas Eve, according to an ancient custom, the children attending the various Sunday Schools had their annual treat.

The scene on which my eyes fell within the brightly-lit hall when I entered, was one of animation. Several hundreds of tidily-dressed boys and girls, and quite a number of young lads and lasses in their teens—the members of several Bible classes as I afterwards learned—were there, all in eager expectation of an evening's enjoyment. And as I thought of the hundreds of young hearts there that might be won for the Saviour, and the young lives that might be made bright by His love and used in His honourable service, I inwardly prayed that on that very Christmas Eve some might be born from above, to grace the kingdom of Him who loved while on earth, and still loves, though now in heaven, to call in the golden days of youth, those whom He delights to send forth to tell "the old, old story" to lone and weary souls in near and distant lands, who have never heard His saving Name.

The superintendent of the school opened the proceedings by giving out a hymn, which was heartily sung, followed by a short but earnest prayer that our gathering might be "happy, profitable, and one long to be remembered; and especially that some young hearts might be reached by the words spoken, and, if yet unsaved, won for Christ. If already His, drawn

closer to Him, and sent forth from Him to tell others of Him and of His saving power."

To that request my heart said "Amen."

Then we had a hearty tea, some pretty Gospel poems, recited by several boys and girls, a distribution of prizes, and then we were told that "a gentleman has come from a distance to tell us something about a country far across the seas, where none of us has ever been, but where there are many boys and girls who have no such happy gatherings as this, and who have never even heard the Saviour's Name."

"What do you think is the name of that country?" asked the speaker.

"Africa," shouted a number of voices.

"No, not quite. Try it again."

"China," said a lad.

"No, not China. Those countries are needy enough, yet we hear of some of the Lord's servants going forth to both of them with the Gospel; but to the land of which we are to hear to-night we never, alas! hear of any missionary going forth. It is a lone and neglected land."

The children seemed puzzled, and for a time there was no further answer. Then a bright, intelligent lad whispered "Greenland."

"You have it now," said the speaker—"Greenland."

There was a general flutter of excitement, not only among the children, but I noticed a smile of delight pass over the faces of the four or five seatfuls of young men and women who sat at the back, which seemed to say, "We are glad of that, for we know next to nothing of Greenland, or whether any people live there or not."

"And if you will give the gentleman your attention he will, while he is speaking to you, throw a number of pictures on the screen, which have been mostly taken from life. They will, therefore, give you a true idea of what the people and the country of Greenland are like."



ICEBERGS.



A Trip to Greenland



HERE was a hush of quiet expectation as the stranger stepped upon the platform, and without any further preliminary he said:—

I suppose there is not one here to-night but knows, and has often sung, the grand missionary hymn which begins,

“From Greenland’s icy mountains.”

But before I throw it on to the screen and we all sing it together, let me tell you in a few words the story of that pretty hymn and its tune, for I think it greatly adds to the interest one takes in a hymn or story, to know something of the man who wrote it, and of the circumstances under which it was written.

The writer of the hymn was Reginald Heber, or, as he is sometimes called, “Bishop Heber”—although I think he was more of an evangelist than a bishop, for he went out to India with the

Gospel. He was once on a visit to North Wales, where a "missionary sermon" was to be preached by his father-in-law. There was no hymn suitable for the occasion to be found, and it is said that Heber, only a short time before the service, shut himself up in his room and wrote the hymn, and also the tune named "Heber," and both were used at the "missionary" service that day.

Here is the hymn. Come, and let us sing it heartily together.

“From Greenland’s icy mountains,
From India’s coral strand,
Where Afric’s sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error’s chain.

“What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft o’er Ceylon’s isle,
Though every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile;
In vain with lavish kindness
The gifts of God are strewn:
The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

“Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high;
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?

Salvation ! O Salvation !
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till men of every nation,
Have heard the Saviour's Name."

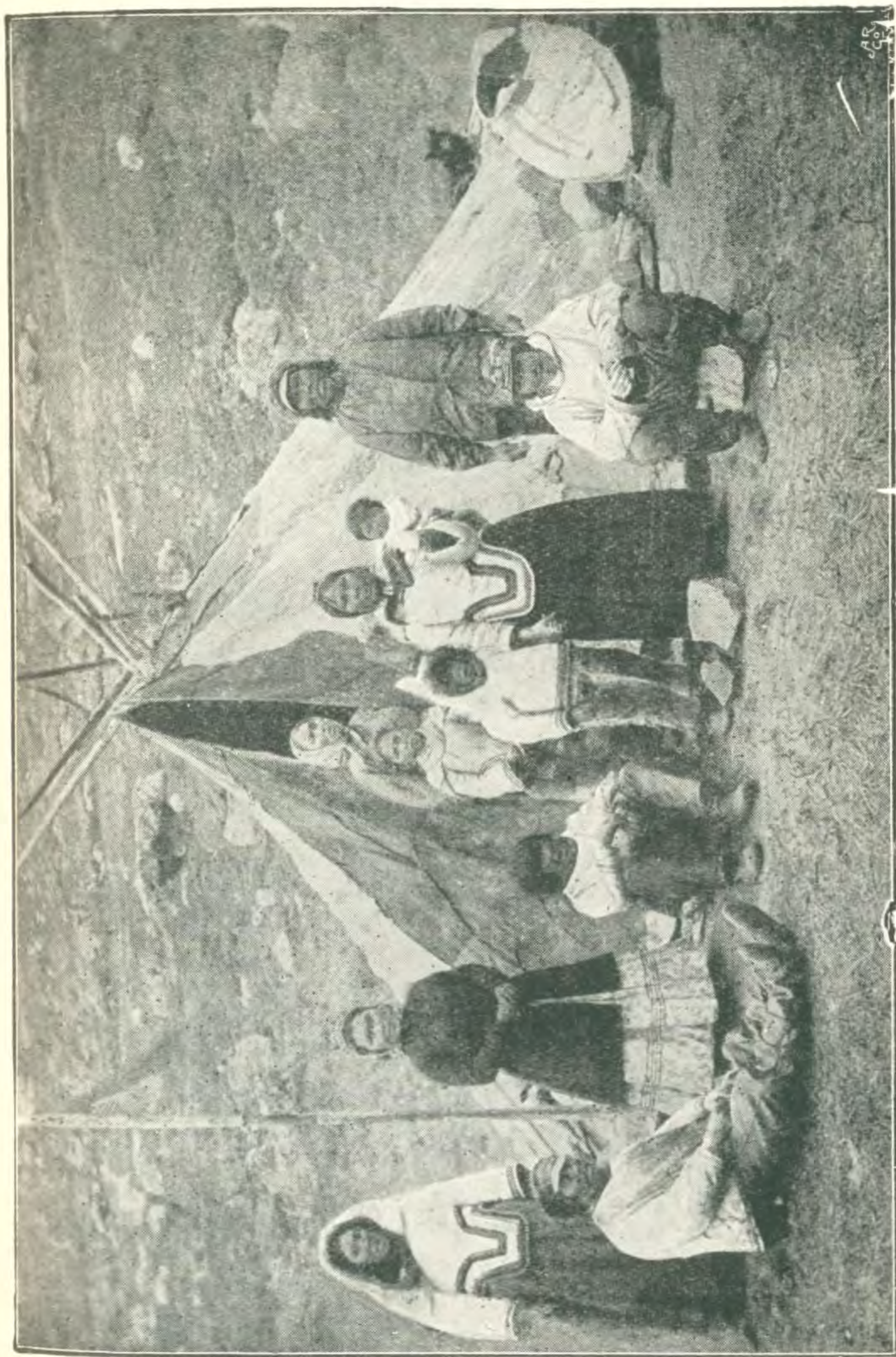
Now I will show you a map of Europe, so that you may know exactly where Greenland is. You see that triangular-shaped piece of country, with its base towards the Pole, and its vertex directed toward the south, that is Greenland. It lies, as you see by the map, in the Arctic seas, far beyond Iceland, which country is about half-way between Greenland and the Orkney and Shetland Isles. For many hundreds of years almost nothing was known by the people of this country about it. But explorers have now visited its shores. Within recent years travellers have crossed its ice-bound fields and penetrated into its hitherto unknown regions, gaining much knowledge of the country, and of its people and their ways. Whale and seal fishing vessels now anchor in its few harbours, and we are getting to know something more every year of the land of snow and its dwellers, which, I hope, may stir us up to interest ourselves in it and its people.

We will now have some glances at these on the screen.

GLIMPSES OF THE COUNTRY.

Here then is a view of Greenland, with its snow-white mountains and fields of perpetual ice, surrounded by Polar seas on which great icebergs float in silent procession, where the midnight sun gleams in the gloomy sky on a land of death-like stillness. Greenland is only about a fortnight's sail from the British Isles, yet, strange to say, it is scarcely known, and certainly less heard of than the interior of Africa, and the tribes whose dwelling is beneath the Equatorial sun.

In order to get a better glimpse of this wonderful land we shall imagine ourselves stepping on board a whaling vessel at Leith, which is bound for the shores of Greenland. We shall then get glimpses of all the places of interest on the way. First we pass the Orkney and Shetland Islands with their rugged, rocky coast, and our first port of call is Thorshaven, the capital of the Faroe Isles. Here are a lot of bottle-nose whales sporting in the bay, and yonder come a lot of Faroese in their boats to catch them. The Faroe Isles have had the Gospel preached in them for many years, and in Thorshaven there is a good Sunday School in which boys and girls



A GREENLAND FAMILY IN THEIR SUMMER QUARTERS.

hear the same sweet story of Jesus and His love as you do.

Two days' further sailing brings us to icebergs floating in the sea, and sailing then becomes dangerous. Yonder is the southern coast of Iceland, with Orofajökull, its highest mountain, rising out of the sea to a height of 6400 feet in majestic grandeur, its summit and sides wrapt in mist; and yonder, on a high projecting rock, is Iceland's only lighthouse. Reykjavik, the capital, is a considerable town, and there are over 70,000 of a population in Iceland. The State religion is Lutheran.

Leaving Iceland, and sailing westward on the lone Arctic seas, you soon come in contact with the floe-ice, which presents a remarkable sight. The floes appear at a distance like great white mountains, tinged with blue from the sky above, or glowing like the hues of the setting sun. Sometimes the drifting ice appears in smaller floes, thirty or forty feet in thickness, and rising as many feet above the water in solitary grandeur. They are exceedingly dangerous to navigators, and many a noble vessel has been dashed to pieces or crushed between these floating mountains of ice. At certain seasons the coast is accessible, and on the west there are several harbours. The chief means of transport inland is by sledges

drawn by dogs, and where this is impossible the individual makes his way along the ice or frozen snow on two long narrow strips of wood, curved at both ends and fastened to both feet. These are called "ski," and when the snow or ice is in good condition, a good "skilöber" can make six or seven miles an hour. These are more used by travellers than by the Eskimo. In some parts of Greenland during the short summer, which only lasts for three months, green grass, heather, and some lovely flowers may be seen growing in sheltered valleys along the shore. But little or nothing grows or is cultivated as food, and this is what most of all frightens Europeans at Greenland.

A VISIT TO "ETERNITY FJORD."

Perhaps the most wonderful of all the sights in Greenland is a "fjord," which bears the remarkable name of "Eternity Fjord." I think it will interest you to see and hear something about it. A recent explorer tells of a visit he made to this place and what he saw there. First of all, he tells us that the natives greatly dread the place, and will scarcely lend their boats to or accompany anyone wishing to see it. I do not wonder at this, for, in our more highly favoured land, anything that reminds people

of "Eternity" is an object of fear to the unconverted. I well remember when, as an unconverted lad, the very word "Eternity" made me shudder, for I knew well that I was unprepared to enter it. It may be some of you are much the same, so you will not be surprised at the ignorant Greenlanders dreading the very name. After a good deal of bargaining, a pilot was found, and the party set off in a boat to "Eternity Fjord." They first reached a river of bright, clear water, which appeared to flow from a lake far up among the mountains, in which there was an abundance of fish, of which one of the party caught eighty in little over an hour. Some of you boys will say that was a good "kill." After another hour's rowing they entered the "fjord," and then a noise resembling loud thunder began to startle them. There was nothing but the blue, cloudless sky overhead; still the noise increased. It came from the great mountains of ice that rose on both sides of the fjord to enormous heights, in great pinnacles, with huge glaciers between them. Great icebergs floated in solemn procession, sometimes colliding with terrible force, producing the noise they had heard; and in the pale moonlight they sparkled like huge diamonds, set with gems of red, blue, and green. The picture was indescribably grand, and impressed the mind with the greatness and power

of the great Creator, God, whose handiwork is nowhere seen to greater advantage than in these lone, uninhabited scenes, where the foot of man has never trod. But neither the mighty glaciers of "Eternity Fjord," in the Arctic seas, nor the stately palms and mighty forests of the Equator, reveal a God of love. The cross of Calvary alone tells out the wonders of redeeming love, the love of God to sinners, which is the greatest and grandest of all that He has made known to man. I wonder how many of you have seen "the great sight" of a dying Saviour, and said by faith, "He died for me."

Here we will make a break in our story, and sing together a well-known hymn, which I will throw on the screen:—

"THE LOVE OF GOD TO SINNERS.

"God loved the world of sinners lost

And ruined by the fall ;

Salvation full, at highest cost,

He offers free to all.

Oh! 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love!

The love of God to me ;

It brought my Saviour from above

To die on Calvary.

"E'en now by faith I claim Him mine,

The risen Son of God ;

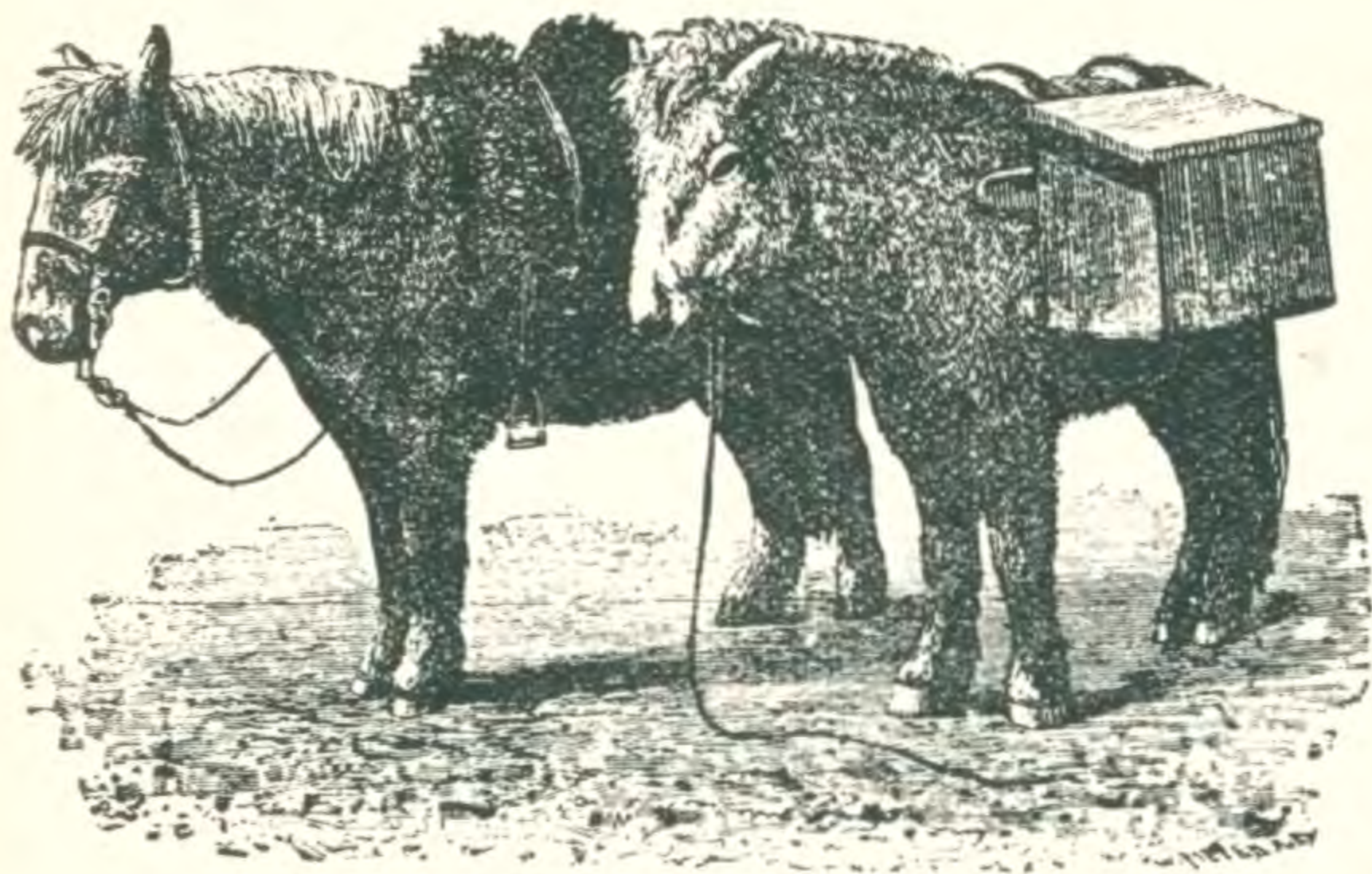
Redemption by His death I find,

And cleansing through the blood.

“Of victory now o’er Satan’s power
Let all the ransomed sing,
And triumph to their latest hour
Through Christ, our Lord, the King.”

“Now, if you are not tired of my story,” said the speaker, “I will tell you something about the Eskimos, their homes and habits. Shall I go on?”

“Yes, sir, yes!” came from all parts of the room; so another set of slides was got into order, and the story went on.



ICELAND PONIES.



Peeps at the People, their Homes and Habits

THE people of Greenland are named Eskimos. They are of a tawny colour, short in stature, with broad, flat faces, high cheek-bones, small, dark eyes, generally obliquely set, and flat noses, narrow above and very broad below. They have long, black, straight hair, not unlike the hair of our horses, which the men allow to hang loose over their shoulders, while the women tie up theirs in a high knot behind, decorated by a band of sealskin, of which they are usually very proud. Their dress consists of a tunic of sealskin, with a hood and long boots of the same material. Since European ships have gone to the ports of Greenland trading, the dress, especially of the women, has been much improved. They are always eager to buy or barter for sealskin or oil the bright-coloured and more modern clothes as worn by the various nations of Europe. The Danish Government forbid the sale

of spirits, which is a mercy. Their food consists of seal, sea fowl, and the flesh of reindeer, raw or cooked, and when these fail they are often in starvation. They live in low huts during the winter, the walls of which are built of turf, lined with skins. The roof is composed of branches or beams, supported by pillars, covered with skins and turf, without door or window. The entrance is a long passage leading into the middle of the house, which is generally very low, and about fifty feet long by twelve feet wide. When the snow lies deep upon the ground, it is cut into great square blocks, and built up in dome-shaped style to form a roof for their winter dwelling. The temperature in summer is much as it is in winter here, and in their winter it is extremely cold, being 73° below zero often, the water freezing in the lamps. In the winter season it is almost constantly dark, the sun never appearing at all. When it appears they go to live in their summer houses, which are tents of skin or turf huts built on the high rocks. These tents consist of a framework or high trestle, on which a number of poles are laid, forming a sort of semicircle below, converging to a point above. Over these a double layer of skins is stretched. The inner skins have the hair turned inwards, the outer being as a rule the skins from old boats no longer fit for use.

In each tent or house—for the arrangement is much the same in summer as in winter—there live four or five families, each having its own share marked off by a low partition, giving in many cases no more than a space of four or five feet for husband, wife, and children. As a rule each man has one wife, never more than two, and they generally live agreeably. Their mode of salutation is not by handshaking or kissing, but by rubbing noses together. In the front of each small apartment in the tent a large stone vessel full of train oil stands burning. The wick is made of dried moss, which is laid against the side of the vessel. The supply is kept up by the women throwing into the vessel pieces of whale blubber, which soon melt into oil. These lamps burn night and day, and serve the double purpose of giving light and heat. The food is cooked in large stone jars, which are hung a little distance above these lamps, and, as you may guess, with so many of these lamps in one place, and with no outlet, the smell is far from agreeable to a stranger. When the inmates enter, they divest themselves of the whole of their garments except their “nâtît” or indoor attire, which consists of a narrow band of skin around the loins.

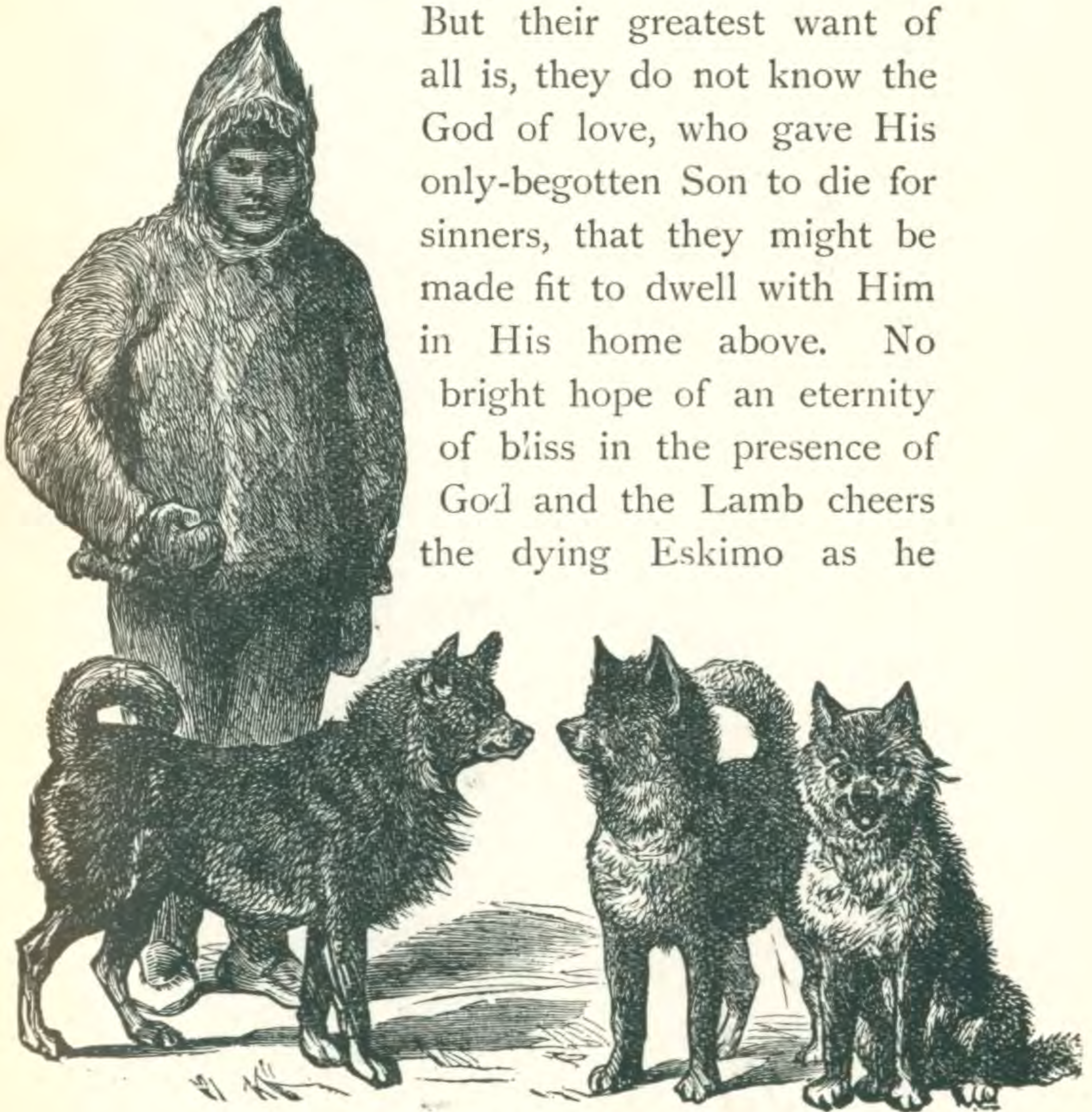
In these strange dwellings you may guess the home-life of the Eskimo is very different from that

of any we see in this civilized country, even among the very poorest. And when I tell you that during the season when there are no seals, which is generally in the early part of the year, they are in dire poverty and often in starvation, you will not

envy their lot, I am sure.

But their greatest want of all is, they do not know the God of love, who gave His only-begotten Son to die for sinners, that they might be made fit to dwell with Him in His home above. No

bright hope of an eternity of bliss in the presence of God and the Lamb cheers the dying Eskimo as he



ESKIMO AND DOGS.

passes into the world beyond. What he thinks about that world and those who inhabit it I must tell you some other evening. But I hope you will think over the sights you have seen and the story you have heard of the dwellers on the shores of Greenland in their strange houses and with their weird customs, and that those of you who know and love the Lord Jesus will earnestly pray that the light of the glorious Gospel may yet shine amid the darkness, and bring peace and gladness to many hearts and homes in that lonely land.

