THROUGH ARCTIC LAPLAND

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Author: Cutcliffe Hyne

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Through Arctic Lapland

By the same Author.

THE RECIPE FOR DIAMONDS.
HONOUR OF THIEVES.
THE PARADISE COAL-BOAT.
ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN KETTLE.

Through

Arctic Lapland

BY

CUTCLIFFE HYNE

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1898

TO

MRS. ALFRED HARMSWORTH

OUR FRIEND

C. H.

C. J. C. H.

Preface

It seems customary in a book of travel to make frequent allusions to other voyagers who have journeyed over the same ground, or at least the same district, and to make constant references to them, and give copious quotations from their works. Of course we ought to have gone to the British Museum before starting on our travel, and there read up all books which in the least bore upon the country which we were going to visit. We omitted to do this, firstly, because we preferred to observe things for ourselves, from our own individual standpoint, unprejudiced by the way in which other people had observed them; and, secondly, from the far more potent reason that we made our actual start in a great hurry, and had little enough time for any preparations whatever.

However, on our return to England we thought well to check the information we had garnered. So we duly provided ourselves with readers' tickets for that institution, and went to the British Museum Library, and got down every book which seemed in any way to bear upon the country we had wandered over, regardless of the tongue in which it was written. It was a surprise to us to learn (and may we add that the surprise was not without its pleasant savour?) that of all the volumes in that collection not one covered the route which we took during summer through Arctic Lapland. Many had gone near it, from a gentleman of bygone date who wrote in Latin, to Mr. Paul du Chaillu, who chats about the larger part of the Scandinavian Peninsula. But we seemed to have stumbled across the one bit of Europe which has not been pilloried on paper at

one time or another, and so we here venture to take up a couple of note-books which were originally made for personal gratification, and amplify them into a volume of letterpress and sketches which may haply interest others.

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Through Arctic Lapland

CHAPTER I

LONDON TO VARDÖ, WITH A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW PLANS MAY BE CHANGED

The wharves of Katherine Dock were black with many thousands of people, and all their eyes converged on a little auxiliary barque which was working out of the basin under her own gentle steam. The barque carried a white tub at her mainmast-head, was rigged with single topsails, bore many white double-ended boats upturned on skids amidships, and was decorated with sundry other matters which even to the shore eye would seem strange in London river. Stacked in her waist were bags of coal, crates, packing cases, a couple of ice-anchors, a tangle of trellis-work sledges, and other quaint trifles which had not yet been struck below.

Any craft more unlike the ordinary conventional type of yacht it would have been hard to conceive, and yet the burgee of the Royal Thames Yacht Club fluttered out from above the white crow's nest (or fouled the telescope rail, as the case might be) and an English blue ensign hung clean and unfrayed from the mizzen truck, as the mizzen gaff, its more orthodox station, had not yet been set up.

The barque was already a vessel well known. As a sealer and whale-fisher she had earned fat dividends for Dundee owners; as the *S.Y. Windward* she had made history, and helped to found the British colony of Elmwood in Franz Josef's Land, and had been iced up for an Arctic winter in a bay at the back of Cape Flora; and on this trip she was destined (although no one even guessed at it then) to acquire a far more international fame. She was setting out then from Katherine Dock under the command of that old ice-sailor, Captain James Brown, to carry recruits and supplies to the Jackson-Harmsworth exploring expedition after their second winter amongst the polar ice; and she landed these on the sterile rocks of Franz Josef's Land after a bitter struggle with the floes, and brought back with her to the land of champagne and telegraph wires, Frithjof Nansen, the Norskman, as by this time all the world most thoroughly knows.

Slowly that single-topsail barque was warped across the dock basin, a strange small creature amongst the huge steam shipping; slowly she passed

through the outer lock; and then the ebb of the muddy river took her, and she moved out into the stream, and the black crowds on the dock-head sent up thunderous cheers.

The little auxiliary propeller fluttered astern, and she dropped down river at no ostentatious speed. But the white barrel perched up there under the main truck betrayed her always, and every vessel of every nationality in those cosmopolitan reaches knew her as the yacht of the English Arctic expedition. The blue ensign was kept on a constant dance up and down from her mizzen truck, as it answered other bunting, which was dipped in salute from countless peaks and poop-staffs. Some crews cheered her as she passed at her puny gait through the crowded shipping; the band of the *Worcester* played her down the river out of earshot; everybody she passed warmed to her enterprise and wished her success and a snug return.

Ladies, and owner, and shore folk, had come down the river to give her a final “send off,” but these left at Greenhythe with the mud pilot, and from that began an easy voyage to the rim of the Polar Sea. The *Windward* was to go North as much as possible under her own canvas; but as some steam would certainly be required for head winds and other emergencies, she was to call in at Vardö at the entrance to the White Sea to rebunker, so as to have the largest possible supply of good Welsh steam coal for her final battle with the Northern ice. To this port, in the north-easternmost angle of Arctic Norway, the *Windward* carried as passengers Mr. Cecil Hayter, who drew pictures for this book, and another man, who wrote it.

Now, to say that we two had a vague notion of what was ahead of us was putting the matter mildly. We knew many of those concerned in the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, and had always had an interest in the achievements of the *Windward*; and one night in somebody’s billiard-room we had talked vaguely over “going North and doing something up there” ourselves. We imagined this something might be to explore the Petchora or one of the lesser-known Northern Siberian rivers, to make the acquaintance of the Samoyede in his native *choom*, and incidentally to do some big game shooting. We knew remarkably little about the country, and so were quite unfettered in making some very appetising plans. This was six months before the *Windward* sailed, and though we met two or three times in the interval, the matter was only mentioned casually, and with merely a dilettante interest.

Finally, when Mr. Alfred Harmsworth wired “Are you going North with *Windward*?” and got a simultaneous reply of “Delighted” from each of us, the

yacht was booked to sail in fifty hours' time, and any preparations we wished to make were naturally hustled.

Midnight among the Lofötens.

When we actually did get under weigh, our outfit consisted of one inferior double-barrelled 12-bore shot-gun by an anonymous maker, one good Marlin '45 repeating rifle carrying a long bullet, a small assortment of tinned foods and loaded cartridges, an imaginative map, the clothes we stood up in, and a brown canvas, seaman's bag apiece containing sleeping sack, tooth-brush, spare shirt, and foreign office passport with a hieroglyphical Russian *visé*. But if our equipment was slender, the plan of our expedition was at least definite and concise. The Petchora and North Siberia were to be left undisturbed in their accustomed darkness. Even the virgin delights of Novaya Zemblya (to which island a steamer was alleged to be on the point of starting from Archangel) were to be left for another time. We were going to see the Lapp in that unmeddled-with country, Arctic Lapland.

It had been my luck to live *en famille* with some herder Lapps once before in North-Western Norway. I had some elk shooting and some fishing up there, and I came across the tribe one day poaching red char from one of my own hired lakes. I kept silence about my temporary proprietorship, and assisted to steal my own fish, after which I encamped with them for seven days, sleeping *à la belle étoile*, and providing my own nutriment. The tribe possessed some three hundred head of tame reindeer, and as my available luggage at the time was a Kodak camera, I managed to get some rather good photographs of the deer at close quarters.

It was these photographs which suggested going to see the Lapp in his own domains. The map showed the position of Lapland in large letters, and for the sake of definiteness we made up our minds to cross it from north to south, and take to the seas again at the head of the Gulf of Bothnia. That should be our expedition. It was delightfully simple in its scope and comprehensiveness.

Drawing from our own ignorance, and from the united ignorance of others (most freely and generously bestowed), we mapped out the details of the campaign with glibness and ease. At Vardö we were to purchase furs to wear and horses to ride. Russian horses, or rather ponies, they were to be: our friends told us all about them. And then we had merely to procure a guide and interpreter, and set off. There was a road along the north shore of the Varanger fjord to

Vadsö, and from there a bridle path of sorts led to Næsseby and Puolnak, and down through the country by Lake Enare to Kittila, where it met a broad road which continued down by the side of the Torneo River as far as the coast. We knew all this because the large scale map which we bought at the best map shop in London said it was so. And there were plenty of villages—the map marked them with clearness and precision. At nights we would either sleep out in our furs and blanket sacks, or sleep in the villages.

As regards the commissariat, that we decided would be simple also. Reindeer meat, salmon, rye bread, milk, cheese, and butter would be always procurable from the natives. And besides, we should shoot far more game than we could possibly use for the pot. Men who "knew the country round there" assured us clearly on this point. Game swarmed. The country was alive with bear, ptarmigan, willow grouse, and capercailzie. I wonder now that no one suggested we might pick up a belated mammoth. And though I personally had been shooting in North Norway before, and so discounted part of the yarns, I did think we should find enough to keep going upon.

The few tins of provisions we did take were mainly to serve as luxuries. For instance, we had quite a large supply of *foie gras* and larks in aspic.

I had a vivid recollection of how the last tin of that *pâté de foie gras* went. We had put in a forty-mile tramp by way of sharpening the appetite, and we sat down in the middle of a gray cloud of mosquitoes to share it between us. It was a tin about four inches in diameter by two deep, and it contained a generous casing of tallow, which had partly melted through being carried next to a perspiring Laplander's back. There was no scrap of any other food available, and so we divided the *pâté* (and the tallow) with mathematical accuracy. Hayter eyed the polished tin when we had finished, and said thoughtfully that he always had liked *foie gras*. I mentioned that sometimes I preferred beef or even venison; that I could do with about six pounds of beef just then; and that as a meal for a hungry man, *foie gras* was all very well, but did not seem to go quite far enough.

With these hints, then, at our initial ignorance of what lay beyond, let me pass on to Vardö, which was the real starting-point of both our plans and our journey. The *Windward* made an easy voyage of it on the whole up to there, and although she carried away her main-topsail yard, and smashed the reefing spar below it in two places, that was looked upon as rather a slice of luck, as it might well have been disastrous if such an accident had happened later, when every ounce of steam and every inch of canvas might be wanted in the fierce wrestle with the Polar ice. In Vardö it might be repaired.

VARDÖ HARBOUR.

Inside Vardö harbour walls, then, to a mooring we came, and the smells of the place closed round us and took possession. Bobbling about on the harbour swell around us were some two hundred vessels of strange Northern rig, and almost all connected with the trade in fish. There is no agriculture in this town perched on the northern outskirts of the continent; there are no trees to make a timber business; there are no metals or fuels to dig from the earth; there are no inducements to weave or carry on any of the manufactures of a more gentle clime. The sea is the only field which yields the Vardö man a harvest, and from the sea he reaps it with unremitting industry. Finns, Russians, Norwegians, Samoyedes, Lapps, all join in the work and bring their catch, in clumsy yots, and square-sailed viking boats, and the other weird unhandy craft of the North, in past the concrete wall of Vardö harbour, and run alongside the smelling warehouses which are built on piles at the water-side, and send it ashore all slimy and glistening, and then go off to dangle bait in the chill inhospitable seas for more.

The men of the town, and the women, gut the fish, and leave the entrails to rot in the streets, or under the wharfs, or in the harbour water; and then the carcasses are carried to the outskirts of the town, and hung on endless racks of wood to shrivel, and dry, and scent the air as thoroughly as the rains of the climate will permit. At the corner posts hang posies of cods' heads to serve as fodder for the cows and goats during the winter, and these too help to amplify the stink. And from the mainland, beyond the fort, when the breezes blow Vardö-wards, there drift across more forceful stinks from the factory where they flense the Finner whales, and try down the blubber into oil, and cut up the pink beef for canned meats and fodder for the Arctic cow.

In the harbour, steamers from France, and Hamburg, and lower Norway, load bales of the dried cod, which will carry the aroma of Vardö as far as Bremen, Brest, and St. Petersburg.

As wooden places go, the town itself is not uncomely. It is built on an island, which is nearly cut in two by the fjords that form the harbour, and it has two principal streets running at right angles to one another, and others again branching off these. The houses are of all colours from ochre to gray, and all sizes, and all architectures. There are roses and stocks and geraniums showing from behind the windows. The older roofs are green with grass, and dotted with the flowers of buttercup and clover. Some are roofed with turf alone. Goats feed

on the roofs, and ladders lead up to them, so that the owners can pull off burning rafters in case of a fire. There are goats in the streets too, snuffling amongst the disused fish.

Once the town was a strong place, but the star-shaped fort, which was built in 1735, is to-day obsolete, though field-guns and some breech-loaders on slides still grin through the embrasures, and the garrison of fifteen men take it in orderly turns to hoist the Norwegian flag. The racks of drying fish carcasses run along the side of its ramp, and bristling nosegays of cods' heads dangle on either side of its main entrance.

There are other towns of Norway given up to the cult of the cod, but nowhere is it so entirely the one staple of commerce as in this ancient settlement so far within the Arctic Circle. The tail of the Gulf Stream keeps its climate equable. It is never very hot and never very cold, and in this it differs vastly from the interior of the continent to the southward, where both extremes prevail; and if it has to put up with a six months' night in the winter of the year, with only a slight lightening of the gloom at midday to tell that the sun is still somewhere in the universe to keep the world a-move, at the same time it has another six months when all lamps can be dismantled and put away, and day burns high all round the clock and round again.

But the summer is the time when commerce bristles. It is then that the larger merchants toil to make their wealth; and when the lamps begin to kindle in the windows, they take the mail steamers and go away to follow the retiring sun. Some merely retreat to Tromsö, some to Bergen, some to Petersburg; but there are others who go to Italy and Southern Europe; and there is one who washes the cod-stink from him, and dons the garb of fashion, and winter after winter hies him to a tiny principality on the Riviera, where they keep a roulette bank, which it is his mood to try and break. The gambling rooms down there are cosmopolitan, certainly, but I wonder how many people have guessed that they usually contain a stock-fish prince who gets his wealth from the chilly Polar sea?

Now Vardö was not what we had come so far to see, or smell. We wanted to get started on our travel in Arctic Lapland as quickly as might be; and as soon as the whale-boat had set us ashore amongst the fish litter on one of the wharves, we set about pushing inquiries as far as they would go.

The success we met with in this pursuit was not brilliant. In fact the results might be catalogued as almost entirely negative.

In the first instance the horse-bubble was pricked once and for all. Lapland,

it appeared, was largely made up of swamps and lakes and rivers, and we were gravely informed that the horse was not a navigable animal. If we wanted to get through, we must walk and wade where that was possible, and canoe or raft the rest; and it was suggested that if we wished to ensure success, we had better in addition borrow two pairs of good reliable wings to help us. Anything we wished to take with us must be borne about our own persons or carried on the backs of hired men. And this was about all the definite information we could arrive at. The cause of the deficit was simple: during the summer months, communication across the interior was entirely interrupted, and Vardö could not be expected to know much about a journey which was never done.

In winter, when the snow crust hardened, and the rivers and the lakes were roofed with massive ice, then movement about the country was a comparatively easy thing. There were recognised routes, and the traveller could pack himself into one of the boat-like, reindeer sledges, and move along over the frozen surface at from six to ten miles per hour, and be sure of relays of deer at certain appointed stations. But in summer the deer were away deep in the fjelds, fattening on the ivory-yellow moss; they were useless to travel with through swamps and across deep open water, and the mosquitoes would have maddened them if they had been tried; and, in consequence, the natives of the interior bowed to the inevitable. They just stayed in their farms, or their fishing-camps, or their herd-stations, and worked during the brief summer months to store up food against the long grim frozen night of winter.

At first, then, it was pointed out to us that we were proposing to do an impossibility, and it was suggested that we should either wait in Vardö till the snows came and sledges could be used, or abandon the Lapland expedition and go off to explore the Petchora, or visit that fascinatingly unknown island, Novaya Zemblya. We quite saw the charm of these two last alternatives, and made arrangements for riving the secrets from Novaya Zemblya some other season, and thinning its flocks of deer and polar bears, and charting the Matoskin Skyar; but for the present Lapland was what our souls hankered after, and we had got to get there somehow.

It is not to be denied, though, that the Novaya Zemblya scheme had its seductions. There was in Vardö harbour a weird, clumsy craft of the type locally known as “yot,” which had visited that island a-many times with a crew of hunters. She had two masts with a square sail (not lug) hoisting on each, and her best point of sailing was more or less before the wind. With the wind anywhere ahead, she just had to run into shelter, or drift, till the breeze chose to veer again.

She had no notion whatever of ratching to windward, and was not addicted to making certain or rapid passages. That summer she was laid up. During the previous summer (having sailed in the spring) she had gone out to the Kara Strait, and then pushed up along the Western Novaya Zemblyan coast, following the line of drift-ice as it retreated north. She had an ample crew on board, and these made short expeditions inshore, taking with them powder and shot, and bringing back deer skins and deer meat. They seldom went far inland from the coast, for fear lest the clumsy "yot" should be blown off in some sudden gale, and they would be left without means of retreat; and they went for the commercial business of meat-hunting alone, just as their fellows hunted the seas for fish; and when their holds were full of venison and peltries, it was a case of 'bout-ship with them, and back to Vardö again as fast as they could drive her.

