AN UNKNOWN LAND

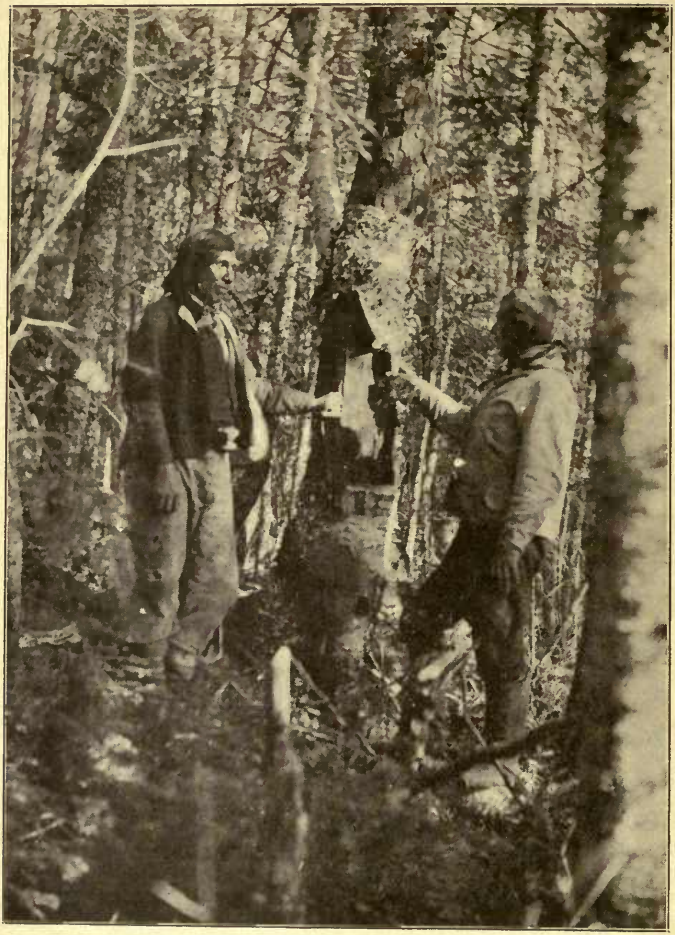
JOURNEY THROUGH THE WASTES OF LABRADOR IN SEARCH OF GOLD

By E. C. ROBINSON

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

DR. W. T. GRENFELL

IN AN UNKNOWN LAND



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EDWARD COLPITTS ROBINSON, F.G.S.

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SUPERINTENDENT OF THE MISSION TO DEEP SEA FISHERMEN

LONDON: ELLIOT STOCK
62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
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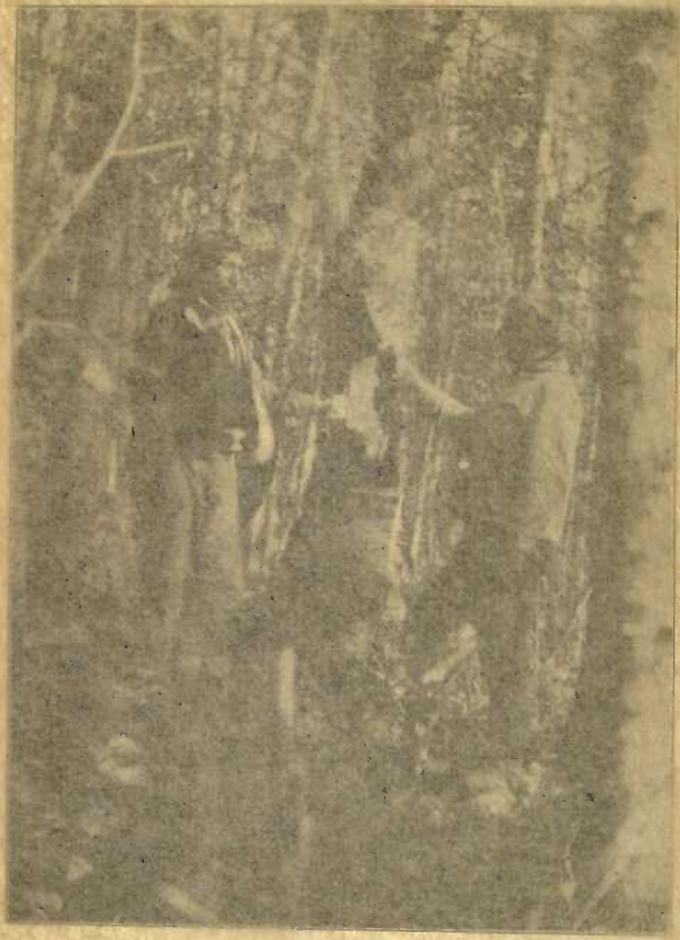

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FOREWORD

IT was with special pleasure I received Mr. Robinson's kind invitation to write a foreword to his book. His simple word-pictures of the country which I have learnt to consider home, speak for themselves as the most interesting kind of description anyone can give of a new land.

To the tourist the main attractions of Labrador are its untrodden waterways, its unconquered peaks, its uncharted, endless islands. The hunter and fisherman find virgin fields and seas. The geologist, botanist, and zoologist find pastures rich in opportunity. But to Mr. Robinson, as to myself, Labrador presents specially a perspective field for human life.

Foreword

When man turns his inventive brain, and the forces he has already mastered, to these vast mineral fields, these still virgin forests, these endless miles of capacity for adapted culture, in spite of physical adverse conditions, in spite of lack of southern verdure, in spite of the iron frosts of winter, not only can a strong race wrest an ample sustenance from it, but Labrador will of necessity be mother of a race " worth while " her glorious atmosphere, and her strong environment could never parley with a weakling people.

Some day we shall learn, as we English know how to learn, the value of other conditions than those existing in our own blessed islands. We have had to learn in Alaska, in Cobalt—yes, and in all Canada—and we shall have learnt that Labrador also is one of God's countries, and therefore is an asset of no mean worth to His children—when their energy and skill are worthy of it.

Foreword

The best prizes the world gives are always and only to be gained at cost, and when an enervated, overcrowded people seek new grit and new vitality, Labrador will loom up from her fog and ice, and offer a field for achievement which is ever a better attraction to men with a vision than even the certainty of a big and immediate return in gold.

It would be wrong to close this already too lengthy foreword without a feeble testimony to the people who now live and work in Labrador. They are all that Mr. Robinson says of them, and more. Their simplicity of faith ; their honesty of purpose ; their hospitality, unlimited except by their circumstances ; their courage in adversity ; their resourcefulness in danger ; and their submission to the inevitable, which is not mere fatalism, are all attributes that in an age of unstable, nervous equilibrium are almost as helpful to the visitor from civilization,

wearied body, soul, and spirit by his strenuous environment, as are the natural advantages of the northerly latitude. These honest and courageous characteristics to me are ten times more attractive than all the possibility of extracting from that great land yet more additions to the world's hoard of wealth.

WILFRED GRENFELL, M.D.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS,
July, 1909.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I BELIEVE there is a big future before inland Labrador, with its extensive forests and its mineral wealth, and Dr. Grenfell's work for the moral and spiritual well-being of the "Liviers" on the coast is bound to advance the temporal prosperity of the whole peninsula.

EDWARD C. ROBINSON.

LONDON.

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In an Unknown Land

CHAPTER I

WESTWARD HO!

I HAVE just completed a journey through unknown Labrador, a country which up to the time of my visit I had always looked upon as a barren and inhospitable waste. My expectations were that, when the summer sun melted the ice and snow on the mountain ranges, mighty torrents of swollen waters would rush down into the sea, leaving the great rugged mountains and hills to warm their naked barrenness in the sunshine of the short northern summer. Away in the interior, perchance a few of the old-time Indians might be met with, and along the northern coast there were the descendants of the once

wild Eskimo, a people now living in peaceful industry under the instruction and guidance of the devoted Moravian missionaries.

As far as the coast-line was concerned, I knew what to expect, because of the definite reports of the hardy fishermen from Newfoundland, who year after year sail their boats to and from Labrador to gather the fishing harvest from those wild and stormy waters along the rugged, frowning coast, stopping there but a few months, and then gladly returning southward to their homes in Terra Nova (Newfoundland), turning their backs upon the cliffs of this inhospitable shore, leaving the hills and valleys to the weird whiteness of winter, and the bays, rivers, and waterfalls to the icy hand and solidifying touch of the keen winds from the north.

My impressions of Labrador have always been that it was a country rugged with barren mountains, inhospitable, cold, and forbidding, but grand in its very barrenness, unclothed from snow for a few short months hardly worthy of the name of summer, and through-

out the long winter a weary, wild, and inhospitable waste. And such is the impression that most Britishers have of this great unexplored country.

Labrador at its greatest length extends over a distance of more than one thousand miles, and in its widest part has a breadth of more than seven hundred miles—a country larger in extent than the whole of the British Islands and France and Switzerland rolled into one. It is described in all our geographies as a country, one of the most dreary and naked portions of the globe, too cold for man to live there in comfort, too barren to grow even the simplest foods, and the natives existed upon the blubber and meat from the seals and walruses that they might catch and kill. Such was the general impression of the country I was visiting. But having now been there, and knowing what there exists, it becomes my pleasure to give to the public a short, unexaggerated, and unvarnished account of what I there saw and what I know to be correct, and to tell them what I think of the

future possibilities and probabilities in store for this despised and forgotten corner of the globe.

But I am not a traveller who is full of daring adventures and hair-breadth escapes, although there are few parts of the world that I have not been into. The fact of my having been in so many countries will give greater reliance to the opinions formed than if this country were the one and only country that it had been my lot to visit. I have travelled for thousands of miles in the wilds of Western Australia, over the burning sands and waterless plains of that vast country; have forced my way through the dense forests and jungles of West Africa, through Ashanti and on towards the Congo; have lived in the Joss-house at Kumasi, and from thence gone north into unknown countries where wild Mohammedan tribes held sway. Then, again, during the late Russo-Japanese War, I was in Siberia, and, leaving the Russian forces at Omsk, went down the River Irtish to the Zaizan Sea, and there, amongst the Kirghiz and Tartars, wan-

dered onward until the great Tarbagati Mountains on the west side of China were visible. I have been in countries where a white man was a curiosity, and have been the first specimen seen by the natives. If I wanted to tell fairy-tales, surely my experience of the world would help me to tickle the fancy by relating stirring adventures and describing blood-curdling scenes. But no. I want just to have a plain, matter-of-fact talk about things which I have seen in a country we all know of, but really know nothing about. I want just to help to make known the unknown country of Labrador.

My journey was not of the nature of a pleasure trip, although the many new scenes and surroundings and the novel conditions made the time pass most pleasantly. If it were not pleasure I was in search of, then I am bound to say what was the purpose of my journeyings in Labrador. It was a search for the precious metal, gold, that took me to this new country. Geologists and scientists had from the sea already seen the great ranges of

mountains in the distance, which fall steep and irregularly to the sea, and from these naked rocks had judged that the land formation belonged to the Laurentian period, as the whole of the north-east coast of Labrador is of Laurentian Gneiss, with intrusive granite and quartz veins. Resting on this are some of the Lower Silurian beds. Judging, therefore, from the appearance of the coast-line, it has been decided that the mountainous regions within the country are of the same formation, and over the country are to be found Gneiss ranges of mountains and boulders. The sands carried down by the rushing rivers show that inland must be rocks of micaceous quartz, and, what is more, quartz that is gold-bearing, for tiny flat grains of the precious metal have been " washed " out of the sands which are brought down by the rivers to the coast.

But not one word will I say about the golden prospects, be they good or bad ; that is not my object in writing this account. I want just to state what I found, and what I saw, and what I learnt, in this unknown,

untried, and uncared-for country. The fact is, I was prospecting for gold, for a place where the energies of the adventurer might be expended in the searching for and gaining the precious metal, so that a new centre of civilization might spring up, and a population be established to work the newly-discovered mines and supply the workers' wants. Away to the westward the Klondike was already a country full of energy and trade, and now that the mad rush to a new goldfield had subsided, work was being carried on with surroundings of civilization.

Why should not wealth be found in Labrador as well as in Klondike? Labrador, "Le Bras d'Or" (The Arm of Gold). Whence was this name derived, and why was this barren, rockbound coast named so strangely? Surely it was that, hundreds of years ago, some French adventurer had found that wealth lay hidden behind these rocky shores. He gave the country its name, and the name has stuck to it. He himself has passed away into oblivion, but the vast eternal hills and

everlasting valleys of this wild and rugged country still remain. In the adventurous days of Queen Elizabeth, when Sir Walter Raleigh was Lord of the Oceans, three small ships went to Northern Labrador, and there spent a summer and a winter. Returning with a cargo of ore to London, the expedition eventually found that this ore would result in an extraction of three ounces of gold to each ton. But this experimental undertaking was not then considered sufficiently successful to induce the merchants of London again to fit out a larger and more powerful expedition. The name that was given to this vast district still lives, but, like all the other names throughout this portion of the globe, has been Anglicized. Although the pronunciation is the same, the spelling has been altered, and Le Bras d'Or, the "Arm of Gold," is now called Labrador.

It is difficult to decide where the boundary-line exists between that part of Labrador which belongs to Newfoundland and the districts which are claimed by the Canadian

Government. This line of demarcation is purely imaginary, as no one has ever been there to mark out the division. But the rivalry of ownership is purely friendly, and will continue until Newfoundland and Canada are merged into one great British colony. Labrador will then become part and parcel of this great, growing British Power in the Western World. Away towards the Pacific, Canada has rich lands that can be still more enriched by the incoming population from the Old World, and the time will come when the prairie lands of the north-east and the mountainous districts still nearer the Atlantic will rival in commercial output the rich fields of Manitoba and the mineral wealth of the Rocky Mountains. Canada has all the vitality and energy of youth, and will flourish when other countries have gradually settled into senile decay. Let Newfoundland but shake off that listless apathy of selfishness which seems to have characterized its past Governments, and let it follow the lead of its best men, and think not only of the passing present, but of the

mighty future that awaits it. Let it rouse itself from its lethargy, and show itself, not merely proud of being the "oldest British colony," but ready and willing to advance with the times, and push onwards to greater prosperity.

It is Newfoundland's side of Labrador that I am more particularly acquainted with—the mountainous country stretching from Blanc-Sablon to Cape Chidley, near the entrance to the Hudson Bay, and measured inland to the highest range of mountains on the west, where the rivers rise, and from whence the country drops away into sweeping, rolling prairie land.

From Liverpool to Labrador, after rounding the north of Ireland, there is nothing but the deep waters of the Atlantic, straight sailing all the way to the West. Liverpool, in England, is very nearly on the same line of latitude as Sandwich Bay in Labrador; but Labrador, being so much more extensive than the British Islands, extends much farther to the north than the British Isles do, and farther to the south as well. When the time comes

for a line of steamships to this new country—this unknown land of Labrador—there is deep water and straight sailing West all the way.

The climate of Labrador is much colder than ours; the winters especially are much more severe than we experience in England. We are blessed with the warmth derived from the Gulf Stream, whereas the coast of Labrador is continually exposed to the cold ice-flow of the Arctic currents. But we are apt to look upon Labrador as a country somewhat near the North Pole, and we forget that its latitude is the same as ours. We are prepared to hear anything about its inhospitable shores, its cold, snow-capped mountains, and the terrors of its supposed inland nakedness. Let us get right on to the real facts, and then all these fancy ideas will become considerably altered before the true statement of affairs.