The feet of explorers and heralds of the Cross have traversed the deserts of Africa and penetrated its lone forests, so that they are no longer represented on our map of Africa by the words "Unknown Territory," as in our school days. Now we hear of Gospel triumphs among the sable Africans, and of men and women being constantly landed on its sunny shores who have gone forth, leaving home and kindred, to tell the benighted thousands of "The Dark Continent" the story of a Saviour's love. But to the white, lone land which girds the North Pole, whose tawny dwellers, clad in furs, are part of that "so loved" world which Jesus came to save, and to "every creature" in which He commands us to carry His Gospel, we hear of no bands of devoted gospellers going forth. There

are indeed a few, a very few, who know the Name of Jesus there, and who seek to make Him known to others, but their progress has been very slow. I will try and tell you the pathetic story of their devotion, their privations and sufferings even unto death, and I hope it may be used of God to call forth prayers from many of your hearts, that God may still send forth His glad message to these icy regions, whose inhabitants live and die and pass into eternity without hearing the Name of Him who came to seek and to save the lost. And may it stir up others whose lot has been to bask beneath the beams of the Gospel from their childhood's days, but who still neglect or despise it, to think how deep is their guilt and how awful will be their doom in comparison with those who have never known, as they have known, the story of redeeming love.

And if you young folks would like to hear more about Greenland and its people, I will come another night and tell you how the Gospel was first introduced and of the triumphs which it wrought, and how many of the Greenlanders were converted. We might sing ere we yet part:—

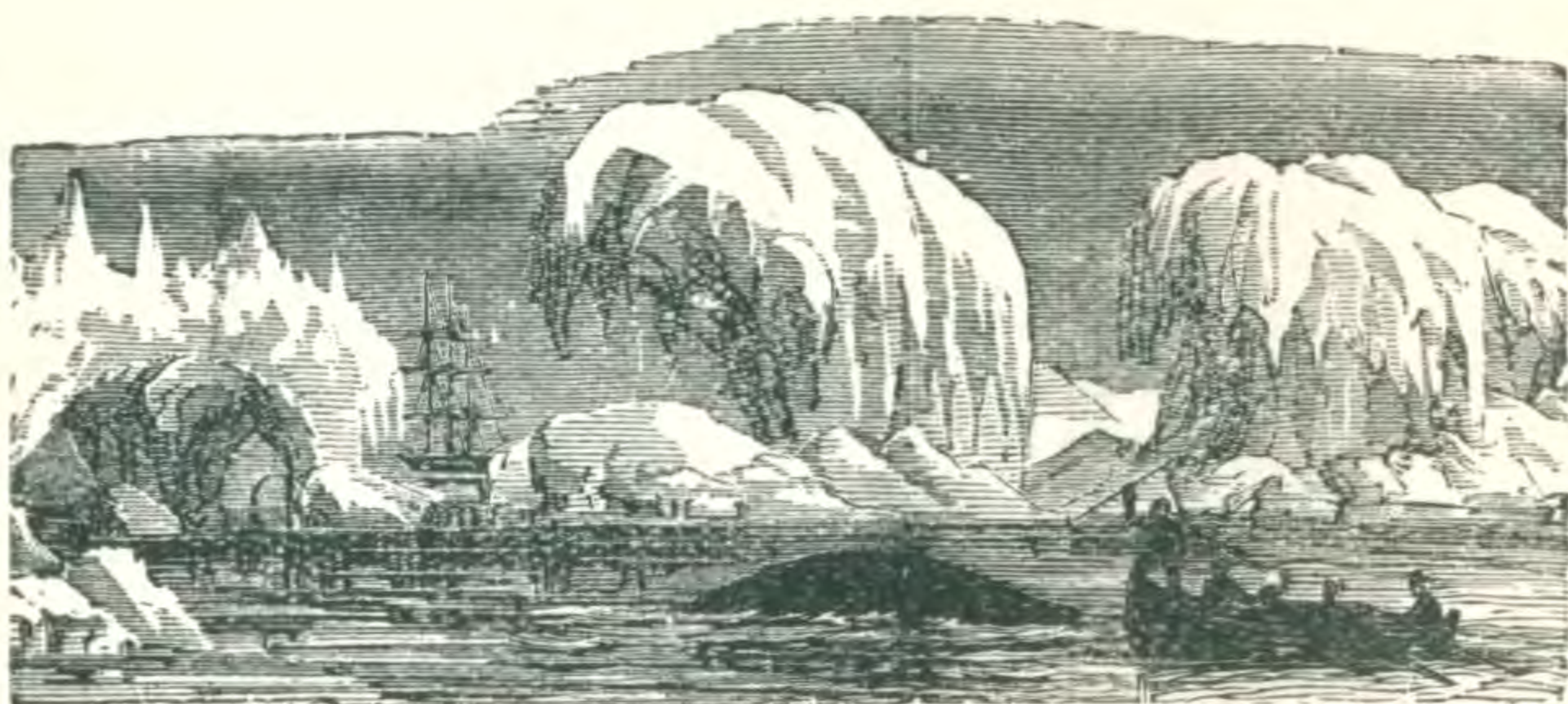
“Far, far away, in heathen darkness dwelling,
Millions of souls for ever may be lost,
Who, who will go, Salvation's story telling—
Looking to Jesus, counting not the cost?

“All power is given unto Me ! All power is given unto Me ! Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel ; and lo, I am with you always.”

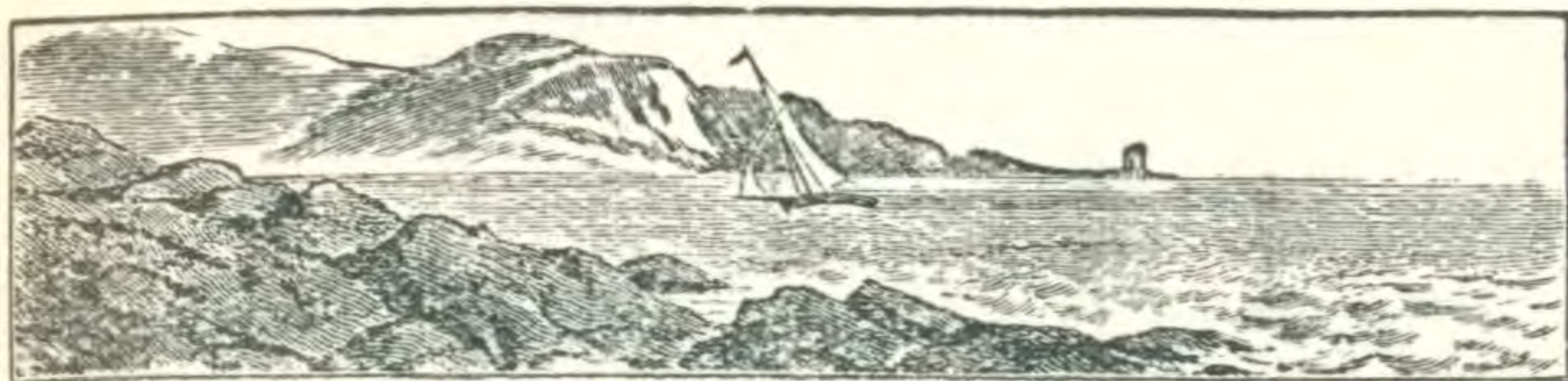
“See o’er the world, wide open doors inviting :
Soldiers of Christ, arise and enter in !
Christians, awake ! your forces all uniting,
Send forth the Gospel, break the chains of sin !

“‘Why will ye die?’ the voice of God is calling,
‘Why will ye die?’ re-echo in His Name :
Jesus hath died, to save from death appalling ;
Life and salvation, therefore, go, proclaim.

“God speed the day when men of ev’ry nation,
‘Glory to God’ triumphantly shall sing ;
Ransom’d, redeem’d, rejoicing in salvation,
Shout ‘Hallelujah, for the Lord is King !’”



HARPOONING A WHALE.



The History of Greenland

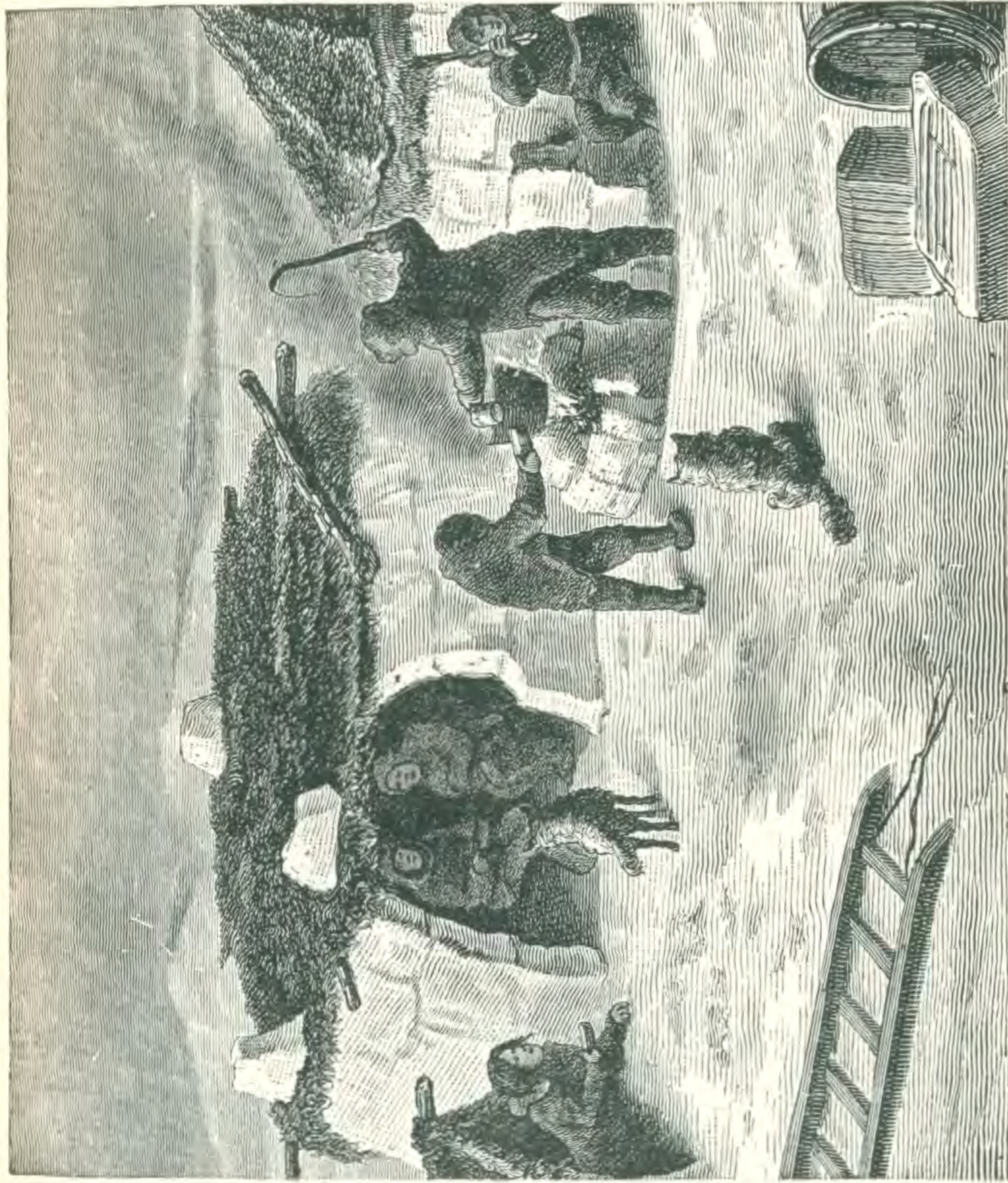


BRIGHT moonlight night in January, a large hall packed full of ruddy schoolboys and schoolgirls, with quite a lot of working lads and factory girls, just the class above all others that are difficult to get hold of on a week-night to hear the story of redeeming love. But the news of our former evening's "Lantern Talk on Greenland" has spread through the village, and some of the lads and lasses who were there have invited their "chums" and fellow-workers, so that accounts for our large gathering to-night. Our friend is here again from the neighbouring town with his lantern and a fresh lot of slides, and he has brought a friend with him to show them while he speaks. After a hymn and prayer for God's blessing on the story about to be told, he said :—

Now, my young friends, I hope the story I am here to tell you may be used to show you your

need of Christ, and how grand it is to know and trust Him in early days.

The early history of Greenland, in so far as it is necessary to refer to it here, may be told in a few words. Gunbiœrn, the son of a Norwegian rover, is said to have first discovered it in the ninth century, and Eric the Red, the son of a Norwegian king, who was banished from his country for three years, fled to the island and sojourned there. He gave to it the name of "Greenland," and represented it to the Icelanders, whom he wished to entice there to settle, as a land of "green" fields, with excellent pastures for the sheep and cattle. The simple people believed his story without making any further enquiry as to the truth of it, and prepared to emigrate to the new land. Like some of later years, they thought they would find another Eden there, where nothing but happiness would be their lot. Twenty-five ships full of people, with cattle, sheep, and goats, sailed for the new country, but only fourteen arrived. The rest foundered in the Arctic seas. They were much disappointed with the appearance of their new home, but had to make up their minds to stay. They settled on the west coast. Others from Iceland and Norway, not knowing what had befallen, followed them, and it is believed that about the year 990 there must have been several



WINTER HUTS AND SLEDGE.

thousands of dwellers along the eastern and western shores of Greenland. But up to this time there is no record of the Gospel having been preached among them. They were without the knowledge of the true God and His Son Jesus Christ. So you may know they were cheerless enough, for nothing can bring peace and happiness to a heart, a home, or a nation, but the knowledge of Jesus and His love. In the northern part of the island there were pagans known as Skrællings, a wild and savage race, who made raids upon the colonists several times, working havoc among them; and, toward the close of the fifteenth century, it is recorded that they swept down in great numbers by land and sea, and utterly extinguished them. It was probably some time after this that a gallant admiral of Queen Elizabeth, named Fro-bisher, sailed with three vessels to find out the state of Greenland. One of his vessels was lost in a fog, another deserted him on the way, and the ship *Gabriel*, in which the admiral sailed, was supposed to have reached Greenland, as relics of the explorer's party were found there three hundred years later, but none of the party ever returned alive. In 1845, Sir John Franklin sailed with two ships and fully equipped crews to those Arctic regions. Franklin died there in 1847. The following year the ships had to be abandoned

on the ice-bound coast, and nearly all their crews perished. From that time till the present explorers and gold-seekers have visited Greenland's shores, and much information regarding the country and its people has been gained; but by far the most interesting part of the story is the thrilling account of how the Gospel of God's salvation was carried to Greenland by heroic men and women constrained by the love of Christ, who, leaving fathers, mothers, friends, and home, went out into the unknown land to tell its dwellers of Jesus and His love. It is this story that I will now try and tell you.

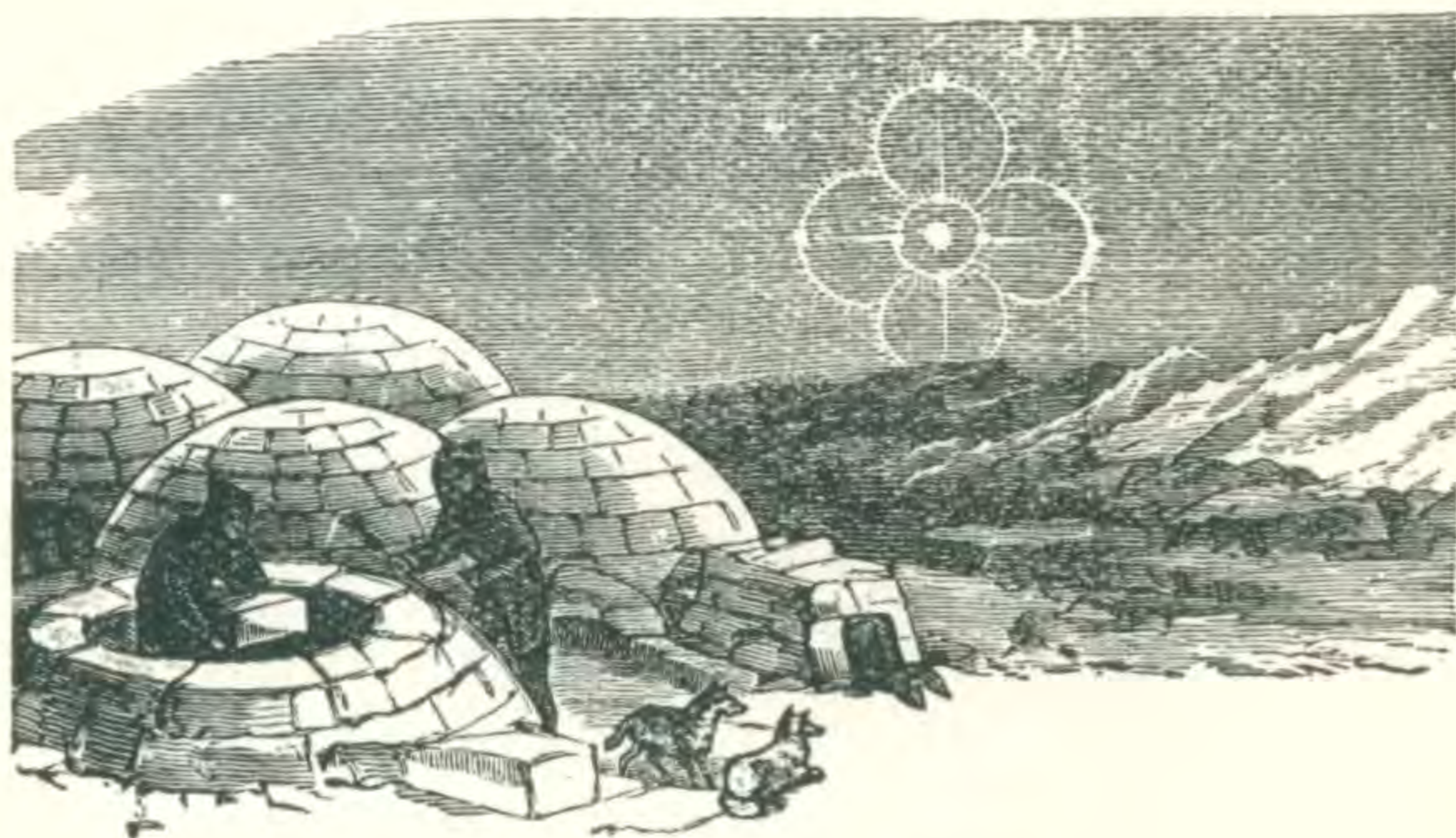




The Introduction of Christianity

THE introduction of Christianity to Greenland took place in 999. It happened in this way. Leif, a son of Eric the Red, had gone across to Norway, and there he met with Olaf the Norwegian king, who had been converted to God in early life while wandering as an exile. Returning to his capital from an evangelistic tour with a number of his helpers, he met Leif with his pagan companions, and at once began to tell them of Christ. We can well imagine how strange this new doctrine would fall upon the ear of the young pagans, who had never heard the Saviour's Name, but such is the power of the Gospel of God, that Leif and several of his companions were at once converted. After a short sojourn in Norway, they returned to Greenland in the year 1000, accompanied by several Norwegian missionaries, to preach to their countrymen the unsearchable riches of Christ.

How sweet it is to think of this young prince and his Christian companions going forth with burning hearts among the pagan Greenlanders with the glad tidings of salvation! How many weary hearts were thus led to the great Rest-giver the day will declare, but we are told by historians that such was the change wrought



BUILDING WINTER HOUSES.

amongst the people, that Eric, the king, fearing they would no longer obey his pagan laws, became very angry, and threatened Leif, his son, with death, unless he gave up preaching Christ. But this was impossible. No matter whether amid "Greenland's icy mountains," or in the more civilized and favoured cities and villages where Christ is loved, His Name will be spread abroad. Need we

wonder when we learn that a few years later Eric himself was converted, and began to use his influence for the spread of the Gospel? By this time over three hundred villages had sprung up, and in most or all of them plain buildings were erected for the preaching of the Gospel and the worship of God. So far as can be gathered from ancient history, the Gospel had been preached in simplicity up to this time, and those who believed it went on making it known to others. But the tidings of this work in the far North reached Rome, and the Pope appointed Arnold, bishop of Greenland in 1121. Then large churches were built, the ruins of which in some cases remain, and no doubt the simplicity of their early faith was to a great extent obscured by tradition. For over two hundred years things seem to have gone on peacefully, until a horde of those wild pagans, bearing the name of Skrællings, swept down upon the peaceful villages along the coast, and utterly destroyed them. No one can tell if any of the Lord's witnesses survived. A hope was long entertained that some might be carried captive, and, like "a little captive maid" of olden time, there make known the Name of their God and His Christ in these dark places of the earth. But with this sad calamity the history of the Gospel's progress in Greenland is lost for cen-

turies, until God aroused the interest of a true and faithful servant of His, whose lot was to again unfurl the banner of the Cross on the lonely shores of Greenland. This was Hans Egede, a devoted young Dane, who, with his wife, went to tell the dwellers among "Greenland's icy mountains" the story of the Cross.





THE STORY OF HANS EGEDE;

Pioneer Missionary to Greenland

BBETTER than stories of heroes and heroines who never lived, and of battles which never were fought, are the true and thrilling life stories of those brave men and women who went out, constrained by the love of Christ, to dark heathen lands, facing danger and death, in order to carry the good news of God's love to those who sit in the shadow of death.

I will try and tell you the thrilling story of one of these brave men who went to the icy fields of Greenland long years ago, to tell the benighted Eskimos of that land the tidings of redeeming love. The story is absolutely true, and

this is just what makes it so full of interest. It is not a story of trials that never were endured, or triumphs that never were won, or the description of a land and a people which merely exist in our imagination, like the stories of *Sindbad the Sailor* and *Robinson Crusoe*.

Greenland exists to-day much as in the days when my story begins, only the feet of explorers and heralds of the Cross have since then trod its ice-covered fields, and the Gospel first carried to its fur-clad dwellers, who were then wholly pagan, by Hans Egede and his wife two hundred years ago, is still made known, and the light then kindled still shines.

THE VILLAGE PASTOR.

In the early years of the eighteenth century, there lived a young pastor, with his wife and two bright children, in the charming little village of Vaagen, on the shore of a deep fjord in the Lofoden islands, off the Norwegian coast. This was Hans Egede and his wife Elizabeth. He had left his native land to preach the Gospel of Christ to the simple fisherfolk on these northern shores. His young wife, a faithful and devoted Christian helpmeet, visited among the people, and while ever seeking to set Christ and His great salvation before them, she spent her days in tending the

sick and helping the villagers in various matters of daily life. Need we wonder that a strong attachment existed between the people of Vaagen and the two devoted Christian workers who had come amongst them? There in the midst of a loving and devoted people, far from the turmoil of the busy world, their days flowed on in peace. But the Lord had other work in store for Hans Egede and his *frau-pastorin* Elizabeth—work which the experiences of these quiet years were doubtless a preparation for. Standing on a little hill behind the village one day, looking across the sea, a strange longing took possession of Egede's mind. When quite a lad, living in Copenhagen, he had read a book in the college library telling of the introduction of Christianity and the Gospel's early triumphs in Greenland, and of the sad disaster which befell the colony there when the pagan host swept down on the peaceful villages along its shores and utterly destroyed them. As the earnest soul-winner's thoughts went back to the days of old, when the praises of Immanuel's Name were sounded abroad in Greenland's snow-clad valleys, he wondered if any voice was lifted up there to tell of Jesus now, or whether any feeble remnant of the followers of Christ remained on that far-off shore. Occasionally he heard from traders coming to the port, items of news regarding the Eskimos

on the western shore, but no word to assure him that the Gospel of salvation was known or preached among them. This lay like a heavy burden on his heart, and the conviction began to fasten itself upon him, that God was calling him to go forth and preach to the people of Greenland the unsearchable riches of Christ. For a time he spoke of it to no one, but made it a matter of daily prayer, until he was sure that it was the call of God, and not a mere feeling or impulse of his own. When at last he did make it known, he found but little sympathy. His wife did not see how they could possibly live in Greenland, with its ice and snow, and pointed to the children growing up around their hearth. The villagers of Vaagen, when they became aware of it, laughed, and stood aloof from Egede, as if his mind had gone wrong. All this severely tried his faith and patience, and sent him to God in prayer, that in His own time a way might be opened whereby the desire of his heart to go to Greenland with the Gospel might be fulfilled. At length God heard His servant's cry. His wife came one day and expressed to him how deeply she had been exercised about the proposal to go to Greenland, and told him of her willingness to go whenever or wherever the Lord might send them. Throwing her arms around her husband's neck,

the heroic young wife said, "Where thou goest I will go, where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried," and from that day Elizabeth Egede became her husband's true helper, and often encouraged him when his faith was like to fail.