We could not find that any of these hunters had so much as shut the eye of sleep upon the island. Samoyedes were alleged to reside there permanently, shifting their *chooms* from point to point as the struggle for a lean subsistence prompted; and in the south there certainly was a Russian colony in the leading strings of the Government of Archangel, and visited once a year by an erratic steamer. But, as I say, the great bulk of the island was *terra incognita*; there was no reason why it should be exceptionally impassable; and there was every cause to expect that it would be plentifully rambled over by fowl of all sorts—and possibly the great auk, who knew?—and graciously blessed in the matter of four-footed big game.

The charm of the Arctic (which must be felt to be understood) had got us well in tow, and we licked our lips over the thought of this unknown isle, and drunk up all available yarns concerning it, and made exhaustive plans to explore it in the not very distant future. But we did not allow this mere flirtation to seduce us away from the more immediate business of the present. Lapland was what we wanted, and it was on schemes for crossing Lapland at which we hammered with unremitting industry.

At last, after much pressing, it was admitted that we might possibly find carriers for our transport at the other side of the Varanger fjord, but at the same time it was pointed out that we probably should not. At any rate the route from Puolnak was utterly impracticable. Our only chance was to start from the Neiden Elv, cross from there to Enare See, boat that, and then trust to luck. Provisions, we were told plainly, it was most unlikely we should find, but (so absolutely ignorant were these Vardö people of the interior of Lapland) the prospects of sport were said to be extremely rosy. There were few bear or other big game, to

be sure, but the gun would provide us with fowl in all abundance for the pot. And, anyway, it was entirely useless to further recruit our slender stock of tins. It was vastly improbable that we should be able to get carriers for the few we had got. It was more than likely that we should have to desert them, and press on alone with merely cartridges as personal luggage, if we were fools enough to try and travel through country at that season where it was not intended by Nature that man should go.

Now this information was none of it very encouraging, and none of it very definite. It was most of it frankly given as depending on mere hearsay. And although we advertised our want largely, and tramped up and down the fish-strewn streets to see countless likely people, nowhere could we find a man who knew Lapland personally, much less one who would (for a fee) act as guide, much less one who could serve as guide and interpreter both. For here was another difficulty: the Lapps spoke Quivnsk (or Finnish), and we did not. We possessed a slender vocabulary of Russian and Norsk between us, and this, it appeared, would be of as much value in Lapland as Spanish or Fijian. French, German, and English were equally useless, and, as it turned out, our remaining rags of schoolboy dog-Latin, made the only language which we brought into that country which we were able to turn to any practical use within its marches.

Finally, came the question of money. Finland is a Grand Duchy of Russia, conquered by that power from Sweden in 1809; but the Russian rouble has never become acclimatised there. The standard coin is the “mark,” which equals a franc, and which contains ten “pennis.” The mark has overflowed into Lapland; and so that country, peopled though it may be by the oldest tribe in Europe, and far behindhand in other matters, is still ahead of England in having the one civilised requisite of a decimal coinage.

But of Finnish marks in Vardö there was not so much as a single specimen even on a watch-chain. Norwegian kroner, dirty Russian notes, and greasy kopecks were current in all abundance, and so were comely English sovereigns. But of money to help us into this fenced-in Lapland we could not get one doit. And so, as an intermediate step, we procured roubles and kopecks, and a rare bother we had with them later on before we could get them exchanged further. But of that small distraction we were blissfully ignorant just then. We did not miss it either. We had quite enough other preliminary difficulties to keep us occupied.

In the meanwhile the *Windward* was getting a new main-topsail yard and reefing spar made by a local ship’s carpenter with a tendency to dipsomania, and

in spite of her desperate hurry to depart Polewards, she was kept lingering. And the good fellows we had chummed with during that pleasant voyage from the Thames, pervaded the town, and competed with one another in abusing its all-embracing stink. But as the days went on, the stink was an atmospheric effect which one got used to, and I could imagine in time one would feel almost lonely without it. To use a professional term, it was the necessary “local colour.” It never faltered in its vehemence, never varied in its ample quality. Come gale, come rain, it was always there, always ready to touch the nostril with its firm caress. It tinctured the wind with its full-flavoured strength, it came off to the yacht and got into the onion salad on the cabin table, it even climbed down into the engine-room and odorised that with the essence of departed cod.

One likened the smell of the place to the lamp of the Persian fire-worshippers elsewhere. Neither is ever allowed to go out. Day by day one is replenished with oil, the other with new fishy débris, each with sacred care. For those Northmen know that if once the stink of fish died out, Vardö would cease to exist. The barren rocks of the island barely show so much as a blade of grass. Nothing but fish stands between their town and obliteration.

CHAPTER II

ACROSS THE VARANGER FJORD TO ELVENAES, WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE FISHING OF FINNER WHALE, AND A NARRATIVE OF TRAVELS WITH A JEW.

One of the most looked-forward-to items of our original programme had been to see the *Windward* pull her anchors out of European mud for the last time before she went to wrestle with the Arctic floe. But the ship's carpenter ashore who had in charge that new main-topsail yard was slow even in his sober moments; and although every one in authority raged at the delay, not even statements in Anglo-Saxon (or Scottish) as to his personal worthiness could bustle him out of his dawdling gait. So in the end the *Windwards* saw us off, instead of our doing the like by them.

We took passage across the broad Varanger fjord to Jarfjord in a little coaster, and as she steamed out between the harbour walls and met the roll outside, all hands on the *Windward*, both forward and aft, yelled themselves hoarse, and we sent back our voices in reply. Then up and down from their peak went the blue ensign, as the big expedition wished the little one luck, and we found a Norwegian flag stopped on the rail, and hoisted that up to the head of the poop-staff (which was as high as my chin), and dipped it with all goodwill in reply. There were Norwegians, and Finns, and Russians, and Lapps on the coaster, come from the villages on the Varanger to do their marketing at the big town, and at first I fancy they thought us Englishmen mad, but after half an hour or so they most of them retired to the 'tween decks very sea-sick, and after that they ceased to give us any thought at all.

We lolled down the northern coast of the Varanger in the trough of a lusty swell, and periodically we called in at some small, bleak, dreary harbour, where drying nets formed a festoon before the houses, and drying cod on their wooden racks, and masses of gray inhospitable stone blocked in the background. Then when we had negotiated all our ports of call the helm was starboarded, and we stood out across the broad waters of the fjord towards the gleaming snow mountains which hedged in the country of the Lapps thirty miles away on the

other side.

Fishers we passed on the way, Russians with long hair and Tartar faces, clumsy high-booted Finns, and queer-garbed Lapps, swinging over the swells in their viking boats, toiling at their miles of long-lines. And then a rain squall drove down, blotting out the view, and we cowered under the green canvas dodger in front of the wheel on the little coaster's spar deck, and shivered at the chill.

But presently, out of the grayness of the rain squall there came an old familiar scent, and the mate at the wheel pulled lustily at the syren string to advertise our whereabouts. An answering hoot came back, and then through the mist a small green-painted steamer of some thirty tons burden loomed out, slowly bearing down upon us. Her pace was almost imperceptible, but a cumbersome harpoon-shell gun on her stem-head gave us the necessary hint as to her occupation, and presently we could make out two towing hawsers astern of her, and a bloated finner whale made fast, tail foremost, to each.

The fish were blown up like balloons with decomposition, and like balloons they were striped with longitudinal gores. Their jaws were just awash, and oil oozed from them in a slimy fan. The smell of them was almost past endurance. The little green whaler had killed, perhaps, three hundred miles away, and was towing her catch back to the home factory for realisation. And a valuable catch it was too. The big black bull was worth all of £250; and although the cow whale, which showed her ivory-white belly, was smaller, she would probably fetch her £200 with bone at its then enormous price.

This fishery of the blue-finned whale, or, as he is more technically named, the finner, is an industry of comparatively modern birth, and has its centre in these bleak Northern seas. The right whale and the sperm whale have been hunted for how many centuries I do not know; the mist of ages has closed over the first capture, and not many more years will pass before the last score is nicked in the tally. The right whales have been chased almost entirely from the face of known waters; they are searched for from Davis Straits to the Kara Sea; ships have looked for them amongst the tabular bergs of the Antarctic, but the fishery is on its last legs. Even with bone at £40 a ton, the Nantucket and the Peterhead owners are dropping out of what they consider a dying business. This newer fishery has, however, increased by such leaps and bounds that in 1894 the kill amounted to 1500 head. And all the credit is due to a Norwegian skipper, one Svend Foyn.

The finner is no stranger in the North. Whalers of all countries have seen him spout and gambol for three hundred years, and have cursed him with maritime point and fluency. Occasionally some harpooner, disbelieving tradition, made fast to a finner, and experienced that sensation which the *vaquero* found when he lassoed the Mexican State Express. And as fishing implements developed, they shot at him with harpoon guns and riddled him with explosive lances. But the end was always the same, it was either “cut” or “swamp,” and there was another white-painted whale boat losing way over the swells, with a white-faced crew, no harpoon, and an empty tub of line.

Until 1865 the finner whale defied the fishermen of the world, but in that year Captain Svend Foyn went North with new ideas for conquering the brute’s prodigious vitality; and though he did not succeed at first, though, indeed he was constantly at shoulder-touch with sudden death, he figured out the right scheme at last, and then reaped a harvest well earned. He died, only a year or two back, the richest man in Norway.

Captain Svend Foyn went into this matter in middle life and already rich. He had two objects in view. In the first instance he wished to be successful where all the world had failed, and conquer the only animal remaining which man had not subdued. And in the second place he was desirous of making money. He was a man scientifically ignorant; he was quite uneducated beyond the narrow lines of his own craft; but he was full of wooden-headed pluck, and possessed of a mule’s determination.

He started in the right way. He discarded the slow, clumsy, single-topsail, wooden barque, with auxiliary steam, and her fleet of carvel-built rowing-boats, and set off in a steamer of fifty tons, which would tow in the wake of a harpooned finner without breaking the line. He believed that this would not only tire out the whale with quickness, but would also prevent the carcase from sinking to the bottom when life had gone, after its usual fashion.

Captain Svend Foyn’s first experiences must have been exciting. He was frequently towed by some maddened fish at a twenty-knot rate through a heavy sea, with his fore-deck smothered with water up to the bridge. On these occasions the engines would be rung to “full astern,” and the little steamer would hang on in tow for twelve hours at a stretch, and to the jaded sportsman, in search of a new sensation, this method of hunting may be recommended with

confidence. But the conclusion was always the same; either Captain Foyn was forced to cut, or the harpoon drew; or the finner died and sunk: at any rate, he never gathered his game.

Time after time his harpoons made fast, and ninety tons of agonised living flesh plucked the little steamer, like a dragging child, across those desolate plains of ocean. Years came and the years went, each dull with disappointment. But yet he did not give in. He mounted artillery, and bombarded the finner with heavy shot, and still without effect; he tried plot after plan, and plan after plot; he expended £20,000 and human limbs in his experiments, and finally, out of all the failures he evolved success. He mounted on the stem-head of his steamer a stunted heavy-breeched gun, which carried an explosive bomb with a huge harpoon, weighing together over eighty English pounds. The idea of playing the finner like a trout was abandoned once and for all. The explosion of the bomb shot it dead; its huge vitality was snapped in a second, and a three-inch warp made fast to the harpoon kept it from sinking, where a thinner whale line would have been snapped.

The strongest fish that swam in all the seas was beaten, and Captain Svend Foyn patented his tactics and took off his oilskins. Then the business part of him came in, and, until his monopoly ceased, his launches were catching a hundred finners a year, which may be valued at £250 apiece.

The fishery has spread since that monopoly granted by law has run out, and other people are permitted now to profit by the schemes evolved from Captain Svend Foyn’s brain. Anywhere where the rice-like animacula on which the whale feeds are to be found, there the little whaling steamers may be seen also, with a look-out man peering from the crow’s nest at their foremast head. In the fjords and bays which lie round that grim coast to eastwards of the North Cape, in Iceland, and even up some of the snug inlets of the Varanger Fjord, are numberless stations where the little steamers can bring their catch for caldrons and axes to resolve into its commercial elements. The finner soon swells after he is dead, and lies on the water like a half-submerged balloon, striped, too, balloon fashion, with gore-like seams. The tail flukes are cut adrift, and he is towed ignominiously stern first, with a wake of oil fanning out from his jaws, and a smell which grows with the days, and beats down the crisp sea air. But when the finner is beached, and the axes and spades strip off the blubber from the pink beef below, and cut away the whalebone from the head, then there arises a stink which poisons heaven. Still, custom is everything. The workers toil at the trying-out the oil, at resolving the carcase into manure, and tinned meats, and cow-

fodder, and at packing the precious bone, and it never strikes them that a smell is abroad which is almost palpable in its solidness. But use is everything in tackling these sort of scents. We were beginning to find that out for ourselves.

Meanwhile the cold was making us blue. We had amplified our wardrobes by the purchase of a leather coat apiece in Vardö, and we had on these, and slop-chest oilskins, but the frosty gale beat through them all as though they had been gossamer silk. To go below was impossible. The coaster's 'tween decks was an Aceldama of unfettered sea-sickness. The only warm spot on the spar deck was the engine-room skylight, and that was occupied by a festive Jew carousing with the skipper and a couple of farmers from the Russian side. We did not feel inclined to rejoice with them just then, for, to tell the truth, we were deadly tired. It was ten o'clock at night, and staring daylight, of course. But then it had been staring daylight with us continuously since we crossed the Arctic circle a fortnight before, and as it is hard to put in regular sleep with the sun burning high in the heavens, we had missed many a regular watch below. And the reaction was on us then. So we turned in on the deck planks below the green canvas dodgers in front of the coaster's wheel, and slept solidly and refreshingly for two whole hours.

The hoot of the syren roused us. We had crossed the broad waters of the fjord, and were close in to the other side. High bare mountains covered with snow that was dappled with hummocky rock rose sheer up from the surf. The sky above was gray and cold. The place was indescribably sterile and savage. At one point, cowering at the foot of the mountains, a little white building stood out like some roosting sea-fowl against a background of dark craggy rock. We were heading towards it, and gradually as we closed with the coast it shaped itself into a church. It was Oscarkirche, which marks the sea end of the frontier line which delimits Russia and Norway.

We shut off steam here, and a boat came out to us from the beach. There is a Russian fishing village in a masked bay to the eastward, to which we sent a pedlar ashore with a travelling box of buttons and German knives. Poor man, he did not seem to anticipate a large rush of business, if one could judge from his face as he lowered himself and his pack into the dancing boat. And yet probably his coming was the event of the summer. It is hard to conceive a more desolate place than that Russian fishing village. But it was a summer settlement only. In winter it was deserted. And the Russian Government do their best to foster its puny trade. It is a free port; there is no customs duty on either imports or exports: canny Russia does not wish to thrust available trade into the hands of its

Norwegian neighbour next door.

Away we steamed again just outside the spouting reefs, towards the Jacob's Elv. The wind was blowing straight down on us from Polar ice, and the cold was bitter. A whale swam parallel to us, some half mile to seaward, sending up at intervals spouts of feathery gray-blue fog.

We put into many dreary little coves, where a handful of fisher-folk, with their backs against the snow and the grim walls of stone, dragged a small living from the cold waters which lapped against their thresholds. We lay off the beaches whilst these came off and did their traffic, and then on again through the reefs to the next stop. Wretched as these villages were, their populace had always spirit on hand to wrangle over politics, and no Irish Nationalist could hate his "dacent Protestant" neighbour as thoroughly and efficiently as one of these semi-savages who held "Left" opinions could loathe another who belonged to the "Right." And they carried this distaste beyond their social relations. They had the "boycott" in full working order; "Right" would not trade with "Left" under any pretence whatever; and if Left could push "Right" a little farther towards starvation than his normal half-fed average, he considered he was doing the State a personal service.

At another time we could have moralised over this self-hindrance principle with weight and dignity, but just then we were too wrapped up in our own discomforts and the prospects of worse to follow to worry very much over the foolishness of other fools. The chill was making us shudder. The grim, savage hills of stone seemed to speak of an infinity of hardships and wretchedness before we sighted the waters of the Bothnia. And each of us told the other so often that he "liked it," that the very repetition of the statement gave it the lie. Alone of all the ship's company the Jew did not mind. He sat down below, and nipped brandy all the live-long night, and roared songs in all the tongues of Pentecost. He was a most cheery fellow.