There being no line of steamships direct to Labrador, I had to get there the best way that was available. This was by the Allan Line from Liverpool to St. John's in Newfoundland, and from thence by local steamer

to the Labrador coast. I was not born a sailor, and therefore never can enter into the pleasures which some men seem to experience (or say they do) when out "on the rolling deep." For my own part, I much prefer gliding smoothly over a still sea, and the more swiftly we get over it the better I am pleased. "A life on the ocean wave" is grandly poetic until you get the actual opportunities of experiencing the truth, and I have had lots of this experience in all parts of the world.

But for "ocean wave" and "rolling deep" the North Atlantic, vulgarly speaking, "takes the cake." Now, the steamship *Siberian* was a good ship, and the captain was a good captain, but the weather was anything but good. Howling winds, raging seas for eight days, and then two days only calm before we reached St. John's.

When we left Liverpool every berth was occupied, and the full number of passengers was carried. Three days after starting, when the storm was at its height, a baby girl appeared and commenced life's voyage. Then

BAPTISM OF BABIES ON BOARD THE BOAT.

another mother, perhaps a bit jealous, added another passenger to the ship's number, a fine, healthy boy. The ship's doctor had a busy time, but looked after these two newly-arrived passengers with the greatest care.

The day before we reached St. John's was Sunday, and the seas and winds were sufficiently calm to allow of a service on deck. The Rev. G. H. Bolt of Newfoundland, who was a passenger on board, conducted the service, and at the close we witnessed the baptism of the two sea-born children. The babies were thoroughly well behaved, and not even seasick.

CHAPTER II

ON THE BORDERS OF THE UNKNOWN LAND

ON our arrival at St. John's, arrangements were made for passage in the ss. *Virginia Lake,* a vessel belonging to the Reid-Newfoundland Company, and one that is constantly employed on the Labrador route.

Along the coast, east and north of Newfoundland, and then along the rock-bound shores of Labrador, is a sea where lighthouses are unknown and where rocks seem to be on every hand, where the coast is a sea of islands, each island barren, with high, frowning cliffs torn and broken by the mighty power of the everlasting sea. There is no amount of " book learning " that will ever fit a man to navigate a ship amongst these weird channels and wild rocks ; a man must be born to the work.

Now Captain Parsons, of the *Virginia Lake,*

was a sailor who could tell where he was in the darkest night just by the sound of the waters dashing against the rocks, each of the ten thousand rocks having a different sound. Positively he has been known, when entering a port on a pitch-dark night, to listen for the bark of a dog, and by the sound of that bark has judged whose dog it was and where his ship was at the time. It would be a difficult thing to find a man more suited to the terribly exacting work of navigating these unknown bays and gulfs and "tickles" than Captain Parsons.

We went from settlement to settlement, places where little bands of fishermen had built their shore dwellings, in and out of the multitudinous bays, up the creeks a long way inland, then back again to some barren island out in the Atlantic waters.

The work of this ship was to call at all of the little stations of fishermen right along the coast, delivering letters and receiving whatever letters there might be to come home to Newfoundland.

In multitudinous places three or four men would lower the boat and row off to the shore, taking with them His Majesty's mail—perhaps a dozen letters or half a dozen newspapers. They would return to the ship in perhaps half an hour with three or four letters for home. Letters go for two cents each, the same as our penny postage, but newspapers are carried free. Newfoundland believes with Canada that newspapers are an essentiality to national progress, and therefore does not tax the spreading of these papers within its own dominion.

A free post for the news of the day, and for national information, political information, and world-wide information!—all is carried by the post free of cost. Of course, this postal service does not pay; it is, on the contrary, so far as newspapers are concerned, a dead loss to the community, but the fisheries pay, and the fisherman must be seen to. The very wealth of Newfoundland lies in its fisheries, and the post is an essential convenience which at all costs must be carried out. The postal

steamer manages to run along the coast and back again to St. John's in about three weeks.

I was interested in landing at most of these settlements, and the first we arrived at was Battle, about the largest on the coast. In fact, it is the principal "town" of Labrador, although not larger than a small English village.

There are eight or ten small dwelling-houses for the fishermen employed on the shore by Bain, Johnson and Co., a big wholesale fishing firm, and a group of larger and more commodious houses for the manager and his staff. There is a neat little church, and a house for the parson, all given and supported by this enterprising firm, who have also donated the land and assisted in the erection of the hospital and surrounding buildings belonging to Dr. Grenfell's Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen, to which centre patients are brought from distances of hundreds of miles up and down the coast.

Battle is a commercial station for one big fishing firm, and a hospital centre for Dr.

Grenfell's good work. It is not a town, but just a summer fishing depot, and which has been selected by reason of the good name and social standing of the proprietors as a hospital centre. Nearly all the men return to Newfoundland before the winter commences, and the station is then practically closed and deserted until the following summer. At certain times in the year the harbour is full of fishing craft, but these are migratory ; they go up and down the coast, following the whereabouts of the immense shoals of codfish that swarm in the waters.

Battle is a little island, and on the top of its high rocks is erected a Marconi telegraph-pole. I climbed up to see the solitary man in the solitary little house on the solitary hill, and there in this experimental station witnessed science seeking to wrest from Nature her secrets.

It was most interesting to sit for a while in this little solitary shed, and see the magnetic flash and hear the noise of the current flashing from the sparking-rods like a storm of thunder

and lightning in miniature. I had run short of photo plates for my camera, and took this means of ordering from St. John's a supply to be sent on to me by the next mail-boat, which I knew was due to sail from Newfoundland on the following day. From Battle to Belle Isle, from thence to Point Amour, then the wireless message for six dozen camera plates was flashed on to Point Riche, then to Whittle Rocks, then Heath Point, and from thence to Cape Ray, from whence my message went by the ordinary telegraph land line to its destination. These stations of the Marconi system have been established more by way of perfecting by practice the possibility of wireless telegraphy, and the district chosen is one free from opposing magnetic currents or other disturbing results of civilization.

Far away on the horizon we could just detect a column of black smoke. I wanted to get the correct time, so as to regulate my watch.

Away circled the question to this unknown ship. I was immediately informed that it

was the ss. *Lake Champion*, from Montreal, and the time twelve minutes past twelve.

Almost immediately afterwards another message was received from the ss. *Canada*, of the Dominion Line. Nothing of the passing ship could be seen; although the day was clear and bright, no telescope could bring her into vision. She was sending a wireless message for transmission to her owners. But for her stating her position, we could not have told whether she was forty or four hundred miles away.

As we left the station the miniature flashes of lightning were again in action between the sparking-rods of the receiver. With a brilliancy that paled the brightest sunlight, the primary and secondary poles on the right hand of the operator were active with zigzag lines of electric light, and the wireless messages were circulating at incalculable speed from the top of the high pole into endless space.

The question is, At what distance from the point of origin can these electric wave-lines be detected so as to make intercommunication

possible and practicable? Scientific investigation in this Marconi nursery alone can determine this.

For us ordinary beings to take something that we can see and understand is the only way to form an idea of what we can neither understand nor see. A stone is thrown into the centre of a calm, still pond: line after line encircles round the splash, each circle larger than the preceding one, but the larger it becomes the less distinct is it to our vision, until at last the great circle of wavelets touches the shore. So the unseen electric current encircles the pole from which it starts, impinging itself upon any receiver that is within its appreciable radius, and the increasing circles of electric power are lost instantly on the shore of infinitude.

The island of Battle is perfectly bare of vegetation, save for a few sparse grasses and wild flowers, and the rocks are exposed, torn, and weather-beaten. Quartz veins could be traced along the surface from north to south, twisting and turning in their courses, but

running from end to end of the island, speaking of ages gone by when fire and heat burst the solid rocks in long fissures and the bowels of the earth belched forth the molten quartz. It will be seen by this statement that I am a believer in the fire origin of quartz, and not that it was deposited somehow in cracks and crevices in the rocks. This, even though scientists urge that quartz cannot well be reduced to a molten condition. Should they not rather put it that they do not know how Nature evolved from a molten state this hard rock ? Nature has ten thousand secrets, and in every age man finds out more and more. I may be wrong in my deduction, but, nevertheless, from seeing the quartz leaders and veins under all conditions and in all parts of the world, I am compelled to favour the theory of a fire origin.

Wandering over the rocky shores, I came across two little children playing happily together. They were collecting the wild flowers that grow here and there in the crevices in the rocks. Skipping from rock

to rock, they were to all appearances English children, but I soon saw that they were little Eskimos in English garb. One of them, a little girl, spoke most beautiful English, and she told me that she preferred the Spanish tongue. If she was as perfect in Spanish as she was when talking to me in English, she is a wonder. She told me that she and her little friend were from the hospital. I was so impressed with the bright intelligence of the girl, a real Eskimo, and yet perfectly choice in her English, and professedly giving the Spanish language first place in her vocabulary, the child was a wonder to me. I asked the little maid if she objected to being photographed. "Not in the least, sir," she smartly replied; so, taking her little Eskimo boy-friend, she quickly posed and was snapped by my camera.

Now comes the extraordinary part of my interview with the little child. I afterwards saw her cooing and playing with a little baby patient at the hospital, walking up and down nursing the infant like a little mother. The

little baby patient was crowing with pleasure and excitement, and the girl was skipping about with it and using all the endearing phrases that we know so well. I congratulated the head nurse on having this help. Judge of my surprise when I heard the history of this little girl!

The lady doctor told me that some ten or twelve years before, when the child was only three or four years old, she had wandered out of her father's snowhouse away up in the lonely north, and had been so frost-bitten that her feet and legs were dead. Her father took his rough hunting-knife, cut through the dead flesh, and roughly chopped the leg bones off below the knees. How the little Eskimo baby survived this rough treatment is a mystery to me.

But there she was — a little piece of humanity that had struggled for life! Of no further use to her wild Eskimo parents, they left her to die. But the servants of Him Who said "Suffer the little children to come unto Me" sought her out, rescued her from

LITTLE LABRADOR LASSIE WITH ARTIFICIAL LEGS.

death, and took care of her, trained her and educated her, and eventually supplied her with artificial lower limbs, as shapely as could be—so much so as actually to deceive one not knowing that the limbs were artificial.

But, alas! the hospital nurse told me that this bright little specimen was not always a good girl. Often, as a punishment, they had to shut her up in a room and take her legs away to keep her there, when she would shout and howl like a little savage. What a pity that she is not always good! Occasionally the inherited nature of this girl's forebears asserts itself. Well, well, she is in good hands, and the missionary, Dr. Grenfell, is not the man to cease in an unfinished work nor to turn her adrift on the cruel world.

CHAPTER III

BATTLE ISLAND AND CARTWRIGHT

THERE are some days of sadness amongst the brave fishing folk from Newfoundland who come in the summer months to reap the harvest of the sea in Labrador waters. Captain Vivian has just landed from the *Little Dart,* a fishing schooner from Bonavista Bay. He has sad news. All day long they have been searching for the bodies of two young men, who, in attending to their fishing-nets, had accidentally upset their boat. Every fishing-boat in the neighbourhood had lent a helping hand, and tried to find the whereabouts of the two lost fishermen. But the sea is deep, and covers up its dead. I am afraid they will never be able to find the bodies of the two poor fellows. The mates of the lost men will do their best to recover

the bodies, as every fisherman does his best for a fellow-fisherman, in this part of the world at least. If they find the bodies, they will be buried in the strange little cemetery that lies on Battle Island between two high cliffs—a little cemetery which, in the winter-time, is deeply buried under twenty or thirty feet of drifted snow.

I went to visit this little resting-place of the dead. There are some strange monuments erected there, some of them very illiterate, but all of them, by the very fact of their erection, showing human love. Some of the stones have very unpoetical poetry inserted thereon, descriptive of the virtues of the deceased and the love of those left behind. For a long time I puzzled over one which announced that Sarah Combe died in 1881. It read : " DiDTHe FoRTH HAGe 31 HOF YARs HoGes," which I took to mean that she " died on the 4th August, aged 31 years." But the sculptor had put a little fancy-work into the arrangement of the words. The " hage 31 yars " was down the

left side, the "forth hof Hoges" down the right side, and the date in the middle, below the two columns. Another inscription, which was in memory of John Hill, who died December 3, 1890, aged thirty-four, finished up with a strange verse :

"Weep not dear Parents
For your lost Tis my
Eteranel gain may
Christ you all take up
The crost that we
Shuld meat again."

Enough! Find no fault! Read deeper than the carved letterings and misspelt words! As one leaves this lone resting-place of the dead, and comes out into the open front, and there sees the large inscription carved by hand and fixed right across the front of the Mission Hospital, "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me,*" one can but remember that the illiterate sculptors were but poor toiling fishermen, and they did what they could to show their love and friendship for their dear departed.

But to change our subject. We had news from the Marconi station at the top of the hill that Commander Peary was putting in at the "whale factory" on the neighbouring coast for a load of whale-meat, intended for food for his team of dogs when he got shut up in the Arctic regions. The exploring ship *Roosevelt* had left America, and now, on its way to the region of ice, called in and remained for some hours while securing its cargo and packing it away in great solid lumps on board.

Peary was in splendid spirits, and expressed himself as determined to reach the Pole. We went down into his cabin, and he sat before a magnificent pianola which some kind friends had provided for the amusement of himself and the crew during their long, lonely night in the Far North. He discoursed a number of sweet melodies, and then, rising from the instrument, showed us his "flag," which it was his determined intention to plant amidst the ice and snow on the most northern portion of the globe. Five or six small squares had

already been cut out of the bunting, and the flag was neatly patched with pieces of white canvas. Each piece out of the flag had been left at some remote spot in the icy north during previous explorations, but the flag itself, or what remained of the stars and stripes, was to be triumphantly planted at the very pole.

The whale factory at which the *Roosevelt* was taking on the cargo of whale-meat had six or eight huge carcasses of these leviathans of the deep being cut to pieces for the purpose of obtaining the oil and the whalebone, so valuable in commerce.

Strange that they should call a slaughter-house a "factory"; but they look at things differently in Labrador from what we do at home. A fisherman comes here to "make" fish, not to catch them. They speak only of cod as fish. A salmon is a salmon, and a trout is a trout, but cod, and cod only, is spoken of as fish. "Will you have salmon or fish?" you are asked at the dinner table, and you soon get into the same way of talking. There

is only one fish, and that is cod, and when we saw the large timber platforms along the shore piled every evening with circular heaps of fish, which is spread out to dry as soon as the sun rises in the morning, to us strangers it seemed more like the process of hay-making than anything else.

We spent nearly two weeks in the neighbourhood of Battle, and then continued our journey north.

