

## CHAPTER II.

### THRILLING INCIDENTS OF A POLAR VOYAGE.

A Thrilling Voyage—Among the Eskimos—Breaking All Precedents—350 Miles in Thirty Days—Helped by Friendly Natives—Lost No Time—Three Years' Supplies Taken—Boat Convertible into Tent or a Blanket—Story of Only White Companion—South Pole Next, Says Brother.

THE voyage northward is best described by Mr. Bradley. Commenting on his preparations, he continued:

"My expedition had the latest devices for minimizing weight, and at the same time increasing efficiency. For instance, I knew of an expedition several years ago which carried five or six brass stoves, weighing from sixteen to eighteen pounds each, to be used with kerosene oil for making tea. Our stoves were made of aluminum, their weight was three pounds each, and they did precisely the same work. We got rid of twelve or fifteen pounds on each stove and without impairing our efficiency got rid of as much unnecessary weight as a dog can pull, and had so much more for food. Not an ounce of weight was wasted. An enterprise like this has to go on its stomach, and we had plenty of food packed in tin cans for transportation.

"We did not take Captain Bartlett into our confidence in the matter of our destination. He was curious and interested at times.

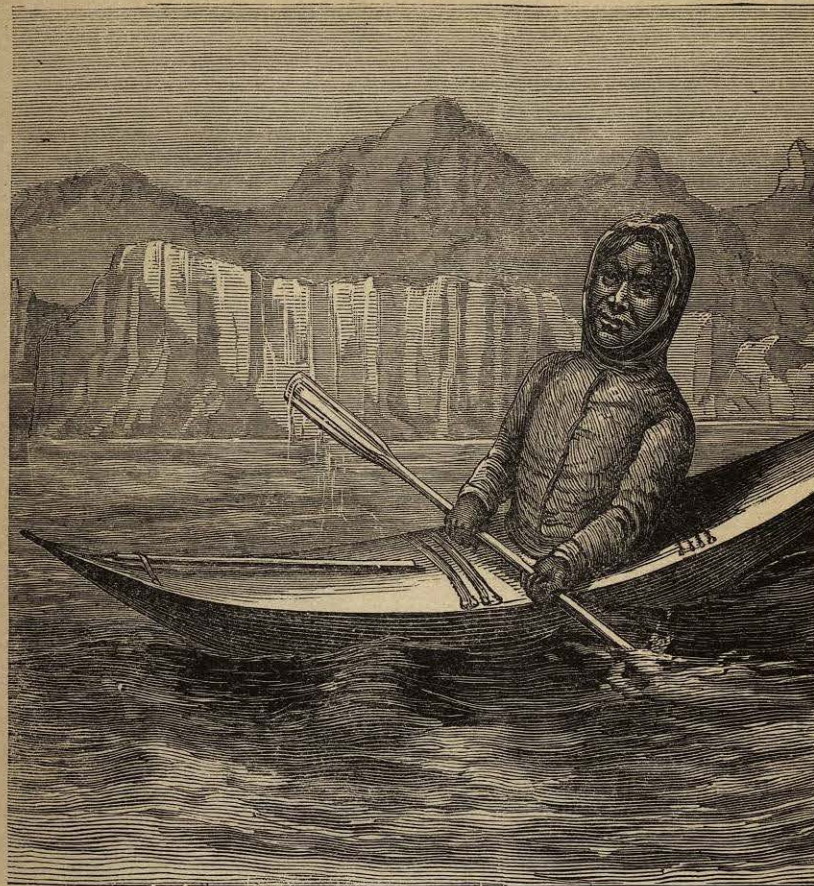
"Got enough pemmican there to feed a tribe of Eskimos," he remarked one day.

"Well, we arrived and everything seemed to be adapted for the attempt which Dr. Cook had in mind. He considered the conditions ideal for his purpose.

"First he made a census of the natives at the point where he landed and found that there were 240 of them as compared with 250 according to the last record. The little colony was in the pink of condition. The young men were strong and healthy.