We were off the entrance to Jarfjord a little after midnight. The sun was high above the poop-staff. The air was clear and icy, and spray leaped in jets from reefs on every side of us. The entrance to the fjord lay amongst a huddle of glacier-worn rocks, with a great table mountain set up in the middle of them, all snow-clad, all entirely sterile. The little coaster wound in and out amongst the reefs with easy confidence. Two small whitened islets, alive with sea-fowl, masked the entrance; and spouts of mist like the blowing of whales rose up from reefs awash on either beam. It was a giddy piece of pilotage. In the crevices, snow lay down to the water's edge, all browned with dust. It was hard to imagine

any spot more savage, and grim, and desolate.

But a change came swiftly. Once we had passed the mouth of this sea-river, and green tints grew on the rock walls, which deepened as we steamed on. It was only slime at first, but then came patches of moss, then bosky lawns of grass, and dwarf shrubs in the more sheltered corries. The snow line on the hillsides rose towards the summits. The snow patches in the crevices below grew smaller and more few. Then in a tiny bay we saw a cabin of logs set in a glow of green. Here was young rye sprouting. And yet that horrible coast line of the Varanger which we had just left was only two miles distant, and by straining the eye we could see the horizon whiten where the seas creamed over the guardian reefs.

THE GATES OF RUSSIAN LAPLAND.

The walls of the fjord were still high and some quarter of a mile apart. The lane of water ran between them, straight as a canal. But always as we went on mountains grew lower. Presently at the mouth of a contributory valley we opened out on a small settlement of felt-roofed wooden houses, with what looked like colossal pink sausages drawn up on the beach before them. As we drew nearer a waft of odour came to us down a slant of the wind, and we laughed in pleasure because we were going to meet again old friends that we thought we had left behind for good. The pink sausages were flensed Finner whales. In the wooden buildings they were trying out the blubber, sorting and packing the precious bone, and working up the beef into its many useful shapes. And the smell of it all filled the air till one could almost dredge it out in handfuls.

Once more we steamed on, beyond sight of the sea now, with the mountains drooping to mere uplands on the fjord sides, with the scrub trees replaced by forests of graceful twenty-foot birches, which covered the gentle slopes. The air was warm—warm as an English summer. And, note well the occasion, the first mosquito came to us. We hailed him as a friend then. Hayter had seen him last in Florida, I had heard his music a year before on the Gold Coast, and we both mentioned that the mosquitoes had no power over us, that our skins were invulnerable. Little did we know the biting power of this Northern monster; bitterly were we to learn it.

The fjord narrowed, the little steamer anchored, and we put ashore with some score of others. Our slender baggage was to go round to Elvenaes, on the Syd Varanger, but we had elected to walk across the intervening neck of land.

And now with the memory big in us of that grim savage coast not a dozen miles away, we stepped out down a veritable country lane between slender birches, with linnets singing behind the foliage on either hand. There were oak ferns and bracken under the trees, and in the open meads, buttercups, pansies, cow-parsley, forget-me-nots, wild pelargonium, dandelions, ranunculi, bright pink campions, and cranberries, with everlasting moss, and other mosses, and grotesque lichens in all abundance. The comely woods were musical with birds, and portioned off by rustic fences. Here and there were gates, slung on hinges, and then would come a fine trim house of logs covered with painted weather boarding. We might have been walking in the Tyrol. And when we remembered that the Arctic circle was over two hundred miles farther to the southward, and the desolation we had come through still close at hand to the north, we had to grant that Nature could perform more white magic than we ever credited her with before.

The narrowing fjord ended in a rolling bay, and against a boat-house built there was a great cemetery of reindeer horns, heaped up as things of no beauty or value. A stream went on beside the road, babbling into idyllic trout-pools. Cow-bells tinkled from within the woods. The passengers from the coaster had branched off singly and in groups till only seven of us were left: the roystering Jew, a gloomy young farmer in high boots, with his sick wife, a nondescript girl, and our two selves. At intervals we talked, and the Jew gathered flowers for the women, and then we came to a large house of wood.

It was exactly three o’clock in the morning, but in this sunlit land no one troubles much with bed, and the owner was standing in his doorway to take the air. The Jew made discourse—all tongues seemed equally facile to him,—and the householder came out and shook us all by the hand, and insisted that we should come inside. The women went off in charge of his women-kind, but us men he took into the parlour, where we gazed upon a picture of Martin Luther, some Sloyd work, and an elaborate stove, and watched the farmer grow drowsy over yarns of bear-hunting in the winter months. But presently our host set before us beer—delicious Bayersk öl—which we all drank standing, with a heartfelt cry of “skaal”! We wanted that beer badly, and it came to us as a pleasant surprise. We fancied we had left such luxuries behind us for many a long week; for Lapland is what they call in America “a Prohibition State.”

The Jew by this time had quite assumed our chaperonage, and though inclined to linger over his beer and to hint at another bottle, said he would come with us when we decided to start. Our fellow-travellers came to the door to see

us off. The sick woman had grown quite a pretty colour from her walk and from the mild excitement of drinking milk. And we took leave of them all with handshakes as though they were ancient friends. Finally, the Jew tore himself away, and we set out again towards Elvenaes under his convoy.

He was a truly joyous creature, this strayed Hebrew, full of carnal appetites, but revelling in the beauties of this Arctic oasis which we were passing through. He discoursed poetry, time-tables, natural history, and the price of furs all in the same breath. He was full of surprising moods (and I fear a trifle drunk), and he swung his brandy-bottle in one hand, and carried a black umbrella tucked under the other arm. He knew all about our expedition and bubbled with advice: there were no horses procurable even if horses would have been any good; there was a Russian Boundary Commission at work in the neighbourhood, which had mopped up all the horses, and all the boats, and all the available men; the Neiden route to Enare was quite impracticable: our way was to push up the Pasvik Elv, and if we would leave it to him he would see that we got both boats and men, even if he had to impress Russian soldiers for our carriers. He was a most liberal Jew—with promises, and other people's beer.

Pines were growing by the wayside now, and heath, and delicate shrubs. The road was a real road, metalled and embanked, with wooden bridges over the streams, and stone culverts to carry away the water. Low wooded hills rose on either side, and the notes of cuckoos floated down to us faintly over their tree-tops. The scenery was delicately beautiful. We might have been walking through a park, suitable (as the advertisements say) for a nobleman or country gentleman.

The one drawback to our perfect pleasure were the thickening swarms of mosquitoes. The Jew suffered from them terribly. But even they did not damp his spirits. He slapped the insect pests from his crimson face with a whisk of green leaves, whistled a stirring march, waved the brandy-bottle as a drum major waves his cane, and stepped out finely.

As we went on, higher mountains came into view ahead, violet-tipped on their wooded summits. The road wound stolidly on over bridges, and embankments, and hollows. Lakes appeared round which we had to skirt, and then other lakes with wooded islands, and cascades tinkling down into them from the hills. The Jew struck up the Soldier's March out of Gounod's *Faust* to words of his own to put spirit into the pace, and grew more hot, and slapped at the mosquitoes more busily than ever. He gave us names for all the lakes we passed, and all the rivers, and all the hills, and even went so far in his courtesy as to invent titles for streams that did not negotiate a dozen gallons of water to the

hour. The guide mania was strong in him, and he was touching us on a tender place.

Gradually, by failing to notice his remarks, and by skirmishing off the road to hunt for the nests of birds, we contrived to let the festive one draw ahead, and for the next two miles we marched on together in peaceful enjoyment. We had crossed the divide; we were heading down into the beautiful valley of the Pasvik Elv where it joins the Syd Varanger; and we were almost within touch of this mysterious Lapland, which the wise of Vardö had done so much to keep us away from.

But we had not done with the Jew yet. A dip of the road and a sudden turn brought us in view of a gorgeous vista up the wooded Pasvik valley. The silver river sat between two sloping walls of greenery, from which the cuckoos called; and where it forked, a white turreted chapel reared up from beneath an umber cliff. In the distance beyond, the whole river leaped down rocks in a cascade of foaming cream. And there on a bench by the roadside sat our Hebrew incubus waiting for us. He raised the brandy bottle, swigged out the dregs, and quoted Heine. Then “Boris Gleb” said he, and waved the empty flagon towards the pure white tracery of the chapel. And “Russia” quoth he, and flung the bottle towards the rearing wall of trees beyond the river. He slid off on to the turf, and settled himself luxuriously for a doze, and we annexed the bench. We stayed there an hour absorbing the beauties of that scene, and I think speculating not a little on the unknown Lapland which lay beyond. And then the tinkle of a bell roused us. A horse came past, trotting up the road; and after him came a Lapp, with a bridle in his hand, trying to catch the horse.

We got up and moved away. The Jew was still sleeping on the turf under the sunlight. It was the last we ever saw of him, and although we are in his debt for beer and fiction, I do not think we ever want to see him more. A little farther on we came across a big shingle-roofed house with outbuildings, set on a neck of land above the narrows, which commands a prospect up and down the river; and there we found entertainment. It was half-past seven in the morning, so we had supper and went to bed.

We made the most of those two unexpected beds. We did not come across beds again for many a weary mile.

Deep-sea Fishing

CHAPTER III

BY CANOE TO THE NEIDEN, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE RUSSIAN LAPP'S DAUBSFEST AT BORIS GLEB

The Lapp in Lapland has his moments of personal cleanliness, as will be remarked in their place. The Russian Lapp, who resides outside Lapland proper, especially if he be of the fisher variety, scorns the outward application of soap and water. In summer a good cake of dirt, especially if it be well smeared in with tar, goes far to ward off the incessant gnawings of the mosquito; and in winter, when the mercury of a thermometer moves always sluggishly far below zero, what poor man would willingly strip off an extra coat of clothing?

The Russian Lapp indeed has few true and Lappish attributes. He resembles far more nearly the ordinary Russian *moujik*. He would even wear the orthodox knee-boot if he could afford it, but he is usually in a state of abject poverty, and attires himself in whatever rags may come to hand.

He is not in the least picturesque. Cover up his face and hair, and put him in a Bradford street, and he would pass for a British tramp, without work, or any inclination to find work. But his gipsyish face, with its black, beady eyes, and high cheek-bones, might betray him somewhat, and anyway the cut of his hair, which is worn along the eyebrows in front and fringing the coat collar (*à la moujik*) behind, would cause the more curious of Bradford wayfarers to turn round and stare.

The Lapp is not much in the reindeer business here on the Russian side. To begin with, the country is ill-adapted to the raising of deer, as it is mostly made up of lake and swamp; and as a further reason, the demand for venison here would be small, since the Russian orthodox church prohibits meat for quite half the year. So fishing becomes the Lapp's chief industry, and by fishing he manages to wriggle along just beyond the grip of starvation.

He permeates the lower reaches of the Pasvik Elv and the shores of the Syd Varanger Fjord in considerable quantities, and there is a settlement of him at Boris Gleb, just below the falls of the Pasvik, round the white turreted church which we had seen from the Jarfjord road. At Boris Gleb he is at his best. He is under the direct eyebrow of Holy Russia at Boris Gleb, and has his place in

statistics as an orthodox member of the Greek Church. His houses are of wood, raised above the damp of floods on curious three-foot piles, and the elements of sanitation are taught to him by official pressure. He is not obtrusively sanitary, even in Boris Gleb, which is by way of being a model village, with a rather high-class patron saint, whom the devout from afar honour with pilgrimages; but he wears there a kind of official “company manners,” and he is quaintly ready to be stared at by the foreigner.

In the Elvenaes neighbourhood he is known as a Skolte, or bald Lapp, because though in the present year of grace he wears an ordinary head of hair, at one time a skin disease ran through the community and made the heads as bare as a boulder of ice-worn rock.

Now under the brilliant glare of a summer sun, Boris Gleb is not a good place to visit. Gazed at from afar—say from above Elvenaes, as we saw it first—it is a fairy chapel set in beauty. Looked at close-to, it is merely a flimsy building of wood, freakishly architected, and painted an indifferent white. The inside is tawdry. The priest is a vulgar showman who would bring out his mother’s corpse for a fee, and the interesting model Skolte Lapps are just about as artificial as all the rest of the paraphernalia. One does not exactly blame either parson or flock; they are the possessors of a spectacle, and they exhibit it for a living; only one kicks one’s self for going to stare.

But Boris Gleb during one night of the long dark gloom of winter shows a very different scene. On the Russian 6th of January (the 18th by our reckoning) there takes place the annual Daubsfest, and from over the bleak snows of the fjeld come in the reindeer sledges of Lapps who hold to the Orthodox faith. For a week previous to the 6th, they are straggling in towards the sacred place, and they crowd into the wooden houses of the Skolte Lapps settlement, and spend much time in prayer. On the 5th of January there is a solemn fast. On the day of the Daubsfest they all come out of the warm lamp-lit houses into the Arctic gloom, men and women both, treading barefoot in the snow, all clad merely in a single linen shirt. They are girt under the arm-pits by a stout woollen scarf, and in that bitter windy cold they march three times round the church, solemnly chanting. The priest in his stiff embroidered robes leads, and he is a showman no longer now, but an earnest Russian pope; and with him go the surpliced acolytes bearing candles. Three times round the white church they move, the icy wind whipping the bare bodies of the singers, and the snow curls wreathing round their ankles. And then they go off to the middle of the frozen river, and the ceremony proceeds.

A hole has been dug with hatchets through the ice, and one by one the Lapps come forward from the circle of worshippers, and the attendants take them in charge. They lay hold of the scarf beneath the arms, and the pilgrim is soused once, twice, and a third time deep into the cold black water which scours so swiftly beneath the ice; and each time the pope waves the three-armed crucifix before the pilgrim's eyes before they go under. And when all have been immersed, they go back to the houses, men and women both, and rub themselves with cloths, and put on deerskin cloaks, and drink scalding tea in all abundance; and they begin on the morrow to collect upon their persons another twelve months' dirt.

But whilst it is in action, that Daubsfest at Boris Gleb is an impressive spectacle. The crowd of shirt-clad Lapps standing there in the cold and dark of the Arctic night, the faint light of the candles and torches flaring in the wind, the long-haired pope in his stiff, embroidered vestments bright with barbaric colours, the aurora borealis burning with its unspeakable glories far off on the Northern sky, and the great white church looming weirdly through the gloom, make up a sight that few who have seen it will ever be inclined to forget.

DAUBSFEST AT BORIS GLEB.

At Elvenaes once more a change of plan was forced upon us, and this time it was the Czar who interfered. His Imperial Majesty had sent a Boundary Commission to fix the frontier line between his possessions and those of his cousin of Norway, and almost all the available men of Boris Gleb and Elvenaes had gone to the Commissioner's camp either as servants, or advisers, or mere camp followers. Consequently the passage to Enare See up the Pasvik Elv, which requires many arms to wield the paddles and make the portages, was debarred. The utmost force we could rake up was two dilapidated Russian Skolte Lapps, who would ferry us in a canoe by the fjords and rivers to the Neiden, where we must trust to luck in finding carriers who would take us through overland.

We accepted the alternative with philosophy, and told them we would start at once. They said "certainly," and proceeded to waste the next two hours in elaborately doing nothing. We sat down and smoked and watched them: they were most laborious over it; they sweated and perspired; and at last, having

completed nothing most satisfactorily, they announced smilingly that they were ready to get under way, and we stepped on board.

The little craft was very much like a Canadian canoe in her lines, and floated corkily. She was stained a rich saddle-colour with tar, which came off in generous patches where one leaned against it. The younger Lapp (whom we called Morris, through his resemblance to an acquaintance) sat on the floor-boards forward, with his back in the curve of the bow, and sculled with a pair of paddles which worked in withy beckets on thole pins. Feodor, the skipper, squatted aft, with his paddles also in beckets, and laboured on whichever side was required. As no more paddles were available, we two English posed as passengers, and lay in magnificence amidship on a luxurious couch of young green birch shoots, with our worldly goods and chattels bestowed fore and aft of us. The canoe just held her load, and there was nothing much to spare, and the Lapps occupied another half hour in getting her trimmed to their satisfaction. Then Morris pushed out into the swirling rapids of the Pasvik, and we left behind us Elvenaes, and those who waved us farewell, probably for always.

That journey down the Syd Varanger lingers in the memory. A blazing sun dwelt overhead, in a sky as blue as one could see in Tripoli. The fjord sides were sloped in graceful curves and draped with comely greenery. The cuckoo cried to us from the woods. The air above the deep-blue water was dancing with heat, and flights of whirring cormorants and duck gave it life. I think, too, that our sense of comfort was accentuated by the knowledge that not a dozen miles to the northward the cold waves of the Varanger chilled the fishers to the bone, and frozen cliffs and snowy ridges glared icily at the sky. Comfort and complacency depend so much upon comparisons.

The absence of mosquitoes, too, was very grateful. Our faces were all mottled in close patterns from the bitings of the day before, and we told ourselves then that we had paid the initiation fee and had earned immunity for the future. We thought that past experience had taught us all about mosquitoes, but we were destined to learn a deal more about the Northern variety of the breed before we were through at the other side of Arctic Lapland.