After several stoppages at various small fishing-stations, we got to Hawk's Harbour. At this place is another large " whale factory." Not that whales are made here, but rather that they are unmade. Here was a huge leviathan of the deep, or, rather, all that was left of him after the blubber and fat had been cut off the carcass, just being hauled up from the stage on which he had been practically dissected, reducing him to about one-half of his natural dimensions. With a rope attached to his tail he was being drawn up an incline by a powerful stationary engine, and when up, was cut into hundreds of pieces and thrown

into steam boilers, and there converted into guano, or an imitation of that valuable manure. Whilst looking round the harbour, a staunch little steam-tug came puffing and blowing up to the wharf, dragging behind it the carcass of a large sperm-whale that had just been captured and killed. Fastening it up to a buoy in the water close up to the stage, the steam-tug then rushed away again, as if she had something very special to do and not much time to do it in. We concluded that a school of whales had been sighted, and that, having captured one, she was anxious to get off and bring some more victims in.

The flesh of the whale, as it was being cut up, looked like good rich beef. The Eskimos eat it and enjoy it, and goodness knows, they are fat enough. How is it that civilized Europeans will not touch it? Here we are—we eat crabs and hideous lobsters, shellfish, and even snails; we will get an ox and fatten it up until it can hardly breathe for fat, and we call these delicacies and prime meat. Now here were hundreds of tons of real good

prime meat that looked just like beef being cut up and boiled down into what was to be used as ordinary manure.

Now, if this meat had been cooked and placed upon the table with all the ordinary culinary attentions, I venture to say that a whale-steak would look just as good as the best beef-steak going, and would cost next to nothing in comparison. Why should it not be eaten? The Eskimos find it delightful, and as much as they can get they will make good use of. Why won't Europeans eat it? Well, the fact is, if you were to put me down to a whale-steak, if I did not soon get up and clear out, my inside would soon set me the example. This does not, however, alter the suggestion that a whale-steak may be as good as a beef-steak.

After a week's steaming along from settlement to settlement, going on shore here and there whenever time allowed, we reached the Hudson Bay Company's station called Cartwright, and from here it was that my real Labrador inland journey commenced.

It was a beautiful day when we hoisted sail in the little boat which I had engaged for the purpose, and went southward through the pleasant rippling waters of Sandwich Bay. We soon lost sight of Cartwright, and got well into this bay, which is really an inland sea. It covers an area of about three hundred square miles. Two channels lead out into the Atlantic Ocean. The wider one, which is too shallow to be navigable by large vessels, is about one mile across, and the narrower but deeper channel, which has cut its way between what is now called Earl Island and the mainland, at its narrowest part is less than half a mile in width. So narrow is the channel, and so great is the rush of waters when the tide ebbs and flows, that only with a fair wind can anything like progress be made when going in the opposite direction to the current; but as we had chosen a time when both wind and tide were in our favour, our little boat literally flew across the waters.

For a day and night I had remained under the hospitable roof of the Hudson Bay

Company's store at Cartwright, where I had been left by the *Virginia Lake* on its way farther to the north. The manager of this trading station, Mr. Ralph Parsons, with all the hospitality of a real Newfoundlander, made me most comfortable, and heartily wished me success during my inland journey. From the stores of the Company my necessary supplies were purchased, and these were of the simplest description.

Never under any circumstances, or in any climate, will I carry with me supplies of that potted rubbish that goes under the name of "tinned meat." It is a great mistake when travellers load themselves up with these so-called tinned luxuries whenever they start for a journey in any new land. My own experience is that the larger proportion of these tinned meats are neither nutritious nor health-sustaining; on the contrary, they just please the palate, but no good is done to the system. The best food to eat is the food which is eaten by the people of the country that you may be travelling in. Far better for the time to

forget all the pleasant dishes of home, and be ready for the meats and fruits and growths which have become the natural foods of man in the particular land in which one may happen to be.

An occasional steak from some deer that you have shot is far sweeter when your system has not been disordered by its being loaded with tinned make-believe meat. The " flipper " of a seal makes a thousand times better dinner, more nutritious and more tasty, more novel and wholesome, than all the tinned commodities in which the taste has been artificially doctored up. There is no fish so sweet as the fish you have caught in your own net or on your own line, no meat so delicious, so sweet, and so tender as the venison resulting from your own gun.

There is a food which is general throughout the whole of the fishing community, not only of Labrador, but of Newfoundland. It is called " brewis." That is the way it is spelt in the dictionary, but all the same it is pronounced " bruze." Every fisherman through-

out Newfoundland and Labrador goes in for this kind of bread ; in fact, it is so generally used that there are very few who do not at least have it once or twice a week even amongst the wealthy classes in St. John's. This food is a hard bread, supplied in little loaves about three inches in diameter. It is biscuit-white, clean, wholesome, and tasty, but as hard as a brick. This bread-biscuit is so made that it will be good and wholesome for months ; in fact, it can be kept for years, and will be as fresh and sweet to the taste as on the day it was manufactured. It is so hard that it can be carried about in bags or sacks without splitting or breaking.

The dish is invariably prepared by boiling the hard bread, generally with a small piece of pork or bacon, and then serving it up with cuts of fresh fish that have been cooked and then mixed with the " brewis." It is not possible to get anything more nutritious. The best of wheat (if you get your bread from the right baker) and the best of fish ! What more can be wanted ? For health, strength

and activity it is all that can be desired. These northern fishermen, descendants of old British stock, are kings of the seas; these inland huntsmen are lords of the forests, and at seventy and eighty, and even ninety, years of age will haul a net or set a snare with the best of the younger generation. And when the time comes, the young ones of to-day will become the hale and hearty old men. Health, strength, and activity is the outcome of the use of pure, healthy food in a fine, healthy climate, and this "brewis" is considered an essential by the toilers of the sea along the Labrador coasts.

Plenty of this hard bread-stuff in a linen sack, a case of biscuits, a supply of sugar and tea, and there you have the extent of my stock of provisions taken with me at the start of my journey. My weight a few days before I left London was a matter of one hundred and seventy-two pounds, and after three months' wandering in this cold, desolate, and barren country—for so it was reported to be—often

with only a blanket stretched out upon the ground for a bed, when last I was weighed the scale was turned at a little over two hundred pounds. Not a bad advertisement for "brewis" biscuit, fish, fruit, and the glorious fresh air of lonely Labrador.

CHAPTER IV

THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

THE services of one of the native "liviers" of Sandwich Bay had been engaged. His name was William Heard. These native huntsmen and fishermen, born and living permanently upon the Labrador coast, are known as "liviers," and are always spoken of in that way by the Newfoundlanders. Most of the fishermen were migratory, coming but for a few months in the summer to fish, and then returning when the season was over to their homes in Newfoundland. The only derivation that I can give for this strange name is that those men who live upon the coast all the year round are called "liviers," in contradistinction to those fishermen who did not live permanently in Labrador, but returned to Newfoundland when the summer

fishing season was over. William Heard was a "livier" of Labrador, and a good man, too—one of the coastal fishermen that could be relied upon for work and honesty. His conversational powers were somewhat limited; he was not a talker, but a thoroughly good and honest worker; he was very reticent of speech, and his communications generally consisted in the two expressions of "Yes, sir," and "No, sir."

"Well, William, is everything in the boat?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then there is nothing else that we shall require?"

"No, sir," said William.

So we set sail, and with a spanking breeze were soon gliding swiftly down Favourites Tickle into the Sandwich Sea.

This word "tickle" is a curious one, and out on the East Canadian waters is invariably used for all straits or narrow waterways. What the original meaning or derivation of the word is I am unable to say, but am

inclined to think that it should be pronounced "trickle," and that the common habit of the people in this part of the globe is invariably to drop the second letter when the first letter is a consonant followed by a trill or an aspirate; thus we get the word "tickle," or, as it is more generally pronounced, "dickle." This, I think, is probably the true origin of the word.

It is very curious the way in which languages get twisted. Names and terms become altered, but still retain their original meanings. In some cases, however, the very meanings of the words themselves are altered. At home, what we speak of as a river out in Labrador is spoken of as a stream. What we designate a lake out there is spoken of as a pond. I have seen most glorious waterfalls, roaring, rushing, rumbling spasms of Nature's beauty, with vast possibilities of power, spoken of as "rattles." Straits are called "tickles," rivers are called streams or brooks, lakes are spoken of as ponds, roaring waterfalls are called "rattles," inland seas and

gulfs are called bays. The fisherman of Labrador is "lord of the waters"; he has no dread of the sea; he is born to it and lives upon it. Storms and winds which sometimes howl furiously across our English shores are but babies to the blasts which come screeching in fury from the frozen north, and the Labrador fisherman would laugh at the tempest which would cause us to tremble. His stout fishing-boat can be battened down, and will safely ride out the fiercest of storms when out in the open sea and away from the rock-bound shore.

But there are times when his brave heart quivers, when the winds will scream in fury, and the icebergs totter and break before the blast, and the waters of the ocean will hurl themselves in relentless fury against the rocky coast, and rush screaming up the cliffs, to be hurled back again into the raging sea. Then it is that he will think of his own little log-home on that storm-beaten shore, and his loved ones on the coast with anxious hearts will pray for his safe return. The Labrador

fisherman is a hero, but does not know it. The terrible hardships of his daily life make him look upon things that would startle us with terror as mere passing events. From infancy to old age his life is one constant struggle, and yet they are the kindest people I have ever come across. If they can do you a good turn they will do it, because it is their nature to act kindly, and they will look for no reward. I speak of them as I found them: they are as honest as the day; they have but little, but you are welcome to share what they have. No need for bolts or bars or locks upon their doors; their houses are open, their natures are honest, there is neither prison nor court-house, magistrate nor policeman: they do not require them. And yet there are twenty-five thousand men, women, and children on and off the coast during the summer months, and more than five thousand Eskimos, Mountaineer Indians, and "livier" fishermen and huntsmen dwelling there continually throughout the year.

They may be poor—desperately poor—in

this world's goods; they have none of the luxuries of life—only its bare necessities are theirs—yet they are truthful and trustful, and honest and good. How is this? Well, herein lies the secret of the country being without a court-house and without crime: *there is no intoxicating drink allowed to be sold.* Say what you will about the terrible hardships and poverty of the people, though poor, they are not dishonest; though only possessing the barest necessities, they are not degraded. They are fatalists in their religious beliefs; and how could it be otherwise in a country where doctors and surgeons are almost unknown? I was a total stranger amongst them, but every one of them was a friend—a true, faithful, upright, honest friend—to me.

We got down to the south of the large bay, or inland sea, called Sandwich Bay, towards the evening. A splendid breeze had filled our sails all through the day, but now that night was coming on it seemed to die away. We had only some three more miles to go before we reached the log-house of a

huntsman who was known to live along the banks of the Paradise River. We pulled hard until nearly ten o'clock, for when the wind ceased we had taken to the oars. Reaching the mouth of the river between high shores, the outflowing water of the river was too strong for us to pull against, so we cast our anchor and made fast for the night.

A clear, bright, starlight night, and we were tired and ready for sleep. Getting out our blankets, we just rolled ourselves up and prepared for dreams. How calm and still that night was! The only sound was just the slight lisp of the water as it washed past our anchored boat, and overhead were the silent, shining stars in a cloudless sky.

I was not, however, destined to sleep for some hours yet. Away to the north-east one of the distant hills, outlined on the midnight sky, seemed to be on fire. If not on fire, what was it that caused that great volume of white smoke to rise from it and spread out? As I looked it became brighter and more bright, and then I noticed that through

this seeming smoke the stars could be as plainly seen as if there were no smoke. Suddenly it dawned upon me that this strange appearance was some manifestation of the Northern Lights, the aurora borealis, which as yet I had not seen.

Giving William a vigorous shake to awaken him, I asked whether the brilliancy was a manifestation of the aurora. He just answered " Yes, sir," and then fell asleep again. Scarcely had we finished speaking when a great arm of light seemed to be stretching out from this column of what at first I had thought to be smoke, and stretching away over the northern heavens, it dipped to the west—a great bow of seeming light which was not light, but a shining, undefinable brilliancy. Away behind this brilliancy, away through the clouds of light which were not clouds, behind the gleaming, shimmering curtain thrown across the sky, twinkled the stars.

And from that broad bow of light there shot up into the highest heavens tall pinnacles of

shimmering splendour, and downward from the bow, faintly at first, but soon shining with all the magnificence of the upward pinnacles, there fell streams of light, and the flickering pinnacles and pendants each existed but for a moment, flashing and passing away, and at the same time being replaced by new light streams, so that never the smallest space existed without being filled with streams of pointed light of shimmering radiance. Shimmering, glancing, glimmering, dancing—the whole northern heavens were covered with this radiance, spreading out as a mighty fan and covering the whole of the northern skies. And yet behind all this brilliancy the stars shone as brightly as before. Surely if the aurora had substance, then the stars behind the brilliant curtain would fade from our view. If it were light, and light only, then the light would fade the brightness of the stars: they would become dimmed by the brilliancy. And yet here was a fan of shimmering light spread out over the whole of the northern heavens, a light which did not fade

the stars, and a light which itself gave no light.

Snugly wrapped in my blanket, I lay on my back in the boat and watched the aurora. I tried to reconcile all the modern theories with what I then saw. But this I could not do. Suddenly it dawned upon me that the light was no longer white ; it had become of a golden colour, but even this golden hue was no barrier to the light of the stars behind and beyond it. Myriads of streams of light were stretching in fan-shape from earth to heaven, each stream of golden light existing just for a moment, and then being replaced by new pinnacles of brilliancy. Then, as if the hand of some great unknown power had struck the chords of this silent, heaven-stretched harp, the strings of light bent before the stroke, and as the unseen hand was drawn across the strings of radiance, it seemed to me that I heard the murmur of some distant sound, but surely this was fancy—how could it be otherwise ? Suddenly the streams of light were drawn across the heavens from east to west,

and with the movement of the electric strings of the aurora harp I distinctly heard a noise like the murmuring swish of the wind across the skies. Again, from west to east the lines of light bent and were wafted or drawn across. Again and yet again, and at each bending movement of these radiant streams of light in the heavens I distinctly heard the swish of the wind or of some substance passing through the air.

Here is a problem for scientists to solve. The aurora apparently, as seen by the human eye, was away in the distant northern heavens, stretching right up, far away, above and beyond me. And yet, as the scintillating streams of light were drawn from east to west and west to east, there came the distinct sound of a body rushing through the air.

Now light as a body has no substance, nor could it be subjected to the action of air in motion, nor would the electric current bend by friction with the air. Therefore the Northern Lights must be some electric action on some visible gaseous formation or condition. And

there is this: the light seemed to be far distant, away up, right into, and across the midnight sky of the far north, but the very moment the light was wafted across the heavens there came the distinct "swish, swish," of atmospheric resistance. Sound cannot travel with the same speed as light. If the aurora were really away in the north, then a long time must elapse before any sound of movement could be heard, or more likely the sound would have been too distant and dim to be distinguished, and too long after the occurrence of the electric light to be correctly connected with it. Beyond a doubt, what was to me a glorious vision of unknown power, far and away beyond my reach and ken, was in reality something near, something almost within touch; all the brilliancy was within a stone's-throw of me. The conjoint senses of seeing and hearing were acted upon at one and the same time without a second's difference. There is, therefore, no other conclusion that one can come to but that the glories of the aurora were and are, as seen

by anyone, not merely a vision of beauty shining from the distant north, but some natural electrical disturbance acting upon the gaseous condition in the surrounding atmosphere, and what appears to be a far-away dream of beauty is in reality close to us, within our touch.