"We found that there was little ice in Kennedy Channel, that the traveling over the land was good and that weather conditions were perfect. There could not have been a combination of circumstances better adapted to the purposes of Dr. Cook. He saw the chance and he took it, and he had the nerve and the will to avail himself of his opportunities.

"We lost no time. The supplies were loaded into dories,



ESQUIMAU AND KAIYAK.

which were towed ashore by my motor boat which was in reality a strong whale boat, twenty-seven feet long with powerful engines. We landed supplies at a rapid rate for a while and then the ice began to drift in and the Captain said that he did not care much about staying about that neighborhood, as we stood a chance of losing the vessel or staying that way all winter. He asked if it made any difference if he

landed the supplies in not precisely that place. I told him to do as he liked about it, and he strung the stuff up and down the coast for about five miles and we had a lively time doing it.

"Three years' supplies were left with Dr. Cook. That does not convey much of an idea perhaps, but if I had the inventory at hand it would astonish those persons who speak of this expedition as a haphazard affair with nothing but the nerve of Dr. Cook to back it.

"Dr. Cook is one of the ablest men with all kinds of appliances I ever met. He has wonderful mechanical skill, and for twenty years he has been taking observations of the kind necessary to find out if a man were really at the North Pole. He is a trained scientist and an explorer of experience. With his experience in the Arctic and the Antarctic I think that Dr. Cook knew very well what he was doing.

#### TAKING OBSERVATIONS.

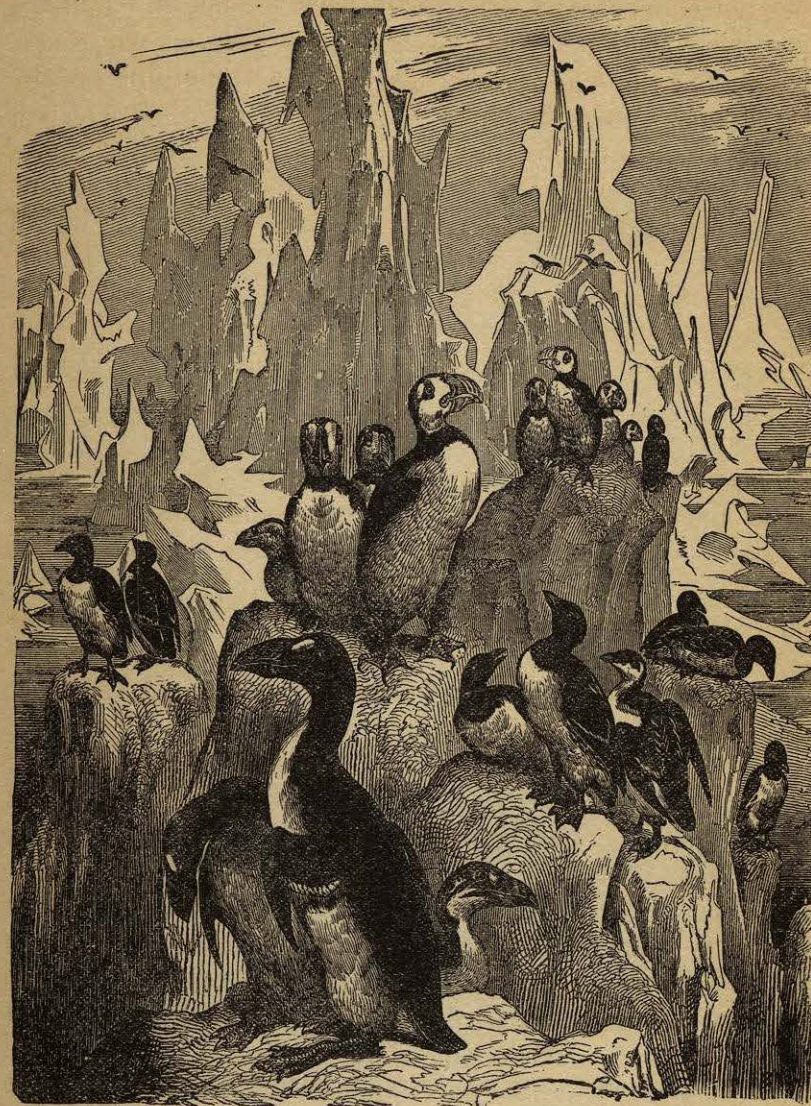
"I've seen him taking the observation for the day on board the yacht, both alone and with the commander and the mate. He had a sextant of aluminum which was an especially fine instrument. The sextant was used in taking the observations of the Bradley all the way, and much of the time it was handled by Dr. Cook himself. He also had eight or ten of the best compasses that money could buy, an artificial horizon, as well as various meteorological instruments.