The two Lapp canoe men provided us in the meanwhile with plenty of food for observation. Feodor was the wily one. Work was not a thing Feodor loved, and he shirked it like a diplomatist. One or other of his thole pins was constantly carrying away. That naturally had to be replaced. To do this he unshipped his paddles (which had blades shaped like the “Warre” oar at Eton) and clambered forward over the baggage, and sorted amongst the green boughs which formed

our couch, till he found a piece of stick of suitable diameter. He had got a reliable eye, and always chose one that would be certain to break if properly handled; and then he went aft again and whittled it accurately down to size with his sheath-knife. Then he would give the withy beckets a thoughtful overhaul, and by the time he had got his paddles shipped again and in the water, he had usually earned a good twenty minutes' shirk. He was a wrinkled little gnome, this skipper of ours, incredibly dirty, and brimming with good humour. He had one available eye that gleamed like a bird's, and over the other he wore a grimy patch made fast with a piece of rope yarn round his lank black hair. Later on, when we got into a breeze, this patch kept blowing up and caused him much annoyance. It seemed that the eye itself was missing, and the wind got into the empty socket and gave him cold in the head. For which very sufficient reason he shipped his starboard paddle and held the patch in place with the spare hand, so as to keep out the draught. He was a wonderfully agile "sugarer" was this elderly Skolte Lapp.

Morris was different. He plugged away in the bows with never a grunt and never an easy. He rowed about thirty strokes to the minute, just in the water and out again, with a bent arm and without much pretence at a swing. One of us gauged these matters with a professional eye, but we did not feel inclined just then to set to work and reform the rowing style of Lapland. He was a whimsical fellow, this same Morris, always grinning at something, and always shaking back his wispy black hair from the front of his eyes. We tried to tempt him into travelling up-country with us, but he shuddered at the idea of getting out of touch with his birthplace.

We turned out of the Syd Varanger into Bogofjord and crept up by the flank of gray walls of naked upright rock against a strong ebb-tide, and amused ourselves by taking occasional compass-bearings, and marvelling at the inaccuracy of the published maps. Once we put ashore on a shelving rock covered with mussels, and the crew lunched off kippered salmon, which they ripped from the family joint in pieces with their fingers as they required it; and afterwards they sought recreation by scratching themselves thoroughly for half an hour. Then Morris put on a pair of fingerless, brown-skin gloves to keep his delicate paws from blistering, and we started again. A brown team of eider duck rustled past us, *ventre à l'eau*, heading for the sea, and then a school of porpoises surged by the canoe in chase of a shoal of flickering silver fish.

Swarms of mosquitoes accompanied the canoe in a noisy biting cloud, and it was some gloomy satisfaction to note that the Lapps suffered equally with ourselves. Feodor indeed suffered so much annoyance that he actually knocked off work to tie a grimy kerchief carefully round his head, which it took him twenty minutes to accomplish before he had managed it to his complete satisfaction.

Broods of duck, some familiar, some strange, began to flight, and we sighed and broke the tenth commandment. But the gun perforce had to stay in its mackintosh housing. The Norwegian Government (very properly) keeps a fatherly eye on all the game within its marches, and has appointed vigorous close-seasons for all except the outlaw wolf, the bear, the lynx, the fox, and wild cat. And they ram home the edict by a good healthy fine for wrongdoers, and a reward for the informer. Once over the Russian border it would be different. There are no game laws in Arctic Lapland. There is very little law of any description. We could bag there whatever came in our way. In fact, Feodor assured us with an impish grin that we might shoot a Laplander should we feel so disposed, provided always we ate him afterwards so as to conceal the carcass from a possible public view. Feodor, the one-eyed, was occasionally rather grisly in his ideas of wit and humour.

A heavy, drenching rain-squall came on and blotted out all view, and beat up a small, steep sea, which gave Feodor all he could do to keep the little canoe from being swamped; and as it was, we two passengers had to bale industriously to keep the water under. But we did not mind; the mosquitoes were driven away, and it was an ecstasy to be without them; the rain, too, cooled our itching bites.

But when we crossed the big fjord for the last time, and turned up between the low alluvial banks of the Neiden Elv, the wet squall blew over, and the sun blazed out again, making creation steam. The mosquitoes came back promptly and punctually, and got to work. On the mud banks, flocks of woodcock were digging for supper. Small black ducks took their fluffy broods for excursions on the broad shallow river, where salmon leaped for sheer sportiveness. Wading fowl plodded and cried in the adjacent marshes, and from the graceful birch forests which covered the alluvial flats, cuckoos hooted news of stolen nests. All the Arctic world was rejoicing in its summer.

And then civilisation began. There was a scrap of fencing here, and a rail to dry grass on there. A tiny hay barn on stilts perched gingerly on a promontory, and farther on was a hut with a man building wood sledges before his door. Then came five houses on a bluff, spread over half a mile, then two more single

dwellings, and afterwards naked river bank and scrub forest. We had passed the thick of Neiden town.

The shallow river was narrowing, and it became harder to push the canoe up against the stream. Presently some rapids showed in black and white ahead, and Feodor put the canoe's nose on a bank, and announced with a heartfelt sigh that the voyage was over. We got ashore, we and our chattels, and within an hour we had found a hospitable roof.

We spent some time there in talk, and then we set off along a narrow, muddy, trail up-stream parallel to the rapids. It seemed there was a man with influence who had a farm farther on, and if any one could collect carriers to take our goods across to Enare See, he was the man to do it. So we tramped along the trail till we came to the river again above the rapids, and then ferried over and called on the man with influence. He got out of bed to receive us; yes, he could do this thing we desired—for a consideration; and so we bought his influence, and bade him set about his collection there and then.

We walked on up the bank of the river to the Falls of the Neiden, where the best salmon pools lie. There was a Russian chapel on the way—a rude, bare cabin of naked logs, with a shuttered window, and a three-armed cross on one of its gables. The lower arm of these crosses is always on the slant, as by Russian tradition Christ had one leg shorter than the other. The Finns and Norwegians round here are Lutherans to a man, and they look upon everything outside Lutheranism as degrading superstition. So naturally they do nothing to keep the chapel in repair. And the stray Lapps from the Russian side, to whom it belongs, are too miserably poor to notice much the chapel's squalor and wretchedness.

There was a graveyard round this lonely fane of an alien faith—a bare, unenclosed patch of mounds, each surmounted by an axe, or shovel, or some implement used by the departed during his earthly life, and it struck me that heathendom and Christianity are sometimes very closely akin. Not a year before I had seen graves in Central African villages similarly decorated.

Farther on were the falls; and though they were too long to be impressive from a mere jaded sight-seer's point of view, they were most appetising when we considered the pools and rapids with the eye of a fisher for salmon. And here again was another grave, that of a man carried down the river from above, and stranded dank and drowned on a jutting rock of the foss. There was no headstone to speak of his fate and virtues, the mouldering remains of the usual overground coffin showed the manner of his sepulture. We laid the compass on the mound,

and found it was orientated accurately magnetic east and west, not allowing for the variation.

So the man had been buried with care and Christian hands, and not bundled into a box and covered up where he lay. And yet he had not been thought worth taking down to one of the Lutheran graveyards on the lower fjords. We wondered much what his story might be, but we could form no very reasonable hypothesis, nor could we find any person round there in the Neiden district who would tell us. They all reddened and said they did not know.

There was a quaintly cumbersome pipe on this lonely grave, and as it happened we were both collectors of the curious in smoking utensils. It was a temptation to carry it away. Let it be recounted then as something of a small virtue that we left the pipe where it lay.

Feodor and Morris—two Skilte Lapps

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE NEIDEN ELV TO ENARE SEE, WITH PUNGENT COMMENT ON THE HABITS OF FINNISH CARRIERS

The salmon fisheries of the Neiden River are jealously guarded assets. Some are held by riparian proprietors whose rights go to the imaginary line of mid-stream. These are Norwegians and Finns for the most part, though they might be Hebrews from the carefulness with which they strive not to be defrauded of a single fish. And the balance is State's land, rented out in the usual way. Nets are abundant, set out to stakes, with one end on shore; but rod-fishing is growing commoner. The local rod-fisherman, however, is but a crude production. His "pole" is comely enough, though heavy, but he persists in fishing a colossal fly of the "Jock Scott" order, ten times too big, and he uses it as though the water were a gong and the salmon could be attracted only by noise. Once hooked, the fish either breaks him or is jerked skyward like a silver bird. He would not play a whale; he does not know that such a process exists.

The Neiden fisherman goes out in a canoe, and his wife or a friend poles him in or about the rapids. The fish do not run big—a twenty-pounder is rare—but there are plenty of them, and the local artist annexes just as many as a very green amateur has any right to expect. Salmon-fishing to him has much the same interest as mowing swamp-grass for his cows, or cutting cord-wood for the winter: it is part of the daily labour, and it never occurs to him to look upon it as a sport. In fact the item of "sport" has been left out of his education; he looks with suspicion on any one who hankers after it; and, as a consequence, asks prices for using a rod on his bit of a stream which would be dear on the Namsen or any other crack salmon rivers of accessible Western Norway. It is not that he is averse to fingering the kroner note. On the contrary, he has a very great affection for money. But he has an exalted notion of the value of things, and, moreover, he is woodenly conservative. He likes to handle the salmon himself. He splits it open and kippers it, after which he stores the worst specimens away for future personal consumption, and packs off the balance to some place on the Vavanger fjord, where a steamer calls which will exchange it either for coin or groceries. His father did this, and his son will do it also, unless by the son's time no fish should be left in the river, as at the present rate of destruction may very

well happen.

But even had the fishing prospects of the Neiden River been ten times more appetising, they would not have induced us to make a stay there. The interior of Lapland lay beyond—a place of great lakes and rivers, of vast deer-packs and nomad herders; and we hungered to be amongst it all. Over night—under the blaze of a twelve o'clock sun—we had commissioned a man to find us carriers, and in the morning we crossed the river below that lonely Russian chapel, we and our goods, and in ten minutes the real troubles of the journey had fairly begun.

Never were such carriers. They were all able-bodied Finns, though one (and he was the strongest) had a hump like a Brahmin cow, another had a hare-lip, and the headman possessed a most virulent squint; but they were the most impracticable creatures that ever slouched over the face of the earth. Our luggage was not heavy; two negro carriers on the Congo or the Gold Coast would have capered with the whole lot of it; but through a wish for long quick marches, we had made it up into three light loads. There were two sacks, and a canvas-covered box containing a few tins, some cartridges, and four pounds of cake tobacco.

Now we both knew something about packs and loads in other parts of the world; but the Finn carrier was new to us, and his ways were strange; and it is always dangerous to introduce customs from a distance for consumption in a country whose difficulties you do not understand. So although we made suggestions, we did not insist on them, and the carriers muddled on with the preparations in their own way.

The neat, rectangular, canvas-covered box was eliminated first. We had looked upon it as an ideal "load"; in Africa there would have been a vigorous scramble for it; but the Finns said it was impossible to tackle anyhow. They scouted all suggestions of slinging, or carrying it hammock fashion, and fetched out another sack and made a re-stowal. Naturally the bundle so contrived was about as impossible to carry on human shoulders as a live porcupine would have been. So a blanket was taken out of one of the sacks and used as a pad. And next the sacks were objected to, and their contents split up, till finally our possessions were made into seven bundles of much fragility.

They worked hard over making this muddle; they took two mortal hours over it, and frequently called upon us for assistance; but finally they limbered up with the help of abundance of thongs of reindeer hide and rope, and we put backs to

the river and set off on our march.

The first halt came at the end of the first three hundred yards; a load had very naturally began to shift, and they all sat down to readjust it. The second halt came at the quarter mile, and then the stoppages became more frequent. We came to a standstill eight several times before we had covered the first mile, and expended exactly two hours and a half of time in doing it. And as during all this time the sun was blazing upon us with scorching force and the mosquitoes were biting like dogs, we were not unspeakably happy.

This start up to the fjeld was over sandy river-beds, through streams, swamps, and neck-high scrub. A month earlier the country had been under snow; a week before the tree buds had not burst; and here were dwarf birches and the Arctic willows in full leaf, and barely so much as a patch of white left even in the crannies of the distant hills. The Arctic summer has a great deal of work to get through in a very short space of time, and rushes its climatic effects. But, worst of all, the mosquito season had opened ten days before, and was in full swing. And such mosquitoes! Their cousins of Africa and the Southern States were nothing to them. They came in their milliards, gaunt gray fellows, without one grain of fear for death. They got their trunks inserted in some unlucky pore, and presently their bodies, from the wing-sockets backwards, would grow into transparent scarlet blobs. We were covered with blood splashes from slaying these vampires, and sore with slapping at them; but it was some selfish consolation to see that the men of the place suffered equally. Each of the Finns carried a bottle of brown Stockholm tar, which dangled from the waist-belt against his knife, and with the contents of this he liberally anointed both face and hands. But this did little more than convert the wearer into an animated fly-trap. We employed tar for the complexion ourselves till we were nearly through to the other side of the country, and then we gave it up and used it for the boots alone, and noted no difference in our discomforts. We had veils each of us, but these were not often available. They got entangled by passing shrubs; the enemy would get inside once every minute or so, however carefully the edges were tucked in, and this entailed a hunt and a blood splash, and, finally, the mesh blurred the view, which was a fatal objection.

There was no vestige of path to guide our caravan, and the man with a squint who led was more than once at a loss, and we had to give him hints from the compass. This ground is never travelled over in summer, and but rarely in winter. The Enare district is entered and left by the Pasvik Elv. The going was very rough. Occasionally we got out on to dry ground and scrambled over tumbled

boulders, or groped our way down slippery rock faces; but for the most part we trod quaking marsh, which either swung under our weight, or let us through into brown tarns of slime. At the outset we were inclined to envy the Finns, who, in their national boot, which reaches to mid-thigh, went over a good deal of swamp dry-shod; but when first one and then another got ducked to the middle, we began to see that there were advantages in less defensive foot-gear.

That first stretch across the fjeld was a typical piece of primeval ground. No one except nature had tampered with it since the beginning of time. Even where the surface was dry there was often a liquid substratum, and little mud volcanoes rose from dessication cracks which were a mile away from the nearest open swamp. But the desolation of the place was cruel. There were no birds, no animals, nothing but the humming insects. Only once during that day did I hear a solitary curlew’s scream, and that seemed wafted to our ears from an infinite distance.

We crossed the Russian frontier in the middle of a lake-pitted moor, and thought with some grim amusement of the foreign office passports with their hieroglyphical visés, lying packed with the tobacco in the middle of the humpback’s load. The marches of Holy Russia are not so carefully patrolled as the stay-at-home blood-and-thunder novelist would have one to suppose. And just about there we halted for perhaps the fiftieth time that day and made a temporary camp.

Finn Carriers Crossing Russian Frontier.

These halts live in the memory more than any other feature of the country. The sitting down to wait perhaps twenty minutes, perhaps an hour, in a stew of insects, and then repacking the loads and starting off again at a gait which rarely amounted to the pace of two miles an hour, was indescribably wearying. When we had Lapps for carriers all this was changed; they were willing, cheery, and active creatures who always did their best—but more of them later. With these high-booted Finns, however, it was almost always the same. They were weak, unwieldy, unhandy. They could not keep a footing on rock; they were about as helpless as camels on soft ground; and they always made a point of getting as badly bogged as possible in every swamp. They were sullen boors without an ounce of pluck, and if one attempted to hurry them at all they collapsed at once.

Up to this point the ground had been slowly rising all the way, and the air was growing cooler. As we went on, the swamp grew more rare. The water collected in little lakes, and under foot we trod for the most part on rock pavements worn smooth by a thousand centuries of water and weather. There were fewer birches, but here and there an abortive pine twisted and squirmed some five or a dozen feet above the naked stone, to hint at the vast forests of his giant fellows which lay only a few hundred miles to the southward. And underfoot, between the outcrops of rock, were here and there patches of ivory-yellow reindeer moss.

But when we reached the divide, and looked down over the country on the southern side, the reindeer moss had taken full possession. The pale sulphur tint was everywhere, but still the fjeld was deserted. There was not a deer in sight. All that rich lichenous growth was left to run to waste. Only one living animal did we see on the whole day’s march, and that was a tiny black-and-tan lemming, which I caught in my hand and (to his surprise) let go again. The country round here is, however, used largely as a camping-ground by Lapps during the winter, and the yellow moss, though crumbling and dry as sand, feeds the deer till they are rolling with fat. It is a very deep snowfall or a very hard frost which makes these pastures inaccessible. In winter the deer break the snow-crust with their great splayed fore-hoofs, and then dig down like terriers, till they are often browsing at the foot of a pit which completely hides them from any one on the surface.