This was a great joy to Egede, but other obstacles still remained. Although an earnest servant of Christ, he was not free from the trammels and laws of the "Church" and the orders of its bishops, who sought to prevent him from going, and to place all sorts of difficulties in his way. Seeing there was no hope of getting the bishop's sanction in his undertaking, he resigned his post at Vaagen. It was a great trial to bid farewell to the simple, loving villagers in whose midst they had spent so many happy days; and when the ship which was to bear them to Bergen cast anchor in the bay, the villagers came in crowds to say their tearful farewell.

One of the sailors asked Egede as he was setting his foot on the plank to embark, "Where do you go?"

"To Greenland," was the answer.

"Then I beg of you, in God's name, to tarry at home," said the sailor, and began to tell of privations, plagues, and cannibals he had seen with his eyes in that land.

A NOBLE WOMAN.

When Egede looked upon his young wife and their four little children, and thought of the sufferings they might be called upon to endure, his heart failed him. He hesitated, and the villagers seeing him falter, pleaded that he might stay with them. This was the moment of the triumph of the faith of his noble wife. Stepping firmly on to the plank, she laid hold of her husband's arm, and said, "Hans, be a man, and a true servant of God. I hear from afar the voices of the people that perish in Greenland, saying: 'Come over and help us.' Who shall hinder? Husband, in the name of God let us go." Then she walked aboard the ship, and the villagers saw through their tears the brave woman's face shine with a holy joy as she sailed away to the work which she believed God had called them to do in the far-off land. When they arrived in Bergen to make preparations for the voyage to Greenland, fresh hindrances, trials, and opposition awaited them. Wars and national jealousies occupied the public mind, and few, if any, seemed to have one spark of sympathy with Egede in his mission. But the time was well employed. Egede and his little son learned to handle the saw, the plane, and the hammer, and became acquainted with



A GROUP OF ESKIMO BOYS

various other industries, so that they might be able to help themselves in the land where they still hoped to go. Day after day for four years he went to the harbour, and gazed wistfully at the departing ships, until the people began to say he was mad, while others said he had seen visions and had strange revelations from the Lord. At length the waiting days passed by. The Lord's full time had come, and with it the needed means to build a small vessel in which Egede and his family, with a few helpers, might cross the Arctic seas to Greenland. Others joined them, hoping to trade with the natives. The little vessel was named *The Hope*, and on the 3rd of May, 1721, after thirteen years of prayerful waiting, Egede, with his wife and children, set sail from Bergen, amid the tearful farewells of many who loved him. For a full month the little vessel tossed on the waves, sometimes almost crushed to pieces amid huge icebergs, at other times in blinding Arctic snows, in which all reckoning of their whereabouts was lost. During one of these storms, in the midst of crashing icebergs, Egede, with hands spread forth to heaven, knelt on the storm-swept deck and prayed before the whole crew for God's protection and guidance. At once the storm ceased, the fog cleared away, and they were able to steer into smooth waters, while songs of thanks-

giving and praise arose from their lips. On the 3rd July, 1721, two months after leaving Bergen, the vessel touched the western coast of Greenland at Ball's River. There they stepped ashore, and began to build a temporary shelter, into which they crept, to spend their first night in Greenland.

FIRST EXPERIENCES IN GREENLAND.

When they awoke in the morning and looked abroad on the land to which they had come, those of the party who had come as colonists and traders were sadly disappointed with the prospect. Instead of a Green Land of pleasant valleys and grass, as it had been described many years before by Eric the Red, they found themselves surrounded by a waste and dreary wilderness. The soil was hard, and seemed to be incapable of yielding fruit, and instead of finding, as they supposed and hoped they might, some remnant of their own stalwart countrymen, they found only a host of miserable-looking, savage Eskimos, who first ran from them in sheer terror, and then refused to allow them to enter or come near their dwellings.

Encouraged by the words of Egede and his devoted wife, the colonists took heart, and built for themselves a house of stone and turf on an

island named Kangek, to which they gave the name of "Hope Island." When the building of the house was finished the whole company gathered together, while Egede read a psalm of thanksgiving. Then they all joined in a song of praise to God, who had brought them through stormy seas in safety, and allowed them to set foot on the land in which they desired to spend their lives in making known to its tawny dwellers the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

But, as is frequently the case with those for whose sake Christian men have sacrificed home and friends, the natives gave them a very cold reception, and when they found that the strangers had come to settle amongst them, they sought to frighten them by making signs that the ice and snow would soon destroy them all, especially the wife and delicate children of Egede. Whenever any of the party appeared, they would stand at their doors gazing, but when any advance toward them was made they slunk inside, muttering and scowling. They evidently wanted to get rid of them, and seemed to think the best way to do so was by leaving them severely alone. All this was hard to bear, and more than once Hans Egede wondered if he had erred in coming among such a people. Instead of finding a remnant of Christian colonists, such as he had hoped to find

from his reading of those old records in Copenhagen, to bid him welcome to their shores, he had only found a race of ignorant savages, with no desire to hear his message, but who seemed ready at any hour to cast him and his loved ones out from amongst them.





The Greenlanders' Religion



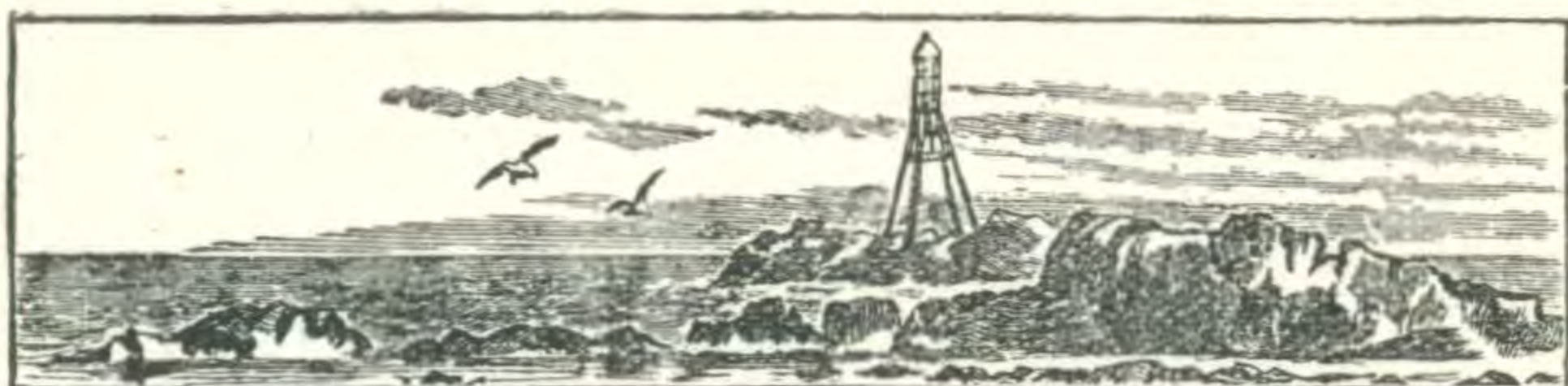
THE early Christianity introduced during the days of Leif had been completely rooted out by the pagan massacre which overtook the colonists, and so far as Egede could find, not a trace of Christianity remained. At first it seemed that they had no religion of any kind, but on forming a better acquaintance with the natives, Egede found that they had a faint idea of the future state. They acknowledged one great deity, a good spirit whom they named "Torngarsuck," who was supposed to dwell in the sea. They said the first man was called Kallak, that he sprang out of the earth, and that his wife sprang out of his thumb. They did not acknowledge an eternity, but said that after so many years all men will cease to exist, that the world will be reduced to atoms, and another more fair will take its place. They had certain traditions of the Creation, the Flood, and a Judgment to come.

A set of men called *angedoks*, or priests, kept these traditions in currency, and claimed to be in connection with the spirit world, and by revelations, incantations, and charms, professed to be able to cure disease, ward off accidents, and conduct the spirits of men after death to the world beyond. They said that the "Aurora Borealis" was the departed spirits of friends playing at "hockey"; but not one ray of heavenly light or love seemed to be known among them. Sin and its punishment, God and His love, Christ and His salvation, were unheard of and unknown. Such were the Greenlanders at the time that Hans Egede and his heroic wife set foot among them nearly two centuries ago, and, with the exception of a few bright spots where the light of the Gospel shines, such is Greenland and its swarthy inhabitants still, a dark, benighted country, where the light and love of the Gospel of Christ are still unknown, where one generation after another passes on to the great eternity without even hearing the precious Name of Jesus or the story of His saving grace. How thankful we ought to be that our lot has been cast in a land of Gospel light and love; but oh, remember, dear young people, that if that light be shut out, and that love rejected, your judgment will be more awful than that of the ignorant Greenlanders.



AN ICEBERG IN NORTHERN SEAS.

In common with all pioneer missionaries, Egede found it very difficult to communicate to the ignorant Greenlanders in their own language the truths of the Gospel. For example, in speaking of Jesus as the Lamb of God, he found it difficult to make them understand, as they had never seen a lamb, nor had they such a word in their language. The nearest was a young seal. His little son would draw pictures of "The Brazen Serpent" and other Bible scenes, holding them up before the people, while his father tried to set Christ crucified before them simply with the few words of their language he had picked up. Sometimes these efforts were listened to with apparent interest, at other times laughed at and ridiculed, and he was frequently opposed by the *angekoks*, or priests, who sought to bring about his death by their arts and enchantments, without success. Egede moved about among the people, who after a time learned to respect him, and to invite him into their filthy huts, which he had often to enter on his hands and knees, and then sit on the mud floor amid a group of swarthy faces, scarcely able to communicate what was burning in his heart, even the sweet story of full and free salvation.



Boating and Seal Fishing

IN order to get as near as possible to the people, so that their language might be picked up and their thoughts on various subjects ascertained, Egede not only spent a good part of his time in their unhealthy dwellings, but he also accompanied them in their seal and whale fishing on the icy seas.

The Greenlanders, as a rule, are expert seal fishers. They are largely dependent on this for their food, as also for their clothing, which is chiefly made of sealskin.

The seal known as the "bladder-nose" is the most common. It is found in all the tract of sea between Greenland and Iceland. At ordinary times the bladder or hood, from which the male derives its name, hangs folded like a proboscis over the end of the nose; but when it is irritated, or any attempt made to catch it, this bladder is



FIXING UP SUMMER QUARTERS.

blown up to an enormous size, giving it a very strange appearance. It has long, smooth hair, grey on the back and almost white below, with large black spots here and there. The head is so thickly spotted, that it seems to be black. His greatest enemy is the polar bear, which devours the seal in large numbers as he finds them on the ice floes.

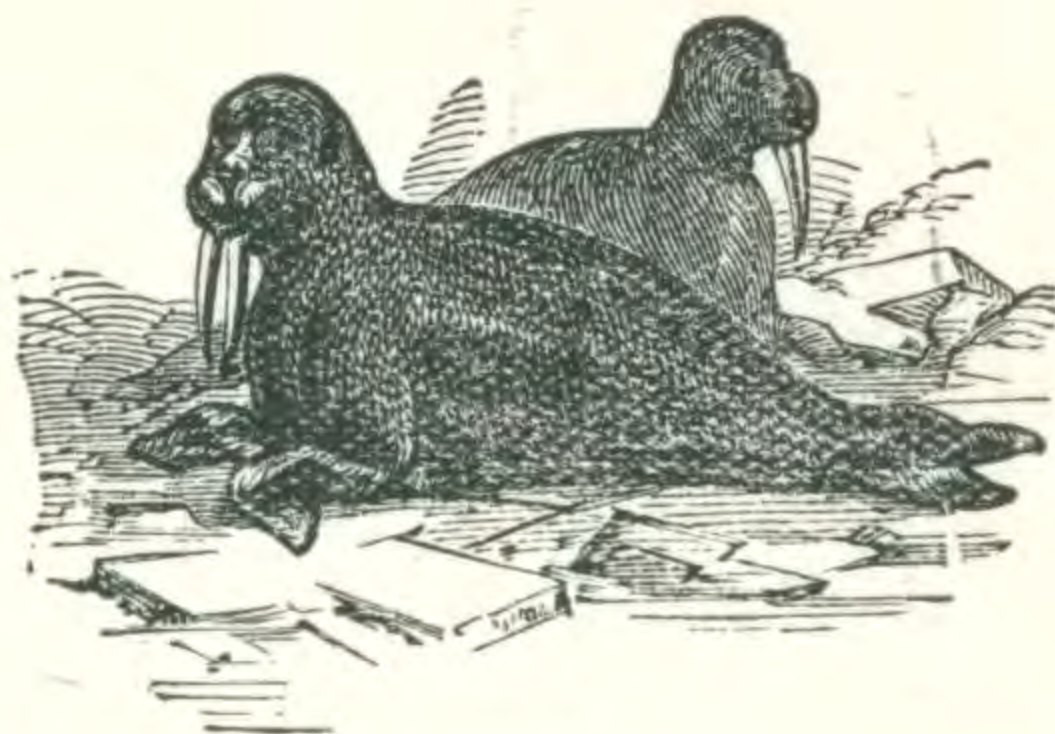


HARPOONING A SEAL.

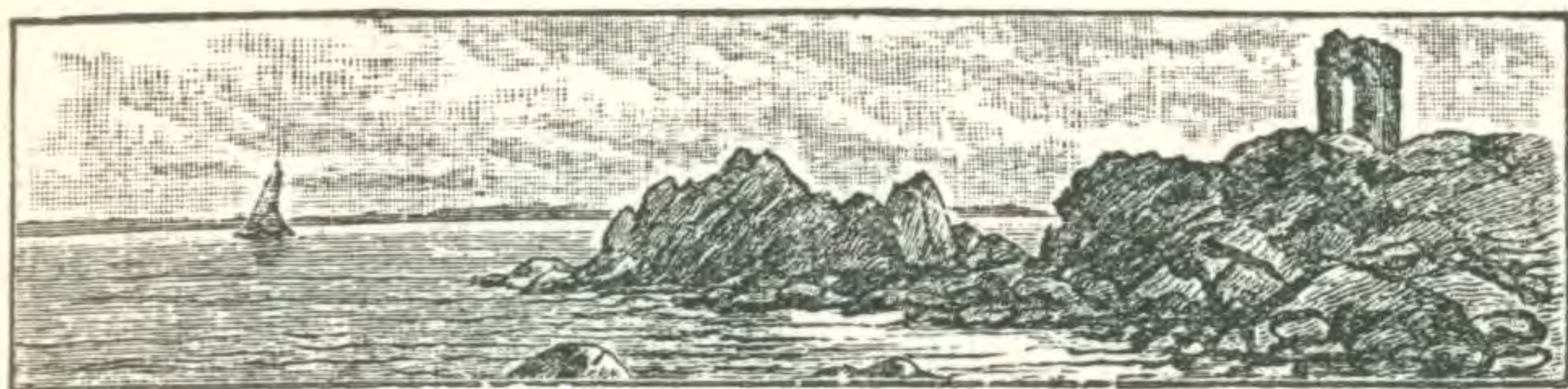
The Greenlander uses two kinds of boats in fishing for the seal. One is named the "kayak," and is used only by men. It is not unlike a canoe, only very sharp at each end, almost like a weaver's shuttle. The other is called the "umiak," or woman's boat. It requires a long experience to use the "kayak," owing to its being so easily upset, especially in seal fishing. A harpoon is attached to the "kayak" by a long line, on which there is a bladder. When the seal appears

on the surface of the water, the harpoon is thrown by the man sitting in his "kayak," and so accurately are all Greenlanders trained to this exercise that it seldom misses.

Egede was obliged to use the "umiak" for his journeys, and in this way he occasionally had the opportunity of preaching, as far as he was able, to a considerable number of people. In this way the Gospel won its way, and the dark minds of the people began to open to the Word of God.



SEALS.



Trials and Dangers



FRESH trial overtook the colony. Their supplies began to fail. Whale and seal fishing were difficult, and very few were caught. Then the pinch of hunger soon began to tell upon them. Week after week passed, and no relief came. Egede looked upon his patient wife, and on his dear children, and his heart failed him. He purposed to return to Bergen for their sake; but nobly did his wife remind him that God had sent them there, and would never leave them to perish. "The ship will come and bring us relief," said the noble woman; "God is trying our faith." When things were at their very worst, and Egede's family and helpers on the point of starvation, the sail of a ship was seen across the icy seas. It was first seen by Egede's wife, who sang her heart's praise to God, and then ran with the good news to her husband and the little colony. On the 27th of

June the ship touched the shore, bringing food and other necessaries, and the good news that a deep interest had sprung up among God's people in Bergen in their work in Greenland. Egede's faith was strengthened, and fresh energy filled his soul. He took two of his children with him, and went to spend the winter among the natives a few miles inland, dwelling in their huts and making himself as one of them, and by this means he was able to spread the Gospel. Such means as these, must be more or less adopted by all missionary pioneers who go to lands where the Gospel has to win its way among a people blinded by the Satanic power of idolatry, or buried in dark ignorance and superstition. During one of his excursions inland, Egede discovered the ruins of an old church, or meeting-place, with the wall and graveyard still to be seen around. This sight revived all his former thoughts of the early Norse Christians, who had many hundreds of years before doubtless gathered near that hallowed spot to sing the praises of Immanuel's saving Name.

A new hindrance to the Gospel showed itself in the arrival of a number of warships, sent by the Danish Government with a view of establishing new colonies on the Greenland coast, and in some of these vessels there were convicts who had been



ESKIMO AND DOG.

sent out to settle there. As may be guessed, these were no help, but a great hindrance, to the spread of the Gospel, and they became Egede's most bitter foes. Next came an order from the new king, Christian VI. of Denmark, asking him to abandon the colony, as it was unprofitable, or if he chose to remain, he must expect no further supplies from the Government. Happy is the servant of Christ who is allowed to go on quietly



PREPARING FOR FISHING.

with his labour, neither drawn into politics nor made the tool of earthly kings. Whatever protection such alliances may afford, they are always a snare. The effect of this order was the immediate return of the whole colony of traders, with the exception of some eight or ten, who chose to remain with Hans Egede and his wife on the dreary land of ice and snow.

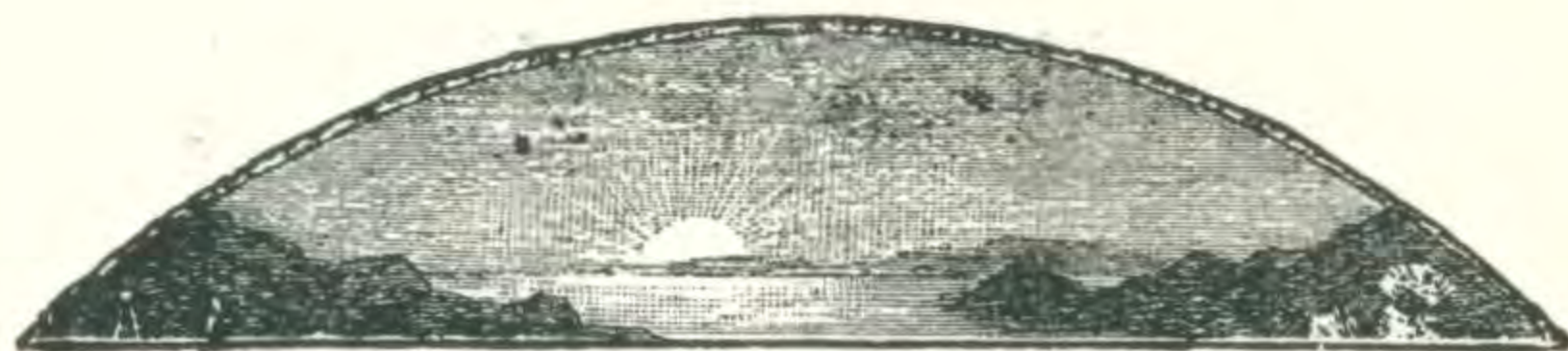
But the greatest trial of all was yet to come. When the colonists returned to Denmark they took with them a little Eskimo boy, to show the Danes what the Greenlanders were like. Two years later this lad was sent back in a vessel, and was in great demand among the natives to tell of all that he had seen in his travels. In every hut and hovel of the place, he told his story to eager and wondering groups of natives. But the lad was taken suddenly ill, and his illness proved to be small-pox, a disease that had never before been seen in Greenland. Egede warned the natives not to mingle with infected persons, but to this warning they paid no regard, with the result that hundreds were seized, and many died. So terrible were the ravages made by this disease that it was calculated about three thousand died, in some cases whole villages being left without a human being in them. Many killed themselves, and others, thinking to mitigate the pain, plunged into the cold sea. Egede and his devoted wife did everything possible to help, visiting the sick and tending the dying. Many were removed from their unhealthy huts and laid in Egede's own house, part of which he had converted into a hospital. But, for all this solemn visitation from God, there seemed little desire for the Gospel. Egede was blamed by the priests for bringing the plague, and

thus the hearts of the poor ignorant natives were more hardened than softened by the awful visitation, for, as you have often been reminded, when the Lord's dealings with a sinner or a nation are slighted, and His gracious messages of peace and love despised, hardness of heart is always the result. Take care how you treat the Lord's messages and His messengers. You may not always have the privileges that you enjoy now, and to be cut off as a rejecter or a neglecter of the Gospel is to perish eternally.

Among the many sad incidents of this solemn time, there is one, I think so touching, that I must tell it to you.

In one of the islands near to Egede's home, he found one little girl ill, and her three brothers. Their father had cared for all the people of the place during their illness, and buried them after they had died. Then he was laid low by the terrible disease himself. Knowing there was no one to care for him and his youngest child, who was dying, he laid himself down in a grave which he had prepared of stones, took the dying child in his arms, and told his only surviving little daughter to cover them with old skins and stones, so that the foxes and ravens might not devour them. The four children, who were the only survivors of the place, were left with part of a dried seal and a few

herrings as their only food. In the Lord's mercy, Egede found them, and had them removed to his home, where they tenderly nursed them and tended them till they recovered. Such deeds of Christlike love, although long forgotten on earth, are remembered and will be rewarded in heaven.





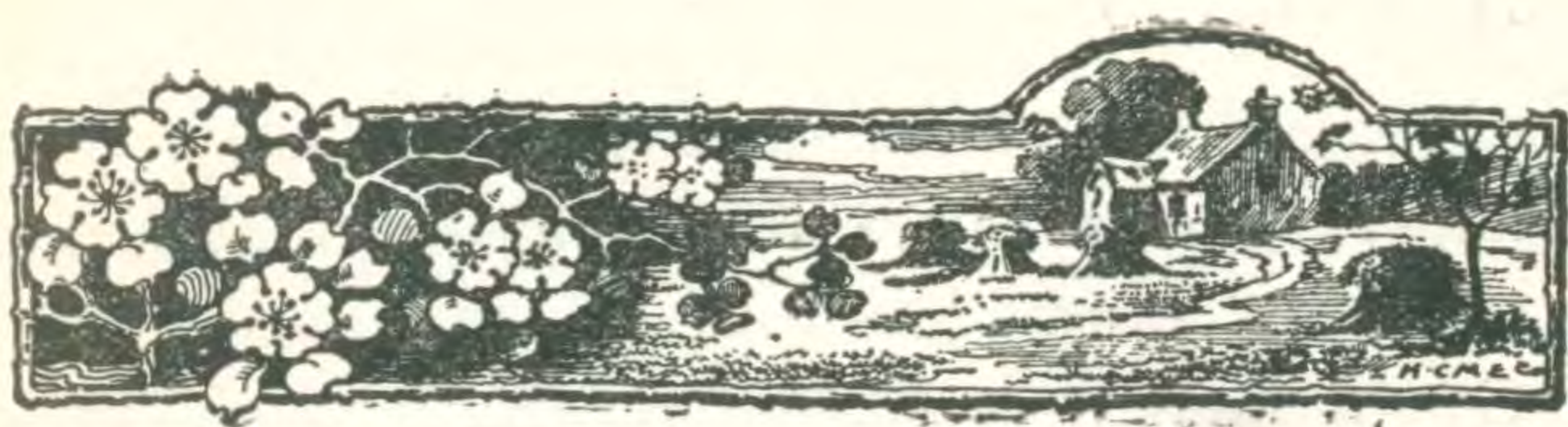
Rest for the Weary

FIFTEEN years of hard toil and incessant trial, began to tell on the noble pioneer missionary Hans Egede. His faithful and devoted wife, Elizabeth, who had been his helper all these years, died in his arms, and he longed to carry her remains to be laid to rest in her native land. Paul, his eldest son, had already gone there to complete his education, and Moravian helpers had come to Greenland to carry on the work. Gathering the little colony together, the aged man gave them a farewell address from the words of Isaiah xlix. 4, and with many affectionate farewells to the Moravians, who were to be left to reap what he had sown in tears, he sailed for Copenhagen, and arriving there, laid the precious dust of his wife in the churchyard of St. Nicholas. He devoted his remaining years in advocating the claims of Greenland, and in stirring up the people

of his native land to a deeper interest in the work of carrying the Gospel to the benighted Eskimos, among whom he had spent the best part of his life. Then his strength gradually gave way, and, at the advanced age of seventy-three, Hans Egede, the pioneer missionary to "Greenland's icy mountains," passed quietly away to his rest and home in heaven.