"Dr. Cook has been breaking precedents in this trip to the Pole. His methods violated all the old traditions. He went at a different season; he did not leave his ship frozen in the ice in the old regular way. Also he was taking a course which no explorer ever took before in keeping away from the eastern drift of the ice on the Behring Sea.

"He made his dash to the Pole from the west, relying on the drift of the ice to carry him to the eastward. In his outfit was a canvas boat; one which was easily collapsed, and it occupied some of the space and weight which might have been given to less important things. Now, according to the books, when your Arctic explorer gets a great lane of water in the ice or a lead he sits down by the side of it for a while and keeps hoping until it closes up, sometimes two or three days pass before his hope comes out. Dr. Cook went across these places in his canvas boat. The boat can be used for a

tent at night, and it is handy when not in commission for use as a tarpaulin cover.

"It was the idea of Dr. Cook that the people he left behind him on the land should cover his retreat. That left him



PUFFINS, AUKS AND OTHER ARCTIC BIRDS.

about 350 miles to cover from March 17 to April 21, the date of his discovery, or thirty days according to my calculations. This is an average of only ten miles a day.

"Before Dr. Cook left me he said he would do a thing that no other explorer had done, and that was to come back from

the Farthest North on foot whether he was successful or not, and to reach the Danish trading post at Upernavik, where he knew that in time a vessel must arrive. All this had been carefully mapped out two years before.

"It has been asked why he did not communicate his discovery to the world sooner. The answer is easy. Because this is his first opportunity. Slowly he made his way back. He lived in Ellesmere Land. He used the meat which he had left in caches, the oxen, and the hares, and so forth, which had been killed on the way up. He subsisted at times on what he could find. It was only this spring that he was able to get over into the neighborhood of Etah.