For cold weather the migrating fjeld-Lapp comes to more permanent moorings, and sets up for himself a domicile more suited to the climate than his

flimsy conical tent. We came across one of these on this day's march, in the forks of a growing river. It was a hut of peat and sods, shaped like a West Greenlander's igloo, and some dozen feet in diameter. Birch-stems were used inside to support the roof and prop out the walls, but these were falling in. One well-cleaned rib-bone and some charred embers were all that remained of furniture. The herdsman Lapp does not build for futurity; it is a concession to his principles when he builds at all; and when he quits his turf mansion in the spring, he does not look to find it still standing in autumn. He is content to waste a day and build another.

We were fortunate enough to come upon the two-roomed log-hut of a Finnish farmer to sleep in that night, and thought ourselves in luck's way. We had to wade a river to reach it; rain had commenced to fall in torrents, and we were wet and very weary.

The farmer had but one cow, and she was not in milk; the agricultural part of the farm consisted of a small garden of unenergetic potatoes, set in drills three feet apart; and they could give us nothing whatever to eat for love or money. Presumably when times were good they lived on fish, for there was the disused head of a four-pound pike near the mouth of the draw-well; and at other times they apparently subsisted upon water. The water was good; it was sheathed in ice for more than half-way up the well; and we drank a bucket apiece with gusto. But our appetites demanded something more; so with much grudging we "killed a tin" out of our very scanty store, and then lit a fire and topped up with cocoa by way of dessert. One of us slept that night with his head upon the stone hearth. We were deadly tired, and though the rain dripped on to us through the roof, we neither knew nor cared.

The rain had cleared by morning, and we set out with better hopes. We were getting down towards Enare See, and expected to come across some duck; also we had managed to pick up an extra carrier, and so hoped that the pace would improve. The addition to our strength was a boy of sixteen whose leg had been broken and then set locally, and so had acquired a limp for life. But for a Finn he had a humorous face, and occasionally he did manage to instil some life into the proceedings.

The mosquitoes met us punctually at the door and got to work at once. The man with the hare-lip explained at some length that they would not be so bad now that the rain had passed over; but though we had grown to be connoisseurs, we could not notice any difference in their attentions. And, moreover, as those exasperating halts came with regularity each six hundred yards, we had every

opportunity to get thoroughly maddened with their bites. We could watch them settle on us in their millions, waddle along with their ungainly walk one shoulder at a time, and probing with their long clumsy trunks at every chink. And we saw them flying away crimson-bellied with blood which we ourselves had a prior claim to.

There was underground drainage in many parts of the fjeld which we passed over here. Hollows abounded like those one sees on the limestone hills of Yorkshire, where cave-roofs have fallen in. But we found neither pot-holes nor cave-openings. Lakes were many. We frequently had to climb round their sides at the foot of steep, smooth cliffs of sandstone, and then again to scramble over hard outcrops of the same rock on the dry ground beyond. The birches were gone. Instead a forest began to grow of weedy, straggling, dishevelled pines, bare in stalk, and showing but little greenery. And always where stone was not, the ivory-yellow moss covered the ground with its dry, crisp carpet. Occasionally, too, sprouts of mountain-ash appeared, but these were rare, and they never grew thicker than a finger, or taller than a grown man's waist. And still the birds kept off: we saw old spoor of reindeer here and there in the softer ground; but of four-footed creatures in the flesh and fur, nothing but tiny lemmings.

Meanwhile the lakes were growing larger, and the rivers which linked them more deep and broad. Enare See as it appears on the maps—even on the best map, which is that of Russian survey—is large; but Enare See as it exists in Arctic Lapland is larger by one half. It is no great sheet of open water like Michigan or Ontario; there is barely one stretch of unbroken water twelve miles square in all its hundred and twenty miles of length; and it is hard to say where the lake ends and where it begins. There are islands all over its great expanse, and the mainland round is cut up by lakes and water channels. In fact, just as some one once defined a fishing-net as "a lot of holes tied together with string," so Enare See might well be described as a collection of land patches made into islands by water.

Our course swung through half the points of the compass as the water channels swerved to this side and that, or the fords lay to our right or left, and those exasperating carriers grew slower in their pace, and more frequent in their halts, and we had resigned ourselves to another fifteen solid hours of torment, when a great streak of luck befell us. Between some bushes at the side of a long narrow lake there lay a canoe.

She was pulled on to the bank and lay bottom upwards, and who she

belonged to we did not know—or care. We were in the mood then to have cheerfully annexed the Czar's own private dinghy even with sure foreknowledge that he wanted it himself during the next half hour. And the carriers seemed to be similarly without scruple. The packs went down to the ground in quick time; the loppy-legged boy said something funny and laughed; even the squint-eyed man smiled. The canoe was rolled on to her keel and shot into the water. The luggage and ourselves went amidships; the Finns distributed themselves forward and aft; and away we went with rather less than an inch of free-board.

Now so long as we were in smooth water, this method of travelling was delightful. The mosquitoes were comparatively absent—we had merely a paltry thousand or two to remind us of the ravening swarms elsewhere. There was a brilliant sun. And the hump-backed man, who was squatting on the floor forward, paddled us on at an excellent pace. But when we got out in broader water, there was a good ripple on, and the lake came over both gunwales merrily. The canoe, moreover, was thoroughly sun-cracked, and leaked like a basket, and nothing but industrious baling kept us afloat at all. There were always two of us at it, watch and watch about; and we worked till our arms ached.

The Finns, being brought up in a country full of rivers and water-ways, naturally could not swim, and if we two foreigners had only had our two selves to think of, I fancy we should have let that canoe swamp. We had suffered many things at the hands of those carriers, and we should much have liked to have seen them—well, inconvenienced. I know this sounds brutal here from a distance, but we were warmed up to it then, and meant what we said, as other people who have met the Northern Finn on his native marsh will possibly understand. But we had the baggage to consider, and the baggage turned the scale. We made them hug the weather shores, and kept the balers going without intermission.

It was not all plain rowing, even then. Twice the lake-chain broke; the rivers which linked the broader water were too shallow to carry a canoe; and we were forced to make a portage. But if the canoe was small on the water, she was small also on land; and many hands made light work; and we had her out, up, over, and launched in almost as quick time as one could have walked over the intervening necks of land.

But we were not done with the marching yet. The navigable water ended for good, and once more we were put to footing it through the forest, and suffering from the flies. But the scenery had changed. The birches had gone, and so had the Arctic willows, and around us were nothing but tall gaunt pines, for the most part bleached and dead. A parasite had invaded the forest and was killing it by

slow inches. The same thing is seen festooning the timber in Florida and Louisiana and the Gulf States generally, where it is called Spanish moss. It is gray there, and looks dreary enough as it hangs in melancholy wisps from its dead or dying victim. But here it was far darker, being in texture like a harsh wool, almost black; and as it swung in the breeze from those blighted boughs, it reminded one of funeral plumes. Here, too, there was no undergrowth of palmetto and saw-grass to tone down the gloom: at the foot of these doomed trunks was one unvarying carpet of sulphur-coloured moss.

As we marched on (with the never-varying series of halts) the outlines of a path appeared, crossed and recrossed by the spoor of deer. The lemmings grew more shy. Against some of the tree trunks the yellow moss was stacked in columns six feet high to fodder cows in winter. The marks of axes appeared on the timber, and there were stumps new-scarred. And then the gleam of water showed through the tree aisles. Our carriers brisked up; even the humpback straightened himself; and the pace quickened—to something close on three miles an hour. We swung round a bluff of sand, and before us lay a log-house painted dragon's-blood red, with a bay beyond whereon rode a masted boat. That one house made up the town of Ischinlisvuoni, the northernmost port of Enare See.

Now our first thought was to get a boat which would take us over the great lake to Enare town, which was distant some eighty-five miles in crow flight; and here we were in luck's way. The miniature viking ship riding in the bay had just come up from the very place, and her crew jumped at the chance (and the profit) of taking us back. We had to wait, however, till she was refitted. They had met heavy weather on the way up it appeared, and in one squall their high square-sail had split neatly down the whole of one of its seams, and naturally this had to be mended before she could put to sea again. So we went into the red log-house, and took possession of one of the two rooms, which was furnished principally with a large white-washed rubble stove that reached up to the roof beams.

The population, however, though nominally they had cleared out of their bedchamber for our benefit, had no notion of leaving us to ourselves. The whole lot of them came in to stare at first, and when the ruck had gone, there always remained an escort of at least six of both sexes, who loafed in the doorway, and spat, and watched us as though we had been performing animals. Occasionally we drove them out and would be alone for perhaps two minutes, but then again the door would open and others would come into the room, spit thoughtfully at the floor, and then get their eyes deliberately focussed. They did not speak either to themselves or to us; and if they enjoyed the performance, they did not show it

in their faces. They remained always the same wooden, unemotional boors, and we found by experience the only way to deal satisfactorily with the Arctic farmer Finns was to take the upper hand, and keep it. Any attempt at civility they construed as weakness, and then took advantage of us as a matter of course.

It is queer how these people can thus isolate themselves. The Norwegian of the North is one of the most civil and obliging fellows on the face of the earth. The Lapp, though he is frequently a savage in his personal habits, is none the less a courteous gentleman in his intercourse with others. And even the Finn fisher has occasionally some rudiments of civilness and hospitality. But these others are past praying for. They can read and write, they are oppressed by no government stress, they could make an easy livelihood if only they had the gumption and the energy to take it, but they prefer to remain the greatest clods within all the marches of Europe.

Happily for ourselves a ceremony was taking place outside which began to draw off the audience. Between the red house and the lake shore was a building of blackened logs, from the doorway of which smoke had been issuing ever since our arrival. It was a Finnish vapour-bath, and when it was heated up, our carriers and the entire population of Ischinlisvuoni went in in squads to enjoy it.

The Finn of the North seldom or never anoints his person with water in the ordinary way. But still, on the whole, as back-block tribes go, one could not call him an uncleanly person. Almost every farm has its bath-house, and it is very rarely that a fortnight passes without this being heated and used. The bath at Ischinlisvuoni was typical of all the lot, for the pattern varies but little. It was a house of logs, twenty feet by fifteen, and some eighteen feet up to the pitch of the roof. Along one side, half-way up to the eaves, there ran a broad shelf of smoothed wood. The floor was of beaten earth, and at one corner beside the door was a large bee-hive-shaped mound of rubble stones, with a fireplace in the middle to admit burning logs. This primitive stove is heated, and the smoke either escapes by the doorway, or remains inside and blackens the roof. Gradually the air of the place warms, and then water is thrown on to the glowing stones to saturate it with steam. The bathers undress at the dwelling-house, and run across the intervening ground in their birthday attire. Both sexes and all ages bathe together. They douche with cold water first, stand about on the earthen floor for a minute or so, and then climb on to the raised shelf and lie down. Every one has a green birch of sweet-smelling Arctic willow shoots, with which he (or she) switches his neighbour, and so stimulates the circulation. And there they stay for twenty minutes or half an hour. Then out they rush, and if there is

snow on the ground they roll on it, or if not, they dip into the coldest water attainable; and then they go back into the house again to cool down.

All through that evening, and till three o'clock the next morning, the bathers in every stage of undress, from the complete to the partial, were sitting about in the kitchen which was next our room. It never seemed to strike any of them that the sight for alien eyes might be a trifle quaint. At the great white Russian stove a woman was cooking circular cakes of rye with a hole in the middle, and threading them on a stick as fast as they were baked. Another woman was roasting coffee, and a man beside her was grinding the beans as they were browned. Half-clad children were sprawling about the floor, and two or three were asleep in a corner. A naked man was contemplatively browsing on tobacco before the stove, and a woman was treading at a spinning-wheel in the middle of the room. By the window our two boatmen squatted on the ground with palm and needle, mending the split sail, and beside them the humpback was playing jigs on a cheap accordion. These were all Finns. The only two Lapps in the place were supping in a corner, off curdled milk and flinty rye cakes.

Ethnographically the Lapps and the Finns are not very distinct races, except in the matter of height. The nose of the district is usually turned up at the point, the cheek-bones are high, and the skull is well drawn towards the back. But in the item of clothes they are always different. The Lapp wears on his back in summer the distinctive *matsoreo*, which is an outer garment of gray, brown, or electric blue, closely woven cloth, that reaches down to the knees. It has a high standing collar more or less profusely embroidered, with other decorations in colour on both back and front. It is belted about the middle by a broad surcingle, from which depends the inevitable knife and tar-bottle, and the more slack there is bunched up forward and aft, the greater dandy is the wearer. The nether limbs are clad in tight *sarre* of ivory-white flannel; and on the feet are *lappellinin*, which are short roomy boots peaked up at the toe, stuffed with grass, and drawn up over the ankle and made fast over the ends of the *sarre* by a narrow red figured bandage, after the fashion of the East Indian *putty*. The head-gear varies. The orthodox square-topped cap of cloth with its head-band of fur is rare, and usually appears only in winter or on festivals. It is picturesque, hot, and expensive, and for daily use a soft round hat of felt is preferred, or for sea work a sou'-wester. And the outer clothing of the women is very much the same, except that the *matsoreo* is a trifle longer, and the head-gear is merely a simple handkerchief. The winter garments of skins differ a good deal from these, but they will be spoken of in their place.

The Finn, on the other hand, is much more ordinary in his attire and much less picturesque. Take away his high boots and he might be almost anybody. The boots, however, are certainly a feature. They are peaked at the toe like the Lapp's, heelless, and have soles and sides all in a piece. The leg part is of soft leather, and can be drawn up above mid-thigh if wished; but it is generally worn telescoped, with the baggy top well below the knee-cap, after the fashion of mediæval villains in Surrey-side melodramas. For the rest, he is clothed in a coat, waistcoat, and trousers, scanty of buttons, and with a cut suggestive of a Leeds clothing factory; carries a thin moustache; and more infrequently than not wears some physical deformity. His woman-kind are distinctly his better half, and probably keep him from starvation. They are bustling and active, utterly devoid of any pretence to figure, and as a rule gratuitously ugly. They affect, in the summer, garments of checked cotton, which they weave themselves, and though they also wear the high boots, the tops of these are discreetly hidden by a skirt of decent length.

We smoked complacently deep into that sunlit night, and thought with pleasure of the sail which was to come amongst the islands of the great lake. But we were not done with our old carriers yet. They wanted payment, and the squint-eyed man came in to say so. We had the money ready for him, counted out, in rouble notes. It lay trimly in a heap. We pointed it out. He inspected, and at once began to object. He desired payment in kroner or marks; and not having either, we could not well give it to him. We pointed out (using the words of the Russian consul at Vardö) that in Russian territory the rouble was legal tender. He seemed partially to grasp this, and suggested exchange at the rate of one rouble (which is worth some two-and-a-penny, English) for the Norwegian krone (which may be valued at thirteen-pence-halfpenny), and became abusive when we declined to fall in with his ideas. He was not a person to whom we owed any gratitude or much consideration, but I think he was surprised at the pace with which he was ejected from the room.

The community here at Ischinlisvuoni had reindeer, which they pastured in the forest, but they did not meddle with these much during the summer months. Indeed they looked upon them much as capital to be drawn upon in time of need during the winter. During the six months of day they lived, to a large extent, on the produce of the cows, the curdled milk, butter, and butter milk, eked out with fish from the lake. But these fish, with some natural perversity, they never ate fresh. The spoils of the nets were always gutted, split open, perfunctorily dried, and then devoured raw in a partly decayed state. There is something in the theory: salmon, boiled or fried, is the most nauseating dish in the world if one

has too much of it, as witness the bargain in the old days of the Newcastle apprentices, that they were not to dine off salmon more than twice a week. Salmon, well kippered, and eaten in thin slices, raw, does not cloy one nearly so much. But when the kippering is imperfect, not to say sketchy; or when the fish is not kippered at all, but merely more or less dried, and, moreover, is not salmon or any of his relatives, but some little soft, white fish like a sloppy trout; then the theory falls to the ground.

Their fishing-tackle for the summer was simple. It consisted merely of short small-mesh nets with floats of birch-bark rolls coiled along the head rope, and pebble sinkers to the foot; and the catches were small. It was in the dark months that they were more successful. Then they were able to spear by torchlight, and secured the heavier fish. We saw the apparatus used lying on foreshore. It consisted of an iron cresset (*parrila*) with four spear-headed prongs and a long curved iron stem, which ended with a fork of wood to make fast to the canoe's bow. Long pitch-pine splinters are laid lengthwise between the prongs, and lit at the outer end. The wind, or the canoe's motion through the air, keeps them blazing. The paddler sits in the stern facing forward. The fisher stands in the bows behind the *parrila*, watching for the fish as they are attracted upwards by the glare. His weapon is the *arrina*, which is very like the grains we use here at home for spearing eels. The shaft is of wood, eight feet long, and fitting into a socket at the head. There are six spears to the head, the outer two the heaviest, all barbed inwards, and all converging from the bottom inwards. It is a formidable implement, and once one gets the knack, very deadly. But it is no child's play to acquire that said knack, as many an energetic British poacher can vouch. I fancy, though, that the average fisherman from these sporting islands would prove himself pretty deadly if he could take his own tools to the lakes and rivers of Arctic Lapland.