May the story of his conversion and early call to the Lord's service, his Christlike, devoted life, his love for the souls of those who never heard the Saviour's Name, and his heroic efforts to reach them with the Gospel, show you, dear young friends, how grand it is to be saved in early years, and how blessed it is to spend and to be spent, in the service of the Lord Jesus.





THE STORY OF THE MORAVIANS

And their Work among the Eskimos

THE snow had all melted, and a dry, sharp frost, with clean roads and bright moonlight, allowed a lot of the young folks from several of the villages around to join us on the third night of our gathering, which had become a Gospel campaign on a small scale, for hundreds of old and young were brought together there, attracted by the story of "Greenland's Icy Mountains," who seldom went "anywhere" to ordinary Gospel meetings; and there was fruit gathered to God in the conversion of sinners, which was what we aimed at and prayed for.

I am glad to see, said the speaker, a still larger number before me to-night, to hear the remainder of my story of the triumphs of the Gospel amid "Greenland's icy mountains," and I am specially glad to see such a number of bright lads among my hearers. I always like to speak to lads, because it was when a lad of seventeen that I was converted and set upon the way to heaven, which, I am glad to tell you, I have found to be a happy and a pleasant path, with many good companions and the very best of enjoyments, with the certainty of a home with Christ at the end. Who knows but some of you, dear lads, may yet be honoured in being sent out to distant lands to tell the story of redeeming love, and to gather in the far-off sheaves that are yet to grace the heavenly harvest-home? One thing you must be clear about first, and that is, that you have Christ yourselves as a personal Saviour, for how can anyone tell of a Christ whom they know not, or lead others to a Saviour whom they have not themselves received? I am going to tell you something to-night about a band of young Moravians, men and women—I might say young men and women—who were made the honoured instruments of winning from Greenland's shores precious souls for the Lord Jesus. My story is true, and I will try and tell it briefly, while some

pictures of the places and the people are thrown upon the screen.

If you look at a map of Europe you will see in the Austrian Empire a province called Moravia. In that quiet spot there is, and has been for nearly two hundred years, a colony of Christians who were driven from their homes and fatherland by the fiery blast of persecution, such as once raged among our own Scottish valleys, when our noble Covenanters were hunted over heather, hill, and valley for their love of the Word of God.

In the fifteenth century, some sixty years before the voice of Luther was heard in Germany proclaiming the doctrines of the Reformation, a little band of earnest lovers of the Lord united together as brethren in Christ, with "the Bible alone as their creed, and the law of Christ as their rule." This was a very simple and scriptural form of constitution, and, we might think, would be allowed to exist without being molested. But Satan does not like the will of God to be done on earth, or any testimony to be raised on earth worthy of the Name of Jesus. This little band of Christians had to suffer severe persecution, so that they were driven from their homes in Bohemia. But when the devil's rage was at its worst, and the enemies of the Lord seemed to have gained the victory, the Lord raised up a deliverer. This was a young

nobleman named Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf. This young nobleman was converted to God in early life, and, it is said, was led to devote himself and his wealth to the cause of Christ



COUNT ZINZENDORF.

through seeing a print of the Saviour on the cross, with the words written underneath :

“This I did for thee ;
What doest thou for Me ?”

This devoted man, hearing of the persecuted and suffering people, built them houses near his castle in Upper Lusatia, in Saxony. This little settle-

ment was called *Hernhutt*, which means "The Watch of the Lord," and no doubt the Lord did watch with a loving eye over His persecuted people, who had there found a shelter, in which they could worship and serve Him as they found written in His Word. In the course of a few years the numbers were increased to 600, and they made it their special work to spread the Gospel among the heathen.



A MORAVIAN MEETING PLACE IN GREENLAND.



Young Workers Called

AMONG those who attended the coronation of Christian VI., King of Denmark, in Copenhagen in the year 1731, was the devoted Count of Zinzendorf. While in Copenhagen he met two young converted Greenlanders who had been sent to Denmark by Hans Egede, and he was told that there was a likelihood of the work in Greenland being given up for want of helpers. When the Count returned to Hernhutt, he told in glowing words what he had seen and heard of the Lord's work in Greenland, and there was great interest aroused among the Christians by his words. As a result of this revived interest in the spread of God's Gospel in heathendom, two of the Moravian preachers volunteered to allow themselves to be sold as slaves so that they might carry the Gospel to the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies. Then the need

of Greenland was laid much upon the hearts of the colony at Hernhutt, and two more of their number, Matthew Stach and Frederick Boehnish, offered themselves as missionaries to "The Land of Snow."

The account, as given by Matthew Stach, of how the call of God came to himself and to Fred. Boehnish, is so exceedingly interesting, and so likely to be helpful to young folks in showing them the way in which the Lord calls and fits His servants for some special work in His vineyard, that I will give you a short *resumé* of it.

The two young men were working together on the new burying-ground of the settlement called "The Hutberg." Speaking together one day of what they had heard concerning Greenland, it came out that both were deeply exercised about going there to preach the Gospel. They agreed to wait on God together, seeking that He might make it clear to them whether He had called them to go. Kneeling down in the wood close by, they pleaded the Lord's promise, "If two of you shall agree," etc. After prayer, they arose, with the inward conviction that God had called them to the work, and they resolved to make this known to their fellow-believers at Hernhutt, which they did in writing. The letter was read in a public meeting, and was well received, only the great

difficulties of the journey, and the hardships they would have to endure in Greenland were fully laid before them, so that they might well count the cost. Count Zinzendorf himself conversed with them, pointing out the difficult task that lay before them, at the same time adding, "If you can go forth in confidence on the Lord, then make ready for your journey, and you shall have my blessing and that also of the congregation." Meanwhile the two humble workmen continued at their daily calling, waiting upon God to open up their way. There were no "societies" in those days, with large sums of money in their hands. These men had to deal with God direct, and receive all their supplies and all their guidance from Him alone. Nearly a whole year passed, during which their patience was well tried—an experience not uncommon to those who are destined to go forth in their Master's service. At last the call and the way were both made clear, and, with many farewell greetings and loving counsels from Count Zinzendorf and their brethren, they started on their journey to Greenland, with little or anything save what they wore.

In the meantime Fred. Boehnish had to leave on a long journey, and other two had become exercised about accompanying Matthew Stach to Greenland. These were Christian Stach his



ESKIMO HUSBAND, WIFE, AND CHILDREN.

brother, and Christian David, both well-known and tried workers. When they arrived at Copenhagen they found little sympathy there. The king at first objected and sought to hinder them, but their zeal so won the admiration of Count Pless, the First Lord of the King's Bedchamber, that he espoused their cause, and brought it before the king, declaring to his Majesty that "in all ages God had made use of the feeble and despised to accomplish His purposes." These words, so remarkable from the lips of a courtier, had the desired effect, and not only did the king give his consent, but ordered Count Pless to prepare a ship with all necessary appliances for the voyage, with building materials and household goods. The Count himself wrote a letter of introduction to Hans Egede, commending the new-comers as devoted servants of Christ. So, you see, when God sends forth His servants He makes all things to work for their good.





The Moravians go to Greenland

ALL being ready, they sailed from Copenhagen in the ship *Caritas*, or "Charity," on the 10th of April, 1733, for the shores of Greenland, amid the prayers and fond farewells of their friends who had come to see them depart. Leaving home and all behind them, they set their faces toward the great lone land with burning hearts, and after a short but very stormy voyage they entered Ball's River on the 13th of May. When near the shore of Greenland, a violent storm was followed by a total eclipse of the sun, lasting four days, during which they drifted in total darkness amid fierce currents, but at last they saw the welcome shore, on which stood a few of the natives, for whose salvation they had left their peaceful and happy home, and forsaken all that earth holds dear.

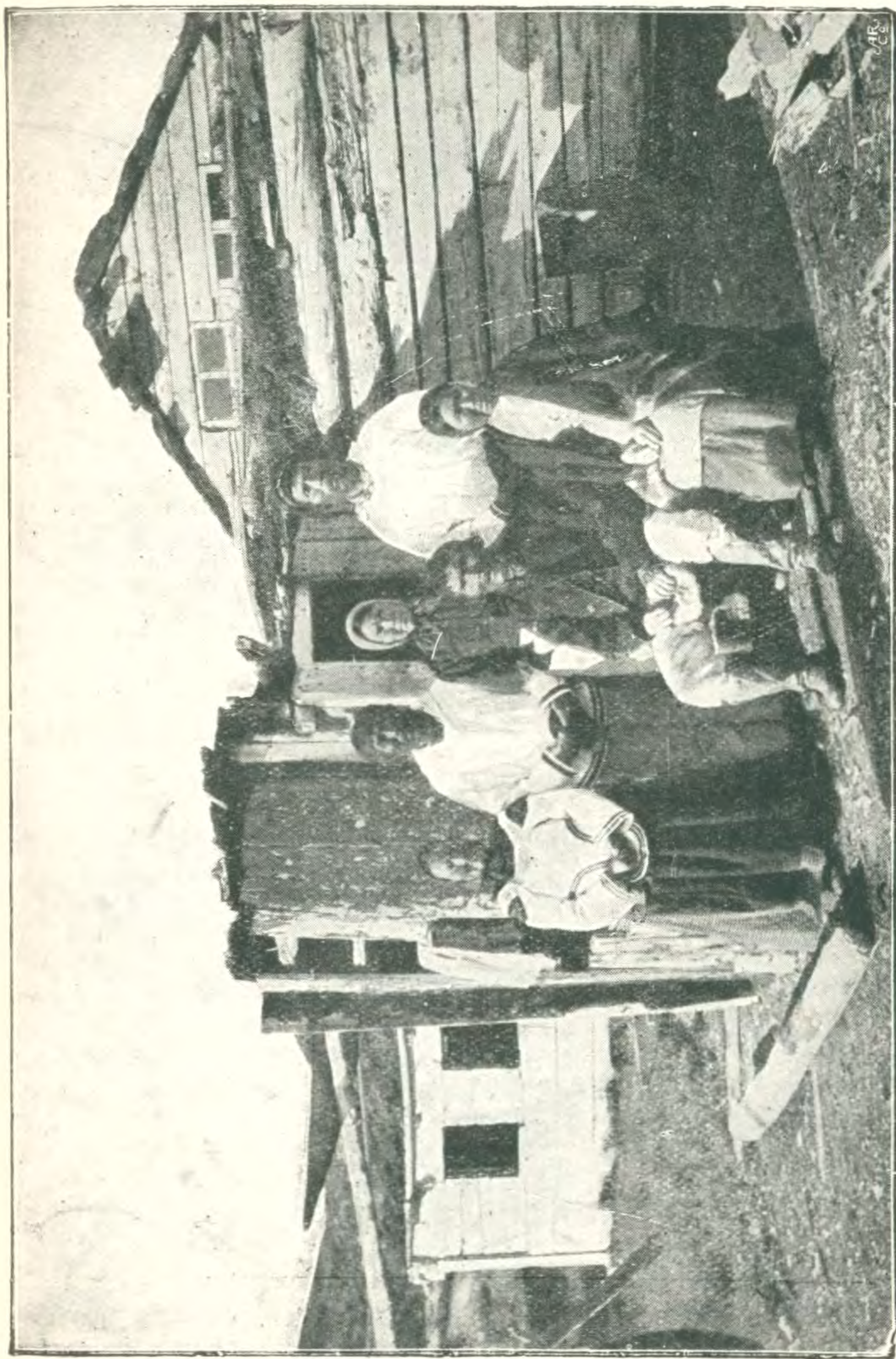
The first work of the little band of Moravians after setting foot on shore, was to find Hans Egede, the noble pioneer missionary, who, with his heroic wife, had been holding the fort on Greenland's shores for nearly twelve years, and present to him the letters of introduction they had received. As you may guess, they received a hearty welcome, and many fervent prayers ascended to the throne from their united hearts that night, that they might be helped of God to tell forth among the Greenlanders the Name of Him who came to seek and to save the lost.

Having found a suitable spot for building, they knelt down and asked that God would make it a birthplace of souls. They built a simple house of stone and earth, and gave it the name of "New Hernhutt." Other houses followed. They purchased an old boat in the hope of being able to support themselves by seal and other kinds of fishing. Their trials soon began. Seal fishing was very difficult, and they were unable to get other kinds of fish, for during a severe storm their only boat had drifted away and been dashed to pieces. A terrible epidemic of small-pox carried away many of the people, and brought others into severe straits. The devoted Moravians did their utmost for the poor sufferers during this awful time at the risk of their own lives, for the

plague was of such a nature that few who were smitten with it survived.

This severe visitation did much to break down prejudice, and to give the missionaries favour in the eyes of the people. They saw that they really cared for them. But the epidemic left them in sore straits. Their supplies had been divided amongst the sick and suffering, and but for the miraculous intervention of God in sending them food through a strange and unlooked-for channel they must have perished.

One day when almost in despair, a native named Ippagen, from a place a long way off, made his appearance, bringing with him a plentiful supply of food. In one of their visits into the country the missionaries had met this man, and showed him some little kindness in his native village, and now he feared they might be in want, and had come to their help with supplies. Truly it is no vain thing to trust in the living God. He who supplied Elijah with bread and flesh, sending it by ravens, still cares for His servants, and can find His messengers in the most unlooked-for places to run His errands. He may try His servants' faith, but He will never desert them. The scarcity of food brought many of the Eskimos to the settlement at New Hernhutt, where they pitched their tents. Among these was a man named Mangek,



GROUP OF CHRISTIAN ESKIMOS FROM WEST GREENLAND.

who pleaded that he might be permitted to live with the missionaries, and act as their fisherman. It soon became evident that the Lord was dealing with this man, and his interest in the Gospel became very marked. Of course his mind was very dark, but gradually the wondrous story of redeeming love won its way, and brought floods of tears down his brawny cheeks. He professed faith in Christ, and confessed Him as his Saviour. No doubt remained in their minds that Mangek was truly converted, and you may guess what joy this brought, for he was the first-fruits of the Gospel in dark Greenland for Christ through their labours. There is a peculiar joy over the first sinner saved, whether in a heathen country, a Christian family, or a Sunday-school class. I shall never forget the joy I had over the first of my companions who was converted. We were "brothers" then, and "companions in Christ," and many happy hours we spent together in His service.





Little Ones Gathered to Christ

THE fourth year of the Moravians' sojourn in Greenland dawned more favourably. A ship which arrived early in the year brought in it Frederick Boehnish and John Beck, two more of the brethren from Hernhutt, true and faithful men, who were welcomed with great joy by the others, and during the following summer a vessel arrived bringing a plentiful supply of provisions, and also Matthew Stach's mother, with her two daughters: Rosina, twenty-two years of age, and Anna, a girl of ten, both bright Christians. The presence of those three Christian females soon produced a change for the better in the comforts of the little mission station, which they had named "New Hernhutt." The mother gave herself to house-keeping, while the two sisters set themselves with great diligence to acquire the language, and in a very short time, Rosina

was able to speak to the native women the glad tidings of salvation in their own tongue. Anna Stach began a school for children, and before long, had a number of girls gathered around her, to whom she told the story of a Saviour's love. Often in the summer season, when for a brief period the snows had disappeared, and the ground was covered with pretty buttercups, poppies, and pinks, would Anna Stach, accompanied by her class of girls, walk out into the valleys singing hymns and speaking of Christ. These valleys had never echoed with such music since the days that Leif and his companions, fifteen centuries before, had sung the Saviour's praises there. The natives gradually drew closer to the young workers, and many of the children were allowed to come daily to Anna Stach's little school, where they learned to read, while Rosina, her elder sister, went out and in among the mothers in their huts, helping them in many ways, and always keeping before them God's way of life and peace.





The Story of Kajarnak



HE work at New Hernhutt had gone on quietly for some time, especially among the young folks, but there had been no further conversions among the grown-up people. It often happens that God begins to work in unexpected ways, and among the least likely persons, for He is a sovereign God, and His ways are past finding out. The sweet surprises that He so often gives His servants in bringing awakened sinners, old and young, to inquire after the way of salvation here, are shared be- times by those who go forth to distant lands to spread His saving Name among the heathen. It was so in His work in Greenland.

One evening John Beck, who had lately come from Europe to join the colony, was sitting in his hut translating a chapter of the Gospels into the Greenland tongue. Suddenly, a number of

natives from the south appeared, and making their way into the hut, inquired what was in the strange book that lay on the table. Beck read to them several passages, in which they manifested great interest, and told him they had heard of these things many years before. This greatly surprised the missionary, and he began to question them as to the future life. They said they knew that when they died, their souls would part from their bodies, and either go up to God or down to the abyss. This greatly cheered the man of God, and led him to speak at length on the sufferings of Christ, His atoning death, and mighty power to save the chief of sinners.

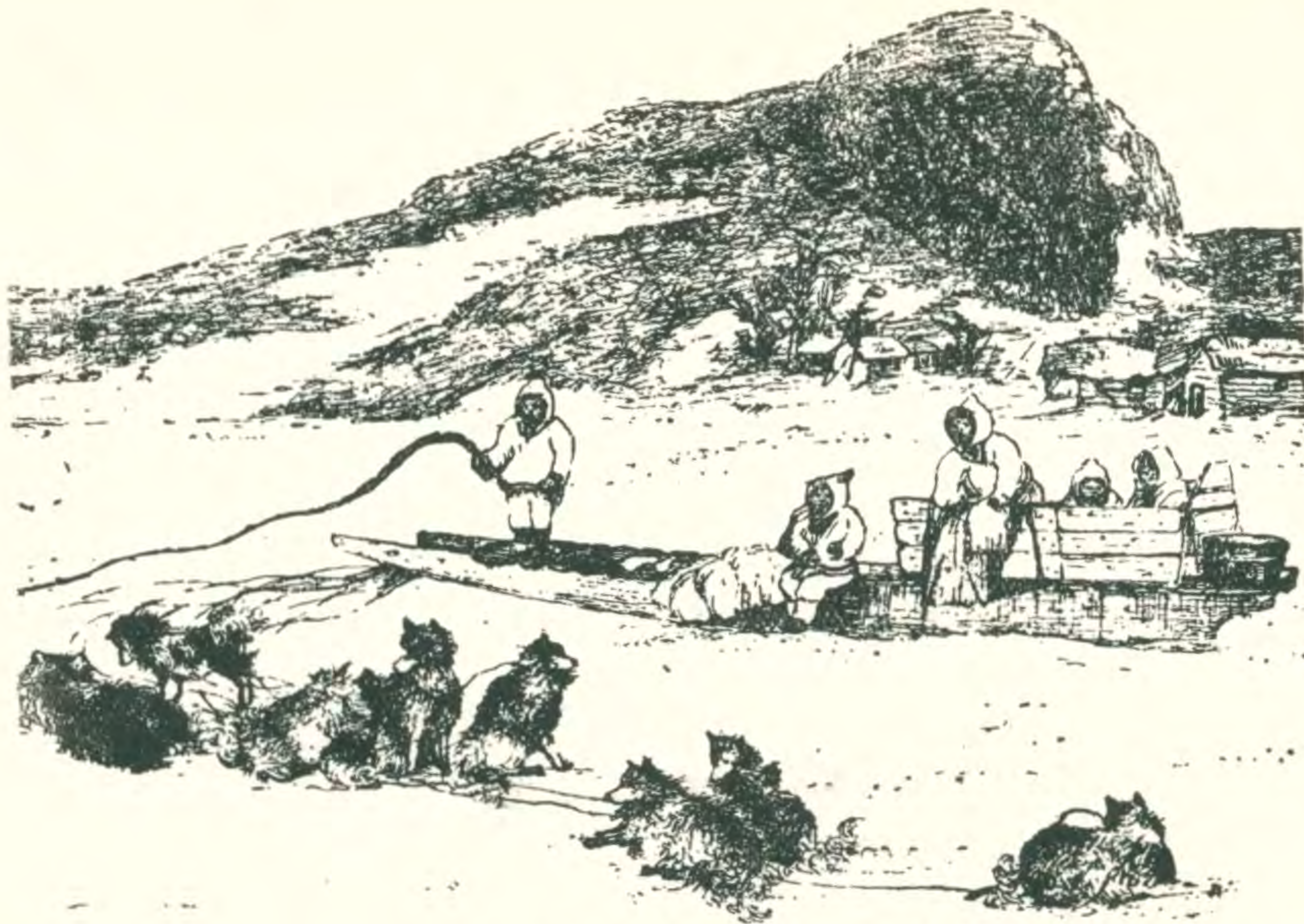
The leader of the company, Kajarnak by name, was deeply interested in what he heard, and at the close of Beck's address he walked up to the table, and, in a voice trembling with emotion, said, "How is that? Tell me that once more, for I would fain be saved, too."

"These words," says John Beck in his diary, "the like of which I had never heard from a Greenlander before, kindled my soul into ardour, and I told them fully of the Saviour, while the tears ran down my cheeks." Some slipped away, while others listened attentively till the end. Such a Gospel meeting as this had never been held in their day in Greenland. It was the beginning

of a harvest. Kajarnak said he would go home and tell his family, particularly his little son, what Jesus Christ had done, and from that day onward he became a regular visitor, and at last he with his family, and three more families of his friends, removed their tents to New Hernhutt, so that they might hear the Word of life continuously. Kajarnak soon manifested that he was a true believer in Christ, and as a result he was persecuted by the natives, because he would no longer share in their ungodly ways, and laughed at, as all Christ's true followers will ever be.

When the winter had passed, Kajarnak and a few others went away south in search of seals. It was with much joy, mingled with fear, that the missionaries bade farewell to the young believers. They were going away into a heathen country, where many temptations awaited them. If they stood true to Christ, they might be the means of blessing to many, and carry the light of the Gospel into dark places where it had never shone; if they fell, great dishonour would be brought upon the Name of the Lord, whose followers they had openly professed to be.

A whole year passed, and no news had come from Kajarnak, so that the people at New Hernhutt were growing anxious about him. One day, when the little settlement was a scene of rejoicing owing



SOUTH GREENLAND SLEDGE AND DOGS.

to the marriage of Frederick Boehnish with Anna Stach, who should walk into the midst of the festive company but Kajarnak, bringing with him his brother, for whose conversion he had watched and waited all these months. As you may guess, they had a warm welcome, and their presence added much to the joy of that happy day.

The news of Kajarnak's conversion, and his decided Christian testimony in the south, was the means of bringing many of his countrymen to hear the Word of life. In the diary of one of the Moravian missionaries, written several years after Kajarnak's conversion, we find the following entry:—"Our Samuel Kajarnak, by the visit he made to the south country after his baptism, drew a train of three or four hundred natives after him, who all forsook their dwelling-places, and now live at New Hernhutt." Surely this was a good report of Kajarnak's testimony. Various attempts were made to entice him back to his old ways, but they all failed. The Lord, whom he trusted, preserved him. On one occasion he was pressed hard by some of his relatives to join with them in a yearly dance at the Sun-feast, when they welcome back the long-lost sun at the close of winter, but his reply was, "I have now another Sun, even Jesus, who has arisen in my heart." Well would it be

if every one who professes to know Christ, could give a like answer.

Soon after his return to New Hernhutt, Kajarnak was seized with a sudden illness, from which he never recovered. The little band of the Lord's disciples gathered around him in prayer, in which he joined ; and when he saw some of them weeping, he said, " Do not be grieved for me. Believers when they die go to the Saviour, and partake of His eternal joy. We shall see one another again, before the throne of the Lamb." While they were speaking, he bowed his head upon his hands and quietly passed away. Had there been no other results of all the labour spent on the Eskimos of Greenland than that one sinner saved and safely landed in glory, it would have been ample return, for the value of one soul who can tell ?