Since that time I have often seen the bright spears of light sparkling and shooting up into the heavens, and sometimes, simultaneously with the sparkling, have heard a low crackling sound, very faint, but perfectly distinct. And the crackling noise always stops when the light ceases to sparkle. Of course, while the lights were streaming upwards like ten thousand bright spears, it was impossible to say whether the crackling heard was the noise of the lights seen at the same moment as the sound was heard, or whether it resulted from some previous illumination some little time before. But I noticed that the moment the lights ceased the crackling noise also ceased, and it was therefore evident that the flashing and the crackling were simultaneous.

So that the glorious show, seeming to be in the far distance, was really an optical illusion, or, rather, its seeming to be so far away was unreal, for in reality it was within touch, right in front of us ; in fact, we were in it, it was around us, and it was a light quite independent of either the sun, the moon, or the stars.

Do not think I was mistaken, for there is no doubt whatever that I not only saw, but heard the aurora, and, what is more, so astonished was I at the fact that careful and cautious inquiries were made, and almost everyone I spoke to in Labrador told me of similar conditions of the Northern Lights. They had sometimes heard the swish of the electric streams as the light was seemingly bent across the sky. On my return to St. John's, in conversation with some of the well-to-do merchants who go occasionally to the northern seas to look after their fleets of fishing-boats and their fishing interests, I was informed that they have sometimes heard and seen the swish of the atmosphere and the sweeping light, and have heard the dim sound

of the crackling of the aurora. But none of them have ever considered the fact that if simultaneous in sight and sound, then the origin of sight and sound must be close to us. It remains for the scientists of the day to accept these facts and solve the mysteries of the Lights of Boreas.

It was getting colder, and a wind was blowing; the lights had disappeared from the north, and the sea began to splash and rock the boat; so, stretching a canvas sail over my blanket in case of rain, I was soon fast asleep.

CHAPTER V

TORTURED BY FLIES

THE morning came, and as the sun rose we saw we were in Paradise. Not exactly in paradise, but in a place which was called Paradise. Now this place on the Government maps is marked as a town—that is to say, there is a small dot, and against this mark is placed the name Paradise. Well, the fact is there were three families living there in this imaginary town, and each family was about half a mile away from the other families.

First of all we took our boat up to a small place where good old Father Mesher lived. He was a huntsman, and a hale old man of over eighty winters, and with him lived his good wife. He had been a hunter all his life, and free from the vices of civilization. He

was quietly looking forward to the time when he would be called away to a better life and more glorious home.

We were glad to get out of the boat and go into his little log-cabin, and there he made us as comfortable as he could, and provided us—or, rather, I should say his wife did—with a good meal of home-made bread and molasses, and some nice fresh fish netted that morning in the river. Right glad we were to get into the shelter of his cabin, for the mosquitoes were terrible. I am not exaggerating when I say that the mosquitoes of Labrador are three times the size of the West African pests, and ten times more bloodthirsty. Believe me, before we had been an hour in the open air that morning my face was one stream of blood, my eyes were almost closed with great swellings, and my neck and wrists and hands were like raw flesh. As soon as the sun got warm, then myriads and myriads of little flies, which were called sand-flies, but which were much bigger than the sand-flies of Western Australia,

ARRIVAL ASHORE AFTER THE AURORA.

came in clouds to welcome us. Whether the mosquitoes were worse than the flies or the flies worse than the mosquitoes it is impossible to say; one thing, the flies did not begin their attack until the sun was well up, and they had the virtue of ceasing their operations as soon as the sun went down, whereas the mosquito seemed to be at work night and day.

My man suffered as badly as I did, but I felt certain that there must be some known means of combating this terrible pest, else how could anyone live in the place under such conditions? Good old Robert Mesher soon put us right. He had a big bottle of seal-oil mixed with tar, and this was what he used; so, rubbing this over our heads and hands, the sand-flies and the mosquitoes were kept at bay.

From the first day until the last that I was in the woods and forests of Labrador I was never without a good supply of this precious ointment. Of course, it was no use just putting a little on your head and then rubbing

it in; you had to pour it over your head and let it run down to your neck, dip your hands right into the mixture, and soak the sleeves and the neck of your jersey with this tar and oil. Then only is it possible to go through the forests and along the rivers of Labrador. Everybody in Paradise—that is to say, the members of the three families—had to do the same thing; tar and oil are really a necessity of existence. Seal-oil was used, not because it had any virtue, but because it was an article in use in every house in Labrador. It was the tar that did the work. Without tar, or some substitute, it is impossible for anyone to travel through the interior of Central or Southern Labrador in the summer months.

No one can travel through Labrador unless means are taken to overcome the attacks of millions of mosquitoes and myriads of sand-flies. They will come around you in clouds, and you cannot drive them away. The sand-flies are all out in the bright sunshine; none of them come into the houses; but the mos-

quito will manage to get everywhere and at any time. If you are going along the rivers or out in the marsh-lands, or even passing through the woods, unless precautions are taken you will be eaten alive. Thick hair or thick beard is no protection from the flies, because they will bury themselves right into the hair and go to work with a vengeance.

The sand-flies I have come across in other parts of the world are tiny little specks, and under the microscope are beautifully coloured and wasp-like in structure. What are called sand-flies in Labrador are much bigger and more clumsy, about the twentieth part of an inch in length, and with white, hairy feet. I am told that their feet early in the summer are quite black, but as the summer advances they all gain this peculiarity.

There are other flies, and most of them seem to relish human blood. The stout is a big kind of blue-bottle, and comes straight for you, digs his spear into your flesh, and if you allowed him to remain there would soon fill himself with a good supply of liquid humanity.

But you always know when this fly is about, for if he commences operations on the back of your neck his first dig is sufficiently painful to cause you to at once flatten him out ; if he comes for your face, you see him coming and know what to do.

There is one fly, a beautiful large black dragon-fly, with four long gossamer wings, similar to the fly we sometimes see at home hovering over our lakes and ponds, then suddenly darting away to another spot and hovering with his silvery wings, seeming almost motionless. I had a great respect for these dragon-flies, for I was told that they lived upon the mosquitoes, and when I proved the fact by capturing one of them and finding under his body a kind of bag in which were the bodies of several mosquitoes carefully packed away, I looked upon him as a friend, for this large dragon-fly lives by destroying other flies, capturing them and tucking them away into a bag which Nature has provided him with underneath his body, and then takes them home for supper, I suppose. I had no

idea that these beautiful flies were cannibalistic, and thought them the more beautiful for being so. This silky black dragon-fly, with his large, beautiful wings, was the only kind of fly in Labrador that was not objectionable.

It was a question whether the flies would conquer us and drive us back again to the coast, or whether we should conquer the flies. The flies lost. In a few days my skin seemed to have absorbed enough of the tar to make it unpalatable to the attacks of the enemy. After that once a day was enough to rub on the lotion. Not the least injury was sustained by this application of tar and oil, and after continued use of this seemingly unpleasant preventative, my face and hands were as clear from any evil effects as one could wish. In fact, my complexion and the generally healthy look of the skin was particularly marked on my return to lands where "mosquitoes cease from troubling and the sand-fly is at rest." This remedy against the flies is simple, effective, perfectly safe, and non-injurious.

I have said a lot about flies, but not more than is necessary, for it would be better and far more comfortable to dwell in a land with howling, hungry wolves skulking around you, and stand the chance of being attacked, than face the absolute certainty of ten times ten million hungry flies, not one of them possessing even a shadow of reluctance or dread or fear of biting you. These flies are not troubled with nerves.

Here is a curious fact. A mosquito, three-quarters of an inch in length, settled on my left hand ; with my right hand I took a sharp pair of small scissors, and while the fly was busy at his work quietly and suddenly snipped off the half of his wings and the end of his body. The fly took very little notice, but went on vigorously sucking, and drop by drop my own blood was trickling out through this sucking, stomachless mosquito, and running down my hand. The head and legs seemed so intent on the work in hand that no notice was taken of the absence of half the wings and half the stomach, and the mosquito kept

on sucking. How long this vengeful mechanical process or instinctive animal proclivity was going to last I am unable to tell, but what little soul there was left in him was quickly squeezed out between my finger and thumb.

Our journey up the principal river was full of novel experiences. At the start I was expecting to find the waterway continually getting narrower as it neared the river's source. We rather anticipated that the current would perhaps prove somewhat strong, but did not think that we should have much difficulty in getting along.

Where the Paradise River flows into the small gulf at the south of Sandwich Bay, the mouth of the river is perhaps as wide as the Thames at London Bridge ; but before we had gone five miles the waters had broadened out into a large lake more than a mile across, and from this upward it was nothing but a wide expanse of waters dotted with islands, and the river channels stretching over miles of the country. Here and there the waterway would again be found somewhat contracted—

that is to say, from two hundred to six hundred feet—and in these places the downward rush of the waters was too much to row against. We had to get out on the shore, and, fastening a long rope to our boat, literally drag it up the rapids. And slow work this was, because there was no pathway along the shore, and we had to swing ourselves around the trees, and as often as not step right into the rushing waters, and climb from rock to rock, pulling our boat after us.

In the first ten miles of our journey up the Paradise River we had six of these places to pass through and over. All the rapids, or "rattles," as they are called in Labrador, rushed and boiled and seethed over huge boulders and bare, jutting rocks. The depth of the falls, from the top of the cataracts to the bottom, varied in measurement; taking the various levels, they were from ten to thirty feet. In length some of these roaring, rushing "rattles" were from a quarter to half a mile.

In the spring of the year, when the ice on the river melts, and the vast snows of the

hills pour down to the valleys in rushing streams, the country must be inundated for miles around wherever the land is flat. I am told by the huntsmen that I met with that the depth of the waters then becomes so great that none of the rocks are visible, but that the seething, rushing torrent completely covers all traces of them.

There were marks of last winter's ice breaking the great trunks of trees at a height on the banks of twenty feet above the level of the then flowing waters. It was in the narrower parts of the river where these great depths of water were more strongly emphasized, where the passage of the waters was contracted by the high hills around.

The Paradise River is a string of lakes, some large, some small, and each lake is full of islands. In places where you would think you were pulling up the river between its two banks, these banks were but the shores of islands, and the river flowed on the other side as well, and even then on the other side there were more islands splitting up the waters.

On my journey up the Paradise I had secured the services of one of the huntsmen who worked for the Hudson Bay Company during the winter, snaring the beasts for their skins, and who had on one occasion in winter travelled on foot over the frozen waters of the river, and gone as far as ninety miles towards the source of the Paradise. It is only in winter-time that this journey could be accomplished, because then you would have a frozen roadway right up into the mountains.

The mountaineer Indians journey during the winter-time right up the river to the source, and then down on the other side of the hilly country, and across the great sweeping plains of Eastern Canada, and will get from the mouth of the river right up to St. John's Lake, where the population of Canada has already reached, and will only take ten days to do this seven hundred miles. The only way in which this marvellous speed can be accounted for is the fact that for nearly the whole of the way there would be

an ice-road suitable for dog-sleighs, first of all up the Paradise River, then on the other side of the mountains, down one of the large frozen rivers, most probably the Todmustook or the Mannuagan, then out into the St. Lawrence, and then up the frozen waters of the Saguenay River into Lake St. John.

In winter messengers, mountaineer Indians, have been sent to St. John Lake, and have returned within twenty days. But the Indians are very reticent ; they will not give any information, not because they are obstinate, but because they have no interest in telling you such matters, and they cannot see how you would in any way be benefited by the information.

The patois spoken by these Indians is a mixture of French and English, with not much English and very bad French. Before the fall of Quebec and capture of the country by the English, French was, of course, the language of the country. Since then English has become pretty general in this part of Canada, with the result that the Indians

have picked up the words from both languages, and this combination is influenced by the early and almost forgotten lingo of the primitive savage.

The Indians are good, honest, quiet, and simple-minded. They are nearly all adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, just as the majority of the Eskimos are followers of the Protestant section of Christianity. For the whole of the time I was travelling inland I only came across one complete family of Indians, a lot of eight—men, women, and children.

During the summer, inland Labrador is practically deserted. Most of the mountaineer Indians were single men, remaining at the houses or near the settlements of the huntsmen and trappers. Nearly all the Indians during the summer-time are away on the border settlements of Canada, and they do not return to the mountains of Labrador until the winter ice makes travelling easy and hunting profitable.

The Indians and the Eskimos are distinct

races, and never intermix. Neither has any love for the other ; in fact, but for the white man's restraining influence, it would be war to extermination. The Indian has no love for the Eskimo, and the Eskimo returns the compliment to the Indian. Their natures and habits, their likes and dislikes, are utterly at variance. An Eskimo will capture or kill a polar bear with the greatest ease and without fear, but an Indian has a terrible dread of these great polar bears. An Indian will fearlessly track a big, black forest bear to his den, and there kill him, but to an Eskimo the black bear is a terrible demon of death and destruction. The Indian seems a long-legged, small-bodied man, tall but thin, whereas the Eskimo is just the opposite—short, fat, and podgy.

Thirty miles up the river the waters become more contracted, and flow between high cliffs, and at this place there is no chance of getting any farther up the river by water, as the torrent is too great to go against, and if the boat were to be upset certain destruction would

ensue to its occupants. So our only plan was to leave the boat and travel along the shores, cutting our way through the dense forest of spruce, and making our own pathway. Here there is no existing sign of anyone having been over the ground before. Of course, in winter, when the river is frozen and the forests buried deep in the beautiful blanket of snow, then is the time when the huntsmen scour over the land to examine their traps and collect the spoils.

CHAPTER VI

SEALS AND DOGS

IN all these rivers seals are very plentiful. They are not the same seals that congregate in vast numbers on the icefloes outside in the ocean. The seals which abound in the fresh-water rivers bear their young in June, and have not the same opportunity of congregating together in such vast numbers.

We saw them, as a rule, just one or two together; sometimes they were to be seen congregated on the rocks in the middle of the river, as many as twenty or thirty together, but seldom did we manage to get nearer to them than perhaps a quarter of a mile, and besides that, had we shot any of them, we should in all probability not have been able to obtain them, for when dead the river-seals sink to the bottom of the water, as they are

not so loaded with fat as the ocean community are. They always choose a place where the water is deep and the current is strong, and we had no desire to kill them simply for the sport of shooting them.

Often the young seals, which in a very short time are independent of the mother—a month making them big enough and strong enough to fight their own way in the world—would come up quite close to our boat, and, rearing themselves up in the water, would look with great curiosity at us, then suddenly would dive down, and the next time they came above water would be half a mile away. The older seals are more cautious, and dive beneath the water at the first alarm, coming up again at a very great distance, generally too far for us to observe them.

The huntsmen use the oil obtained from the seals for purposes innumerable in their own homes, and the skins are made into winter moccasins, a splendid soft, warm boot, which will keep the feet dry and warm. The flesh is used to feed their dogs, without which the

Labrador "livier" would be unable to do anything in the winter-time.

I have the authority of Captain George C. Whiteley, of Bonne Esperance, for the following facts concerning the ocean seals, the young of which are slaughtered for the purpose of tanning their skins into leather, and extracting the seal-oil.