#### ARRIVAL AT CAPE YORK.

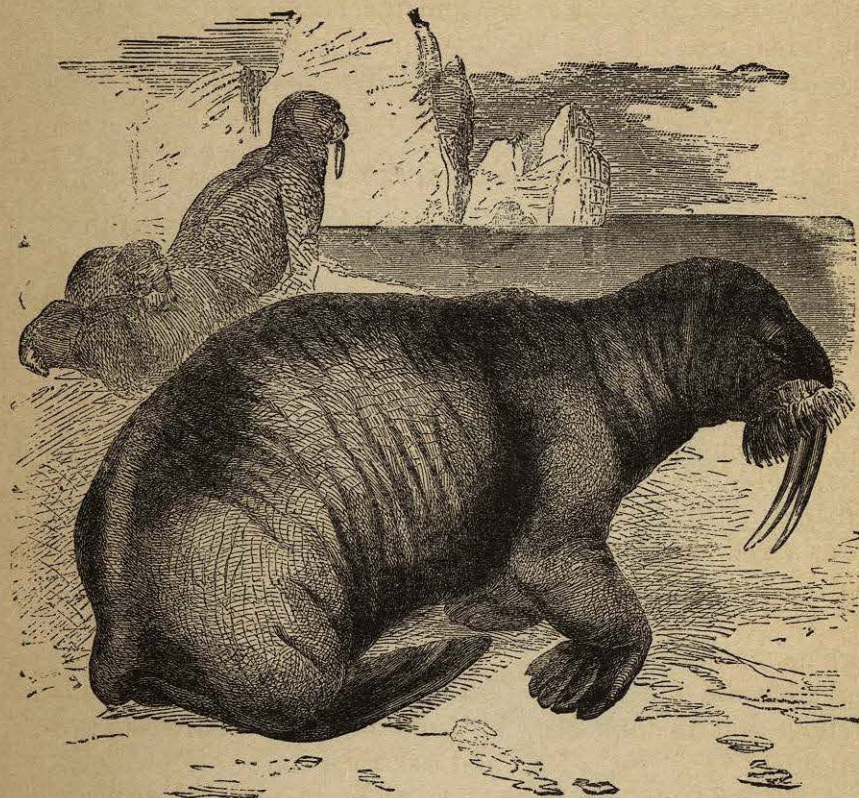
"Now he comes at last to Cape York. He knows that the Danish Government sends a ship there to look after its colony and to take calico and merchandise to trade for ivory, eider-down and blubber. I suggested to him that he keep stowed away about his clothing in sealskin bags one hundred pounds in English gold with which to pay his passage to Copenhagen, and from there to the United States. This he did as he said he would. So when everything had been arranged and I felt that nothing could go wrong I resented it a little when I was asked to contribute a relief expedition which I felt sure that Dr. Cook did not want, and felt sure that I did not.

"The natives have gone across that ice for thousands, perhaps millions of years. I do not see why Dr. Cook cannot. He did it and now for the last thought of Admiral Melville and others. How he could induce the natives to go with him to the North Pole and risk their lives? How does anybody influence the Eskimo to do anything? Here was as fully equipped an expedition as ever went to the frozen seas, excepting neither Peary, Dr. Nansen or the Duke of the Abruzzi.

"It was peculiarly fitted out with things which were dear to the heart of the Eskimo and Dr. Cook had enough of them to be liberal. They will go anywhere for a gun. One will work all day for a biscuit. How about a box of matches occasionally? I had shipped 10,000 boxes of them. A biscuit, a cracker, a bit of tobacco, any thing will bring an Eskimo to your feet.

"Mr. Peary used to promise every Eskimo who went with him a gun when the party got back. Those guns cost him about \$2.50 each, I should say. The natives used to pick them to pieces and come to us to find out how they worked. There were twenty-five guns prepared just for the purpose of rewarding the faithful Eskimos.

'But beyond all this there is a personal element that must be considered, for the Eskimos are very fond of Dr. Cook.



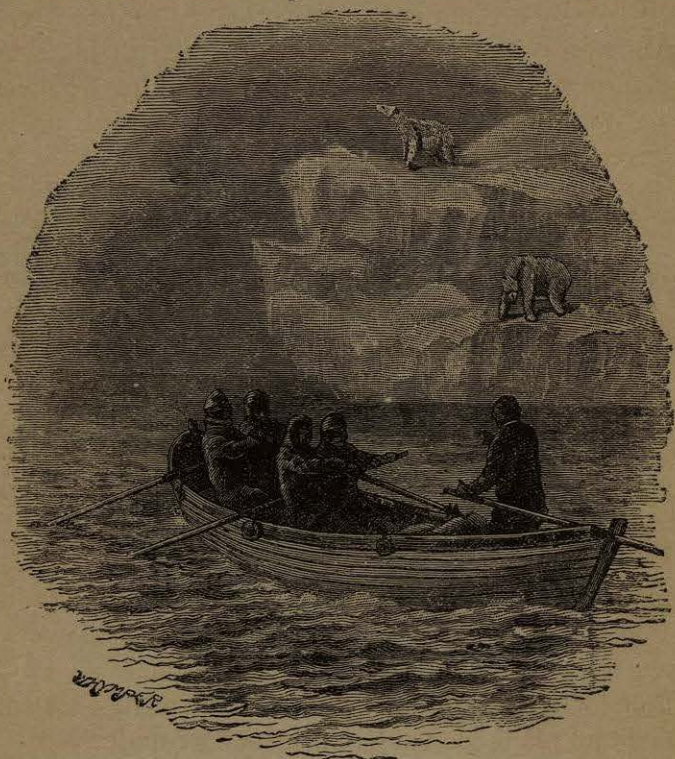
WALRUS OR SEA-HORSE.