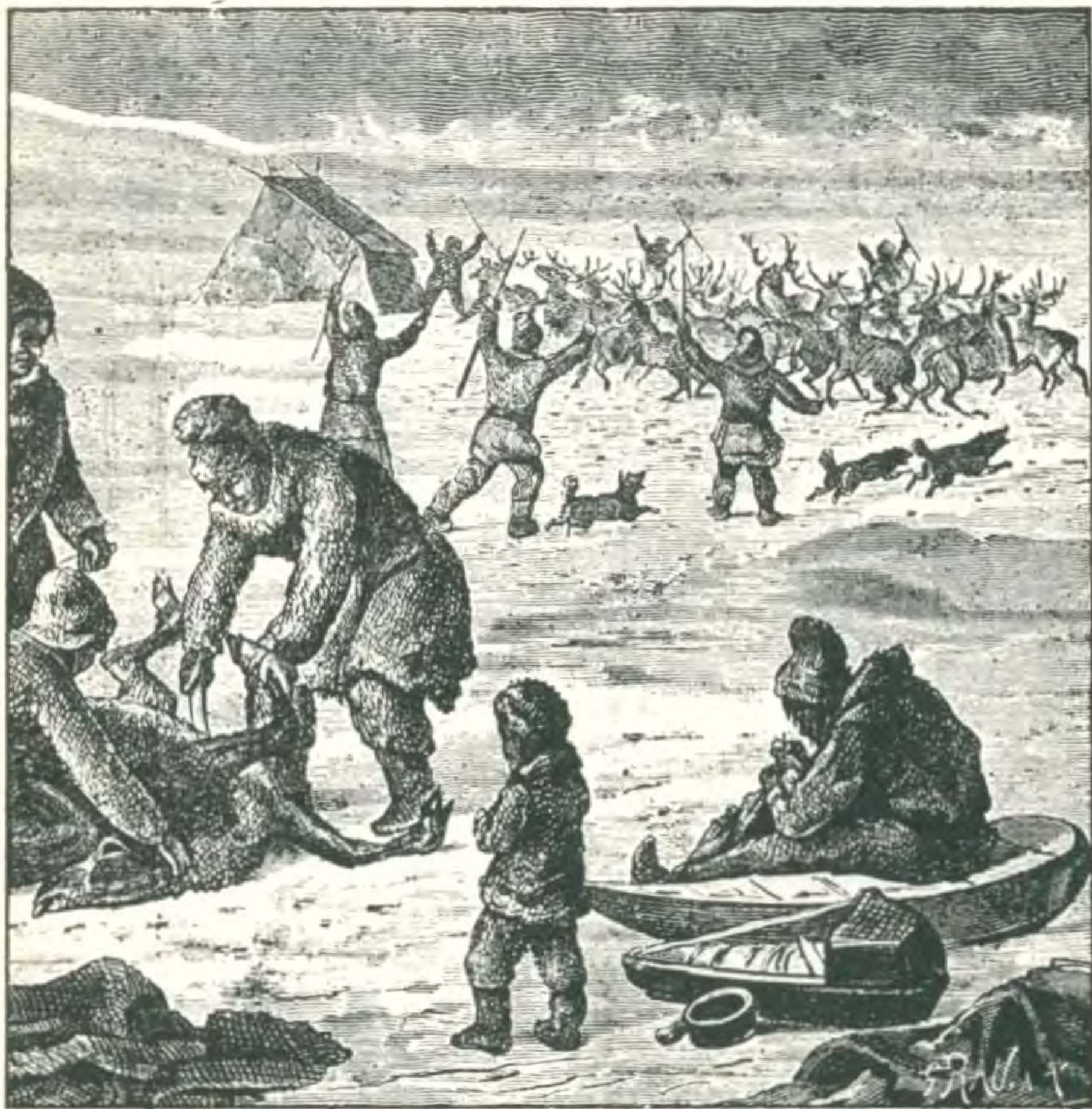


The Light Still Shining

ENCOURAGED by the interest manifested by the Eskimos in the Gospel, and the fruit that had been gathered after long toil, the Moravians longed to go further afield. When this news reached Matthew Stach, who had gone to Europe for rest and change, he at once volunteered to return to Greenland, and take the lead in this new effort. He arrived with two other workers, and, after spending a short time at New Hernhutt, they set out along the coast to seek a site for a new settlement, which they found on the anniversary of their first arrival in Greenland exactly twenty-five years before. To this new colony they gave the name of "Lichtenfels," or "The Light of the Rock," and, after rearing a simple house and meeting-place there, the light of the glorious Gospel began to shed its rays abroad on that

rocky shore. Four families, consisting of thirty-four persons, formed the entire colony for two years; then others gathered around, until at the end of the fourth year, there were quite as many families at Lichtenfels as at New Hernhutt.

A third settlement was established in the south, not far from Cape Farewell, and, by the blessing of God upon the Gospel preached, many were converted. And such was the testimony borne by the lives of these converted Eskimos, ignorant as they were, that traders and whale fishers who visited their coast, bore witness that their lives were more like true Christians than many in Europe who knew a great deal more. But though the work went on, the workers were one after another gathered home. Frederick Boehnish was the first of the noble band of pioneers who had braved the storm and borne the burden of the days of trial, to be called to his rest. He quietly passed away on the 29th of July, 1763, and was buried in the land of snow, where he had spent twenty-nine years of his life, telling the people "the old, old story of Jesus and His love." Laying his hand tenderly on the head of his little boy, who was brought to his bedside by his mother, he gave him his blessing, and then with much joy exclaiming, "My dear Saviour is now come to take me home," he fell asleep. Some of the years



A REINDEER DRIVE IN GREENLAND.

that followed were intensely cold, the inlets being solid ice, so that the "kayaks" could not be used, yet in the midst of all this the Lord's servants were preserved and kept happy. One, in departing to Europe to end his days, said, "I have spent twenty years of my life in this land, and would willingly spend as many more, to have my share of the mercy and grace now enjoyed among us."

Recent explorers and travellers tell of happy gatherings of children and young folk to sing the same hymns of Gospel grace and love, and to repeat texts and portions of the same Scriptures as we use in our Sunday-schools and meetings here. And here and there along the eastern and western shores, the lamp of the Gospel still casts its glimmering light amid the darkness. The population has been greatly reduced by influenza and other epidemics within recent years, although it is estimated there may be nearly ten thousand of a population in Danish Greenland. In the south and west they all are taught to read and write, and none are now found there who practise pagan rites, although many are yet without Christ, and in need of His blessed Gospel. May the Lord stir up His people—and especially those who are young in years, whose lives are yet to live—to think of the needy souls who dwell on these inhospitable shores. May the simple story that

I have tried to tell you, be used in showing those who are yet unsaved their need of a Saviour, and the way of life and peace. And may those who are already saved be stirred up to remember the lone land of snow, and to help to speed the Gospel there, which alone can give the sinner rest and peace. And when that glad morning breaks, and the redeemed of the Lord, all saved by sovereign grace, shall be gathered from every land and sea, around the throne of God and the Lamb, how pleasant it will be to meet in the midst of that celestial throng, those who toiled for Christ, and those who were won by their incessant labours for the Lord Jesus, amid

“GREENLAND’S ICY MOUNTAINS.”





AMID ARCTIC SNOWS

INTRODUCTION.

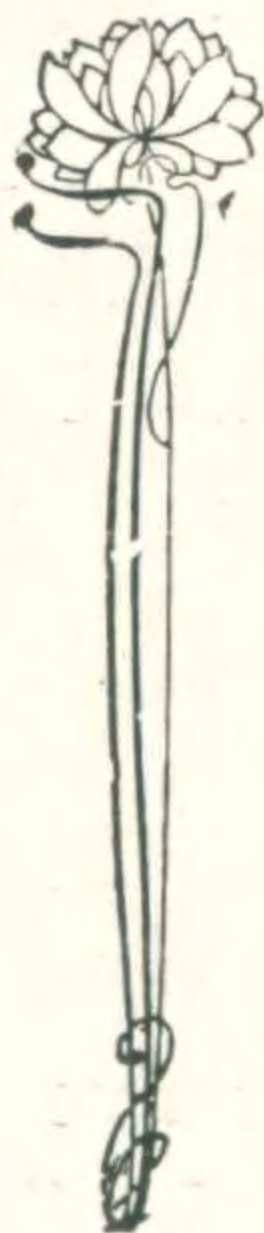
THE full moon shone brightly across fields of newly-fallen snow. A sharp frost had set in during the evening, making the white-robed earth glisten like diamonds, as we started off, well wrapped up in great-coats and wearing snow-shoes, to reach a hall where some five hundred young folks were gathering for an evening meeting.

It had been our custom for some years to give the boys and girls and the young men and maidens attending our Sunday Schools and Bible Classes a trip to some far-off land in which the Gospel has wrought its wonders in the salvation of sinners, and by means of photographs, taken on the spot by those who have gone forth with the Gospel, to bring these far-off

places and their peoples near. This was done by means of a lime-light lantern enlarging and throwing on a screen at the side of the platform the various sights and scenes, with portraits taken from life, in these distant regions ; while one told the story of the conquests of the Cross and the faith of its heralds in these dark places of the earth. By this means eye-gate and ear-gate were both secured for full two hours seeing and hearing what took place—not in fiction, but in fact—in the lands to which some whom they had known had gone forth, constrained by the love of Jesus, to tell the wondrous story of His Cross, and to preach salvation through His precious blood.

The young folks were greatly interested in these subjects. They brought home to them in living form what they heard from week to week in their classes, and, by God's blessing on the word spoken, led some to see that there is a reality in the Gospel as the instrument by which God saves sinners of every clime, while others who had already believed it were led to see the need of Gospel labourers in the needy lands to which most of them had hitherto been strangers. Who knows what may be the full results of these early impressions, or whither they may lead ? To the great Husbandman who watches over His own good seed, whose prerogative it is to give it life and cause it to grow ; who also calleth and sendeth forth whom He chooseth to be His messengers to those who have not heard His Name, and to

gather from lands afar other sheep for which He died—to Him who is Lord of all we commit the story told that night, and here rehearsed in the following pages, of the Conquests of the Cross in ice-bound fields and “Amid Arctic Snows.”





PEEPS AT ICELAND.

ITS MOUNTAINS, PLAINS, AND PEOPLE.

ICELAND, the land of icebergs, glaciers, hot springs, and volcanic mountains, lies in mid-ocean between Europe and America at a distance of nearly a thousand miles from its foster-motherland, on the very border of the Arctic circle. It is a wonderful country in many ways, yet but little known to Europeans, and sadly neglected in regard to spiritual things.

Although only about five days' sail from Great Britain and five hundred miles from Scotland there are few of those who know the Saviour's name there, who have any idea of its extent and need, or feel much responsibility towards its dwellers, who are virtually their next-door neighbours, in carrying or sending to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which alone can bring salvation and gladness to the individual heart, and light and liberty to a people who

sit in darkness and the shadow of death. In the hope of stirring up a true interest in this isolated and solitary island and its people we tell the story of the place, the people, and the progress of the Gospel there, so far as it has been given us to know them.



A WILD ROCKY SHORE.

Far away back about the year 860, Naddodr, a Viking king, while on a voyage from Norway to his eyrie in the Faroe Isles, was driven by a storm far out of his course, and landed on the bare and barren shores of Iceland. He had never heard of such a place, and naturally accredited himself as the discoverer of it. When his ship ran aground on its

coast, he, with a few trusted followers, climbed up on their hands and knees and explored the dark rocks on a part of the coast-line, but found no sign of human habitation or life. While returning to their ship a great snowstorm fell, covering as with a white mantle the entire country, and Naddodr, who was so entranced with the effect, named the newly-discovered island "Snowland," and returned in triumph to Norway to tell of his discovery.

But while Naddodr is thus greatly accredited as the discoverer of Iceland, it is pretty certain, from the writings of Dicinlus, an Irish monk, who lived and wrote about the year 825, that Iceland had been known some time before his day, and actually visited by Culdee missionaries preaching the Gospel to its people. It is pleasant to think that, years before the country became known politically or had been claimed as a kingdom of the earth, it had been pioneered by these earnest Irish evangelists with the joyful message of the Gospel, and that from their lips its people had at that early day, when most of the European nations sat in darkness, heard the way of salvation, life, and peace.

There is a story told, too, of a Christian princess who is believed to have gone to Iceland about the year 889, and to whose instrumentality the spread of the Gospel there may owe more than will ever be known until the day of Christ.

Auth, daughter of Kentil the Flatneb, or flatnose,

whose husband Olaf the White, King of Dublin, died suddenly, and whose only son, Thorstein, was killed in Scotland, determined to sail for a foreign land where she might bury her sorrow and spend her life in the service of the Lord. She sailed for Iceland, and reached it in company with a few others like-minded with her. She appears to have known the Lord, to have truly loved His Gospel, and to have had a real desire to spread abroad His saving name. Her sister Thorum, who also was a Christian, accompanied her, and the two of them spent their energies and their wealth in seeking the temporal and spiritual welfare of the Icelanders. These two royal ladies personally taught the young people to read, and engaged others to teach them. They also set before them the Gospel of Christ, with what results we cannot now tell, but "the Day" will declare. Thus they spent and were spent in the honoured service of Christ until at a good, old age they both passed to their heavenly home—Auth giving instructions that she should be buried high above the tide-mark on the mountain top, and not in the deep sea as the Icelanders were wont to bury their dead. That the service of these two royal workers is not forgotten even yet in Iceland is evident from the fact that so late as 1891 a festival was held in Akureyri in their honour, to celebrate the thousandth anniversary of their arrival there. Thus the Word is verified that "the memory of the just is blessed," and "the

righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance" (Psalm cxii. 6).

In the tenth century, when the earliest Norwegian settlers left their homes to escape the tyranny of Harald Harfa'qr, the first Norwegian king, many of them found a place of refuge in Iceland, and there established a sort of patriarchal system of Government amongst themselves, not unlike what we may gather from the early books of the Bible existed in Abraham's time. Each chief was independent, and exercised the rights of both king and priest among his people, all of whom were regarded as equals, and shared common privileges under his rule. The spread of Christianity was largely through the instrumentality of missionaries who had fled from Norway about the same time, and onward, until, in the year 1000, the knowledge of Christ and of Christianity had so spread among the people that it became necessary for the native chieftains to assemble and decide whether they would receive Christianity as their national religion or return fully to the rites of their heathen forefathers.

The thrilling story of that momentous day in which the chieftains assembled in solemn concourse to decide this great question, I reserve to another chapter. It was no doubt a great day in Iceland, but there is a much more important day in the life-history of every human being who hears the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and in which the hand of the Lord knocks

at his heart's door for admission with the message. The reception of that message brings life and peace to the soul, while its rejection or neglect seals the doom of the sinner for eternal woe. The choice of a nation of a national religion is not of nearly so much importance in the sight of God and Heaven as the choice of a soul for eternity. Happy, thrice happy are all who can truly sing—

“ My heart is fixed, Eternal God,
Fixed on Thee !
And my immortal choice is made,
Christ for me.
He is my Prophet, Priest, and King,
Who did for me salvation bring,
And while I live I mean to sing
Christ for me.”





THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

ICELAND covers an area of over 40,000 square miles, or more than one-third larger than Scotland. It is about 300 miles in width from east to west, and about 200 miles in length from north to south, but, owing to its condition, only a tenth part is available for human habitation. Its population is consequently found on a fringe of only a few miles in width on the deeply indented coast, numbering in all about 72,000.

Lying as it does on the very border of the Arctic circle, it is exposed to the action of two opposite currents—the Gulf Stream and the Polar current, the former bringing a constant flow of warmer waters to its coast from afar, while the latter as constantly carries the colder waters of the Arctic Sea to its northern shores, causing seasons of excessive cold, with huge icebergs which drift in majestic silence along its coasts. So terrible is the cold at

times, that the very fish in the sea are killed in large numbers and all vegetation is destroyed. Yet, strange to say, in various parts of the island there are hot springs bubbling up and sending forth a continuous stream of hot water, some of it at such a temperature that the natives use it for washing purposes, while other springs are literally so boiling that they send up a constant cloud of steam. The most famous



AN ICELAND GEYSER.

of these is the Great Geyser, which travellers say is very grand.

Iceland owes its origin to volcanic eruption. Its interior and highest parts are covered with volcanic matter, its hills and rocks are basalt, and most of its interior consists of lava tracks, barren sands, and huge icefields. The largest icefield, named Valna

Jokull, covers 3,000 square miles. The highest mountain is Oerafa Jokull, 6,246 feet above sea level, its upper part being covered with everlasting snow.

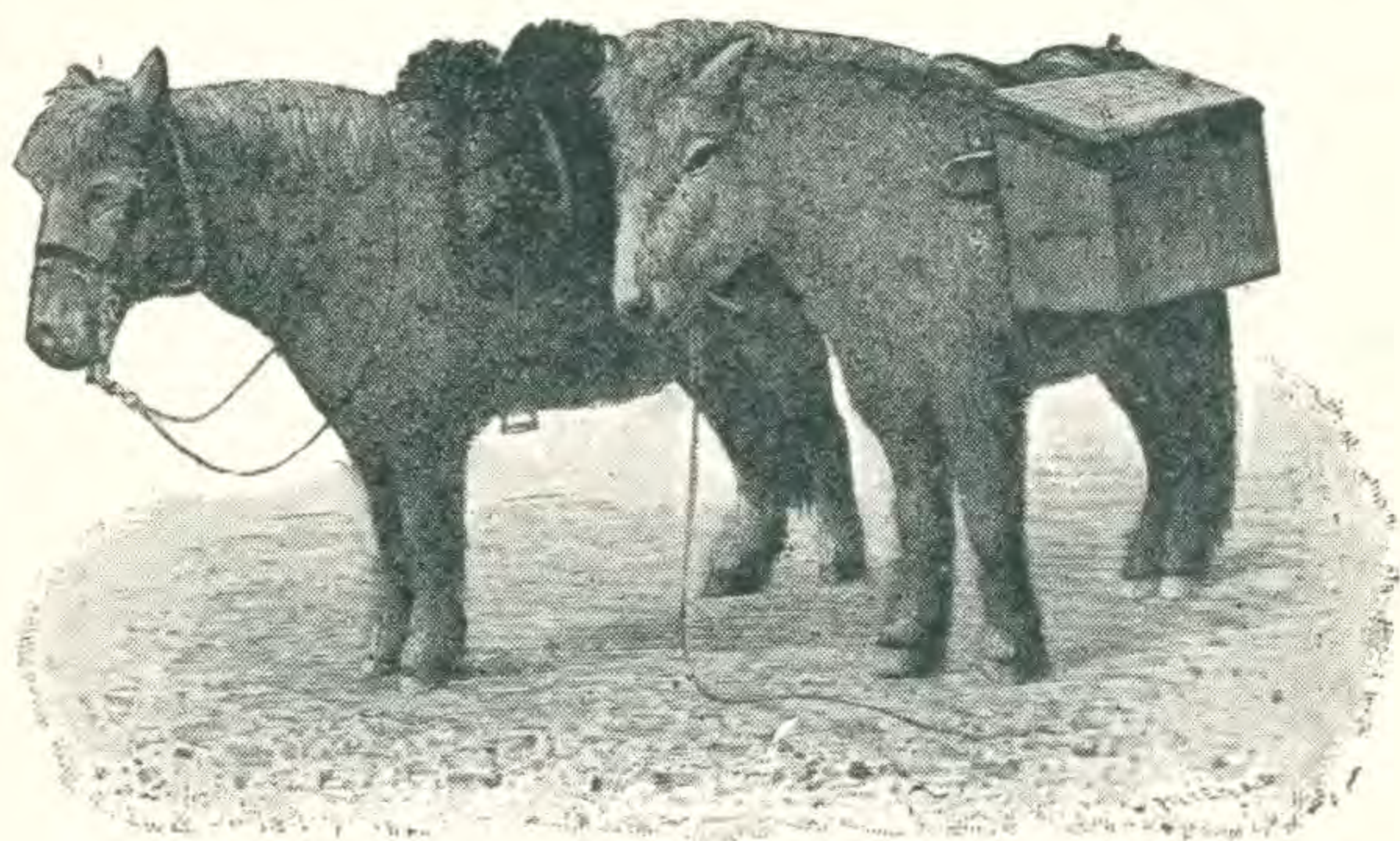
Twenty volcanoes have been active since Iceland was first inhabited—Mount Hecla being the most famous and its eruptions most frequent. In 1783, it threw out a stream of lava 45 miles in length and several miles in breadth, which is the largest known. As the result of this and other eruptions, over 2,400 miles of country are covered with lava and entirely unfruitful.

Earthquakes are of frequent occurrence, and often do great damage to life and property.

The climate is subject to sudden and excessive variations and changes of temperature. In the far north at Akureyri the mean temperature is 32° , while at Reykjavik, the capital, in the south-west, it is 39° . February is the coldest, and July the hottest month. Owing to the high latitude, the difference in the length of days is very great. In some parts the shortest day has only three hours' light, while the longest has only three hours' darkness. In the far north even these are modified, so that in the long, dreary winter there is almost constant darkness, while in the brief summer there is scarcely any night.

The Icelanders are not Eskimos like the inhabitants of Greenland and Labrador, but much in outward appearance like Europeans. They are not now heathen, but Christian in name and Lutheran in

creed. They have churches and priests, but not much of the plain, simple Gospel of Christ, which makes known to sinners a present and known salvation through the finished work of Christ at the Cross of Calvary, apart from works or sacraments or confessions to human priests. This is Iceland's greatest lack, and, until the light of the Gospel shines more fully among its people, there will be a lack which nothing else can supply. Thank God, the dawn of a



ICELAND PONIES.

brighter day has even now arisen, and we long to hear of the spread of the glad tidings of life and light and liberty among those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

The principal modes of transport are the famous Iceland ponies, and, where these are impossible, horses, sledges, and ice-shoes have to be used.

The people of Iceland are an intelligent and clever people, and as a rule fairly well educated. Almost

all the children can read, and the average Icelfander is fond of reading. Alas, that a literature of a degrading and pernicious character should find its way to that far-off island, which has done and is doing its deadly work amongst the people, leading them on in all the sceptical and infidel theories with which our cities and universities abound. Tourists frequenting the country during the summer bring many evil ways with them, which the natives quickly acquire and retain, for what is wrong and vile is much more easily acquired and retained than the truth and way of God, simply because the former is according to man's natural heart, while the other is not.





INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

OWING to the variety of climatic conditions the occupations of the Icelanders vary according to locality. In Reykjavik, the capital, the mean temperature of the year is 39° Fahr., the summer $45^{\circ} 5'$ and the winter $20^{\circ} 7'$, while at Akureyri, in the north, it is 32° for the year, the summer being $45^{\circ} 5'$, and the winter $20^{\circ} 7'$. This naturally causes a great difference in agriculture and other occupations. In the north the atmosphere is clear and pure, while the climate is dry, but in the south, although milder, it is wet and foggy.

There are few cereals grown, a wild oats called "melur" being the chief. Cranberries and bilberries are the only fruits. Domestic animals are the cow, horse, and sheep. "Iceland ponies" are hardy and enduring: many of them in years gone by were exported to Britain for work in the coal mines. Eider

ducks are numerous, and a large trade is done in eider-down, of which quilts are made. Haymaking is carried on for two months in the year, and for three more months various other outdoor employments, but for seven months outside work is at a standstill, owing to the severity of the weather. Spinning, weaving, and toolmaking fill up the long winter, and it is then that the Gospeller finds easiest access to the people with his message. The fisheries employ over 12,000 people, and most of the fishing is carried on in open boats, which is associated with many dangers on so wild a coast. Journeys are mostly on horseback, and there are no proper roads, only bridle-paths, which are not generally well kept. All this makes locomotion rather difficult, nevertheless, it can be done, and is by tourists from all parts, who frequent the island during the summer. The heralds of God's salvation who go to Iceland would require to be well inured to hard work, and able to put up with homely fare. They would also need to be able to "endure hardness," and plod along from farm to farm and house to house, often in blinding snowstorms, across frozen streams, and amid strange surroundings, in order to reach the people, for no crowds of eager listeners, no large halls filled with attentive audiences are yet to be found in Iceland.

From the colonisation of Iceland down to the 14th century, the trade—if such it can be called—was in the hands of Norsemen and native Icelanders ; from

the 15th to the 17th centuries, it fell into the hands of British and Germans, and latterly was held as a monopoly by the Danish Government. Since the year 1874, when Iceland obtained her own administration under the Danish Crown, her commerce has greatly increased, especially in horses, sheep, salt meat, hides, and wool, to which must be added her fishing products of cod, herrings, and oil.

In Reykjavik, the capital, there is a cathedral, a college, and a Governor's house. Some of the private houses look bright and pretty : mostly built of wood, painted in various shades, surrounded by neat gardens, in which hardy flowers grow at certain seasons. A few of the better class are of whinstone, and the red Danish flag flutters over many a roof. Lodging can be had at a small hotel and in many private houses. There are pretty walks by the sea and along the sides of a lake which bounds the town, and a splendid view of the blazing sunset behind Snæfell Jokull is to be had from a headland a short distance from Reykjavik. Scores of ponies stand ready for hire, and most travellers in Iceland use them. They are easy to ride, usually very docile, and go at a good pace. Domestic as a dog, the good Iceland pony follows his rider when he has left the saddle, and rubs his head against his master's shoulder.

The Great Geyser, the largest of the hot springs, in the valley of Haukadal, is about seventy miles from the capital. Its crater is like an inverted oyster

shell. The pool is sixty-five feet in diameter, filled with transparent water, simmering quietly the one moment, springing up in the air like a great jet of steam 100 feet high, pouring down its torrents of hot water all around, the next. This marvel of Nature, and witness to Nature's God in the far north, is



A SICK FISHER LAD BEING TENDED ON A MISSION SHIP.

visited by all tourists, and few leave it, after hearing its subterranean thunders and witnessing its grand, yet dangerous risings, without being reminded of the presence of the great God in that far-off land.