Young seals are all called "white-coats"; they are all born between February 25 and March 10. All the three hundred thousand mothers give birth within twelve days of each other, and the young white-coats are wonderfully alike in size and weight. The sealing fleet, leaving St. John's on March 12 in each year, generally brings back over two hundred thousand young harps and seals, which are killed during the five legal weeks. When the young seals get to be about one month old, then their white fur begins to change in colour. Commencing at the head and flippers, they begin to turn dark, and before long the whole body becomes spotted. They then look remarkably pretty as they

play about on the ice. As soon as they lose the white fur they take to the water, and once they begin to "dip" the seal-hunter is unable to catch them, as they will take to the water, and are away in no time. It is therefore the object of the seal-hunter to get the young harp-seals before they are big enough to take to the water.

It sometimes happens, however, that after they have left the ice and taken to the water the weather will become very changed, and the sun shine hot and strong, and it has been known that during April the young seals will get on the ice in large numbers and there fall asleep. They have sometimes been surprised in this way, and ships that have been "jammed" in the ice, and therefore been unable to get to the early seal-killing, sometimes are able to make a very good haul under the exceptional circumstances of the weather having become warm, and the young seals having in consequence again taken to the ice.

As they grow older the different characteristics of the school, or harp family, to

which they belong, begin to appear. Some of them will get black as jet, and these are known as dark angel harps. Then we have the smutty-nose harp, with a black head and nose and a spotted body. There are some half a dozen types of various descriptions, but all of the youthful seals are called harps.

Then, in three years' time, the saddle, a large mark on the fur, begins to appear on the dog-harp, and the three-year-old female harp will have her first young, and from that time they soon reach their full size. The young white-coat is always born close to the "bobbing-hole," a round hole in the ice kept open by the mother-seal, and from which she takes her daily trips in search of fish for food. The mother is much braver than the dog-seal. She will often stay by her young ones' side long after the dog has gone under the ice for safety. Often when the pelts (skins) of the young ones are being taken, the sealers will be surprised by a sudden splash and snort in the ice-hole. The mother-seal, returning, will rear herself up through the hole in the

ice, and with those wonderfully expressive eyes of hers will speak her grief ; she will look on with fear and trembling, and almost seem to weep as she gazes in wonder at the strange beings who are robbing her of her young.

The rapid growth of the young seal is truly marvellous. The rich milk given by the mother-seal no doubt has much to do with this rapid growth. In about a month's time the young white-coat is big enough to leave his mother, and well able to look after himself.

Dogs are used by the huntsmen and by the Eskimos. The Indian also has dogs, but they are much smaller, and he does not use them in the same way in which the Eskimo dogs are used. The dog of the Indian is kept for hunting purposes, while the world-renowned Eskimo dog is a beast of burden. He is a *beast,* too. Try and make him happy by giving him a biscuit : he will take the biscuit and your fingers if he gets the chance.

I love dogs, but the only way you can show your affections to an Eskimo canine is by showing him that you are his master, not by

mere passive persuasion, but with a good strong stick or dog-whip. When out with the dogs, harnessed to a "komatic," the name for the dog-sledges used in Labrador, do not make a slip and trip up in front of the dogs; unless you have the complete mastery they will at once set on to you and kill you.

Mr. Swaffield, the manager of the Hudson Bay Company's branch at Cartwright, has a little boy who was one day playing with some of the dogs; the dogs entered into the fun, and took twenty little pieces, and big pieces, too, out of the little boy's baby skin and flesh. But for the efforts of a noble English retriever dog, which stood by and fought the whole gang of wolf-dogs, that little boy would not have been alive to-day. Just in time he was rescued by some men who saw the affray from the house, and for a long time the little one was between life and death.

At the present time I have a paper before me in which is a letter from that noble man who has devoted his life to the poor, struggling, uncared-for "livier" of Labrador, and the

hard-worked fishermen who spend their summers working off the shores. I refer to that manly missionary, Dr. Grenfell. In this letter he relates the account of a man bringing home all that remained of his mate, a bit of curly hair on a piece of skin, found near the komatic or dog-sleigh, from which the dogs had broken away. Nothing was ever heard about that man. In all probability he had got out of the sleigh to fasten some of the straps on the dogs, perhaps had tripped and fallen; then the end came. And I know, and the doctor knows, not only of one individual case where death has resulted from these dogs, but of many which are constantly occurring.

These Eskimo dogs are half wolf in their nature. The she-dogs are often turned out into the forests so that they may breed with the wolf, and the pups are considered stronger and better for this throw-back in nature. At night-time, in places where the dogs are not shut in, the howling is hideous. They do not bark like an English dog, but yelp and howl like a wolf. Each separate community

of dogs seems to imagine that it has a right to fight with every other community, and all in a moment they will suddenly commence an onslaught on any strange band of dogs, which is only quieted by tremendous blows and the free use of the whip. Show yourself to be the master of the dog, and you can walk in and out amongst them without the slightest fear.

Dr. Grenfell fully recognizes, and has realized by occurring events, that the day of the dog must cease. The Eskimo wolf-hound must be replaced by something more tractable and less dangerous. At great expense, Dr. Grenfell has imported from Lapland a herd of deer. While I now write I understand that two shiploads of these beautiful animals have been landed over on the other side, in charge of Laplanders. Wherever the deer are the dogs will have to be done away with, or they will certainly attack and kill the deer.

The mosses on the mountains of Labrador have been demonstrated to be the true food of the reindeer, and the climate and the

surroundings will be very similar to the conditions in Lapland. I can see no reason why Dr. Grenfell's plans should not be carried out to the letter, and if this is successfully done the whole of Labrador and its people would benefit by the self-sacrificing and noble work of Dr. Grenfell.

It was surprising to see how these dogs can work; they seemed to thoroughly brighten up when put into harness, and would rush along with their tails wagging and themselves looking as if they enjoyed the work thoroughly. I did not see them harnessed to any snow-sleigh, because, of course, at that time of the year there was no snow about, but they were just put in for a run, to show me how they were harnessed and how they would do the work.

Along the northern shores of Newfoundland, during the last winter, I saw many of these dogs, and observed what ready and willing workers they were. However surly a dog might be, and however he went slinking around the place, growling and snarling, or

uniting with the other dogs in one long-drawn-out howl, just get the dog-whip ready and bring out the komatic sleigh, and the whole nature of the dogs is roused: their eyes seem on fire, their tails are curled over their backs and wagging vigorously; the whole team is ready for anything, working or fighting, and each dog knows his correct place in the komatic. Generally a female is made the leader, and some dogs will act as incentives to those that may in any way be lazy by biting the heels of the dog in front of them. As soon as ever you are ready and in the sleigh, away they will tear, and work like slaves while they are at it.

Of course, for our experiments we had chosen an open place where there were but few trees, and we were wonderfully surprised at the strength of the dogs. The ground was too rough to take them far, and a great deal too lumpy to be comfortable to us who were sitting in the sleigh, but over the winter ice the sleighing along the frozen rivers must be delightful.

There are no reins to guide the dogs, so it becomes essential that the leading dog be one that can carry out the shouted instructions of the driver, and the intelligence that is shown by them is marvellous. But all the same they are not to be trusted; at any moment, should a favourable opportunity occur to them, they will turn and rend you. A few Eskimo dogs might be trained to be faithful, but the majority of them are simply the slaves of man, not his friends, and slaves that would have no compunction in eating their master for a meal.

It is not often that a man is killed, but the half-dozen cases which have come to my knowledge make me confident of the advantage of the change of the useful reindeer for these fierce brutes. Dr. Grenfell knows of many instances where death has resulted from the teeth of these fierce dogs.

CHAPTER VII

THE HAMILTON RIVER AND THE MUSK-RAT FALLS

FARTHER north than the Sandwich Bay is the large inlet from the ocean known as Hamilton Inlet. Here, just at the recognized junction of the inland waters and the ocean waters, is situated one of the business houses of the Hudson Bay Company; in fact, the largest and most important post in the whole of the country. It is called Rigolet, and is presided over by Mr. Ernest Swaffield, whose name and reputation for fair dealing and honest treatment is unrivalled amongst the trappers and Indians.

As we turned into the Hamilton Inlet we were surrounded by a strange optical illusion, a mirage over both sea and land. No reliance could be placed on the apparent outline of

the coast, because it appeared strangely duplicated, and the effect was unreal. The icebergs which were floating down the ocean outside the inlet were duplicated by an apparent inverted berg on the top of each, just touching at the highest point and then spreading out into an exact inverted counterpart of the iceberg below, breaking off in a scintillating line, the reflected representation of the ocean. The gentle rise and fall of the waves, and the splashing of the waters along the base of the iceberg, gave a beautiful glinting and shimmering appearance to the sky-reflected image of the water-line.

The coast-line and the islands along the coast were distorted in appearance by an inverted image or mirage alongside the actual land. Thus the summit of a hill was reflected at the base of the hill, and the base at the summit, so that all islands and stretches of land were represented by a mass of brightness with a flat sea-level base and corresponding flat top, and the ends of each mass were slightly concave. As we sailed along and

occupied different relative positions to these strange-shaped brilliant blocks they kept altering in size, sometimes narrower, and sometimes broader, according to the position we occupied. It was impossible to distinguish anything on the land, as everything was lost in the bright shimmering mirage. As we journeyed farther up the inlet, and the coast-lines narrowed down, the hills and islands began to lose this strange phantastic appearance, and after a run of about forty miles we reached the Hudson Bay Company's post at Rigolet.

His Majesty's ship *Fiona* was lying at anchor just off the shore, and by this we knew that Sir William Macgregor, G.C.M.G., C.B., M.D., the Governor of Newfoundland, had arrived. As soon as we landed we found him hard at work with his surveying instruments, for he is an indefatigable worker, and his astronomical deductions gave us the exact latitude and longitude of each place, wherever he was able to take sights and make the necessary calculations.

Dr. Grenfell, C.M.G., in his mission steamer *Strathcona,* had not yet arrived. We afterwards learnt that he had been delayed by his efforts to save the fishing vessels from destruction in the fierce storms that had raged on the seas some two days previous. His own vessel, the *Strathcona,* had narrowly escaped destruction, but he had been enabled to help nearly a hundred fishermen to reach safety, and had given assistance to schooners that would undoubtedly have been wrecked on the rocks. This is but one small instance of the good work that is being done by the doctor.

Sir William Macgregor, on leaving the *Fiona,* took a small fishing schooner belonging to the Hudson Bay Company, and proceeded down Lake Melville, followed later on by Dr. Grenfell in the *Strathcona.*

After passing the narrows the water opens out, and the lake becomes from fifteen to twenty miles across, and about a hundred and twenty miles in length. For the first fifty miles of that distance the lake lay between high and rugged mountains. In many places these

barren heights, which were part of the Mealy Mountains, were considerably over a thousand feet, and very picturesque in their rugged barrenness.

There was no soil for vegetation on the steep sides, and here and there were torrents of water rushing down the hills. In several places these torrents were like long waterfalls. As we looked at them from the lake they appeared to be almost perpendicular as they stretched a thousand feet down the mountain-side. They were anything between ten and fifty feet in width. The power that could be obtained from these rushing waters is almost incalculable.

About fifty miles down the lake the two ranges of mountains deviated, the northern range taking a more northerly direction, and the mountains on the south of the lake dipping more and more to the south. The appearance of the surroundings then changed. The whole of this vast extent of country between the lake and the receding hills was clothed with forest growth—a great silent forest-land of

spruce and fir and pine, the greater bulk of the trees being spruce. And this is Labrador, a country that we have all deemed to be a barren wilderness of rocks, an ice-covered solitude, a desolate, uncared-for country. There are forests enough to supply the world with all the pulp that it may want in the manufacture of paper for centuries to come. At the southern end of Lake Melville the timber stretches away for miles and miles, as far as the eye could reach. What a marvellous change in the appearance of the country !

At the mouth of the Hamilton River, Sir William Macgregor decided to leave his schooner and proceed up the river in a smaller boat. The depth of the waters in the Melville Lake was sufficient for a vessel of any size to be safely brought along, but the mouth of the Hamilton River has many sandbanks, and it would be foolish to enter without first knowing where the deeper channels are to be found.

Leaving the schooner, His Excellency and Mr. Henry Reeve, C.M.G., took a small boat, and, accompanied by Mr. John Rowland,

SIR WM. MACGREGOR, G.C.M.G., C.B., AT THE MUSKRAT RAPIDS.

U.S.A., and myself, proceeded up the river. It was not until the second day that the Musk-Rat Falls were reached. The distance is twenty-eight miles from the lake, about a hundred and forty-eight miles to the south-west of Rigolet, and a hundred and ninety miles from the outer coast-line. We got near the falls at the end of the first day, but it was too dark to proceed any farther.

We knew we were not far, because of the roar of the rushing waters, which sounded like continuous, distant thunder. But it was too dark to see anything, so we went to sleep under the trees. When daylight broke we saw we had another two miles to travel before the falls were reached. After an early breakfast, we took to the boat, and commenced pulling up against the stream. But about a mile below the falls we were again compelled to land, as the current was too strong to pull against.

The average width of the river along which we had already travelled was over a mile, but here in front of the falls it widened out to nearly two miles. The full width of the

waters as they tumbled over the rocks could not have been less than six hundred feet. The waters plunge into the south side of the wide basin, and rush with such mighty force over the precipice, that they rise in a great wave of surging foam almost as high as the falls, then in four more great surging waves, each less mighty than the one preceding, the water spreads itself out into a whirling caldron. Trunks of great trees that had been torn and uprooted by the torrent, and hurled down the stream, were floating around in this great whirlpool of waters. Immediately above this fall there is a chute, or rapid, about three hundred and fifty feet wide for a distance of about three-eighths of a mile, and with a drop in its course of fifteen to twenty feet. Above these rapids is another fall, where the waters, being somewhat more contracted, rush with even greater force than at the lower falls. The two falls, with the chute or rapids in between, make a total drop of sixty feet.

Oh, the grandeur of the mighty rushing river, where nothing can be heard but the

thunder of its waters ; where the spray of the lashing torrent rises in a mist, and is crowned by a silent rainbow! One looks and wonders at its majestic beauty, and listens entranced to the thundering melody of music. No other sound can reach the ear. The wild bird flying overhead may be calling to his mate, but no note of his call will reach you. The forest trees may be bending and breaking before the fiercest storm, but the crash of the broken branches or the fall of the stately timbers is silent before the deafening roar of the rushing torrent.

That His Excellency the Governor at all times has the best interests of the colony at heart is evidenced by the work he did in Northern Labrador. Not only was he scientifically employed with his theodolite for the good of the colony, but he made himself " one of the crowd," and he knew well what it was to pull hard at the oar, and take his share of the joys and sorrows of an open-air sleeping-place. During the long row on the Hamilton River His Excellency took his turn at the

rowlocks or the rudder, and at night-time slept under the shelter of the trees, just the same as the rest of the explorers.

We remained for two nights camped out near the falls. The day was occupied in clambering over the rocks and examining the wild beauties of the place. We came across a very strange stone formation in the waters of the river, samples of which we collected, so as to have Sir William Macgregor's opinion on their origin, he being an advanced geological scientist, and the expression of his opinion was invariably on a thoroughly scientific basis. There were thousands of hard clay rings and curious globular-shaped and semi-rounded pebbles of hard clay, which seemed unnatural, and made us think that we had come across the handiwork of some pre-historic race. He had obtained similar samples of this strange deposit on an island just below the falls, and attributed the strange shapes and conditions of these clay stones to the peculiar action of the eddying waters at the base of the falls.