We did not go to sleep that night very confident of a peaceful start down-lake on the morrow. The squint-eyed man and his friends had been making irruptions into our room at intervals all through the evening, noisily, and flatly refusing to be satisfied with their lawful wage. We, on the other hand, had quite made up our minds not to pay three shillings for one, and so expected that next morning they would try to put in force the local equivalent of a *ne exeat regno*. In which case there would be trouble. Because come what might we were firmly determined to get under way.

CHAPTER V

ENARE SEE TO ENARE TOWN, IN A SQUARE-SAIL VIKING SHIP

When it came to the point, our Neiden carriers, to use a colloquialism, climbed down abjectly. We roused very early, escorted our baggage (once more made up into three twin sacks) down to the shore, and stowed it in the boat on either side of the mast. The carriers hung about, but we ignored them as though they had been men of glass. At last the squint-eyed headman stated their willingness to accept their just dues, and they were handed the contracted-for number of rouble notes with a few impressive remarks thrown in. The discomforts of the place where thieves eventually frizzle was described to them with a lurid wealth of colour, which, being Lutherans, they thoroughly appreciated. And as we had a few minutes on hand whilst the boat was being ballasted, Hayter sketched on a smoothed board a few spirited recollections from Doré's *Dante's Inferno*, so as to ram the matter home. They grew awed and limp, just like so many naughty children, and we left them thoroughly repentant; and I fancy that the next stray English who come in contact with that squint-eyed Finn and his friends will meet with more tender entreatment.

Now our two boatmen were Finns also, but the business on the waters seemed to have lifted them above the ruck of their race. They were civil and willing, and so far as their lights went, attentive. For instance, they had floored their craft amidships with a springy cushion of birch boughs for our special benefit. And moreover, conjointly, they were incomparable boat sailors. In the course of our voyage occasion came more than once when there was need for handiness and quick decision; and South-coast yachtsmen, bred in racers, could not have beaten these inland sailors of the North. The skipper was a little wrinkled man of sixty, grown old in the traffic of the lake. Man and boy he had sailed Enare See whenever it was free from ice for all of a lifetime, and what he did not know about the shoals, and the thousand islands, and the millions of unbuoyed reefs, and the places where the wind eddied, and the other quaintnesses of the place, could have been written large on a thumb-nail and still have been unimportant. He looked out upon his small watery world with a pair of bright bird's eyes, and knew every mood of it by heart, and neither knew

anything beyond nor wanted to.

His mate was a man entirely different—a mere creature of thews, who could shift the tack when ordered, set up a backstay, eat, row, smile, or carry out any of these minor offices of life which do not require the effort of a brain. He had the good humour of a puppy, an ample sufficiency of strength, and the face of a prosperous publican. His name was Olaf.

We set off down narrow waters with a snoring breeze from out of the N.N.W. The red house and the well-derrick and the farm-buildings of Ischinlisvuoni quickly dipped from sight behind a bluff; the axe-marks left the trees on shore; and the black forests grew up untouched out of the carpet of ivory-yellow moss. But we were not in the open lake yet. A run of some dozen miles brought us to shallows where a portage was necessary. We had to unload and unballast and drag the boat painfully across a neck of land on rollers, which for the four of us was a full-weight job, as she was a stout, beamy, 25-foot craft, built to endure heavy lake seas and powdering squalls. But we got her nicely launched again, brought down to trim with boulders forward and aft, and once more under way. There were 3500 square miles of lake and island ahead of us; and the neighbourhood was comparatively unknown to any one except Enare natives; and we were anxious to sample as much of it as possible. Moreover, although the breeding season was on, we promised ourselves to shoot a sufficiency of duck for the pot.

Now I am free to confess at once that Enare See was somewhat of a disappointment. We bore away to the south and east, dodging amongst countless isles and innumerable shoals, and sometimes we landed, but most times we contented ourselves by exploring with the eye alone. The islands were of all sizes, from the come-and-go boulder, the bigness of a hat-box, which ducks under every other wave, up to land patches three miles in radius, with harbours, and mountains, and rivers, and men, and all the appurtenances of a pocket continent. But there was nothing (in actual view) large enough to be impressive. The very hills themselves which bounded the lake were more in the form of rolling uplands than craggy mountains.

Of shootable game we came upon barely a trace. A whole day would pass without our seeing a single fowl either in the air, on the land, or upon the face of the waters. And the reindeer, of course, were like our cattle at home here—the domestic possession of the native. We saw these animals, it is true, in quantities. All the islands of Enare are laid down in deer according to their size, and solitary hermits peered at us from patches of ground smaller than a cricket-field, and I

hope we cheered their loneliness. They were not very beautiful creatures to look upon just about then. They were very much out of condition. The snows had only just departed, and they were thin with the hard exertion of delving with their forefeet to reach the moss beneath, and worn with hard driving in the sledges. Their antlers were in velvet, and only partly grown, and their coats were very much in a transition state. In fact, they appeared to be clothed in a badly made patchwork of shades, which varied from dirty white to faded brown. These deer get little or no tending in the summer. They are not wanted for traction; they are put out to graze; and they do it industriously. Their owners permeate the neighbourhood in their canoes on fishing intent, and if they manage to cast eyes upon each individual deer once a month, it is a piece of unusual attention.

We came across these lake-fisher Lapps at intervals, and often sat and chatted round their camp fires. I remember well the first of these savage entertainments. Our eyes caught a slim blue drift of wood-smoke rising up from the farther side of an island. We ran down, hauled our wind, and sailed up to it. We were welcomed ashore with easy cordiality. There were three Lapp canoes nuzzling the foot of a black rock, and on the crown of the rock were their crews of four men and three round-faced, good-humoured women. They cleared the place of honour for Hayter and myself, and we sat down in the smoke drift from the fire, where the mosquitoes could only raid us with difficulty, and we listened to the politics of the lake: fishing was good here and bad there; this man had finished eating that lame deer he killed in the early spring; that man’s canoe had been beached in a gale, and smashed like an egg.

One lady indeed wanted to know about the outer world. She was a portly young person, whose globular red face beamed with a healthy animal cheerfulness. She had stubby hands, and a figure which resembled a corn sack, well filled, and stamped down. She carried a neat brass wedding-ring slung to her neck-handkerchief, and had a most educated taste in tobacco. She filled her pipe with shavings from my plug of negro-head, lit it with a brand from the fire, and then absorbed the smoke in an ecstasy. It was enjoyment to watch her pleasure: she puffed that pipe to the uttermost ash, and the vapour circled amongst her smiles. Then the spirit of inquisitiveness, and perhaps of envy, took her, and she wanted to know if this beautiful, this exquisite tobacco was the common smoke of my country.

To weakly avoid an hour’s complicated explanation, I admitted that it was.

And could English ladies have as much of it as they wished?

With distinct truth I answered that no stint was put upon them in the matter.

The patriarch of this group was a travelled man. His reindeer sledge had carried him in winter as far south as Sodankyla, where he had seen tinned anchovies and a Singer's sewing-machine; and more than once he had boated down the Pasvik Elv to below Boris Gleb and caught glimpses of steamers out on the broad Varanger Fjord beyond. As some advertisement of all this experience, his head was capped with a battered yellow sou'-wester; but the rest of him was clothed in orthodox Lapp attire, and his tattered blue *matsoreo* was a miracle of barbaric ornament. His sardonic old face peered out from a calico mosquito cowl, which covered all the rest of the head, and his attention was very firmly fixed upon his meal.

In these lake-side camps every one cooks for himself. The lumps of meat (when there are any) are impaled on a piece of stick sharpened at both ends, so that the lower point may be pushed into the ground at an angle, and keep the meat in position whilst it is toasted. But the Lapp does not let his meat become over-cooked, and as a general thing he does very little more than take off the chill. It must be remembered, however, that everything is dried, more or less, and that fresh reindeer meat, or fresh fish, are things never used. Indeed I have frequently seen Lapps, and Finns for the matter of that, go home hungry in a boat half full of sweet, fresh fish, and then make their meal off semi-dried relics reeking of decay.

The coffee alone is a common brew, always made in a kettle of copper with a lid on the spout, and always drunk sweetened with cone beet-sugar after the rest of the meal is finished. And when it is strong enough, Laplander's coffee is the best flavoured in Europe.

A Lakeside Camp on Enare See.

After the meal, the fire is carefully quenched with water, and then comes sleep, and then once more away in the canoes. These lake-fisher Lapps think no more of sleeping in the open than do birds or deer, and perhaps the untemptingness of their headquarters has something to do with this.

In the course of our cruise down Enare See we came upon several of these settlements on the coast and on the islands, but they did not strike us as appetising for a prolonged residence. The *gamme* (house) itself, which is usually some dozen yards beyond high lake-mark, has walls of stones and mud, or turf, with a roof more or less flat, made of turf laid on birch rafters. A chimney is a

rarity, and in summer a nuisance. In a land which swarms with mosquitoes, it is always pleasant to have a wood-fire on the floor which will fill the atmosphere with “smudge,” after the fashion adopted by the Floridan cracker in his palmetto shack. But the hut is not without luxury. The floor is paved with stone, and round the walls are layers of young birch shoots, which make a springy mattress. In the better *gammer* the front-door opens on to a sort of lobby, which is used as a store, with a room on either side; but in the generality of these dwellings there is a single chamber, where the family, and the fleas, and the dogs, and a reindeer calf or so, and possibly a sheep, all pig it together, much as Noah and his friends did at their famous convocation.

But besides the one or more *gammer*, there are buildings at these settlements of almost greater importance, and these are the storehouses where the dried fish are stacked for winter sustenance. In nearly all instances these are made solidly of logs (whatever may be the structure of the *gamme*) roofed with birch-bark shingles, and well raised from the ground on piles, so as to keep the contents as dry as may be. There are racks, too, for drying the fish out of reach of the dogs, and the mortal remains of what were once fishes’ internals lie trodden into the grass in every direction. The lake-fisher Lapp is not a cleanly person in his disposal of items which he has no particular need for.

The pine forests thicken along the shores as one walks south down Enare See, and the lines of the tree-changes are very clearly defined. The shores are for the most part low-lying, and in many places the trees stand up gaunt and dead for miles at a stretch. For a stranger the navigation here would be a thing impossible. The islands twist and turn and crop up in every direction. Reefs spring up from deep water, and stay just awash. We would frequently run down to a line of creaming surf, open up some passage and slip through it, and then haul our wind and stand along between two lines of reefs with not a dozen inches of water under the keel. In places the great lake was a regular stone-yard.

Our boat was wonderfully handy. In build she was well rockered, with a good beam, but had very fine entrance and a clean run aft. She was of the regular viking build and rig, and from the English ideas of spars and canvas, it was a matter of wonder how she could sail at all anywhere except dead before the wind. A casual onlooker might have classified her as belonging to the lug-sail type, but that emphatically she was not. Her mast was stepped amidships, well set up by forestay, and by a couple of shrouds on either gunwale. When the sail was hoisted, the halliards and the down-haul were brought well aft and made fast to a thwart to serve as backstay. But it was this sail which was the wonderful part

of her. It was not a lug at all, but a true square-sail with the halliard bent on to the very centre of the yard, with tack and sheet interchangeable, and with braces to each yard-arm. It was just such a rig as the Northman used when he came to ravage the English coasts. It was the sail which drove the Roman galley. It was the identical sail which the Phœnicians were using when the Londoner went out to dinner in a suit of neat blue paint, and brought his own stone axe to crack the bones.

Going free, and with sheets well-started, this sail had enormous lifting and driving power; and with tack bowsed down to the weather hause-hole, and the sheet flattened aft, our boat would look up to it as close as Norfolk una. The tiller worked with a joint so as to clear the stern-post, and pushed fore and aft after the manner of a single yoke-line; and every time we went about, this tiller was shifted over to the weather side. The gear, too, was of necessity cumbersome, and on no sort of day could she be called a one-man boat. But she was splendidly dry, and we were not without giving her one or two stiff tests. We carried a breeze with us all the time we were on the lake, and once or twice, on the large patches of open, we met that short, steep sea, common to this class of waters, which for a small boat is the wettest sea on earth. She went over it like a cork—she had magnificent lifting power—and at the same time she did not lose her way.

Once, in a heavy rain-squall, we got blown very nearly out of the water; the reefs were blotted out of sight; and the boat showed her one weak point in declining to lie-to. But in Enare this fault did not matter. The skipper luffed up under the lee of an island, Olof ran down sail, and ten minutes later the kettles were singing over a fire in a sheltered cranny of the rocks. The squall swished and boomed overhead, thunder with it and abundance of rain; the camp-fire sent out darting, twisting snakes of flame, which hissed at the wet; and the two Finns squatted beside the blaze like some queer trolls, each working with knife and teeth at a stringy rib-bone. I remember it was at this camp we came upon a piece of chocolate about as big as twelve sixpences (the last of a very slender store), and made a present of it to the skipper. He took it with a twinkle of thanks, and popped it in his mouth. Then he set his jaws to work, and spat with solemn regularity. He believed the gift to be some new form of chewing tobacco.

The rain had come first, and so the squall did not last. The mists dropped, and the sky showed up blue and white, with the sun hanging in it, round as a coin, and red as a soldier’s coat. The gaunt pines of the island and the ivory-yellow moss were lit with the glow. It was after midnight. We stood up and

watched in silence. A stray duck, the only fowl we saw on all Enare, came flying across—a clean black silhouette against the brightness.

Once more we quenched a camp-fire and mastheaded the brown sail, and once more we left the open lake and dived in amongst another maze of its islands. We had seen our fill of the northern and eastern reaches of Enare See, and were heading now so as to reach Enare Town in the quickest reasonable time. The wind hardened as the sun climbed higher into the sky; and the boat flew south and west with a swirl of sound. The lake-floor rose and sank beneath her, and the surf leaped up from a thousand reefs. The pines roared at us as we drove past a wooded point. Here and there a house of logs showed against a clearing on the shores.

The lake was deserted of man and fowl. The canoes of the fisher Lapps had run into shelter, and the birds were not. The loneliness of the place chilled one like the hour before the dawn.

Then we saw houses of red and gray and ochre standing on a low bluff, and we made for them, ran down sail, and put the boat's nose on a beach of sand. We had arrived at Enare Town, the chief city of the Lapps, and it was three o'clock in the morning. We were deadly tired. The rest-house lay at the top of the bluff, and we climbed to it with yawns and drooping eyelids. There are no locks in Lapland, and we went inside and announced ourselves. A young Lapp and his wife were asleep in the guest-room bed, under a calico mosquito bar. They rose, silent and blinking, and began to clear away their bedding. In a cradle lay a child with its face all blotched with bites, and this also they took away. But what other preparations they made then for our comfort I do not know. We lay down on the floor in our oilskins as we were, and dropped off on the instant into the deadest of sleep.

Up there in the North, where the day lasts bright all round the clock, they set down no arbitrary hours for work and sleep such as are forced upon us here in England. One may often see children winding up their play at 4 A.M., or their elders starting a day's work at six in the afternoon. In our journey which followed, across this country down towards the Arctic Circle, we marched quite as frequently by night as by day. On that special occasion at Enare we breakfasted at twelve midday, and found most of the town outside to welcome us.

We held a levee inside first, because Olof had advertised the wonders of Hayter's Marlin rifle, and the bear-hunting section of Enare (which comprised all

the males) could not rest till they understood all about the repeating mechanism. And then we went to present a letter to Herr Praest Hinkola. It turned out that he was away, and was not expected home for some days, but Fru Hinkola and her brother, the postmaster, took us in charge, and strangers in a strange land were never more hospitably entreated. We had all our meals at their table, and if we did not sleep under the parsonage roof, it was only through our own refusal to trespass farther on their kindness.

They were not cheering, however, about our chances of getting through across the country to Kittila. It was never done in summer; there were no roads; the mosquitoes and the swamps were almost impassable; horses or reindeer were utterly out of the question; lakes and rivers lay in the way, over which it was very doubtful if we should find ferriage even for ourselves; and, finally, it was distinctly improbable that we could get carriers to pack our goods beyond the first stage or two. In winter the route was practicable enough, for then the river and the lakes were frozen, and the swamps were covered in snow, and a sledge with relays of deer could get over the ground with ease. But even in winter that way was little traversed. It was from Helsingfors and Uleaborg they got the supplies, and the route to those towns lay through Sodankyla. That was quite practicable even in summer, though of course not for horses or reindeer. We could travel by canoe nearly all the way.

And we should see, what? Well, we should have an excellent view of several hundred miles of river-bank. And we could post onwards with horses either to Kittila or else directly down to the sea, in comparative luxury and comfort.