The Iceland women dress trimly and look well. They are good house-keepers, and the young girls smart servants. After a meal, all the guests rise and shake hands with the mistress of the house, saying—

“Thanks for the meal,” to which she replies—“May it do you good.” The Iceland women are generally good looking, with fair complexions and shell-pink tints. The old national costume of high white helmet with veil is very becoming, but is dying out in favour of southern fashions, which are every year being more worn.

Steamers sail around Iceland during the summer, calling at most of its ports, or anchoring outside where this is impossible, in which case numerous small boats put forth to the steamers, which their occupants quickly board, selling, buying, or bartering as they have opportunity among the passengers. A Christian tourist on board one of these steamers cruising around the island was able to distribute a large number of Gospel booklets, tracts, and texts in the Icelandic language among these boatmen, and to send by them, for distribution amongst their friends and neighbours, quantities of these silent messengers of Gospel grace. Who knows what the fruit of such a sowing may be, or what its full results in the enlightenment of souls and the guiding of weary ones to the Rest-Giver. The Icelanders are a reading people ; almost without exception they are able to read well, and, if the Gospel and the Truth of God is to be spread abroad amongst them, it will be chiefly by means of books and tracts.

An illustrated edition of the New Testament in the Icelandic tongue was issued in London quite

lately, and, in a very short time, the whole of it was eagerly used up, and much interest manifested in it by the people. If you give an Icelfander a book or anything to read, he is most profuse in his thanks, saying, "tak, tak," which is the word for "thanks," and usually supplementing it by a vigorous shake of the hand.



A GROUP OF ICELAND WOMEN.

Whale fishing is one of the chief industries, and during the season many whalers come from other parts to use the harpoon on Icelandic seas. These hardy fellows are glad when any interest is taken in them, especially in spiritual things, which now is more looked after than in years gone by. Mission ships go forth among the deep-sea fishermen and whalers, often visiting the coast of Iceland, carrying healing for the bodies and Gospel tidings for the souls of these toilers on the deep.

Icelanders are very hospitable, and take a pride

in entertaining strangers, although, in many cases, their means of doing so is sadly deficient. Some of the farmhouses are fairly comfortable; others are scarcely habitable. In the country houses the women spin and the men weave a tweed called *Vathmdl*, which is the chief item of their clothing. The cattle occupy the lower parts of the house, and generally their odour extends through its various parts. The Lutheran priests are not much given to visiting their people, and the people, living in many cases long distances from the churches, do not frequent them often. If the Gospel is to reach the scattered dwellers along the coasts of Iceland and its lone farmhouses, it must be literally taken to them, and, blessed be God, something of this is being done. But before we tell the story of the Gospel's progress in the far-off isle, we must go back nine hundred years and hear how it was first carried to and welcomed by the people of Iceland.



ICELANDERS, WITH PONIES CARRYING WOOD.



EARLY DAYS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THERE are many evidences that Christianity, introduced to Iceland by the Irish missionaries, and later by the Norwegians, made considerable progress among the people. In the Flatey Isles, a kind of college or monastery was founded in the eleventh century, and a printing press of a primitive sort was set up, from which books were sent forth in the Icelandic tongue to all parts of the island. It was this spread of the truth of the Gospel and its effects upon the people that caused the chieftains of Iceland to assemble together in the year 1000 on the great Althing plain to hear from the ambassadors of the Cross their message, and to decide whether it should be received as the religion of the people, or whether it should be cast out, and the ancient duties and rites of heathenism retained.

The ancient Althing plain on which this great assembly was held in that memorable year, is a place

of great interest, alike from its historical associations and its striking geological character. The plain is a ravine of seventy miles in length in the midst of lava beds, skirted by massive lava walls. Year by year the people came from far and near in great numbers and encamped along this plain to attend the Althing, or great national assembly. Here for over 800 years every great event connected with the history of the people was discussed. The council of the chieftains was held on an island in the river Oxara, where they, as a sort of Parliament, sat in judgment on the various matters affecting the country and people, and when they had come to a decision as to what was to be done, the result was made known to the assembled multitude encamped upon the plain.

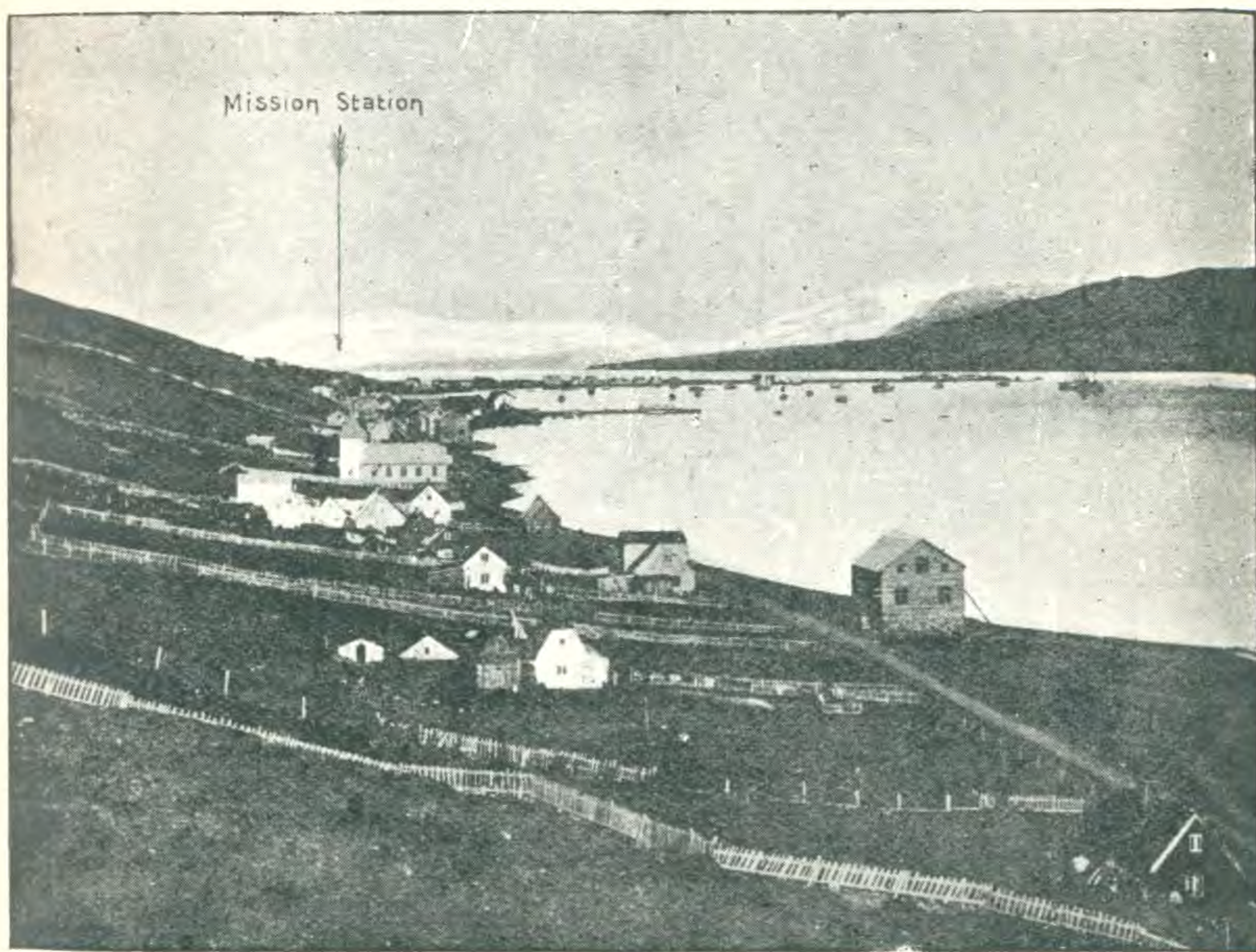
On an eminence west of the river Oxara, stands the Logben, or Rock of the Law, where the decisions of the Althing were proclaimed. This place is still shown to the traveller, and bears the name of "The Law Hill." It was on this historic spot that the great council of Icelandic chieftains was held in the year 1000—a year memorable throughout Christendom, believed by many to be the end of the world—to hear the message of the missionaries sent by King Olaf, and decide as to whether they and their message would be received or rejected.

History gives a full and interesting account of the great assembly and the long debate which con-

tinued for several days, all sides being heard. Then the momentous decision was arrived at, and Thorgan, the speaker, or "law-say" man, ascended the Rock and gave the sentence of the Althing, while the people stood in solemn silence on the great plain, with its lava walls like sentinels around. The oration was long and learned, but it ended with these memorable words—"This is the beginning of our laws: all men shall be Christian here in this land, and believe in one God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They shall leave off idol worship, cease to expose their children to death, and not eat horse flesh." This was accepted by the people at large, and great multitudes were baptised in the warm springs in confession of their faith in Christianity. But it needs to be remembered that national Christianity of this sort is one thing, and the individual faith and conversion of a sinner is quite another. Many who are Christians nationally and by profession have yet to learn their personal need of the new birth, and to be brought as lost and guilty sinners to the Lord Jesus, as their personal Saviour. The word of the Lord on this matter is intensely personal and plain. It singles each individual out from the nation and says to him as a solitary person, "Ye must be born again" (John iii. 7).

The New Testament was translated into Icelandic by Odd Gottakalksson, a son of a bishop who had been converted in Norway and returned to Iceland.

He was prohibited from preaching the Gospel publicly, and kept pretty much a prisoner. It was during his confinement that he finished his translation, which he took to Denmark and got printed. Three years after his death a printing press was set up in Hunafloe, and his Gospels issued in 1562. It would



A MISSION STATION IN ICELAND.

have been well had the preachers and teachers continued to instruct the people in the Word of God, but instead of this they gave most of their time to writing sagas or fabulous tales, which for ages have been the chief reading of the Icelanders, together

with legendary lives of saints and histories of the Church, neither of which have been of any help to them on things eternal.

It is to be feared that in Iceland, as elsewhere, many adopted the new religion without knowing anything of the power of the Gospel unto their personal salvation, and just as surely as this is so with any people will the Christianity of that people be one of form rather than of power, and when it is assailed by the enemies of the truth from without, or in the leavening of its doctrines by traditions and corruptions within, those who have only the outward form will let it go, or probably take sides with the enemies of the truth in assailing it. Such has been the history of nominal Christianity and national religion all along the line, and such was the fate in Iceland. It would be wearisome work to trace the varied seductions used, first by the emissaries of Romanism, and latterly by the apostles of Rationalism, to lead the Icelanders away from the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ ; it will be sufficient to say that at the present time there is very little real living Christianity in the sea-girt, snow-clad island, very few who openly confess Jesus as the Saviour, and the Word of God as their rule of faith. The Christianity of Iceland, where the name is retained, is a dead Lutheranism, almost as full of Romanism as that from which Martin Luther and his confederates severed themselves, and testified against at the time of the Reformation. And

over against this dead and corrupt religion a spirit of infidelity has arisen, especially amongst the younger Icelanders, who are kept supplied from Britain, America, and Denmark with all the current Higher Criticism and sceptical literature, which they devour greedily, for the young Icelanders are a reading and inquiring people. O, that the Gospel in all its plain simplicity may yet sound across its snow-clad vales, and the "old, old story of Jesus and His love" echo over its icy fields, bringing life and light and liberty to its dwellers.

That something is being done in this way which God is using I shall now tell you as I close my story of the land of the hot spring, the volcano, and **the** icefield.





GOSPEL PIONEERING IN ICELAND.

TOURISTS and travellers to Iceland have, within recent years, taken Gospel books and tracts, scattering them amongst the people, and for some time solitary labourers in the Gospel have been quietly working in Husavik and Akureyri, seeking to preach and teach Jesus Christ among the people.

Before me lies the diary of a visit made across several hundreds of miles in Iceland during winter by a young English Gospeller who is seeking to spread the Gospel there, and if I give you a few extracts from it you will have some idea of the conditions under which pioneer Gospel work is carried on in that land.

Clad in snow-shoes, carrying all necessary requisites, which must be as few as possible, for a month's tour, he starts alone into the waste, and at two o'clock in the afternoon finds it quite dark. He

spends the long evening and night at a farm, and is accompanied several miles next morning by Stefan, an old-type Icelfander over seventy, born again and a true lover of the Lord. This was a cheery start, and the old saint did not leave his young brother



FRED. H. JONES, PIONEER MISSIONARY TO ICELAND.

until he had introduced him to another veteran, Sera Daoid, who is also a decided Christian. It was delightful to hear these two worthies speak of God, His love and His faithfulness—like Caleb and Joshua of old. They are few and far between up there how-

ever. At a merchant's store next night a Gospel meeting was held to which over fifty from all the farms around gathered, and were so interested that a second meeting was arranged the following night, to which seventy came and listened attentively to the Gospel for two full hours. Surely, this is something to praise God for in Iceland. Snow-shoes are now useless, as the frost is gone and the roads are mud and water, so they are discarded and left till a steamer calls to take them home. They are of oak, eight feet long, and too cumbersome to carry. Streams knee-deep have to be waded, still frozen rivers crossed on cracking ice. Another meeting at night from which the people had to walk long distances in thick darkness after hearing the Gospel for two hours. They are extremely reticent, but the earnest looks tell it is reaching hearts.

Next day the road lay across the icy reaches of a large river, over flat icefields and frozen moors which seemed boundless. Hour after hour the traveller has to plod along without seeing human being or habitation, scanning the monotonous landscape, and in faith looking up to his God who alone can guide through these wilds in safety. At last a few dark specks in the far distance come into view, and concentrating his remaining strength, the wearied and worn, yet undaunted Gospeller, makes a desperate effort to reach these houses on the shore of Viking's lake, and arrives none too soon, for he has

to go to bed, and for three days and nights is unable to eat or move about. The effects of such hardships tell on the body, and only strong and wiry men with willing hearts and minds to work are of any use in such lands as Iceland pioneering the Gospel.

A meeting at this place, to which all the neighbours are invited, gives an opportunity to the now-rested labourer to testify the Gospel, which some had never heard before, and others never again, for one old man, the father of the host, who heard the way of life set forth that night, entered the eternal world a few days after. Thus they pass on, generation after generation, from the land of ice and snow to the world beyond, some, no doubt, saved by grace to eternal glory, but the most in darkness to eternal judgment.

At the close of this meeting, in the midst of a blinding snowstorm, the preacher accompanied part of his audience to the next village some three or four miles along, the road to which lies alongside gaping chasms and rifts, opened by pre-historic earthquakes in the lava-covered basalt rocks, making the journey very dangerous, for men and horses have before disappeared in these gloomy depths. Thus the Gospeller and his message find their way in Iceland, slowly, and with little to speak of in visible results. But the Word of the Lord will make its way to hearts, and the hand of the Lord will go forth working in spite of all human and Satanic hindrances. May the

Lord of the Harvest send forth true and tried servants of His to that long-neglected land, where, nearly a thousand years ago, when most of the land now flooded with Gospel light was in darkness, the lamp of truth was lighted by a few devoted men, and the light kept burning by the efforts of two earnest women who gave themselves and their substance to God for the spread of His Gospel—to pioneer and plough up the fallow ground, to sow the good seed of the Word of God, and to spread the glad tidings of the Saviour's love and gather out to Christ a people for His own possession. Then, when the "great congregation" from all nations and climes and tongues is gathered around the throne, there will be found fruit of the Gospel from far-off Iceland.





PEEPS AT LAPLAND.

THE LAND OF THE REINDEER.

LAPLAND, the land of the reindeer, the sledge, and the fjord, forms the northern part of Norway, Sweden, and Finland ; bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, and on the north-west by the broad Atlantic. Its dwellers number some thirty thousand, the larger number of whom are in Norwegian Lapland. They are divided into three families, generally named Sea Lapps, River Lapps, and Forest or Mountain Lapps, the latter being the poorest and most nomadic, living almost entirely in tents.

The Lapps are a quiet, inoffensive people, not warlike or pushing, with the result that they are unable to hold their own or even preserve their nationality, but are gradually being swallowed up in greater and stronger nations.

Their country is wild and most uninhabitable ; yet it has its beauties. Norwegian Lapland is very mountainous, its coast line cleft by hundreds of narrow fjords. Swedish Lapland is full of narrow valleys with long lakes ; while Russian Lapland abounds in large forests of spruce and fir. The summer is short and very hot, owing to the sun scarcely ever setting. The winter is long and excessively cold, the thermometer frequently registering sixty degrees of frost. It is no great wonder that many of the people in their inhospitable dwellings suffer extreme privation, and that many perish from the severity of the frost and cold.

On June 22 the sun shines for a whole day, and at midnight he appears above the horizon, due north. On September 22 the sun descends to the horizon, where it rests all day ; then disappears the day following, to be seen no more till March 22 next year. Sometimes the splendid orb appears of a deep-red colour, tinging everything with a roseate hue, producing on the observer a drowsy effect. At certain times it is like a charcoal fire burning with a fierce red glow, then fading away and rekindling with greater brightness. At other times it looks white and pale, and presents a cold appearance, so that it may be looked at with the naked eye. Toward the end of July the sun never sets. About eleven o'clock p.m. the colour of the clouds begins to change to a golden tint, a warning that the midnight hour is near

and sunset close at hand. Soon they become a fiery red, and, while for a few brief moments the sun seems hid from view, they gradually become brighter as if new life had been infused into them ; and so indeed they are, for the rising sun has now tinged their lines, and the new-born day has dawned—the evening and the morning twilight being blended in one.

As we think of this wonderful phenomena of the far North we remember the words spoken by the prophet concerning God's earthly people in a coming day. "The sun shall no more go down . . . for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light " (Isa. lx. 20) ; and the still more glowing words of the seer in Patmos, who in his lonely exile saw the Golden City—the Eternal Home of God's heavenly people—and tells us concerning it—"The city had no need of the sun neither the moon to shine in it : for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof " (Rev. xxi. 23). Who would not desire to dwell in these holy regions ? Who would wish to go to the "outer darkness " where no ray of Heaven's light shall ever shine ? The former is the home of the children of light ; the latter the doom of the children of darkness.

The Lapps—especially the sea and river portions of them—like the Finns, have in the past lived almost exclusively on their reindeer and the proceeds of their fishing. When these fail, as in many cases they do,

then they are reduced to the point of starvation, and, indeed, many have died and still die of want.

It has been proved that barley and rye ripen high up in the northern country, and that roots grow in the farthest north ; while prairie land is plentiful. Within recent years peat bogs and unreclaimed lands have been cultivated, and dairies have been established here and there, and in several parts timber cutting has been begun and carried on with some success. A beautiful marble, grey, and tinged with blue, is found in one part of the country, which has been used in the building of royal palaces in Russia ; but the people are not industrious, so, unless the working of these industries is undertaken and carried on by others outside Lapland, there is little hope of them being of much value to the country and its people or providing work for them. There are large quantities of fish of various kinds in the fjords which, if they were caught, would yield a more healthy supply of food to the people than they usually subsist on, but they are either too indolent or too stupid to catch them. Reindeer flesh, coarse brown bread, and dried cod-fish, which at certain seasons is found without much labour, form the staple fare of the ordinary Lapps, and they seem well pleased with it. They sail on the fjords and rivers in little canoes which they push along with long poles called " stanges," which is about the only way pos-

sible to get along owing to the frequent falls and rapids with which these waters abound.

Mosquitoes are very plentiful in Lapland. After the snow has melted they come in countless numbers, and are a source of great trouble to the tourist and traveller there; the native skin seems inured to their bite. They are very trying to the reindeer, so much so, that in the warm parts of the season, the men take all their reindeer to the coast to be free from the "mug," as the mosquito is named by them.

Life among the Lapps has little variation. From youth to old age it is the same monotonous round, and there is little desire or hope for anything different. Worst of all, there is no bright hope in the life beyond. To very, very few has the Gospel brought its joy and peace, its present possession of eternal life and prospect of future glory. Indeed, few of them have yet heard its message. Churches they have in some places, with state-appointed "priests," who, as a rule, are as ignorant of God and Christ and the Gospel as the people; and thus generation after generation live and die and pass into the eternal world. O, that soon the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ may shine in all its brightness, bringing life, light, and liberty to the inhabitants of the land of the reindeer and the fjord.

The Lapps are said to be the shortest people in Europe, although this is not so general as is supposed. They have short legs, mostly bandied, long bodies,

and are not particularly smart in their movements. Their skin is of a yellow or copper colour, but much of this is due to the smoke in which they are so constantly enveloped, and which they seldom take the trouble to wash off their skins. Their faces present a wrinkled and puckered appearance, possibly due to constant exposure and to the excessive variations of summer heat and winter cold. They seem to become prematurely old, although many of them live to a great age.

They have dark, sharp eyes, not obliquely set, thick, short hair, almost bristly, scanty beards, large mouths, and thick lips almost like the negro. The family character is very striking. A Lapp father has entire control of all his own affairs, and at his death his authority passes to his eldest son. If any of the sons separate from the family or marry without his father's consent, he receives no share of his father's property except a gun. The appearance and dress of the Lapps vary according to their station, although all are somewhat alike. In summer the tourist will find a river Laplander ready to guide him, dressed in a grey blouse of woollen material, with undergarment to match, woollen cap, leather leggings, leather pouch on his back to hold food, and birch staff seven feet long. The female costume is much the same, the blouse being longer and open at the neck. But the forest Lapp is very much worse in his outfit than those described. Here is the description of a present-

time forest or mountain Lapp, as given by a recent traveller in that country.

“ I met here the first bona-fide Laplander—a moving heap of rags and dirt. He was a very fair average specimen of his countrymen. About four feet six inches in height, his face and hands absolutely grimed with dirt, he wore a peculiar sort of hat, not unlike the headpiece that Britannia wears on the English penny, made of black cloth, with the stiff, four-cornered flat piece above, and striped from corner to corner with red or yellow. His long, uncombed hair fell some way down over a tunic of skin that reached to his knees, and a broad leather belt of skin was fastened round his loins. This strip of skin is scarcely ever properly cured, so its odour is frequently bad, and, worse still, it becomes a lodging-place for much that for health’s sake the man would be better without.

“ A pair of thin, wrinkled hands, like eagles’ claws, protruded from his sleeves, and his thin, bowed legs were tightly cased in dirty white cloth, probably the production of his wife’s spindle. The feet were disproportionately large, and he wore big leather shoes turned up at the points, and very wide at the ankle and instep. They were stuffed full of dry hay, and bound round several inches up the leg with a thong of coloured leather or skin. These shoes are a good protection against the cold, which is at times severe. But they do not last long, six months being

the average wear of a pair, we are told. They are made of reindeer, all of a piece in the tops, while the soles are composed of two discs of the same substance attached to the bottom of the foot, one under the heel, the other under the toe. As may be guessed, the Laplander in these conditions is neither a stately figure nor a good walker. Indeed, he is a queer little chap, with his ugly, slouching hat, from under which there peers a pair of black, piercing eyes, which at the first glance, would seem to indicate that he is capable of any villainy. And this is not far from being a just estimate of the average Lapp, who is a mean, dishonest, and greedy being, just as opposite as can be from the tall, fair, and magnanimous Norwegian, his near neighbour."

But there are some of the Lapps a pleasing contrast to this dark picture. Where the Gospel has penetrated, or even the civilising effects of contact with true Christians, a better condition of things is to be seen.

On board a steamer bound for Vadso and the North a passenger met a native of Lapland of a different sort, and was so struck with his clean appearance and mannerly behaviour that he has given a description of him.

"He was the servant of a Norwegian on a surveying expedition, and was evidently of a better than the ordinary class of Lapps. Considerably above the average height, clean washed, and of a good ap-

pearance, his face being a striking contrast to the generally haggard, unhealthy, and unclean visage of his countrymen, he was dressed in a rough, homespun tunic of coarse white material, with stripes of bright red and yellow across from shoulder to shoulder, four more of the same reaching half-way down his back, with a large knife or bill-hook hanging from his side. He moved about smartly, was pleasant and courteous, and evidently a good servant. He was intelligent too, for with his own hand, without the use of instruments or books of any kind, he had drawn out a map of the country, giving distances, positions of mountains and towns."

This shows that the Lapp, like most other nationalities, may be taught the ordinary laws of health and duty, and, when brought into contact with more civilised and intelligent beings, made to live in harmony with them. And, most important of all, it reminds us that the Lapp is a human being, with a living soul, and may, under the teaching of the Word of God, learn his position in relation to God as a sinner, and how, by means of the grace of God and the power of the Gospel of Christ, he may be saved and brought back to God in the new relation of His child, to live with and for Him here, and by-and-bye in Eternal Glory with Christ in Heaven. Of all the needs of Lapland the Gospel is the greatest. Civilisation, education, changes of Government, and habits of life may, and doubtless will, ameliorate the con-

dition of the poor Lapps ; but the only thing that will bring true and lasting blessing to that lone and dreary land and its dwellers is the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ, proclaimed to the people, brought to them in their own tongue by men and women whose hearts are warm with the love of Christ, and who, for His Name's sake, have forsaken home and kindred to bring the Gospel's joyful sound to this far-off and long-neglected race, who are part of that " so loved " world for which God gave His only Son, and to " every creature " in which free and full salvation is sent forth in this day of Gospel grace. May the Lord hasten the time when among Lapland's huts the joyful sound will be heard, and when in the land of " the midnight sun " the song of salvation shall echo from hill to valley, from the lips of Lapland's fur-clad dwellers who know and love the Saviour's Name.