When night came on we made a huge bonfire and piled up the green logs so as to have plenty of smoke in which to hide ourselves from the multitude of mosquitoes. It was Hobson's choice : either we must be smoked alive or eaten alive, and we decided that the former was preferable. While we roasted and smoked ourselves, His Excellency, with long gloves on his hands and netting over his head, until long past midnight, was out in the open with his astronomical instruments, taking observations and making scientific calculations. He is a very hard worker and true scientist, and our humblest apologies are due to him for our having preferred the sheltered position near our midnight bonfire instead of being out working and assisting him in his nocturnal labours, exposed to the mosquitoes.

The morning came for us to return to the mouth of the river. Our big rowing boat had to be very carefully packed, because of the valuable scientific instruments that the Governor had brought with him. It so happened that for the whole distance of twenty-eight

miles the rain came down in torrents, but as we had with us our oilskin overalls, we were quite contented and comfortable. As we glided down the river we saw many seals resting themselves on the sandbanks. In one place there were quite thirty of them slumbering peacefully together. When we got too near, they would wake up and instantly glide off the bank into the water. Then some of them would rise to the surface again, and, rearing themselves up on their "flippers," would gaze at us in astonishment and curiosity. No doubt they wondered what sort of creatures we were. We had our firearms, but decided not to kill them, as it would be useless slaughter.

As we had the current of the river with us on this return journey, we finished the distance of twenty-eight miles long before the evening, and left Sir William Macgregor on his schooner, which had been lying at anchor waiting for his return.

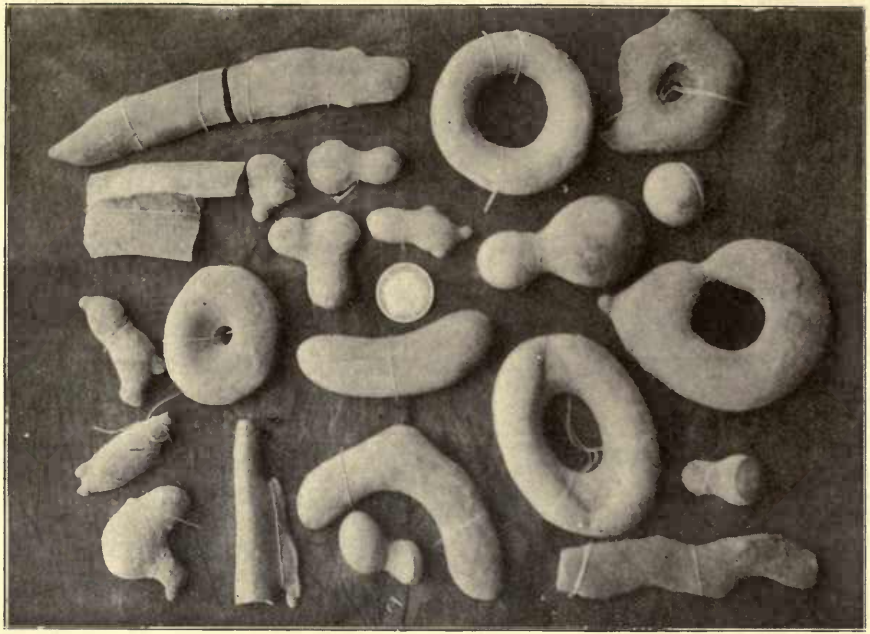
Dr. Grenfell, in the *Strathcona,* which had been delayed by tempestuous weather in the

seas outside, managed to meet the Governor at the mouth of the Hamilton River, and remained but a short time. He steamed away to Nain, a Moravian Mission station, some two hundred miles distant, and His Excellency the Governor decided he would meet the doctor there at a later date.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "GRAND FALLS" AND FORESTS

IT was my intention to make my way up the river to the Grand Falls, some two hundred miles farther to the west. In this I failed, but got all the necessary information concerning this mightier than Niagara rush of waters from some of the hunters who had seen it, and I feel certain that the information given me is correct in every particular. It would have taken me at least four weeks to get up to the Falls. There are many places where the canoe would have to be "portaged" or carried. At the Musk-Rat Falls, for instance, there would be a distance of two miles to carry your boat and provisions and belongings before getting into sufficiently calm waters above the Falls. Some thirty miles farther up the river, at the Porcupine Rapids, there is



STRANGE-SHAPED STONES.
(A shilling in the centre to show the size.)

See page 92.

a long stretch of country which would have to be laboriously undertaken on foot, carrying your boat and everything else with you. Plenty of these difficult stretches of water, and an impossible distance of eighteen miles below the Falls, made me decide not to make the attempt personally to see this mighty cataract.

The descent of the water in a distance of about eighteen miles is over eight hundred feet. At one place there is a direct fall of over three hundred feet. The boom of the thunder of the falling cataract can be heard twenty miles away, and the trembling of the solid earth can be detected at this distance, so great is the impact of the falling waters on the hard rock.

In the country around the mouth of the Hamilton River and the southern part of Lake Melville I spent nearly four weeks, and had a most pleasant and enjoyable time. The air was clear and balmy, and the sun's rays were warm and invigorating, equal to any climate in the world.

On all sides, as far away as the eye could reach, were forests of spruce and beech and fir, each kind of tree with its own shade of green, for the summer was advancing, and the autumnal glory of vegetation was evident. The undergrowth was still more strongly varied in colouring. The green lichen and curious white moss, patches of undergrowth in bright red, or deep gold or purple tints, made a most beautiful mixture of shades.

Here around me was a country with all the necessary growth of timber for the axeman's hand. A very remarkable feature about the growth of the trees, although, perhaps, my African experience may have somewhat prejudiced me, is the almost total absence of rotten and decayed timber; the growth of the trees is so free from fault and so fresh-looking.

The timber which forms by far the greater bulk of these forest growths is spruce, and perhaps one-tenth of the growth is fir and birch. There were two kinds of spruce—the white and the black—though to an ordinary

individual white and black look the same. The difference in the two kinds of trees lies in the softness of the timber, the black spruce, which a long way outnumbers the white variety, being the best and most suitable for pulp manufacturing.

But this pulp-making industry is not the only one that could at once be undertaken. There is fruit enough on the hills around the Paradise, Eagle, and White Bear Rivers to supply all the preserve factories in the British Islands. Whether the season had been an extraordinary one for the growth of these fruits, or whether each and every year there is the same prolific abundance, is only a matter that we can guess at. But if the supply of wild berries were to be but one-fourth of the abundance that literally covered the whole area of the country, even then there would be sufficient fruit to supply large commercial undertakings. This fruit grows perfectly wild; no cultivation is required; the only thing is to gather the fruit and convey it to the factory. Most of this fruit will be quite

unknown in the English market, although there were some places where I found red and white currants growing in abundance; but this was only just in places.

Nearly all the fruit which grows in Labrador is, strange to say, right on the ground, like strawberry-plants in England. First and foremost is what is called the blackberry, a fruit very much like the black currant in appearance. It was growing in abundance everywhere, on hill and in valley, by the sides of rivers and away up in the mountains, in the forests, on the open ground, on all the islands in the rivers, and away up to the tops of the hills. Whenever we wanted a meal all we had to do was to sit down, take out our biscuit or hard bread, and, without moving from our seats, it was possible to pick around us far more fruit than we could by any chance eat.

The only way I can tell you of the wonderful supply of this blackberry is by narrating the experiments we made by way of testing our individual capacity for eating the fruit. We

cut holes in some pieces of paper, making them three inches square; we placed these pieces of paper on the ground over the fruit, and then counted the berries as we picked them from this exposed square. In six trials we picked, by way of an amusing experiment, in six different places, all the fruit that was to be obtained from the small space of three inches square. The result was that we obtained from the richest of these places eighty-two berries, and from the poorest square we had fifty-five blackberries, and the average of the six places was sixty-eight berries. Now, here is a sum: If there were sixty-eight berries in a space of three inches square, how many berries would there be in a square mile?

And then, after making that calculation, decide how many thousand square miles there are covered with these berries, and see how many tens of thousands of tons of fruit are waiting to be picked. Blackberries were everywhere, unpicked by hand, untrodden by

foot ; the whole country seemed covered with them.

Then there was a fruit known as the bake-apple, which grew a few inches from the ground, a very sweet fruit with a delightful taste, and very much like a raspberry in its appearance. The only difference in the picking of this fruit and the picking of the blackberry was that you can sit down on the ground to gather and eat the latter, but the bake-apple grows only in places where the ground is damp and boggy, and if you were to sit down there you would require trousers made of the same material as your boots. These bake-apples have a tint very much like the colouring of a yellow raspberry, but some of them were a bright red in districts where the ground was not excessively damp.

There was also the partridge berry—a red berry very much like the cranberry ; and there was the hurtz berry, of a blue colour going off into purple. Then there was another berry which was not so plentiful as the foregoing ;

it was a beautiful little fruit about the size of a large pea, but creamy in colour, like an egg, and very much of the same shape. Like all the others, it grew along the ground, and the plant is locally known as the maiden-hair. This very same berry I have gathered in some of the inland districts of Newfoundland, where it is much prized and spoken of there as the capillaire berry.

Millions and millions of berries! They were all perfect in condition, and not one of them was touched by any insect life. In fact, it seems to me that very little insect life is to be seen anywhere along the ground, the hard Laurentian formation making the ground far too hard for them to exist upon.

The black bear grows fat and lazy, and eats nothing but these berries for the whole of the later summer, and then retires to his winter quarters and sleeps all through the cold weather. Nature has placed these fruits there with an object in view. They are flesh-

forming and fattening, and they are fruits that can withstand almost any weather such as they are exposed to. Frosty nights make but little difference to them, and they stand on the low-growing plants until the snows of winter fall and bury them in, protecting the plants under the thick white winter blanket.

There is a strange fact in connection with nearly all these fruits, and that is that they can so easily be kept, perfect and in good condition, right through the winter as well as the summer months. When collected they are placed in bottles or barrels or kegs, and then just simply covered over with water. In closed casks the fruit can be carried anywhere and any distance.

When the fishermen return from their summer's work on the coast, and make for their homes in Newfoundland, it is a common thing for them to take to their wives and families bottles of fruit of various descriptions. The fruit which seemed to be most in favour, being more of a delicacy, was the bake-apple.

These delicious, soft, raspberry-like fruits were simply placed in bottles of any description, filled up with fresh water, and then corked down. They were carried out without any fear of their being spoilt, and were perhaps for weeks on their journey home, and then would stand the whole winter through in the kitchens of the good housewives. So it is evident that the fruit will keep either out in the icy cold or in the snug warm kitchen of the fisherman.

Labrador is a field of fruit. There are thousands of square miles ready every year to be picked. The fruit all comes to perfection without the aid of man, and will keep so much better than other fruits from other climes and in other conditions. Just the necessary money is wanted to erect a factory suitable for the making of preserves. Timber for the buildings can be had for the labour of cutting it down ; furnaces could be kept going almost free of cost from the surrounding forests ; no rent, no taxes. What more could be wanted to make the undertaking a glorious success ?

Now, looking at the fact that this proposed preserve manufacturing would only occupy the employees for some few months in the year, there is yet another undertaking which, if properly carried out, is bound to be most advantageous. There are millions of fish every year simply wasted as manure on the ground.

In Newfoundland I have seen large barrels holding perhaps a hundred gallons filled with these small fish, the whole lot being sold for twenty cents. Ten thousand fish for tenpence ! These fish are known as caplin ; they are beautiful little creatures, very much like sardines in colour and in size, only the colour is perhaps more silvery in the caplin. When eaten fresh they are as sweet a fish as one could wish for. Sometimes the people will dry them and salt them, and keep them all through the winter, but nine hundred and ninety-nine out of the thousand of these delicious little morsels which are captured are spread on the ground and used simply as manure.

In the north of Newfoundland every potato that is grown has probably had a dozen or more of these little fish rotted at the surface of the ground. When beautiful, delicious little mouthfuls like these caplins can be so easily caught, and in such vast numbers, surely, with a little discretion and care, a means might be devised of tinning the fish, and turning what is now an article that is practically wasted into an article of luxury.

For a stretch of eight miles along the coast of Labrador, near Cape Porcupine, I have seen tens of thousands of these fish all lying high and dry rotting in the sun. It is difficult to say for what reason they throw themselves upon the shore. The fishermen say that they come for the purpose of spawning, and that they are so multitudinously thick together that they are pushed out of the water by the dense crowd behind them. But I am inclined to think that the reason they get stranded is, when they are pursued by armies of codfish these little caplin swarm into the shallower water for

safety, and many of them get left on the beach ; they come in such vast numbers that on the first inrush those which are in the front get driven ashore, and are there left high and dry.

The way in which they are caught was something new to me. The nets were circular, about ten feet in circumference ; all round the edges were small lead weights, and from the edges were numbers of cords all joining together in the centre, and passing as one cord through the centre of the net. The fisherman would stand up in his boat, take one edge of the net in his mouth and hold it tight, while he threw out the net so that it fell flat on the water. The weighted edges then sank it down into the water—only a few feet to the bottom, for, of course, all this is done close in to the shore—and beneath the thrown net are all the fish that were within the circle of its reach. Then, by pulling the central cord, the whole of the edges of the net would be drawn together, and the whole net drawn in by the plaited rope which passed through the

centre of the net, and to which the ropes from the edges were attached. Every haul would bring from one to twenty gallons of fish, so that in an hour or so the boat would be too full to hold any more.

CHAPTER IX

ESKIMOS, INDIANS, AND "LIVIERS"

THE first time I came in contact with the Eskimos was while travelling up the coast north of Hamilton Inlet, but it was difficult to get actually into close touch with them, and meet them alone, without their being in any way in contact with the Newfoundland fishermen that were about. But when I left Horse Harbour my only companions were an Eskimo and his two sons.

These three had agreed to accompany me on an expedition down one of the rivers emptying itself a little farther—about thirty miles—to the north. This man's name was Tooktosina, and he and both his boys were as honest and uprightly simple as anyone could wish. They were willing to go anywhere, to do anything I wanted them to do, and they

did their work, slowly, perhaps, but to the best of their ability, and they worked well and honestly. What better character could I give them? They were going to accompany me up one of the northern rivers, and back into the hinterland, and we were to do the journey in the Eskimo's own sailing boat.

When the four of us started, the sea was pleasant enough, the wind was in our favour, and we got along famously. But after some six hours' sailing there was a sudden change in the wind, and we beat about trying to make headway. The sea was getting rougher, and every now and again would wash right over us, and it took the two boys all their time to bail out the boat. Tooktosina was skilfully steering the boat, and I had to look after the sails, while the two boys were kept constantly employed in bailing out. Unfortunately, the boat was far too cranky to permit of our taking any undue liberties with it, for it was leaking freely, and I decided that we were running too great a risk. It was too much like tempting Providence, as the sea was

rising rapidly, and the foam from the waves was blown over us until we were wet to the skin. I therefore, before night came on, decided to run for the shore, and wait for a change in the wind and finer weather.