They remembered him when he came with Peary, they recalled his other expeditions. When they saw him coming ashore they ran up and down the shore for joy waving their hands and shouting their welcome.

"He can speak their language and they know that he is a square and honest man. He could get them to go with him anywhere, no matter what extreme of temperature they might have to endure. And then there is the question whether or not the Eskimo considers that he risks his life wandering up to the North Pole.

"His ancestors have been doing that kind of thing for many generations, and, after all, our brother of the north does not care so much for a few degrees of cold. I am deeply interested in this matter, and when there is talk of Dr. Cook not being properly equipped I feel like just rising up and showing that he did not start for the North Pole in a straw hat."

Further facts concerning the supplies and equipments of



POLAR BEARS ON A FLOATING ICEBERG.

Dr. Cook, given by Rudolph Francke, who helped prepare them for the final dash to the Pole, and who was the last white man who saw Mr. Cook before his departure, tell a thrilling tale.

Francke was a steward on the yacht of John R. Bradley, and when volunteers were asked to stay with the explorer at Araostok, he was selected by the physician himself out of five volunteers.

As before stated, however, Dr. Cook, at the last, thought it better that Francke, who had started with him to the North should return to the winter headquarters, there to guard the

supplies. Later, pursuant to further instruction, Francke came back to this country when Dr. Cook did not return in the following June. He had taken leave of the explorer on March 3, 1908, at which time Dr. Cook had been four days on his way to the Pole.

"I am thoroughly convinced," said he, "in reading the account cabled by Dr. Cook, that every word which he has sent is absolutely true and that he has indeed discovered the Pole. I lived with him for months, helped him in preparing his outfit and constantly saw how he acted in his relations with men of all classes. When he says a thing he means it; he never makes any statement which he cannot prove; he never gives a promise which he does not keep."

#### AN IMPARTIAL IMPRESSION OF DR. COOK.

"That is the kind of a man Dr. Cook is. From the first time I ever met him I was impressed by his perseverance, by his strength of purpose, and by his wonderful mastery of details. I had been for some years in the employ of German steamships as steward, and was lodging in Hoboken looking for another job, when I advertised and thus obtained a place to go on John R. Bradley's yacht in the summer of 1907.

"It was at Gloucester, where the vessel was being fitted out, that I first saw Dr. Cook. He was busy overhauling the supply, and his alert manner and his understanding of every detail the way that he had even then mapped everything out even to the smallest thing impressed me.

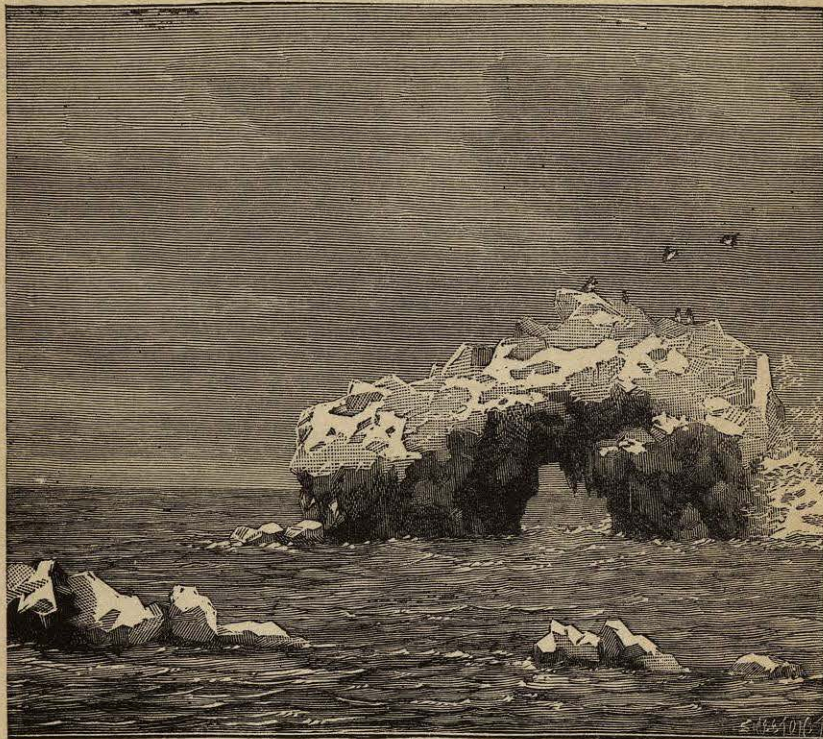
"Later I saw something every day to show how thoroughly Dr. Cook had planned everything which he undertook.