PEEPS AT THE LAPPS.

THEIR DWELLINGS AND HABITS.

THE Lapps, as a rule, live in villages not unlike what some of the villages of India are, generally small, not often more than a dozen families living together. Low, wooden huts, or houses composed of wood, with turf, moss, or peat walls, standing some distance apart, each with its own enclosure of grass land around it, form the dwellings of the poorer people. Within this enclosure the reindeer are kept during the winter. In its centre is a sort of platform of rough poles on which the hay is stored, and round the whole village there is a fence of long, rough stakes, each being some ten feet in length, laid in a slanting direction at an angle of forty-five degrees from the ground, with a binding of willow some four feet up. This forms an almost impenetrable barrier, and serves to exclude beasts of all kinds, for so close are the poles together that not even a small dog can force an entrance between them.

The houses of the Lapps are by no means imposing. The inside is generally devoid of furniture, an occasional bench being the only exception. They are all built after the same pattern : long fir beams laid one on the top of the other, intersected with moss closely packed. The roof is composed of birch bark, large pieces of which, more than a foot in breadth, are used, while a plentiful supply to replenish, in case of storm or wear, lies piled up in every village. In the summer, when on the move, the men live in tents consisting of a frame of wood, over which is drawn a cover of coarse wool, very durable and light.

The elv, or river Lapps, are the very poorest. They own no reindeer, but maintain a miserable existence by catching fish : only as many as keep them living. They are named after the river on which they live or on the side of which they were born, and there generation after generation live and die—without migrating many miles from the spot.

The wattle and mud or moss cabins of the average Lapps are fairly free from damp and wet, but otherwise far from comfortable. The smoke is supposed to ascend and find an exit by a hole in the top, but it more frequently lingers in the dwelling, causing those within to resemble brown or black-skinned nations. An open fire in the middle of the house serves as heat and light, and during the long winter it is kept burning day and night. How the people can sleep in the continual smoke is a mystery, but

they do, and seem to feel no inconvenience either—people get accustomed to anything. The beds are of



A LAPP MOTHER AND CHILD.

dried and generally dirty grass; the blankets of sheepskins. The children when young are fastened

in a strange sort of cradle in which they may be carried if occasion so requires, and when able to walk are allowed to run about the village or grovel in the earth almost naked. Some of the girls are pleasant-looking, but from lack of training and education are generally indolent. The women spin while the men are at the coast, and on them the household is dependent for their clothing, such as it is. The women and children wear no shoes ; the men use them sparingly ; and while boating or “ stanging ” on the fjords, always remove them from their feet.

The handelsmann (or shopkeeper), the landsmann, and clergymen live in better houses, and are usually Norwegians.

Sleighing is the principal means of locomotion in Lapland. The sledge is in shape somewhat like a baby's cradle on runners, with just enough room to sit with your legs at full length. It is made of wood, and to it are harnessed the reindeer. It requires some art to sit in one—still more to drive. The reindeer are not easily managed nor so good-tempered as you might suppose them to be. When they are over-driven or kept long without food it is no uncommon thing for them to turn round and butt the driver. It is no use “ reasoning ” or even using the whip on such occasions : the only way of escape is to step out from the sledge and wait until the angry animals have vented their rage upon it. Then they will resume the journey as if nothing had happened.

These reindeer have tremendous horns, and it is decidedly best not to be too near to them when out of temper. In the winter, when everything is bound hard and fast in frost and snow, these sledges glide along at a great rate, and you can almost take a bee-line from place to place, across swamps, rivers, and otherwise impassible ground. In summer, locomotion is chiefly by rivers, or, if by road, long detours have to be taken to avoid the difficulties above-named. Where roads are good the svaka or pack-saddle on the back of the reindeer is a useful mode of travelling.

The language of Lapland varies a good deal. Finnish, Lapp, and Norse are all spoken. The Finns speak Finnish or Qvensh, and form a considerable part of the population generally under the rule of Russia or Sweden. The bona-fide Lapp speaks Finsk, or Lapp, which is quite different from the other. It is a matter for much thankfulness that part of the Scriptures has now been issued in the Lapp language and the whole in the tongue of the Finns. A recent visitor to a Lapland village tells how he found an aged man sitting in a corner by himself diligently engaged reading the Word of God in his own tongue, and so deeply interested was he in the subject of his reading that he never looked up although a foreigner, speaking in an unknown tongue, was in his house. Who knows what the Spirit of God may have wrought in that earnest soul ! He can use the Word to lead

the sinner to the Saviour. He can lead the convicted soul to confide in the precious blood that cleanseth from all sin, apart from any human instrumentality whatever, and often does. But the common way, the way set forth in the Book of God by which the world and all its peoples are to be evangelised, is—“Go ye unto all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark xvi. 15). And the question asked by the Apostle is, “How shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans x. 14). May those who have themselves been saved by the Gospel’s mighty power and in whose hearts the love of God dwells, go forth and tell it out to others who are yet strangers to its saving power. The best, the brightest, and the most truly happy life is that which is spent in the honourable service of the King of kings. O, the supreme bliss, the unbounded joy, the unutterable delight of being saved by Christ, to live for Christ in early years, to go forth in the strength of His grace to tell the story of redeeming love, and to bring to Him and to the knowledge of His saving power the sheep scattered far on distant mountains and in lone deserts, for whom He shed His precious blood and to whom He now sends from His throne in glory, through human lips, the ever-precious, ever-fragrant words—“Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew xi. 28).



THE RELIGION OF THE LAPPS.

IN common with other Europeans, the Laplanders worshipped stocks and stones, and in some parts do till this day. Their ancient religion, like that of the Finns, consisted in the recognition of a supreme Deity named Jumala, whom they worshipped in conjunction with Baiva, the God of Fire. Ajeka was adored as the author of life, and Stourra Passe, who was held in reverence as a household deity, had his image in stone in every home. The stone idol was placed on a mound with a pile of horns behind it. These were the memorials of the reindeer which had been sacrificed in his honour.

The image of Ajeka was kept in a hut made of branches of fir and birch trees, which served as a temple, and was placed in the middle of each village of huts. A table was placed in the middle of the sanctuary before the idol, and on it stood a box filled

with pieces of flesh taken from the reindeer which had been sacrificed to propitiate the god, and for his refreshment. A traveller tells how, in North Lapland, within recent years, he found these stones held in



A GROUP OF LAPPS.

reverence, and great alarm was manifest among the people when he essayed to remove them, lest the anger of the gods might be aroused thereby.

A new stone statue was erected to the honour of Ajeka at the fall of each year, and reindeer blood

smeared upon it ; and twice a year branches of pine and birch trees were placed around these stones in honour of the god whom they were supposed to represent. So dark is the mind of man to whom the light of the Gospel has not come, so utterly wrong are his conceptions of God ! Worship was offered to the sun and to the spirits of the dead, and there was great veneration paid to a sort of aerial spirits named Juhles, who were supposed to float in the air in great numbers, and for whose refreshment baskets of flesh were suspended on the branches of trees at Christmas Eve, when the Juhles were believed to be present in large numbers, in commemoration of the appearance of the angels to the shepherds announcing the birth of Christ.

Such was the strange mixture of Paganism and nominal Christianity that was found among the Laplanders when the messengers of the Gospel went among them.

The God of Heaven—the true God—is a God of love, not of wrath, who needs to be appeased by blood of victims to avert his vengeance, which they think is ever seeking to break out upon them. It is true He is a righteous God and cannot allow sin to pass unpunished, but He found a means whereby His justice might be magnified, and sinners righteously saved. This was by giving up His Son, who gave Himself in life and in death as a sacrifice to God to atone for sin, and to gratify the heart of Him who had

been wronged by man's unfaithfulness and sin. Now justice is satisfied. God's righteousness is declared, and there is no need and no room for any other sacrifice. The One great Sacrifice has been accepted, in token of which God has seated His beloved Son at His own right hand, there to give salvation full and free to the chief of sinners without money and without price. And there is no need to bring anything to God either as a preparation or an appeasement, only just to come in faith and empty-handed. As one has sweetly sung of this great event :—

“ Not the labours of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears for ever flow,
All for sin could not atone :
Thou must save, and Thou alone.”

And then, as if in striking contrast to the heathen who continually come bringing gifts and sacrifices to appease their gods, and with their hands filled with oblations to propitiate their anger, he adds :—

“ Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling ;
Naked, come to Thee for dress ;
Helpless, look to Thee for grace ;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly ;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.”



THE GOSPEL IN LAPLAND.

THE ninth and tenth centuries seem to have been distinguished by a thoroughly evangelical spirit among the Lord's people. The Gospel was spread far and wide, and amongst others the Laplanders seem to have heard the story of a Saviour's love and to have become Christians, in name at least. But the danger in any nation adopting Christianity as its religion is that the individuals forget that they need personally to be born again, and to individually accept the Saviour. The Danes were converted to Christianity in the early part of the ninth century, the Swedes a little later, chiefly by the preaching of a monk named Ansgarius. There was no doubt a great dearth of Gospel truth in the preaching of these times, for the traditions of Rome had long ere then over-run the Word of God, and rendered it of non-effect.

In the year 1559, Gustavus Vasa, the Swedish King, sent a missionary into Lapland, of the name of Michael, to preach the Gospel to the people, and to establish schools in which the Bible might be taught. As has already been said, they had previously heard the Way of Life, and in ages before the Reformation a light had been kindled for God in these northern lands, but from lack of the Word of God, which alone can sustain the Divine life in the soul or the testimony of Christ in the world, the people had gradually sunk back into their old religion of Paganism, just as many in our own day sink back into the worldly religion and tradition, after being converted and delivered from both by the power of the Gospel of Christ. Yet, owing to neglect of the Word as food for the Divine life within, and as a light and guide to the path, they slip back and down to their former surroundings until, in the case of many, it is impossible to tell any difference between them and the world.

When the messenger of King Gustavus arrived in Lapland, he issued a proclamation in the King's name, commanding the people to assemble at stated places during the winter to receive instruction in the Christian religion, and his successors on the Swedish throne continued the same custom. But the truth seems to have made but little progress, although churches were built and more preachers sent, right on to the beginning of the seventeenth century. When Gustavus

Adolphus ascended the throne of Sweden in 1611, the year in which the Authorised Version of our English Bible was issued, he had several books translated into the Lapp language, and these were followed by the Psalms and part of the Gospels in 1648.

The following year, Olaus Stephen Graem, a native preacher who had been converted through reading the New Testament in his early years, set himself to complete the translation of the Bible into the language of the people, and to travel far and wide expounding and preaching the Gospel which had become so precious to his own soul. There may not have been a national turning to Christianity through his means, but there was, no doubt, what in God's account is of much greater importance, namely, the individual conversion of sinners to the Saviour. It is said that Olaus was a devout lover of the Word of God, and impressed on those who were converted through his instrumentality to read and study the Book of Books. The result was that, although Bibles were few and very costly, one was to be found in every little group of huts, and the people would gather night after night in each hut in turn to hear the reading of the words of life and peace. Had they thus continued and been led on in the truth of God, a very different condition of things might have been witnessed in the far-off land with its fur-clad dwellers to-day. The present-day condition of the Laplanders is very sad, spiritually. Although nomi-

nally a Christian country, there is little real living Christianity in it. The churches are little used, few of the people attend, and when they do, it is at a fair or festival to have the Sacraments administered to them, and to pay their dues. The Word of God is little known, and the Gospel of God is little heard. The clergy, as a rule, are utterly indifferent to spiritual things, and their evil example as drinkers and gamblers causes the people to commit these evils with impunity.

There is a little light shining here and there, and we trust the day may soon come when young and zealous pioneers of the Gospel, filled with love to Christ and the souls of men, may go forth bearing the precious seed to the land of the Lapps, to tell, in clear and certain sound among the fur-clad dwellers on these northern shores, "The old, old story of Jesus and His love."





PEEPS AT FAROE.

ITS ISLANDS AND THEIR DWELLERS.

FAR up north, in the midst of the wild waves of the Atlantic Ocean, you will observe on the map of Europe a few black dots, not quite half-way between the Shetland Isles and Iceland. These are the Faroe Isles. They lie about 400 miles north of the mainland of Scotland, and about 800 miles south of Iceland. The passage from Leith occupies about four days, and is usually pretty rough and stormy. The islands belong to Denmark. They have an area of some 500 square miles, and a population of a little over 11,000. There are six main islands, named Stromoe, Osteroe, Sudero, Vaagoe, Sandoe, and the North Isles. The people are a hardy and energetic race, generally found living along the coast, and are chiefly occupied in fishing and farming. The country

is very mountainous, barren, and rocky, with deep "fjords" on the shore. A succession of terraces rise one above another to the height of 3000 feet in some parts, providing good pasture for the sheep, which is the principal stock of the Faroe farmer. Indeed, it is from this that the name is derived. The original inhabitants are supposed to have been Westmen or Irish, who brought some sheep to the islands with them. When the Norsemen, who permanently colonised, arrived, they found a small remnant of these on the islands, and, giving them the honour of the name, they called the group "Foeroer," from foer—sheep, and oer—ises. The houses of the present time are built chiefly of wood, with roofs of turf, although here and there a stone house with slate roof may be seen.

The chief industry of the Faroese is fishing, and it is often associated with great danger. Rapid tides sweep around the islands, and, overtaken in gales and storms, many of the boats are sunk, and their occupants engulfed in the angry sea.

In the summer season the bay of Thorshaven, which is the capital, is well filled with small boats, many of them used by quite young sailors, for the boys of Faroe are from their earliest years taught to row and sail their little boats.

Whale fishing is the principal occupation of the men, and it is a great day among the inhabitants when a shoal of whales is seen. "Grind a bo!" which

means good news, is shouted on all hands, and as the cry is heard everything is let drop, and all the men rush to the shore to get ready their boats in hopes that the shoal may be driven into the bay, where with long knives and spears they kill them. There is great excitement and not a little risk during the operation of the spearing of the whales, and very frequently some one, in too eager haste, falls into the water and is drowned. It is quite a sight to see the hundreds of bottle-nose whales floundering in the sea, with every available boat filled with men and boys seeking to capture and kill them.

Sometimes they are disappointed after all, for while the "good news" is being sounded among the islanders, the whales make their escape, and so their labour to reach them is in vain. Very different is this from God's good news as proclaimed in the Gospel of His Son! None ever were or will be disappointed in it, for no sinner ever heard and believed the glad tidings of God's salvation without receiving eternal life then and there, with a title and fitness for eternal glory hereafter.

The religion of the Faroese is Lutheran, and each boy and girl is made a member of the "church" by sprinkling in infancy, and confirmation about the age of fourteen. The "confirmation" is finished up with a feast, at which there is usually dancing, drinking, and playing of cards. They are not told that they need to be born again before they can see or enter

God's Kingdom, so the result is that while most of the people are members of the Lutheran State Church, very few of them either know or believe what Martin Luther preached, namely, that a sinner is justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, apart from good works or merit of his own. If Luther lived now and preached the truths he did in the days of the Reformation, they would expose the errors of Lutheranism as surely as they did the errors of Romanism then. The Lutheran priests are sent from Denmark, and have their religion given to them, with the subjects they are to preach, by the Government. As a rule the Bible is not known or used, not even in the pulpits. Dead formalism prevails, and the confessional, with all its blasphemous pretensions, in Lutheranism is about as degrading alike to priest and penitent as in Romanism. Nothing brings life and joy and peace to the heart, the home, and the community but the Gospel of the grace of God proclaimed in plain simplicity in the power of the Holy Ghost, and received by faith into the heart by the individual sinner. There, no matter what the former religion has been, Romanism, Lutheranism, Protestantism, or any other ism, it will drop off like withered leaves before the bursting buds, and Christ will become the Centre and the Source of every joy and every blessing that the new-born soul desires or knows.



GOSPEL LABOURS AND FRUIT.

IN 1876, a middle-aged Scotchman, named William Sloan, was working in the Shetland Isles as a colporteur. His work was to visit the homes of the people, giving tracts, selling Bibles, Testaments, and other books, and speaking a word for Christ as he had opportunity. During the fishing season a great many fishermen, from all parts of the British Isles congregate in Shetland, affording a good opportunity for preaching and distributing the Gospel.

Sometimes fishermen from Norway, Sweden, and other European countries are found there, and it was from some of these that Mr. Sloan first heard of the Faroe Isles and their deep need of the Gospel. Although less than 200 miles from Shetland, nobody had ever crossed over to see what their spiritual condition was, or been concerned about carrying to the islands the glad tidings of a Saviour's love.

bring it before the Lord and to tell of it to His people.

He severed his connection with the Society whose servant he had been in order that he might be free to go where the Lord directed, and setting himself to acquire the language, he returned to Faroe in 1877, and began to preach to the people, in their own tongue, the Gospel of the Grace of God. As may be expected, there was much to contend with, and little to encourage, but the pioneer Gospeller must be a man of patient perseverance. The opening up of a new field means hard work, plodding toil, and a stiff battle with many foes. Few, very few, there are who have faith and courage to open up new fields to the Gospel, and go forward single-handed for God, counting on His support and sustaining grace, and trusting Him to supply all His servant's wants and all that His work requires, both spiritual and temporal. There was no Society to finance the worker or to provide for the work in Faroe. No rich benefactor to undertake the responsibility of supplying the "sinews of war." God had to be prayed to, trusted, and counted upon to provide all, and, blessed be His Holy Name, He did so through the stewardship of His people. No begging appeals were made to the world; no bazaar or sale of work was held. God supplied the means to have a hall in Thorshaven for the preaching of His Word, and a home for the worker. He has provided means, raised up and sent labourers,

and in His grace carried on His work therefor till the present time.

Many have heard the Gospel; a number have been saved, some of whom are now in Heaven, while others live and testify for the Lord in their island home. The glad tidings have been carried by Mr. Sloan and others to all the twenty-one islands of the group where frequently the entire population gather to hear. Books and tracts have been issued in the Faroese language. Boys and girls hear the way of life in the Sunday School conducted in the Gospel Hall, and a new generation is rising up who at least know the Gospel in the letter as their fathers did not. When the great multitude from every clime and country, from continents and scattered islands of the sea, assemble around the throne of God and the Lamb there will be some—may their number be multiplied a hundredfold—from the distant Faroe Isles.



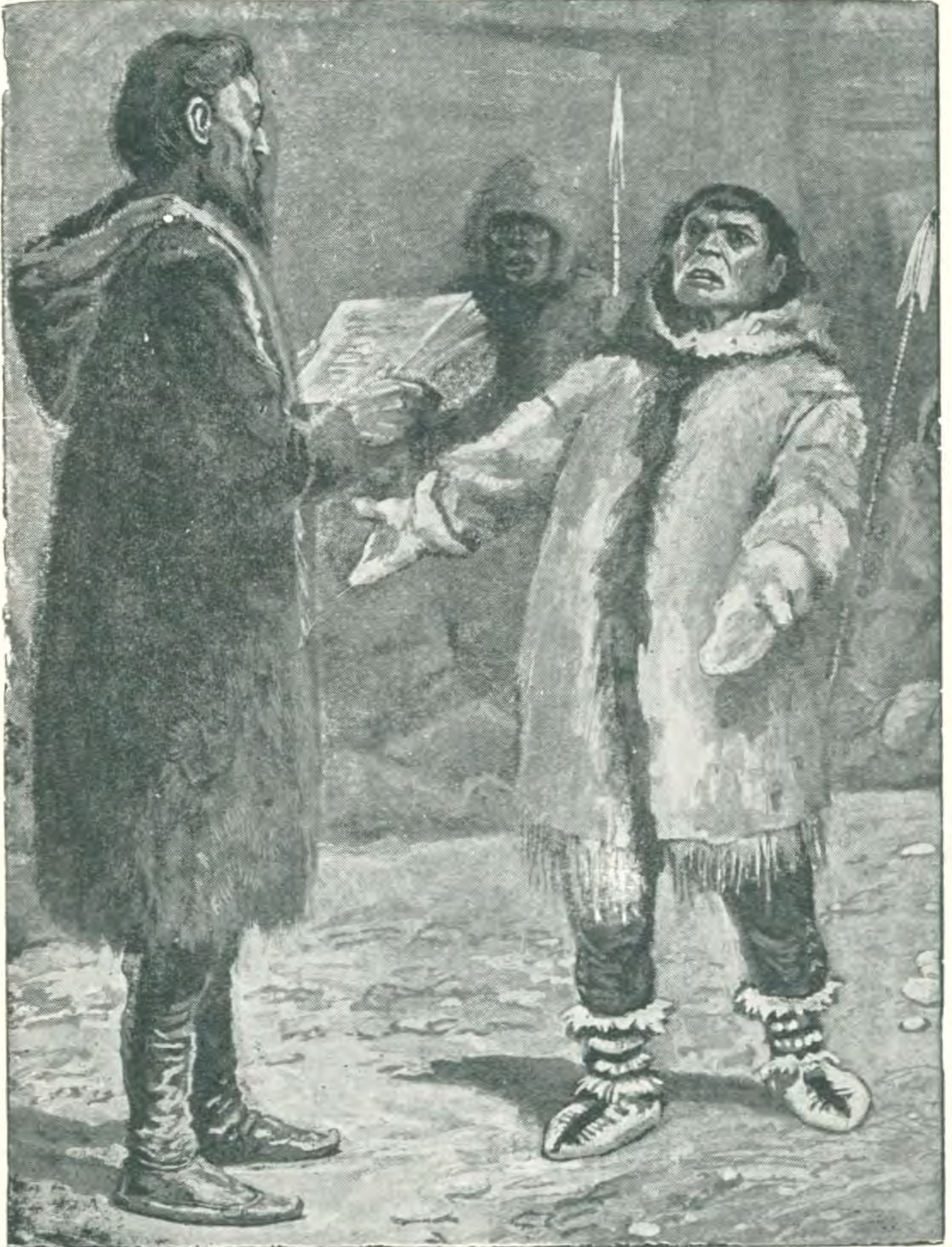


LONE LABRADOR.

ABOUT the year 1741, a Dutch sailor, named John Christian Erhardt, was on a voyage to the West Indies, and landed on the island of St Thomas. Utterly unconcerned about the things of God and eternity, he was wandering about on the island, when he saw a circle of negro slaves on one of the plantations standing around a missionary, who was preaching the Gospel to them. Erhardt stood and listened. The Spirit of God carried the words spoken by the servant of Christ home to his heart and conscience, and he was soon after converted. He began at once to testify for Christ, and to tell among his fellows of the great salvation which he had become possessed of. They could not but listen to his words when they saw the mighty change wrought by God's grace in him. Erhardt, desiring to return to Europe, joined a ship going to Greenland. There

he met with Matthew Stach and others of the devoted band of Moravians, who had gone to these icy regions with the glad tidings of salvation. While in Greenland, he became acquainted with several Esquimaux from North America, who told him of the heathen darkness of their countrymen, who lived in the lone land of Labrador, on the opposite side of Davis Strait. Erhardt's heart yearned for these poor barbarians, and he longed to preach amongst them the Name of Jesus. On his return to Germany, he told the earnest and devoted Count Zinzendorf of his heart's desire. That good man was ever ready to give his help and counsel to all whose spirits stirred them to go forth among the heathen with the Gospel. Notwithstanding the many difficulties and dangers connected with such an undertaking, the way was clearly opened by God for Erhardt to go forth, and on the 17th of May 1752, he, with four others, sailed for the coast of Labrador in a vessel which they named "The Hope," fitted out by a number of London merchants. They took with them a wooden house ready to erect, tools, agricultural implements, and seeds of various kinds to sow. When they cast anchor off the coast of Labrador, a number of the natives surrounded the ship in their kayaks, shouting and yelling frantically at the strangers, but were quieted by Erhardt addressing them in their own language. The five pioneer missionaries landed, and erected their hut, naming the place "Hopedale."