While talking with this Eskimo, the perfect innocence and total absence of all guile was remarkable. He was not very well able to express himself in English, but had sufficient knowledge of the language to make himself understood, and to grasp the meaning of what was said to him. His two boys were unable to speak or understand anything else but their native tongue. And what a strange tongue that is!

When travelling between Hawkes Harbour and Rigolet I met with a very intelligent woman, who had been educated at the Moravian Mission School. She was fat and forty, as full of fun as might be wished, but there was no apparent wickedness in her. She knew nothing of the world outside her own Labrador but what she had heard of or read about in books. She could read both in

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MOUNTAINEER INDIANS AT NORTH-WEST RIVER.

Eskimo and in English, and showed me a book, laughingly asking me to try and read it. But she was taking a rise out of me, for the title of the book was "Atuagagldliutit Nalinginarmik Tusaruminasassumik Univkat." I did not attempt to read it, but just copied down the title in my diary, and then asked her what it was all about. She said it was a "Book of Interesting Subjects," and was what she had learnt to read at the Mission School.

These Eskimos are very curious people. They are very peaceful and law-abiding; seldom is there any trouble amongst them. In their settlements they work with and for the Moravian missionaries, who seem to have complete control, not only spiritually, but physically and temporally, over them. They are by nature a musical people, and have a natural ear for the beauty of sound, and it is astonishing how well they can master some of our popular music, and how remarkably they progress under the tuition of the missionary fathers.

These Moravians seem to think that all

missions should be made to pay for themselves by trading and barter, and so forth, all conducted under the auspices of the missionaries themselves. They therefore purchase from the people the skins and fish and oil that they may individually or collectively gather together, and pay them in return, not with cash, but with flour and other provisions and clothing. This means that the Moravian Mission represents a great trading body, and the profits resulting out of the trading is supposed to go to the starting of more missions wherever wanted.

The various places where these missions have been established in Labrador are at Hopedale, Nain, and some half a dozen places along the coast, and all these places are trading as well as mission stations. Looking at the matter from an outsider's point of view, I can only say that these missions must be of an advantage to the Eskimos, so long as they retain their simple habits and honest ways, which habits and ways are largely owing to the influence of the Mission. Where the

difficulty really presents itself is the fact that trading is done, and sufficient interest is held over the people to compel them to do all their trading with the missionaries. Money as a means of exchange in the community is useless; the laws of supply and demand are influenced by a social working of matters and means which is apt to cause ill-feeling to arise without the circle. But as far as these civilized Eskimo communities are concerned, of one thing I am certain: within sixty years from the present time they will be practically extinct. The present Eskimo death-rate so far outnumbers the births.

The Mountaineer Indians, who inhabit the interior of the country, are few in number, but what there are of them have been thoroughly broken in to the ways of civilization by the controlling influence of the Roman Catholic Church. They generally get away to parts of the country near the Canadian settlement, and by their association with the white people are all thoroughly docile. As French was the original language of the

settlers in the Quebec part of Canada, and the language still holds on, and is very much in evidence, the language of these few remaining mountaineers is very "Frenchy" in tone. The French-speaking priests of the Romish Church, who go amongst these Indians and speak to them in French, have so influenced their intonation that it becomes almost an impossibility to understand the patois without possessing a previous knowledge of conversational French.

All the inhabitants of Labrador are essentially of a religious turn of mind. However ignorant the Mountaineer Indian may be, they are held firmly by the priests of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Indians look up to the priests with fear, and yet with love and respect. The Eskimos are all of the Lutheran form of belief, and strictly follow the teachings of the Moravian missionaries.

The fishermen and huntsmen and their families, the "liviers" of Labrador, even though they may live far away from any church influence, are remarkable for their

simple faith and their honest lives. The various small communities along the coast-line are each provided with, or rather have themselves erected, a suitable small house or room which they use as a church, and on Sunday it is quite out of order to follow any occupation, however poor or in want the family may be.

The "liviers" of Labrador are poor—very poor; the lives they lead are hard—desperately hard; they know nothing about the comforts that our poor in England know of, and yet they are the kindest and best-dispositioned people in the world. Well, at any rate, I found them so.

For how long this natural kindly feeling will remain when the mining communities start work, and when the pulp-timber factories are hard at it, and when the fruit and fish preserving industries are in full swing—how long they will retain their goodness, and not be robbed of their kindly disposition—is a question which should make the speculating communities consider whether it is not better

to work recognizing the simple good-nature of the people rather than take advantage of their want of knowledge and unworldliness, and grind them down to the lowest figure. Leaders of commercial speculation are as much missionaries of civilization and advancement in backward and unknown countries as the missionary, who carries only a doctrine. The one is a missionary of work ; the other is a missionary of faith.

CHAPTER X

BEAVERS AND BEARS

In the tent of a Mountaineer Indian that I came across when travelling inland some distance to the south of Hamilton Inlet, I saw more skins of animals that had been killed than at any other time or place—wolverins, lynxes, martens, beavers, bears—as well as of wild birds that frequented the neighbourhood. The furs of the wolverin and the lynx were not so valuable as the furs of the black marten, which is an animal about the size of a large cat, with a big bushy tail. He had a larger supply of beaver-skins than anything else, although they are such shy creatures, and difficult to get near enough to kill.

It so happened that we came across a community of these interesting beavers when out

travelling, and the Indian who was with us secured four of them for himself. We were making our way through the woods, along the banks of a very rapid rivulet, when we suddenly opened out into a lake or pond. The stream we were going up was tolerably swift, but the waters of the lake were seemingly stationary, as it was of large extent, some half a mile across, reaching on all sides in amongst the trees. The night before it had been raining very hard, and the lake was evidently over-full, and the pressure of the surplus water had broken away what seemed to me to have been a natural dam at the outflow of the lake into the stream.

The Indian looked at the broken barrier, and quickly pointed out to me that it was an artificial accumulation built up by the beavers, and he wanted to return to his "mitchwamp" —the name they give their primitive tents—for, of course, they do not live in "stick-houses," like the white man does. He wanted to fetch his traps, and set them in this

INDIAN "MITCHWAMP."

broken dam, as he said there were beavers somewhere about, and showed me where they had evidently been busy trying to repair the broken breakwater. They had seen us before we had got right up to the lake, and had quietly slunk away into concealment.

The dam had evidently been constructed by the beavers for the purpose of keeping a good supply of water in the pond, so as to cover the entrance to their house with a good depth of water. The rains had been unusually heavy the night before, and it was evident that they had miscalculated the strength of their dam building. It was really wonderful, the way in which the logs—big ones that it would be difficult to lift—and branches of trees, and sediment from the bottom of the lake, had been built and woven together.

To me at first sight it looked as if the logs and branches had been the natural accumulation of the running waters for years past, but the mountaineer soon showed me how the logs

had all been skilfully cut or nibbled by the beavers' teeth, and then laid in place so as to keep the waters back in the pond, and prevent them getting too low, and thereby uncovering the tunnel into their beaver-house.

As soon as my man had secured his traps, he placed them in the water just below its surface, without any bait, and close up to the broken timbers. They were just ordinary fox-traps, or gins, that were used.

We then continued our journey up the hill, as we were out trying to find the run of a quartz reef that was visible down at the banks of the river, but which we found very difficult to trace going through the marshy ground along the stream, and we wanted to try our luck on the other side of the hill just beyond the lake. This took us until close on night-fall, and, on returning, we went the way of the stream, so as to see whether our traps had been successful. Sure enough, both of the traps were sprung, and two large beavers had

been caught. One was dead, but the other had only just been captured by his foreleg, and was struggling hard to get away. Poor things! They had fallen a prey to their desire to repair the damage to their outlying timber-built dam which had been injured by the storm. The mountaineer said we should catch no more beavers there, as they would all desert the place now that two of them were dead; but if I would come up with him in the morning we should probably be able to find where the beaver community lived, and so could try and catch some more of them in their homes.

Early the next morning we set out on our hunt. The pond was very low, as the water had been running away all through the night, and the breakage had become wider, and seemingly irreparable. After about an hour's search, we came across a place towards the top of the pond, where we discovered the home of the beavers. The water was very low, and the entrance to the beaver-house was by a tunnel from under the water,

but the pond was not deep enough to hide it from us.

The house had been constructed on the side of the lake, and was a wonderful construction of logs and twisted sticks and hard plastered mud, all solidly packed together as if with cement. Outside the house, on the top of the mound, everything looked just like the surrounding country ; it was a rough and irregularly raised place, a kind of mound, which in the course of time had been completely grown over by vegetation, and looked just like all the rest of the surrounding country. Anyone who did not know the habits of the beavers would pass by without any thought of its being a beaver-house. When we came to breaking open the solid mass of cemented timbers, I was astonished to find that, in the first place, the house had not been built as a house, but as a solid mass, and the cemented logs had then been scooped out—that is, eaten and gnawed away with the beavers' teeth—and the beavers must have first of all made the channel under the water before they

could reach the mound to scoop out their residing-places.

The beavers commenced by a burrowed channel passing from under the water in the lake, and then would nibble and nibble until they had scooped out a room sufficiently large for their nesting purposes. As the dust and gnawed timber accumulated, it would be passed away down by the under-water channel into the lake, and would there be borne off by the current, thus leaving no local trace of these busy workers.

It was no easy matter to break open this solid mass of cemented timbers ; it was some hours before we managed to break through, and then we got two small beavers as the result of our work, and these the Indian added to his store down in his " mitchwamp."

I was somewhat under the impression that the Newfoundland Government had legally forbidden the capture of beavers, as it was a close time, but was uncertain whether or not the regulation applied to Labrador. If there were any law, the Indian knew nothing about

it, and was perfectly innocent of any offence. If I had been certain that there were no legal difficulties, it would not have taken me long to arrange matters so that I might have had those skins as a memento of the sport. The protection of the beaver is a necessity; it gives them plenty of security during their breeding time; and the close time should certainly apply to Labrador as well as to Newfoundland.

There was another rather more exciting adventure I had when out with an Indian, prospecting along the range known as the Mealy Mountains. We were sitting down after having just finished our midday meal—some biscuits, "brewis," and fresh-picked fruit. Our fire had gone out (and, by the way, it is very essential that all travellers in this land should see that all their open-air fires are properly extinguished, or they may set the forests in a blaze), and Pierre, the Indian, was just packing away our kettle and cups and other commodities, so that we might continue our tramp up the mountains. All at

once a black object was seen a little farther up the hill.

"Hush!" said Pierre. "It is a bear."

We quietly watched, and prepared to meet the animal, which, strange to say, had not yet noticed us. Pierre took his long knife, and I saw that my revolver was ready, and away we went, crawling slowly along the ground up the hill after the bear. It was not long before he saw us, and made off in a moment. We sprang to our feet, and ran after him as quickly as we could.

I must confess that I did not half like this running after a bear, and a big one, too, but Pierre was so eager that I simply followed him and trusted to Providence. After about five minutes' chase, the Indian stopped before a large rocky boulder, and pointed to a hole down by the side of it, saying that the bear had taken to earth, and was safely inside his den. Pierre asked me to stand in front of the entrance to his underground cave, which I did, with my revolver ready cocked. Now, as a matter of fact, I was a bit nervous stand-

ing in that position, as this was my first bear, and Pierre had gone off some little distance, and was cutting down a young fir-tree, from which he stripped the branches, and then dragged the long stump up to the hole that I was so intently watching.

He placed one end of this long fir-stump between a tree that was growing close up to the rock and the rock itself, the timber thus laying at full length in front of the hole leading down into the cave or excavation. Pierre then went down on his hands and knees, and put his head inside the cave. When he had finished making his examination, he got up and told me that the cave went about six feet to the west, and that Mr. Bruin was safely crouching at the far end of the excavation. The result was that I had to continue standing on guard while the Indian cut another stake about six feet in length, and then sharpened up one of the ends to a good point. Then, taking this stake, he commenced to bore a hole just over the spot where he judged the bear to be, and as the

earth was simply decayed vegetable matter, the undertaking was a comparatively easy one. With a large stone he then commenced beating down the stake so as to drive it into the animal crouching below, and thus compel it to come out.

Bang ! bang ! went the stone ; deeper and deeper went the stake, and suddenly a low growl came from underground. In a moment Pierre seized the end of the long fir-tree which he had placed across the entrance—and just in time. The bear had decided to clear out, and would have been away in no time, but just as his head came well out of the hole Pierre moved the piece of fir timber by catching hold of the end, and jammed the bear across the neck tight up against the rock behind.

" Don't shoot him !" yelled Pierre. " Take my knife and stick him." He was evidently thinking of the skin, which he wanted perfect and without any bullet-holes.

Well, to tell the truth, I did not like this sticking business. There was Pierre pressing

with all his might against the loose end of the fir log ; the other end was well fixed between a standing tree and the face of the rock, and Mr. Bruin had the felled tree right up against his neck, pressing him close up into the wall of rock behind. His paws were scratching and tearing into splinters the strangling piece of timber, and not only did the claws rip the bark, but tore savagely right into the wood. All the time the long sharp knife was lying ready on the ground, but the fact was I did not fancy the job.

" Be quick !" shouted Pierre ; but I thought the best thing to do was to change places with him and let him do the " sticking " part of the programme instead of me. I felt sure he would put on the finishing touch in a sportsmanlike manner. So we exchanged places, and I took hold of the long piece of timber, and found that it was as much as I could do to hold it back against the rock. There was plenty of leverage, but the strength of the bear was enormous ; he had got his claws well into the timber, and was trying with all

his might to push it off from his neck. It was only for a minute, however, that I had to hold on, because Pierre, in a rapid and artistic manner, soon finished the struggles of the poor brute.

Afterwards we measured him. He was rather over two and a half feet in height, and had a length of about three feet six inches—a real good specimen of the Labrador black bear. There is no doubt but that when the skin was taken to the market at Quebec at the end of the season, the Indian would receive a good price for this beautiful black specimen.

The fact is that all these Labrador bears are far more afraid of man than man should be of them. They are perfectly harmless, and live on the berries that grow about in such wonderful abundance, and will keep as far away from their two-legged enemies as they possibly can. Such a thing as a bear attacking a man and making mincemeat of him is generally a fable. But travellers like to please the imaginations of their stay-at-home

friends, who will listen breathlessly to their stirring adventures. It is with bears as with other wild animals: if they had their choice, your room to your company would be much preferred.

CHAPTER XI

ON THE TRAIL OF THE MAMMOTH

NOT the least interesting feature in my Labrador travels was the information I gathered from the few huntsmen and Indians that I met with from time to time. Often of a night we sat out in the open, with a great log fire blazing merrily, and sometimes, when we were near the camping-place or home of our hunting friends, we would take shelter in their roughly-built little houses, with a big, blazing timber fire, a kettle merrily singing, and a big pot of stew simmering away. While the supper was preparing we would smoke our pipes, take off our boots, and toast our feet, and not much would be said. But when the stew was ready we soon got more communicative, and would sit and chat far into the night.

And we had plenty to talk about ; for was I not in a country which had always appealed to me as a barren land of dreary and inhospitable hills ? Yes, but these false ideas had been dispelled. Around me were dense forests, not the giant trees of more southern countries, it is true, but spruce and fir and birch—good, serviceable trees, from twelve to seventy inches in circumference, large enough for all modern purposes. Strange wild-flowers grouped themselves over the ground, and immense beds of low-lying wild fruit were to be found everywhere where anything could grow. The interior of Labrador was a totally distinct country from the wild hills and fierce-looking cliffs along the coast, and the climate was much warmer when we were right out of the influence of the cold winds direct from the ocean.