We had not journeyed that far, however, to exploit future tourist-routes; our business was to visit the Lapland farmer and fisher and herder on his native heath; and we were not going to spare ourselves pains to carry this out. So we announced with a sigh that Sodankyla would not do, and that we were going to worry through the other way somehow; and forthwith the postmaster shook his head, and sent word round the houses that carriers were wanted for the morrow.

In the meantime we looked about us. There are twelve hundred people in Enare, but as the town-limits are some seven miles across, a stranger looking at it from the landing-place might reasonably put down what he saw from there as a small straggling village of new log-houses set down near a spired, red church. The houses were closer once and older, but one of the periodical fires broke out during a gale a few years back and swept the whole place away, so that it had to be entirely rebuilt. Given a sufficient frost to freeze the water, a good breeze, a house afire on the weather side, and one of these Northern wood-built towns will

blaze itself to ashes in a dozen hours if it is at all closely built. So the more modern idea is to leave at least a hundred yards between every house, and as the intervening spaces are cultivated, the towns are now going back to the old scheme of being merely clusters of farms. And every building, from the red church down to the smallest fish-barn, has a broad, slanting ladder which leads permanently to its roof, with a great iron hook at the end of a pole, always hung there ready to tear away blazing shingles or smouldering roof-turf.

A few of the Lapps of Enare town keep unostentatious stores, where they sell sewing-cotton, gunpowder, cone-sugar, axes, and coffee-beans, all of which have been brought up by sledges during the winter from Helsingfors, Uleaborg, and the towns without the Arctic Circle. But the import traffic is small, and the reindeer, which form the only export, are driven down alive to the markets. The community is self-supporting: it catches and cures its own fish; produces its own milk, curd, rye-meal, and dried meat; weaves its own woollen cloth and checked cotton wear; builds its own houses, boats, sledges, and churns; makes for itself spoons, casks, bowls, balers, all from the native birch-wood; brings forth its own young, and buries its dead with a roofed-in sledge for a coffin.

The community hinges on the parsonage, the largest house in the place, the only house which has an upper story, which is weather-boarded without, and which has the nakedness of its logs covered by a ceiling within. Here are the brains of the place, the Law of the place, the post-office, the only library. At the parsonage they had two hundred books; and English literature was not neglected. There were translations of Messrs. Stanley Weyman, Fergus Hume, and W. Le Queux, in sumptuous pictured covers. It was there we got our Russian roubles changed to Finnish marks. It was outside the parsonage that a flag flew from the head of a tall, white-painted mast to show that Holy Russia held the land. At the parsonage dwelt the cooper who made the shallow tubs in which milk is set to cream in the dairies, and there also was the Herr Praest, who married every one of the Lutheran Church who wished for marriage within a circle of 200 weary miles; who baptized all those who were admitted to the faith; and who buried all those who were brought in the nailed-down sledges in their own private plot of Christian ground. And if the time was winter, and mother-earth was fast locked in frost, the Herr Praest would see the sledge put into the common grave which was always open, there to lie snugly iced till spring brought a thaw, and let the spades delve out its more proper niche.

One of our great notions in wandering through so dismal a place as Arctic Lapland was to revel in sport which was unattainable elsewhere, and for a good

many miles we had seen no living thing except mosquitoes and frogs. We had more or less given up the idea of fishing, but we still held on to the theory that there was game to be found, and, in fact, calculated on it for food to see us across the country. And with these theories still strong within us we began to push inquiries about the shooting, in deadly earnest.

The account was dismal enough. There was no rigorous close-time here, as in Norway, and game was very scarce. Probably there never was much, but by vigorous hunting all the year round there has come to be less. Now, it is not worth one's while to carry a gun in summer. There are rype, willow grouse, and capercailzie, which are fairly in evidence during the courting season, but as soon as family cares begin, they keep well to cover; and since the capercailzie cock has no taste for chickens, and bolts off *solus* so soon as ever the honeymoon is done, his haunts are in such far depths of the forests that man seldom gets so much as a glimpse of his wonderful plumage. Bird-shooting as an industry is not worth following in Lapland till the leaves have gone, and the snow makes everywhere a staring background.

And big game? Well, of course, the reindeer are all tame, or nominally so; and as for wolves and lynxes, these are mostly legendary. They have been shot—frequently shot—but for the most part round camp-fires, after the fishing yarns have come on. And their skins are rare: these have a way of getting lost, as is explained in the tale. But foxes there are, both white and red, in tolerable numbers, and, of course, the occasional bear. These, again, are for the winter shooting, as it is only their winter coats which have a value. The fox is plentiful. A man who understands the work may put on *ski* for six consecutive days, and travel 300 miles over the snow, and at the end of the week be owner of three average hides.

But a bear-hunt is a far more troublesome affair. When a track is found, the bear is promptly ringed. That is, the track is not followed up, but a man on *ski* leaves it at right angles, and working in slightly all the time towards the direction in which the bear was travelling, finally hits the spoor again where he had left it. If he has not seen the spoor in the meanwhile, the bear is somewhere within that ring.

There is no immediate hurry for the next move. Bears only shift their quarters two or three times during the course of the winter, and if undisturbed they will doze for a considerable while when once they have settled down. So if there is no immediate danger of a heavy fall of snow to obliterate the spoor, the finder goes back and organises the hunt at his leisure.

The number of hunters depends upon the two items of pluck and skill, but not more than four go as a general thing, as there is a distinctly commercial side to the business, and the fewer the guns the more there is to every share. The Government gives head-money; the merchant will pay anything between £4 and £10 English for the cleaned skins; and the beef, too, is an asset of value. A third share in a good bear is enough for a Lapp to marry on and set up a tidy farm, if he happen to be economical.

The winter light may be gray and small, but the snow looms white, and the spoor reads like a book. A bear breaks through any crust, and plunges elbow-deep at every stride. His belly trails along the snow and ploughs a great furrow. It takes the drifts of a gale to cover that track. But withal his highness is a scary person, and though he may sleep with shut eyes, he keeps open ears and an active nose. So the callers have to tread with niceness and delicacy if they wish to make sure of an interview; and even supposing that they carry the spoor with them up to the pile of tumbled rocks where it ends, and the absence of back tracks show his bearship is at home, the hunt is by no means over even then. The bear will know quite well that enemies are at hand, but he will not rush them. He is no fool. On the contrary, he is an animal of infinite cunning and resource; and he quite knows that in his stone redoubt there is at least one chance to three of brazening out the situation and wearing his own hide for another season.

It takes a man of much more recklessness, or ignorance of the consequences, than the average Lapp hunter to go into a cave of the rocks and deliberately invite a rough-and-tumble with a live brown-bear.

But the hunters do their best to irritate him from a distance. They fire single shots into the darkness in the hope of riling him sufficiently to make a rush, so that the other guns which remain loaded may drop him when he comes into the open. They do this from every direction on which the cave mouth opens, so as to give him every chance of feeling a shot. And finally, if this method fails, they light a bonfire on his front-door step and stand round on their *ski* to await results.

It is by no means certain that the smoke will reach him, for there may be quite possibly an outward air-current, and the Lapps have produced their Rembrandtesque effect for no practical return. But if they have luck, and the stinging reek is too strong to be endured, then they have to stand by for quick shooting. The bear bolts like a rabbit, out of the firelight into the gloom, and in a matter of seconds he will be absorbed amongst the tree-stems of the forest. There is something uncanny, something almost devilish in the way a Northern bear can adopt invisibility.

On the whole, then, when a bear is shot it is a day worth remembering, and all involved congratulate themselves on being incomparable hunters. There are plenty to listen to and envy them. Few men can say that they have not been concerned in a hunt. But in all last year head-money was only paid on seven bears in the whole of the Enare district, and that covers some 150,000 square miles. So, whatever can be said against the Lapp as looking on hunting as a business, it must be granted that it comes to him as sport and enjoyment as well, or he would not embark in a trade which brings in such extremely frail dividends for so large a percentage of outlay in risk and exertion. If further proof were needed, it was there plain in Enare Town. The majority of the Lapps lived in snug wooden houses, tilled the ground, tended cattle, lived prosperous lives. The professional hunters were like the hunters of the States, practically outcasts—men of the outer air, it is true, and rare fellows, but in the riches of this life they were un-acquisitive. When one of the rare windfalls came they were generous, and it quickly went; and between whiles they and theirs knew the grip of an empty belly. In Enare Town they lived in peat *gammer*, eyesores amongst the comely houses. Their wives were slatterns, their children ragged, their homes ringed round by squalor and poverty. They lived the free life of the forests, which is the best life of all, but they had to pay its price.

Viking Boats on Enare See

CHAPTER VI

INTO THE LAND OF HORRIBLE FLIES: A NARRATIVE OF PERSONALLY-CONDUCTED TRAVEL

It was manifestly absurd to drag the Marlin and its cartridges any farther. In the first case there was absolutely no probability of finding big game for it to shoot; in the second it was more than likely that carriers would be unprocurable farther inside the country, and we should have to hump all necessaries on our own backs, and the rifle would have to be jettisoned. In mid-Lapland it was unlikely also that we should find a purchaser, and here in Enare one offered. Who does not know the delights of doing a trade? We sold the Marlin for the price it had cost in London town, and threw in the cartridges as ballast to the bargain. It was the postmaster who bought; and in the joy of his purchase he put the Marlin to his shoulder, aimed at a hut some fifty yards away, and pulled trigger. The result was surprising. The bullet went in at one side of the hut and out at the other, and as the inhabitants happened to be within at the time, they came out hurriedly, and looking distinctly worried. The postmaster was only acquainted up to then with the penetrative power of the local weapon. So this performance of the Marlin made him dance with delight.

His thirst was whetted. He had tasted the delights of owning one good weapon, and he wanted another, and he cast his eyes upon it with frank longing. Now our 12-bore shot-gun would not have been classed in England as excellent; indeed it would barely have toed the mark at tolerable. It was an old friend certainly; it had done good service in many climes, and it had seen so many things that its owner was devoutly thankful it could not talk. But it showed the batterings of travel. Its stock was scored and scarred; its barrel was browned more by oil and tallow rubbed on bright-red rust than by the more scientific method of the gunsmith’s shop. It had been spoken of by a whisky miller in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee (who used shot-guns in the defence of his business) as homely; it had been described in more than one stately home of England as “that qualified old blunderbuss”; and its owner always started out across the seas from his native island with the advice, “Now, don’t bring that rotten old tin spout back this time.”

Still it had its points, that much-abused old gun. Held straight, it was deadly

enough. It had many a time carried a ball in its right barrel with sound effect; and once, in Africa, when in a moment of stress and panic the ball cartridge was slipped into the left barrel, which was alleged to be “full choke,” it eased itself of the charge without bursting, although it nearly did dislocate the firer’s shoulder in the recoil by way of remonstrance. And at the same time it performed most thoroughly the requisite business with the bullet.

It was one of those guns which was probably always second-hand, and it had never been a high-class weapon even in its palmy days. Even its builder had sent it out into the cold, suspicious world without the testimonial of his name. Yet the man who carried it so many miles through so many scenes, and slept by its side before camp-fires, and nursed it in his lap through many a weary hour when—well, when things were not exactly so smooth as they might have been, and grumbled at its weight under tropical suns, and swore when he missed his supper with it, and got hot when jeerers made sport of its battered ugliness,—that man, I say, would give more than one crisp note to-day if he might have it stored away at home in some dark corner near at hand, from where he could take it out at times and abuse it with rough, friendly words, as one old chum abuses another. He would like to lift it in his fingers again, and put his chin against that piece of spun yarn which was served round the stock where—pah! what nonsense is this? The gun was not fit to carry. It was absurd to go about with such a weapon, when better guns were so handy. And if (as a matter of accurate fact) it was rather more serviceable than any of the other guns in Enare, why, of course, the people up there were little better than rank barbarians, and what could be expected of their artillery?

And so at Enare the old gun remained, and forty marks exchanged hands over the transaction. We travelled thereafter the lighter by several pounds of dead weight, and we did not miss the weapon’s usefulness. Even had we condescended to the murder of nursing mothers, we could barely have filled a decent game-bag with birds from one end of the country to the other. So one wished the postmaster good luck with his purchase; but many a thought went backwards after the old gun’s welfare, and many a sighing hope was registered that the new owner would entreat it tenderly.

The postmaster was the active spirit of Enare Town, and we made a good move in securing his vote and influence. He could not give us any information

about much of our journey, it is true, because, as he explained before, all his experience of passage in and out of the country had been by the Sodankya route; but at least he could put us in the way of negotiating the first stage. He sent round word, and, after a delay, carriers came to our dwelling with thongs of reindeer harness in their hands ready to strap on their packs. But when they heard what was required, they demurred. They had no taste for wandering away into the distant wilderness. The postmaster delivered to them an hour's animated lecture in Qfinsk before they would even think of it. Then they replied with more objections, and thus for two more solid hours the argument went on. There were three carriers—two Lapps and a Finn—and they stood in a row with their mouths open, and looked rather limp and dejected whilst the postmaster railed at them and detailed their prospective duties. A decorative background of Lapps arranged itself behind the group and watched proceedings with curiosity and attention. They rather regarded us as villagers elsewhere do a travelling circus.

We impressed upon the postmaster that what we really would like was one reliable carrier who would go through the country with us as far as Kittila, and engage the other carriers and guides as they were needed along the route—you see our demands by this time were getting simpler. We had quite given up the idea of the combined guide-interpreter person; and the postmaster urged this proposition with fluency and noise. He pointed out the easiness with which such a piece of work could be done. He dwelt upon the wealth which would accrue to the happy man who did it. But the three carriers did not warm to the scheme one little bit. They merely looked frightened, and shook their heads, and the Finn paid us the compliment of glancing in our direction, and then turning away with a perceptible shudder.

The postmaster gave it up. "Very well," said he, "then you shall just take them the first stage to Lusaniemi, and then they must get other carriers."

The faces brightened at once. They were very like children these Lapps and Northern Finns. And they set about making up the packs to their fancy, and getting them strapped to their shoulders with the thongs of reindeer hide. The word went round, and the houses exuded more men, children, and women, all smiling their goodwill, all anxious to wish us God-speed. One wrinkled old crone of a woman, long past walking, was dragged up by her grandchildren in one of the boat-like reindeer sledges that she might not miss the spectacle.

We were all ready to start, when one more request was made for—shall we say, a souvenir. Would we fire one shot with the Marlin at a mark to show how good an aim Englishmen can make with a heavy rifle?

Was there ever a more embarrassing favour asked? We had made a good impression on Enare—there was not a doubt of it; and here was an excellent chance of destroying it in a single moment before the assembled community. But there was no evasion possible, and so one of us shouldered the rifle, took a quick sight on the mark they pointed out (and which he could only just see), and pressed delicately on the hair trigger. The bullet sped, and the crowd ran off to see the result. It was a lucky shot; it had blundered in “plum-centre”; and furthermore, it had pierced in through the log wall of the house on which the mark was set, and out again on the opposite side. Whatever else had happened, the reputation of the Marlin rifle for penetration was established in the Lapp capital for good and always. We were so overcome by the warmth of the multitude of the subsequent good-byes, that I regret to say we marched off neglecting to pay a debt of tenpence to the good lady with whom we lodged.

Our escort left us at the last of the dozen houses which formed the town, and from there on, excepting for one or two turf *gamme* of pariah hunters, we came across no human dwellings for some time. The way lay through a thick and fairly tall forest, mostly of pines and birches, though in places there was a heavy jungle of shrubs and undergrowth. There were no birds, and no sign of larger game. Only insects abounded. For awhile we had a trail to walk on, but this grew more disused, and finally vanished, and more than once we got astray, and had to make sharp turnings to recover the direction.

It was not altogether country that would have suited a bicyclist. There were rivers to plod through, and swamps to clog one, cliffs to scramble up and down, and thickets to disarrange one’s personal appearance, and most effectually to tear a mosquito veil if one had been worn. As a main direction, we were heading east along the flank of a steep valley, with hills on one side and a deep river on the other, which sometimes broke up into noisy rapids. As a general thing the trees closed us in, but now and again we got out on to rising ground, and found a view which it was worth stopping to look at.

The pace of our caravan now, was very different from that detestable slouch we had been forced to put up with at the north of Enare See. We logged off a good steady four miles to the hour, and after the first stop (which always comes early on a march, to get the loads finally adjusted) halts were pleasingly infrequent. The two Lapps were the willingest fellows on earth, and the solitary, high-booted Finn, although he was a poorer creature, was forced to keep up with his better’s lead. The elder Lapp, who headed the advance, was a melancholy-faced man of some personal beauty. He had lost his wife a few months before,

had had his house burnt on the top of that, and so found himself, in middle life, changed from a prosperous family man to a homeless widower; and these things do not tend to cheer a man. He was a dull, capable servant, but we could not bring ourselves to like him.