Here the four remained, while Erhardt, with the captain and crew of "The Hope," went further along the coast in the hope of trading with the natives, and thus



AN ESKIMO PROFESSES FAITH IN CHRIST.

opening up a way for the Gospel. After sailing about for several days in search of a suitable place to go ashore, Erhardt, with five of the crew, landed, and, accompanied by a number of natives whom they met on shore, went into the interior, from which, alas, they never returned. They were taken and cruelly murdered by the savages. The sad news of this was conveyed to the four missionaries at Hopedale, who were very much cast down. They saw that further efforts to reach the natives with the Gospel, from that point at least, were impossible, so they decided to return to their own country. The four Gospellers willingly took the places of the murdered sailors, and helped to bring the ship back to England. They left the hut standing, in the hope that some of the missing men might, after all, return, a hope which, alas, was never realised. When tidings of the disaster reached Europe, many advised that all hope of evangelising a people so cruel and treacherous should be abandoned, or at least postponed until civilisation had wrought some change on the savage dwellers on the coast of Labrador—a kind of counsel which is frequently given by those who know little of and care less for the heathen. But one heart at least was exercised otherwise. This was Jans Haven, a godly carpenter, who felt he was called of God to go forth to Labrador to again make an effort to reach its people with the Gospel. After long and prayerful waiting upon God for guidance, he engaged himself

as a ship carpenter on a vessel belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. As the ship touched the shore a party of Esquimaux invited him to land and settle amongst them. The remembrance of what had happened to Erhardt, no doubt, would be in his mind, but kneeling down on the ship's deck, he said, "I will go to them in Thy Name, O Lord. If they kill me, my work on earth is done. If they spare me, I will believe it is Thy will that they should hear and receive the Gospel." These were noble words. What, but faith in God, and the love of Christ in the heart, could lead a man to take his life in his hand, and go single-handed into the midst of a horde of blood-thirsty savages who had treacherously murdered his predecessors? But the same Divine compassion that moved the Eternal God to give His only-begotten Son to bleed and die for lost and guilty sinners, moved the heart of Jans Haven to fearlessly step on the shores of Labrador, into the midst of a heathen and blood-thirsty, uncivilised people, with the glad tidings of salvation. When they saw that their invitation had been accepted, they danced and shouted in wild confusion for a long time, until they were quite exhausted. Then the Lord's lone witness quietly walked into the settlement, and, standing up in the midst of the noisy crowd, began to sing a hymn in the Greenland tongue. This was the first song of salvation that had ever been heard on that icy shore. The effect was marvellous. The noise was instantly

hushed, and with eyes and ears and mouths all open they stood listening for long to the “old, old story,” sung and spoken in their native tongue. What an honour to be the Lord’s messenger to those who have never heard His Name ; to tell the weary hearts in dark heathendom, or in still more guilty Christendom, of the true Rest-Giver, and to bear to thirsty souls the water of life ! Haven explored part of the coast and found it was thickly populated, and that the people, although buried in gross superstition, and excessively treacherous, were willing to listen to the Gospel message which he had come to give them ; and in the confidence that it would prove, as God had promised, the power of God in the salvation of those who received it, he set himself to the work with all his might. But, as all who go single-handed into heathendom soon feel, Jans Haven felt the need of a comrade, so, after a few months’ work he returned to Europe to find a fellow-labourer.





PEEPS AT LABRADOR AND ITS PEOPLE.

WE will leave the story of Jans Haven's sojourn in Europe, and his return to Labrador with a band of fellow-labourers, and have a peep at the country and the people to whom they were to bear the glad tidings of God's salvation.

The triangular-shaped peninsula extending from the Straits of Belle Isle to Hudson's Straits, forming part of North America, is known as the Coast of Labrador. The northern part of this peninsula is the proper home of the Esquimaux. The coast is full of rocks and crags and numberless islands, with little or no vegetation, the abode of seagulls and eider-ducks. Inland, as also around the more sheltered bays, there are green fields, and many beautiful trees, including the fir, the birch, and the larch. Lakes and moss-covered plains, with several high mountains, one of which, named Kaumaget, is over 3600 feet

high, are found in the interior. For nine months of the year the country is covered with ice and snow, so that the inhabitants can do nothing in the way of cultivating the land. They have to seek their liveli-



AN ESKIMO BRIDE ON HER WEDDING DAY.

hood in hunting and fishing. The chief spoil of the sea is the seal, of which there are five or six sorts, and of these many thousands are caught every year by the natives.

The Moravian missionaries, who were the first to penetrate into this lone land with the Gospel, still hold the fort, with at least four stations, bearing the names of Nain, Hebron, Hopedale, and Zoar. Around each of these they collect the Esquimaux in small colonies, and, while preaching the Gospel and giving daily instruction in the Word, they teach the young to work at simple trades, so that they may be weaned from the wandering and idle life so natural to them, to win their bread in an honest manner. The inhabitants are said to have received the name of Esquimaux from their Indian neighbours, with whom for years they waged continual war. The name implies that they eat raw or uncooked flesh. They call themselves "Innuït," or, "The men," and call other races "Kablunat," or inferior beings, and have as one of their traditions that God the Creator, in whom they profess to believe, made the "Innuït" as a sample of what He designed all men to be—a very flattering conclusion to arrive at.

The Esquimaux are short in stature, with large heads, long black hair, coarse features, and have very small hands and feet. The men are chiefly engaged in fishing for seals, and, when at home, are occupied in building or repairing the "kayaks" or sea boats, which are made of light wood covered with skins. The women spend their time cleaning fish for food, and preparing the skins of seals as clothing for themselves and their children.

Their chief means of transport is by sledges, which are driven by dogs of a wolf-like appearance. These dogs are of a savage nature, and the strong ones usually fall out upon the rest and kill them. They are harnessed in pairs to the sledge, or “cemmetigue,” as it is termed, as many as six and eight pairs being used for each sledge. In this way they can move at considerable speed smoothly along the ice or snow; the sledge being shod with whalebone, it glides along swiftly.

At the time when the heralds of the Cross first went among them the dwellers on the Labrador coast were nearly all heathen, worshipping “Torgarsuk,” who they say rules the sea; and “Superuksoak,” a goddess, who rules the land. The “Angekoks,” or priests, by means of sorceries and dark superstitions, held them in bondage to Satan. These angekoks claimed to have dealings with the spirit world, and to make journeys to the heart of the earth to consult Torgarsuk. These journeys are supposed to be made during the darkness of night, when the angekok remains in his hut with his hands and feet tied, while his spirit is off to Heaven or hell. In this way these wily priests of the Wicked One gained great power over the poor ignorant Esquimaux, and deluded them by their sorceries.

When the devoted Moravians first went among them with the Gospel they were all heathen, but now after a century of earnest labour among them, there

are very few of the Esquimaux who practice heathen customs, although there are many of them yet unsaved. But the Esquimaux, like the Red Indians, are a dying race. In the year 1790, a tribe of five thou-



AN ESQUIMAUX FAMILY AND TENT.

sand dwelt in the Straits of Belle Isle ; now only some two or three thousand are believed to exist, most of them around or not far from the Moravian settlements. Their nomad life in tents of skin has

largely given place to wooden and mud huts, and their dress is no longer wholly of sealskin but partly of cotton and wool.

They have a very precarious mode of living, partly by fishing and by robbing the nests of birds which build on the high rocks along the coast. The Esquimau women, as a rule, have to perform this dangerous feat, by being lowered with a rope from the top of the cliff ; their self-important husbands thinking it beneath the dignity of a man to engage in such a practice. Diseases, which they had nothing to help them to combat, carried them off in thousands ; now, thank God, they are visited by mission ships at certain seasons ; and several hospitals, with Christian nurses in charge of them, have, through the liberality of the children of God in Europe and America, been erected on that bleak shore, whose inmates receive the care they need, and hear the story of a Saviour's love.





THE GOSPEL'S FIRST ENTRANCE.

AFTER a brief sojourn in Europe, Jans Haven, accompanied by a devoted fellow-labourer, named Christian Laurence Drahart, and two others, returned to the stormy coast of Labrador with the message of salvation. Drahart had been for a number of years in Greenland, and had there become acquainted with the language and habits of the Esquimau ; and he had also seen much of the work of God's grace in the hearts of the Greenlanders. Many of them, during the period of his labours, had been converted to God. He was therefore a very fit companion for his younger and more zealous brother in Christ, Jans Haven. The Lord's way was to send out His disciples two and two. We cannot improve upon this now ; our wisdom is to follow the example set before us. When the ship anchored in Chateau Bay, several hundreds of the natives came running to the shore, and great was their joy to

recognise their former friend, Jans Haven. They gave the party a warm welcome, and were greatly interested when Drahart told them he had come all the way from Greenland, where the people were Esquimaux like themselves. Their questions about the country and the people there gave him many

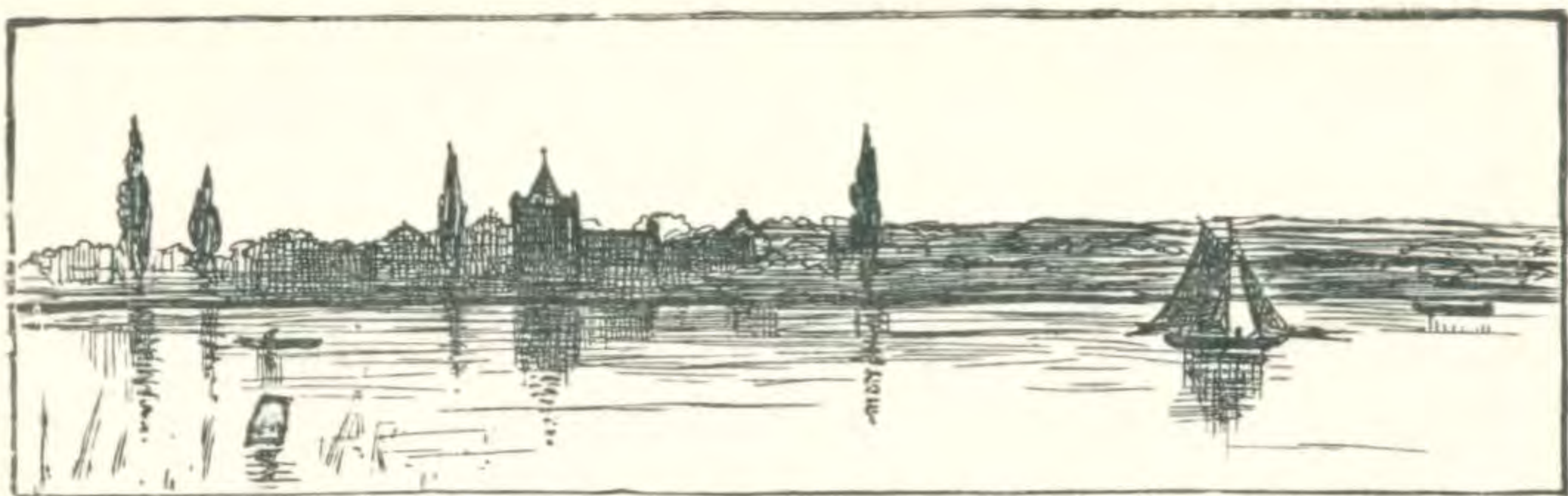


MID SNOWY WASTES.

excellent opportunities of telling them what the Lord was doing in Greenland, and how many of their kinsmen there were happy in the knowledge of a Saviour's love. "They must have been very bad to need all that," was the answer Drahart got from one, after

telling them of the work of conviction of sin and conversion to God he had witnessed among the Greenlanders. When he told them of their own depravity and their need of a Saviour, they shook their heads and said it might all be true of the “Kablunats,” or foreigners, but not of them. Such is the unwillingness of the human heart, in unlearned pagan or refined professor, to bow to God’s testimony and own its sin and depravity in His sight. Sometimes they would listen with a measure of interest to the Word of Life, and at other times they manifested extreme jealousy and suspicion. One thing that greatly tended to establish confidence in the Lord’s servants was that they appeared there among them without gun or sword, with no display of power, without warship or guard of soldiers, but as the ambassadors of Christ, preaching peace, and telling of free salvation, neither asking nor expecting anything from them, but ready to live or die for their salvation. This is the grandest and most effectual “influence” upon the heathen, and in the wilds of Labrador, as elsewhere, it began to make itself felt. As the missionaries went in and out among the people, often spending hours in their inhospitable dwellings, they used every opportunity of speaking to them of God and His Word, and of the great salvation they had come to make known. During the whole of this period they had to live on board their vessel, as no land was available for building. One night they stayed so long speaking with the

people that they could not find their way back to the ship, and a violent storm arose which made it impossible for them to reach it. To their surprise, one of the leading *angekoks*, or priests, hearing of their dilemma, offered them hospitality and a night's lodging, which they gladly accepted, and thus, for the first time, did Europeans sleep in the tents of the heathen in lone Labrador. Such fragmentary labours as these may be of some value in the way of pioneering, but the servants of Christ, who go to the heathen, must settle down to patient, plodding toil, if they would see abiding results of their labour. An explorer, rushing through tribes and crossing continents, and a herald of the Cross are two very different personages. They can scarcely ever be combined without the "Gospeller" being swamped in the "explorer." Paul travelled through continents and sailed across stormy seas, but his one object was to preach the Gospel of Christ, to tell sinners of the Saviour. The more simply that the Lord's servants keep to this the better. Seldom do we hear of those who meddle with political or other relations being used in leading sinners to Christ. Christianising the heathen and "forming churches" of those who adopt the Christian name is one thing; getting sinners converted, souls truly brought to Christ, born of God, and living regenerated lives, is quite another. It was such work that Jans Haven and Charles Drahart longed to see among the Esquimaux.



THE FIRST MISSION COLONY.

AFTER a long trial of patience, King George III. and his Government made them a grant of land on the coast, on which to build and settle; for this they were truly thankful. Nevertheless, in order to render their title to it valid in the eyes of the natives, they purchased the land from them. Then they built upon it a wooden house, which they had brought with them, and gave the little settlement the name of "Nain." Several families pitched their tents close to the spot, and thus were within easy reach; and others drove long distances in their sledges across the frozen sea, and when the ice was gone they came in greater numbers in their "kayaks" or sea-boats, bringing their tents with them. On such occasions several hundreds would be within sound of the glad tidings, and as Charles Drahart

looked out on the circle of thirty or forty tents at Nain he prayed, "Bless our feeble words. Thou who hast in Greenland made dark minds understand, do so here also." And God was not forgetful of that cry, for ere they took down their tents to return to their various homes, one of the Esquimaux, speaking on behalf of the others, said—"We thank our brothers that they have come to us. We wish to go on hearing about Jesus, and to renounce our heathen customs. We and our wives talk in our tents about the Lord Jesus. We know that we are sinners, but we believe in His mercy." How cheering such words must have been to the hearts of Christ's lonely servants, who had given up their worldly all to make known His saving Name to those perishing heathens. How grand to see the work of the Spirit of God in a sinner's heart, and to hear the confession from his lips that Jesus, and Jesus only, is the Saviour in whom he trusts, and to whom alone he clings for forgiveness, life, and glory. But these first fruits of God's grace did not satisfy the earnest soul of Jans Haven—he longed to carry the glad tidings further afield.

On a fine afternoon in August 1774, Haven, with three others, set out in a small sloop to look for a suitable spot to establish another preaching station. A brisk breeze sprang up, which increased to a gale, and the frail ship was driven on the rocks. Two of the brethren, with the sailors, were cast on the rocks, half dead with cold, in pitch darkness, the wild waves roar-

ing around them ; but Lister and Brasen, the other two of the party, were drowned. After enduring great privation and hunger for three days, they reached Nain, and were welcomed with joy, mingled with sorrow. A second station was founded at Okak, about 150 miles from Nain. It was while on a journey to this place that a most remarkable incident occurred, in which the hand of God, working deliverance, is seen. Two of the brethren, Liebisch and Turner, started off in a sledge, driven by a converted Esquimau, named Mark. The track over the frozen sea was in good condition, so they sped along at the rate of six or seven miles an hour. After they had gone so far, the Eskimo driver hinted that there was a ground swell under the ice. On laying the ear close to the ground a roaring noise was heard, and large cracks became visible. The driver kept toward the shore, but when they approached the coast the sight was terrific. The ice had broken loose from the rocks and was forced up like great mountains, and the whole mass of ice for miles along the coast began to break and rise in awful grandeur, like huge icebergs, plunging into the sea with a noise like cannon firing. The travellers stood awe-struck at the remarkable sight, and could only praise God for their remarkable deliverance. They built a shelter, sang a hymn, and lay down to rest. At midnight, a tremendous wave broke over them, and they had just time to escape when a second wave carried every vestige of their

shelter away. For several days they had no food save an old sack made of fish skin. News had been carried to Nain of the breaking up of the ice, and a party of Esquimaux, who had met the sledge, told their friends on the little mission colony that they must have perished, without a doubt, in the sea.



AN ICEBERG.



TRIUMPHS AND TRIALS OF FAITH.

THE sorrow-stricken colony at Nain, after shedding many bitter tears over the loss of their loved ones, had retired to rest ; the storm had subsided, and the little mission station lay at peace, surrounded by fields of snow and ice. The families of Liebisch and Turner mourned them as dead, and their fellow-workers felt their loss exceedingly. At midnight, a sudden howling of dogs, mingled with human voices, awoke the sleepers, and the whole settlement suddenly turned out. What a joyful surprise it was to welcome back, as from the dead, their loved ones, who had a marvellous story to tell of God's preserving care. The rest of that night was spent in praise.

Six years later, a third station was founded about 150 miles to the south of Nain, and named Hopedale,

and there again a number of Esquimaux were gathered to hear the story of redeeming love. As a result of the twenty years' labour of Jans Haven and his companions, over a hundred had professed conversion, and by their new lives and testimony gave evidence not only that they had renounced heathen customs, but that they had been truly "born of God." But, as may easily be imagined, they had much to learn, and needed constant instruction in the truth of God, which the Moravians were very careful to give ; thus seeking to foster and strengthen the new and heavenly life that had been begotten in them, and to cleanse their ways by the water of the Word (Eph. v. 26) from such things and habits as hindered their growth in grace. Among those who professed conversion was a man named Inglavira, who, after going on well for a time, became a backslider, and led others astray. This was a new and bitter trial to the Lord's servants, and worse to bear than privations and sufferings. Yet they were not discouraged. But day and night, by earnest prayer and effort, they sought to bring the wanderers to repentance, and God owned their service, for they were brought back confessing, with many tears, their backslidings ; and even Inglavira, who had led the rest astray, was restored to the Lord, and died in peace.

At Hopedale and Hebron, which was founded later, special attention was given to the young. Only about six months of the year is it possible for children



A LABRADOR MISSIONARY AND DOG.

in Labrador to attend school, owing to the excessive cold and the dangers of travelling, but during these months they are most diligent, so that at five many can read and write well. In the humble dwellings of the Christian Esquimaux, there was daily prayer and praise, and when the Gospel according to John was sent out from England to them, printed in their own language, their joy broke all bounds. Some burst into tears, others clasped the Book to their bosom, and several families gathered together—each house where there was a copy—in evenings to hear it read. When they went in search of provisions or fishing for seal, they took “The Book” with them, and all their spare moments were spent in reading it. Need we wonder that the work of God grew, and that those who had been converted made progress and became winners of others to the Saviour. When they heard of the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society in sending out the Word of God, they were so moved with gratitude that they began of their own accord to collect seals’ blubber, and several brought whole seals which they had caught, wishing the proceeds to be sent to England to provide the Scripture for others in heathendom who had not yet received them. Nothing more clearly showed that God had been at work among them than these voluntary gifts, for naturally the Esquimaux is not marked by liberality, but the opposite. Truly the grace of God wherever it is welcomed, and the love of Christ wherever it is be-

lieved, work wonders such as no power on earth can do. But while the work of God thus went on, the wearied and worn-out workers were being gathered home.

Jans Haven, the noble pioneer, who had the honour of being first on the field, was now an old man, and although his heart and spirit would have carried him forward into the untrodden fields, his bodily strength gave way, so that in 1784 he had to return to his home in Europe. He spent the evening of his life at Hernhutt, surrounded by his friends of early years, to whom his daily converse was most helpful and profitable, for, like Enoch of old, he walked with God, and his lips spake of Christ from morning till night. For the last six years of his life he was totally blind, but never murmured. At the age of seventy-two he passed away to be with Christ, leaving the following testimony, written by his own hand on a slip of paper, which he wished to be added to the narrative of his life :—

JANS HAVEN,

A POOR SINNER, WHO, IN HIS OWN JUDGMENT,
DESERVED ETERNAL CONDEMNATION, FELL HAPPILY
ASLEEP, RELYING UPON THE DEATH AND
MERITS OF JESUS.

Was not this a good passport wherewith to enter the eternal world? Just what God will accept, and no

other, and what will pass, the great and small, the young and the aged, from every country and clime, within the gates of that fair city, where the only song that rings through its pearly portals is "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

During the intervening years from the day that Jans Haven and his companions set foot on Labrador's stormy shore to the present time, the glad tidings of the Saviour's love has been sounded forth. Hardships and famine have been bravely endured by those who have gone forth, and their labours have not been in vain. A mission ship, named "The Harmony," has made an annual voyage from England to Labrador carrying supplies to the missionaries there, and, wonderful to relate, as it truly is, no wreck or disaster has overtaken that ship of mercy all these years. God has guided her course and wafted her through stormy seas safely to her desired haven. The hand of God has been so manifestly in this that men of the world have noticed it, and been made to own it in wonder. It is a witness that God lives.





LABRADOR AT THE PRESENT TIME.

WE have briefly told the story of how the Gospel was first introduced and its power made known among the heathen Esquimaux of the stormy coast of Labrador, and now must bring our story to a close by relating how the devoted Moravians have held the field from that time till the present, a period of over a hundred and twenty years, toiling and suffering for Christ on that inhospitable shore. There are few heathen Esquimaux now to be found in Labrador; most have, at least in name, renounced the barbarous customs and rites of their forefathers. The nomadic dwellings in tents of skin have been mostly abandoned for huts of wood and mud, and the sealskin clothing for coarse European dress. As a race, the Esquimaux are fast dying out, only some 1700 being now found on the

coast, mostly grouped around the mission stations of the Moravians. In the interior are a hardy race of Indians called "Mountaineers," and further south, a resident white population of some 5000 called the "Livyeries." These are said to be the descendants of convicts and others who had fled their country, and of crews of shipwrecked vessels cast upon that shore. In May and June of every year about from 20,000 to 25,000 fishermen, with wives and children, are said to visit this coast for the cod and seal fishing. These mostly come from Newfoundland, and reside on small colonies on islands and headlands, where the fish are brought by the men, cleaned and salted by the women, then shipped for the markets. Each family has a separate hut, built of sods and wood. There is no jail or police, and little crime or drunkenness. The Moravians visit along the coast in their boats, and preach the Word among them; and within recent years other workers have gone there with the Gospel. Mission ships call occasionally at some of the ports; and three hospitals, under the care of Christian nurses, have been opened, where the bodies and souls of many are cared for. In one of these, a dying Esquimau, with both his hands off, suffering intense pain, said to the doctor, "It is nothing to what my Saviour bore in the Garden for me." He passed away singing Count Zinzendorf's beautiful hymn :—

"Jesus, day by day, guide us on our way;
 Trial marks the road, leading us to God."

One moonlight night lately, while the mission ship "Albert," on a visit to the Labrador coast, lay at anchor, the captain and crew were astonished to have the silence of night broken by the sound of singing. The air was familiar, and listening, they heard the words distinctly coming nearer and nearer :—

“ There’s a land that is fairer than day,
And by faith we can see it afar ;
For our Father waits over the way
To prepare us a dwelling-place there.”

Ascending the gangway, they found the deck filled with quaint little figures dressed in skins, with snow-white jumpers, topped by long pointed cowls high above their heads. It was a company of Christian Esquimaux who had come in their boats to welcome them to their shore. Once it would have been death to have visited the Esquimaux on his native shore, but what changes the Gospel’s power has wrought, and ever will work where it is welcomed, whether among the heathen or the refined and enlightened worldlings, whose God is the world and its pleasures. Christ received by faith as Saviour, owned and loved as Lord, wins the heart, and so changes the life and ways that others, whether friends or foes, must acknowledge it, for now, as of old, Christ cannot be hid.

The Esquimaux children have not been forgotten. One who cares for them tells how their last Christmas

day was spent in Battle Creek Hospital. There, in little cots, with many bright pictures on the walls, little cripples and sick Esquimaux children are tenderly cared for.

Stockings filled with toys and good things were found hanging on the cots in early morning, much to the surprise of the little inmates. The day was spent happily, and in the evening the little ward rang with many sweet voices singing :—

“ What can wash away my stain ?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus ; ”

and, later, childish voices were heard singing their evensong. It was this :—

“ When He cometh, when He cometh
To make up His jewels.”

Thus does the story of the Cross pursue its way, and thus the company of the redeemed from every clime is being gathered.

May His Gospel still speed its way among the lonely dwellers of Labrador's stormy shore, and gather from among them many trophies to grace the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus. And may many hearts take up the fervent wish of James Montgomery, who long ago wrote in one of his sacred songs :—

“ To-day one world-neglected race
We fervently commend
To Thee and to Thy Word of Grace.
Lord, visit and befriend
A people scattered, paled and rude,
By land and ocean solitude ;
Cut off from every kindlier shore,
In dreary Labrador.”