Many a tale the hunters told of their experiences in this silent land, and I was particularly interested in listening to them. I don't say that the details as given of the following remarkable tale are true, but this I will say :

that the people who told me the circumstances thoroughly believed it was true, and told me what they believed they had seen and heard.

Joe Mesher is the name of the huntsman who first found the trail of some mysterious animal. The footmarks were long, and had two toes. The creature must have been very heavy, because the marks were sunk into the ground deeply in places where the footmarks of a man would hardly leave any trace. The shape of the mark was long and two-toed, and the animal seemed to be a biped, and the length of the step was about four feet. It was near the River Traverspine, a tributary of the Grand River, where first the footmarks were seen, and right along the side of the river, which was low at the time, the prints could be traced for miles. There were very few men about, but every one who was there went and had a look at these footprints, and they got very much disturbed in mind about this strange trail.

The next to be heard of this strange visitor

was one night when the huntsman's wife was alone. She described the noise as a "rumbling sort of whistling noise like breathing," and now and again branches of trees were snapped. Women have plenty of pluck out in Labrador, and she quietly got down her husband's best gun from the rack and loaded it up. Outside the house she found all the dogs shivering with fear. It was too dark to see anything distinctly, so she let fly a chance shot amongst the trees. Immediately there was a crashing of branches, and the sound of some huge monster tearing hotly away. The dogs, that would have tackled the biggest bear with the greatest zest, were all shivering with fear and thoroughly cowed, and slunk whining round the house. She, like a sensible woman, went back into the house and shut the door, and waited for her husband's return.

On the afternoon of the following day her husband returned, and with him was a mate from down the river, to whom he had been to fetch a barrel of flour, as his provisions were

running short. Together they went into the woods, accompanied by the wife. They found that some enormous creatures had been there, and traced the footprints quite down to the river. All the way down the branches of the trees were snapped and broken off. The footprints went straight into the river, and, of course, all trace was there lost. There had evidently been two creatures this time, because the footmarks showed that, besides the large imprints, which were very deep wherever the soil was loose, there were small but similar marks alongside, but with a stretch of only about three feet between each step. It looked as if a mother and her young one had been there.

The above is the sum and substance of what I was told, and more than a dozen men declare that when out hunting they have seen similar footprints. I just tell the story as it was told to me. Of one thing I am certain : there was no desire to gain publicity, because that is the last thing in the thoughts of these men, who know nothing of the world outside. Nor

did they want to tell lies to deceive me. They simply told me what they believed to be the case, only they did not like to say what really was in their minds, and that was that Monsieur le Diable had been taking his strolls around that quarter of the globe.

It seems to me that possibly before very long the mystery will be solved by the finding of a few of the great saurians which we consider to be prehistoric—some survivors of that age when huge monsters were on the earth. There is no absolute reason why they should have died out altogether. What makes the matter very difficult to accept is the fact that the animal is always spoken of as a biped, but this might possibly result from a descendant of the huge prehistoric marsupials, which, although a quadruped, would get along on its hind-legs and tail. To sum the whole matter up, if there be any descendants still in existence of these prehistoric monsters, there is no more likely place to find such a creature than here in the vast forests, amongst the great lakes and mighty

rivers which man has not as yet conquered and appropriated.

Many tales were told about the caribou deer. In this uninhabited land they seemed more inclined to satisfy their curiosity about man than to run away from him. One man had captured a young doe, and lifted it into his canoe, and paddled away with it. But it became too much of a burden, so he took it to the shore and let it go again. Away it scampered into the woods, but no sooner was it gone than it came back again and ran along the shore, looking in wonderment at the man in the canoe. On second thoughts, he captured it again, for he had visions of deer-meat during the following winter. But before the winter came this little doe had become quite a pet.

A big herd of caribou was passing to the south at the end of the summer, so the hunter, knowing that he would be unable to feed his pet during the winter, determined to send it off with the passing herd. He took a leather belt from his waist and fastened it round the

doe's neck, and then drove his little friend away, right amongst the migrating caribou. He had put his mark on the doe, so that perchance it might be spared should some other hunter be in want of food and see it. Not much protection, but all the same it was the best thing he could do. Now this little deer grew to a big one, and for some years afterwards it always passed near the huntsman's house whenever the herd was migrating to, or returning from, the south.

The curiosity of the caribou is proverbial. Walking through the woods, a hunter suddenly came across two bucks amusing themselves by pushing each other with their great antlers interlaced, but without injuring each other. The man was carrying a sack of provisions to his camp, and hiding behind a tree, the bag stuck out behind him. Immediately the caribou saw this bag they stopped their play, and slowly and shyly approached. The man knew their habits well, and, peeping from behind a tree, just shook his big parcel, and pushed it well into the line of sight.

Away they scampered. But they were not satisfied; they soon came back again, and slowly and cautiously came nearer and nearer. At last the man showed himself, and away they both bolted. But even then one of them came back again, as if to thoroughly satisfy himself. But the man had shouldered his sack, and was on his way. The deer, seeing him, after gazing for a few seconds, thought discretion was the better part of valour, and quickly joined his more timid mate.

The horns of the caribou are very beautifully covered over with a velvety plush or moss when they first begin to grow, and for some time during their growth. They are constantly rubbing their horns against trees, and playing with each other by butting together and interlacing their horns; but the soft mossy covering is not all rubbed off until the season comes, when each buck wants to be the master of the herd. The soft, velvety covering is all knocked off when the fighting and quarrelling begins, and each buck tries to be the boss.

The horns are shed once a year, and a new pair grows in place of the discarded pair. Sometimes these horns grow to a marvellous size, and have as many as forty points on them, and naturally such horns would be considered very fine specimens.

At the rutting season these caribou are not quite so gentle, and often show themselves to be very formidable foes. One of the men was paddling up a wide river, when he found his canoe had got injured in one of the seams. It was an Eskimo canoe of skin laced together. He put in to the nearest shore, and, pulling his canoe on to the land, began to repair the damage. His two companions were on the other side of the river, and suddenly began shouting to him ; but the noise of the rushing waters drowned the sound, and he could not make out what they said. He shouted back that he would not be long, and that his canoe wanted repairing. The next thing he saw was one of his friends raising his rifle to his shoulder, pointing it, so it seemed, directly at him. Then he saw a puff of

smoke, and the bullet whizzed past him close to his ear.

Horror-struck at this seeming attempt to murder him by his own bosom friend, he turned round to run into the woods. No sooner had he turned than he saw a lordly stag, just ten yards away, dropping to the ground. This stag had been on the hill above him, had seen him, and was making for him. His friends on the other side of the river shouted to warn him, but, seeing they could not make him understand at so great a distance, one of them, the best shot, had taken aim, and, luckily, had stopped the stag just as it was about to make the final charge.

Then another tale was told—how, after a long chase of a wounded caribou, they had just reached him and planted a bullet so that he fell to the ground. One man rushed up and stuck his bowie-knife into the stag's throat. In a second the beast rose to its feet again, and charged straight for the other man, who instantly jumped behind a group of

small trees. The caribou went straight for him, and blindly rushed to get through the trees. His big, spreading horns caught in the branches, jerking his head backwards, and the knife, which was sticking through his neck, was forced right through the front of his throat. Blood spurted all over the man like from a fountain, and the buck dropped a second time—this time, of course, to die.

They told me, too, of a wealthy Englishman who had come out for sport, and had shot a number of caribou. He expressed himself as anxious to take a photograph of a whole herd that was passing, so he told the guides to throw over him the skin of one of the slain caribou, and he started off with his camera in his hand and the skin thrown over him, with the horns of the stag sticking up over his shoulders. The herd did not seem to take much notice of him as he approached, and he got well up to them. But suddenly two old bucks stepped out; they evidently did not like the look of this strange buck that

was approaching them. They stamped their feet and threw their heads up and down, and then suddenly, as if of one mind, made straight for this strange-looking caribou. There was only just time for the Englishman to step from under the skins and horns, and run for his very life. The hunters could not say whether the caribou or the Englishman was the most dumbfounded by the incident. The Englishman left that neighbourhood without taking any photographs of "the stag in his native haunts."

But since photography has become so easy, and the apparatus is carried by almost every traveller and pleasure-seeker, it is not an uncommon occurrence to take splendid pictures of these herds in their wild condition. But these pictures have all been taken in Newfoundland, and I do not know of anyone who has succeeded in snapshotting the caribou in Labrador.

We chatted about bears as well as about caribou. A bear-skin will bring the hunter from ten to fifty dollars' worth of goods in

return from the Hudson Bay Company. The men like to get the chance of shooting at this game. One of the huntsmen had recently killed a black bear, and inside its skin, on one side of the body, he had found about a dozen shot, and from the bone of the shoulder a large bullet was extracted.

None of the shots seemed to have permanently injured the bear, for the skin was quite perfect. The holes in the skin had all completely covered over and healed up, and it was only by the shot coming in contact with the skinning-knife that the strange occurrence was observed. This bear must have carried this load of shot and the rifle-bullet for over two years.

Bill and Patsy were two little boys, aged ten and six years. They were the sons of Michael Larrygan, an Irishman, whom you could tell was Irish, although neither he nor his father had ever seen the old country. Larrygan told me that the boys' great-grandfather had come from somewhere near a place called Cork, but where Cork was, " faith, he didn't

know, 'ceptin' it was in Ould Oireland." Labrador was his country, and true enough he was as happy in his poor surroundings as a man could be.

Bill and Patsy were away one day climbing over the hills about a mile from their father's hut. Suddenly Patsy called out to Bill that he had found something, and sure enough there were two little bear cubs snuggled up in a moss-lined hole in the rocks.

"Let's each carry one," said little boy Patsy.

"No," said Bill, "because the big bear is sure to find us, and she will kill us."

But little Patsy tried to persuade Bill that it was downhill all the way home, and they could run.

"Yes," said Bill, "and the bear will sure to run after us, and we shall be killed."

But little Patsy was not to be thwarted; he urged that little boys could run faster than bears, and they would have a start as well, because the bear did not know they were there. Finally, Bill, much against his better

judgment, yielded to the persuasive baby eloquence of his little brother, and each took a cub, and away they ran. But they had not gone very far when the young bears began to call out for their mother. Soon the mother, a great black-coated bear, came tearing through the bushes and ran straight for the little boys. But Patsy would not let his prize go, and urged Bill to run on and tell father. Then they suddenly caught sight of father, and shouted wildly to him. He saw his boys, and a great black beast about a hundred yards behind them. Seizing his gun, he made towards them. The boys rushed on, breathless with exertion and excitement; the bear slackened her speed. The father took steady aim, and shot the bear dead. He eventually got twenty dollars' worth of provisions in exchange for the skin, and the two little boys each had a bear, which died in a few days, because they could not feed the little cubs properly. Bill and Patsy were both particularly proud of their adventure.

The way in which the bears are generally

caught in Labrador is by what is called a "running trap." Two upright sticks are placed one each side of the bear's run. They are just placed wide enough apart to allow the ends of a heavy log of wood, some four feet in length and twelve to eighteen inches in diameter, to pass in between them. The heavy log is placed near the top of these two uprights, some five feet from the ground, and is supported there on small pieces of wood wedged in loosely between the log and the side pieces. To these two wedges some tendons or twisted roots are fastened, and the other end of these cords is attached to a platform made of rough branches, which is between the two uprights and under the log, close down to the ground. The bear comes along the pathway through the woods, and tries to pass over the platform of twisted branches and under the heavy log. But his weight on the centre of the platform drags out the two wedges, and down falls the heavy log on the bear's back and breaks it. That is what the huntsman wants, but from what I could see they more often

had a trap down with nothing in it than one which fell on a bear. They always said the wind had blown the trap down. Perhaps this was so, but the fact is that if a man gets half a dozen bear-skins in the season, whether he traps or shoots the bears, he does very well.

EPILOGUE

AFTER having been six months away, I am back in Old England, where the working-man, if he has work, can live in comfort and happiness. But how about the tens of thousands of would-be workers who can get no work? What about the horrors of being unemployed in a country where only employment can make men happy and enable them to live? Not only is it the working-man that we have to consider, but his wife and his children. It is a natural law for man to marry, and a natural sequence for him to have children to support until they are able to take their position amongst mankind.

Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the Cape have already been the means of raising to a condition of prosperity tens of thousands

of our countrymen, and in most of these countries there is room for thousands more.

Labrador is a new country, with all the glamour of speculation in it. There is an opportunity of finding work for some thousands of our unemployed. Not that we should send out there only those who cannot get employment in England, but send some of our best workers, and make vacant places here at home to be filled by willing workers. The question is a vast one, and Labrador is one of those countries that can help to solve the problem.

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, C.M.G., who spends all his time out there, knows a great deal better than any other man what are the possibilities of the country. He says: "Why should not this vast Labrador, with its minerals, its fisheries, its forests, and its firs, be as prosperous as Norway?" And this question is not only asked, but Dr. Grenfell himself is bringing about the answer. We have heard of Labrador as a wild and desolate place, dreary and forbidding. But this is

only rumour ; it is not true. The wild North-West of Canada, not long ago, was looked upon as a land from which no good could come, and at the present time there are thousands of families earning their daily bread and benefiting the world at large.

Now, as a man that knows the world, who has seen it under all climes and under all conditions—Asia, Africa, and America, as well as Europe and the Antipodes—I would say that there is money to be made and real work to be done out in Labrador. And why? Because the country is so near to our own home, the nearest part of America. Because the country is ready, waiting for the workers. Because the harbours and inlets from the sea are the finest in the world, and are large enough and deep enough for the world's fleets to float in. Because the rocks contain minerals, and only want prospecting. Because the timber in the country is the best in the world for pulp, and pulp-manufacturers are everywhere crying out for new sources of supply. Because sawn timbers can be se-

lected and used for boat-building, for house-building, and for exportation. Because wild fruits grow in such abundance without cultivation or care, and fruits which contain all the nutritive qualities and, I should not be surprised, more medicinal properties than our English fruits. Because the country is one from which the richest and most valuable skins can be procured — bear, otter, seal, lynx, beaver—and this trade is done by the Hudson Bay Company, who do it well, but take care not to talk about it lest competition should increase.

For how many hundred years has this Company been coining money out of the skins and other products from the unknown depths of this country of Labrador? They have, wisely for themselves, said nothing about the origin of their wealth; in fact, I would say that all their employees are bound to keep secret their sources of supplies, lest the system should become too well known. It is a system of barter, a socialism which does not improve the position of the workers, but which brings

wealth to the investor without giving a fair chance to the worker.

Last, but not least—and Newfoundland has the right to flourish on the industry—is the work of fishing. But this is only just along the coast. How is it that Newfoundlanders have never gone inland and seen the possibilities of this vast country? Because they are a fishing people, and have as much as they can do with their fishing. It remains for part of the surplus and idle wealth of Great Britain to be used in making this Labrador worthy of its name, "Le Bras d'Or"—"The Arm of Gold"—and in bringing out all the riches and wealth that has been hidden away in this "Unknown Land."

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