"Some of the critics intimate that Dr. Cook would not have known he was at the North Pole when he got there. The physician made the observations for the navigation of the Bradley, often determining the position of the vessel for the captain, and he had been practicing with all kinds of scientific instruments before that time. When the call for volunteers came I gladly offered to go and I felt pleased and complimented at being chosen.

"Dr. Cook is on very friendly terms with the natives and at all times he has had their assistance. He had a surplus of supplies at Annaostok, including many things that the Eskimo especially liked.

“ ‘Francke,’ he said to me as we parted on the morning of March 3, ‘I am going to take a desperate chance and I have decided that it would be asking too much to expect you to go with me. You are young and have a life before you. I am willing to risk my life for this idea and I hope to win. I have reason to believe that I shall succeed, but if I go down I shall go down alone.’

“From that day I have never doubted that he would suc-



A WAVE-WORN ICEBERG.

ceed and I wished more than ever that I could have gone as I told him that I considered my life of no account.”

But before entering upon Doctor Cook's own personal narrative of his desperate dash for the Pole, it will be interesting to read a word picture of the intrepid conqueror of the frozen fastnesses of the North, and to learn not only how his own brother regards him, his expedition and his victory, but also his story of the great explorer's early life.

A few days after the news of Doctor Cook's amazing triumph was flashed over the ocean cables, William L. Cook,

his brother, at his home in Brooklyn, told of his early life. But that shall be reserved for another chapter.

“The best and most complete way possible to explain why my brother reached the Pole is to say that now he will find the South Pole. He will not fail. He cannot fail. His whole life proves this. His career has been picturesque in the extreme and filled with honor and determined efforts. He is a self-made man as much so as the greatest figure in the world's history.”

William L. Cook was associated with Dr. Cook in the explorer's first business enterprise. This was the establishment of a milk route, and it paved the way to Dr. Cook's later career as a physician, surgeon and explorer by providing him with the financial means to attend Columbia Medical College, in Manhattan.

“You remember his first expedition was in the Antarctic,” said the brother. “It failed. Now that he has reached the North Pole I believe he will make other efforts to find the South Pole. And I am confident he will succeed. I think he will come here only long enough to meet his family and rest a little, then start out for the South.”

“I was not surprised by the announcement of Fred's triumph,” the brother went on with pride. “Of course, at first it was something of a sensation, but when I remember his capabilities I realized it was the thing I should have expected.

“It is not true that nobody expected he would do it. His family knew Fred never did things on impulse. He always planned carefully before he went ahead with a feat, and this was no accident. His failure in the Antarctic never discouraged him. He turned North and tried that. As soon as we lost track of him up there I knew Fred was on his way to his goal.

“He is not a person to talk about what he has done. If he has told as much as has been printed he has the achievement back of him. He seldom discusses what he has done. I know him and his ways, for we worked shoulder to shoulder.”

But of that later. First let us read the explorer's life, compiled from facts told by his admiring brother.