Johann, the younger Lapp, was a very different animal. We took him to be aged eighteen, though he turned out afterwards to be ten years older than that estimate. He stood about four feet ten inches high in his *lappellinin*, and the full curve of his bandy legs was charmingly exhibited by the skin-tight white-flannel garments which covered them. He had a quaintly ugly face, beardless as a girl's, and thatched above by a fell of coarse, black hair; and with his gaily-piped *matsoreo* off and packed against his load (as he always carried it on the march), and a tight, striped jersey covering his upper man, he was an exact reproduction of the peripatetic acrobat one comes across at English fairs and seaside summer beaches. Indeed one could never quite get over the idea that he was merely playing the part of carrier for a joke, and that some day, quite unexpectedly, he would doff his load, produce a square of threadbare carpet, and go through some entertaining contortions, and afterwards hand round his wooden coffee-bowl for coppers.

He was a fellow of infinite thews and a boundless appetite for hilarity. He always had the heaviest load foisted on him, and received it with a joke and a grimace; and after the most wearisome march he could always tell funny tales, and laugh uproariously at his own excessive wit. In his personal habits he was an irresponsible savage; but in a land where everybody was accustomed to do everything for themselves, he was surprisingly thoughtful and attentive. For instance, after he had been drinking at a stream, he frequently offered his wooden cup to one of us that we might drink with niceness also, instead of being forced to lap the water up like a dog; and more than once, when our kettle and the carriers' were heating together on a camp-fire, he has burnt his own fingers that he might take our kettle off and hand it to us. Indeed in these little attentions he distinguished himself above all his countrymen we met, and perhaps it was partly for this reason along with the others that we grew so much to like him.

Two deserted villages did we pass through on this march, with their few mouldering remnants of huts and clearings almost blotted into forest by the second growth. In one of them there was an especially picturesque bit, and we

came to a halt, and Hayter sat himself on the wreck of an old reindeer sledge and tried to sketch it. He was prepared for annoyance from the mosquitoes, and he got it. He battled with them bravely for a long time: he smoked like a chimney; he slapped himself with frantic industry; and at last he gave it up in despair. He had covered three pages of his sketch-book with blood—his own blood—and pencil scratches, and dishevelled insect corpses, and he certainly did get three good impressionist sketches of the atmospheric condition, but he carried away no intelligible note of the ruined huts and the clearing.

The carriers shouldered their loads again, and we knocked out our tobacco into the grass; but the caravan did not start till the two Lapps had come up and carefully stamped out any smoulder which might remain.

All trails which might at one time lead out of that village were long since grown up. The forest is always greedy to take back any territory of which man has robbed it. So we had to make our own path as we progressed, and pressed on through clinging undergrowth. The dim roar of the foss down in the valley rumbled through the air, but no birds lightened the march with their songs. Occasionally the straining ear thought it caught the cry of some feathered creature, but it always turned out (on seeking deeper) to be tree-branches grinding together in imitation of bird sounds.

Ant-hills, built of pine-needles and clay, perched under the trees on the steep hillside, with gallery entrances into them of the bigness of peas, and a marvellous insect busyness pervading all their neighbourhood. They were not so large as those pine-needle ant-hills one meets with in north-western Norway, and of course were dwarfed by the huge ant-mounds of Africa, but they ran to a goodly size here in the Enare district, often reaching to a four-foot height above a seven-foot base.

We had passed the noisy falls by this time, and when we could catch sight of it through the trees, we could make out that the farther side of the valley was moving away from us. We were working downwards all the time, and presently we stepped out from the cover and stood on the sand beaches of Muddusjärvi.

It was necessary to cross this lake before we could get any farther, and the packs were thrown down, and we proceeded to telegraph our need to a tiny farm on the other side. The Finn did not help. He was driven half mad with the mosquitoes, and he lay on the sand, with his head wrapped in his coat, writhing with the irritation of his bites. But we others dragged some dead wood to the extreme water’s edge, and shredded it with our sheath-knives, and set it alight,

and coaxed it into a goodly flame. And then we added more fuel, and still more. There is always plenty of dead wood ready to hand in these austere forests, which no one but Nature herself cuts or cares for, and we dragged down whole trees to dedicate them to the flames.

The lake was dim with mist, and a clear signal was imperative; and Johann, the eccentric, must needs climb trees and dance upon dead branches, crooning music to himself, till he and the branch came crashing down to the ground. He was a weird creature. So we made this beacon of ours no niggling flicker. We had got to make our presence known and our needs understood; so we built us a royal blaze which roared, and writhed, and rose high into heaven; and then we ranged ourselves in the valley of smoke which drifted to leeward (to keep out of the mosquitoes' reach), and one by one stepped out and hailed at the upmost stretch of our voices, that some one, we did not know who, might bring across a boat.

It was a good opportunity to experiment for the best travelling note of sound. The Echoes from their perches on the frowning hillsides across the lake appointed themselves judges, unasked, and we mortals began the contest.

First Johann coughed the wood-smoke from his lungs and ran forward as though he were going to throw a cricket ball, and set back his shoulders, and yelled out a sort of dog-yap on two high notes. He scored, but not heavily.

The other Lapp lifted up his head and emitted a melancholy howl like a wolf's. We listened. Yes, that certainly carried farther.

The Finn lay on the ground, with head shrouded from the insects with his coat, and would not compete. So we foreigners in our turn cooeed, after the Australian fashion, and the Echoes, fickle ladies that they were, awarded the palm to the newer, stranger, imported sound. They cooeed back that the cooee won by an easy thousand yards.

The Signal Fire.

Water-mists hung in filmy layers above the lake, and thickened as the hours drew on. Patience and more fuel to the beacon were the only things that would help us, and we applied them both assiduously. And when we were not working,

we sat where the smoke of the fire could drift solidly over us, and those gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease, and have never seen the mosquito at his worst, do not understand the luxury of it. There are not many insects whose proud boast it is that they can make the monarch man find stinging wood-reek fascinating.

"*Illi robur et aes triplex*
Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci
Commisit pelago ratem
Primus,"

wrote Horace in the days gone by; but unknown lands, had he known it, can contain far more horrid torments than the unknown sea.

But at last our vigil and beckoning came to an end. Through the gray lake-mists there loomed out a hazy dot of a deeper gray. It grew and blackened, and resolved itself into a canoe, spiritlessly sent along by a single paddler. We watched its approach with warming hearts. And lo! the solitary paddler was a woman, old, bent, and toothless. All her men-kind were away, it seemed, fishing up a farther arm of the lake. It was a year since she had been in a boat, because of her rheumatism. Moreover she had been in bed, and so our beacon had been lost on her, and being rather deaf, our shouts had fallen but dimly upon her notice. She hoped, with fluttering courtesy, that we would forgive her dilatoriness. Poor old crone! we shook hands with her all round, and soon let her know where the indebtedness was placed.

But the canoe was small, perilously small, and leaky, and it obviously would not hold the party of us. So the packs were piled in on to the wet floor-boards, and we foreigners paddled off to an appointed place where there was a larger craft, and we took the old lady, enthroned on a brown canvas sack, as an honoured passenger. The carriers tossed the remaining embers of the fire into the lake, carefully extinguishing with water every remaining spark, and then they went round by the beaches to meet us; and we ran the other canoe down into the lake, and made the trans-shipment, and paddled off in triumph. The old woman watched all passively. She was past the age of doing much for herself, or giving directions. She had a strong face, but the days of initiative had passed from her, and it must have been by a marvellous and unaccustomed exercise of will that

she roused from her bed, and brought that first canoe across through the dank lake-mists to succour us. We recognised this, and I think we were duly thankful.

We beached the canoe before the little farm, and went up to the hut there and took possession as a matter of course. There is an entire lack of formality about quartering yourself in your neighbour's house in Arctic Lapland.

The old woman, with her latent housewifely instincts aroused, pottered about with a burning green branch to drive away the intruding mosquito. There were two rooms to the hut—a general living-room, and a tiny cupboard-like chamber which held two box-beds. There was a pet reindeer calf in the larger room, a frail, stilt-legged creature of the bigness of a greyhound, with a hoarse, dog's bark. It had an amazing knack of getting into every one's way, and sucked without invitation every finger that dangled within its reach. Of food about the place there was no single scrap. Milk, fish, bread, were all unprocurable. And so we were reduced to "killing a tin" from our scanty store, and making a sketchy meal off preserved dainties, which seemed to provoke the appetite rather than appease it. Ours was the smaller room, and we lit a fire on the stone hearth, and brewed milkless, sugarless cocoa, and finished up with a dessert of that and cigarettes.

The warmth grew in the little chamber, and there was a dry floor of boards beneath us. The mosquitoes, too, seemed for the moment to have left us. Here seemed an opportunity for taking off our clothes, the first for many days. The scars on the vulnerable parts beneath them were cruel. Hayter's legs and knees were so swollen with the bites that he could not rid himself of his breeches until he had slit the bands of them with his knife. Our arms were tight in the sleeves of our coats; our hands were the size of boxing-gloves; we were both of us bloodied and blotched all over with the treatment we had undergone.

Personally I got on to one of the beds and fell asleep there in the act of filling a final pipe. But Hayter did not get so far. He was seated on the floor when I saw him last, reeving a new lace in one of his boots; and when I roused in the morning, he was still upon the floor, with the lace in one hand and the boot under his head. I fancy we must have been a trifle worn out when we finally reached the shelter of that little farm on Muddusjärvi.

We were woke by Johann at 5.30 the next morning (after three hours' sleep),

but did not make a start of it much before eight. We were bound up the lake, and as a paddle had been broken in the landing overnight, another had to be hacked out of the solid tree with axe and knife before we could leave. You may use another man's property if you find it lying about in Lapland, but you are expected to make all damage good. As Johann pointed out, it is sometimes a profitable move to leave an old paddle or a battered pair of *ski* where the chance, needy stranger can lay hold of them, as by that means he does the breaking, and one gets provided with brand-new implements free of trouble. And there is no fear of being taken in by some one who is incompetent to do the requisite carpentering. Axe and knife, and more rarely a saw, are the only tools in the country, and within all its marches one could not find a grown, sound man unable to use all three with deftness.

We paid off our Finn carrier at this point, and gave the old lady of the house two marks, at which she nearly bowed herself in two. And then we embarked in the canoe again, with the two Lapps paddling, one the bows, and one aft, and set off up the lake.

Muddusjärvi is narrow here, and contracts still more farther on, till one could well set it down as a mere currentless river. It sits quietly between its low banks, and is fed from the low, hummocky hills on the northern side, and by the higher hills beyond them. There is thick cover in beyond these banks, but no sign of game anywhere.

Reed grasses which scraped against the canoe's tarry side were beginning to grow in the shallows, and then, just as the lake was beginning to widen again, we landed before a cluster of three huts, and tried for carriers. Johann and the melancholy Lapp went up to do the negotiation, and we foreigners got out of the canoe and stretched our limbs. A flock of ten diminutive sheep, two of them black, sauntered up and nibbled at my legs. The farm was small, but it seemed fertile and cared-for, and by no means poverty-stricken. There was a grass-field, enclosed by split-rail fence, and manured. And good grass it was, too, well cleared from weeds. But there were no carriers available here, which was what we were particularly interested in just then, so we went back to the canoe and once more got her under way.

We opened up broad Muddusjärvi after this—a fine sheet of water, bordered by wooded hills; but presently we turned due north again, and paddled up a narrower arm of the lake, and landed at another Lapp farm.

This was certainly the most prosperous place that we had come across since

entering the country, and it was marvellous to think that such a spot could exist so far inland and so deep within the Arctic Circle. There were store sheds and outhouses running right up from the lake beach, in all abundance; and the big, log dwelling-house itself, on the top of the rise, was a place of mark. It had yellow window frames and a shingle roof. Its big kitchen living-room measured twenty good feet by five-and-twenty, and it had no less than two separate bedrooms, not to mention the usual combined dairy-bedroom, each with a separate door of its own.

But then this estate was no one-man farm. It doubtless had called one man owner sometime during history; but he had begotten sons, who shared the land between them, *more Hibernico*, and then in the recent past these amalgamated into a sensible partnership. By dyke and axe they had added a few more acres to the ancestral plot from the forest swamp at the back; but only a very few: mere husbandry is of small account in this far Northern clime. What they did was to increase the number of nets, and build more fishing canoes, and more drying sheds in which to cure the catch. It was from the lake they got the more important harvest. The milk and the cheese, and the rye and the meat of sheep and oxen, were good, but they could not be depended on. It was the fish that never failed. No Arctic storm, no broken summer, could kill the crop of the lake or deny it leave to ripen.

Still twenty acres of good mowing-grass had this partnership got growing bravely in their rail-enclosed fields, and a potato garden, and a flock of sheep, and some dozen healthy cows; and as wealth goes in Lapland, they were rich men. But the struggle for existence up there in the North does not permit of any idle hands. If a sufficient living is to be got, all must work for it. There was no sitting back to enjoy a life of moneyed ease on the shores of Muddusjärvi.

The place, as we saw it, hummed so briskly with work that we were almost ashamed of our own unattached condition. A big catch of fish had just been brought in from the lake, and they lay gleaming against the grass, sorted out into tubs according to their kind, awaiting their turn for evisceration. All spare hands were hard at this work. One of the partners, a comparatively big man for a Lapp, gave the lead. He took his fish up by the back, cut through three-quarters of the neck down to the backbone, slit up the belly, emptied the guts on to the grass, and twisted the tail-flukes through a slit in the gills, so as to keep the flattened carcass perpetually open. Two women and a bent old man toiled at the same work, though with less deftness; and two small girls squatted on the grass, and picked with care the fishes’ sounds from amongst the other inconsidered debris,

and washed them in water, and stored them in a wooden bowl of birch.

In the shed built for that purpose, these finny spoils, strung on sticks, were put up to dry. There were no salmon or trout there; they were all coarse fish; some, of the bigness of sardines, strung through the eyes; some, of the perch tribes, hooped into circles like those above described; and a few stray pike, half decapitated, each on his own especial withe, hung up like shrivelled criminals with their wicked heads a-cock.

There was a draw-well in front of the house, with a huge, straddling counterpoise-derrick over it in constant use. We stood by this for some time watching the bustling life of the place. Johann came and said that a carrier was available, but he must dine before he set out, and he (Johann) had received an invitation to dine also. We accepted the delay, and when one of the ladies asked us, we went up to the house. She produced stools, and wiped them down with a corner of her skirt before offering them to be sat on. Verily feminine human nature of a certain class is much the same all the world over.

A Prosperous Lapp Settlement.

It was the dairy-bedroom we sat in, the room of state and honour, and as it was comparatively free from mosquitoes—there were some paltry dozen or so to remind us of our immunity—we rolled cigarettes in peace, and Hayter produced a sketch-book. The old woman who had charge of us was shown what was wanted, and took up her position, nothing loath. She stood like a professional model—a rare thing in this fidgety land—and the sketch progressed with speed.

A very happy likeness it was, and the old woman was amazed to see herself for the first time in all a long life on paper. But she was not altogether pleased. On some occasion during her days she had broken a leg, which (according to the primitive method of the country) had been set with a reef in it. When she walked this gave her a prodigious limp. When she stood at rest upon both feet, it naturally skewed her shoulders well out of the horizontal. The sketch faithfully reproduced this trait, and the old lady objected in her top key. She wanted to be drawn straight as she would like to be, and not with rugged face and halting body, as the accident of years and weather had happened to make her. She was very like her sisters in more favoured climes, this middle-aged dame of Lapland.

But she did not stay arguing long. Work could not stop. She left us in the dairy and went away to the kitchen, and the *whirr* of a spinning-wheel told us what was her employment.

Hayter’s pencil, however, was not permitted to rest. Johann had evidently exploited its powers, and presently he came in half-dragging, half-leading, a younger, more comely girl, and whom he explained he was sweet on himself. He backed her up against the wall, arranged her hands and her head-kerchief, and explained that he would like a portrait of her executed in the best style for his own personal use and convenience. Her name he said was Margrete, and he mentioned that she was famed for her skill in milking cows in the summer and making clothes during the long nights of winter. The gay *matsoreo* which he was at that moment wearing himself was the outcome of her clever knife and needle.

In view of the forty-nine mile tramp ahead, Johann had annexed a bundle of the fine, dried grass they use here in the shoes, and whilst the sketch of his sweetheart was progressing—by the way she was only one of his many loves—he dumped himself down acrobat-fashion on the floor and took off his foot-gear, and arranged the packing of grass therein with vast deliberateness and care. A small, solemn child, all bumpy about the head from bites, came in, stark-naked, from the other room, and stayed to stare. A couple of dogs—stout, gray, wire-coated fellows, like the dogs of the Eskimo—added themselves unobtrusively to the audience.

A lover of trimness in the female ankle should not go to Lapland to find his models, as the trouser, strapped on to the boot-top, is fatal to any idea of symmetry. And in fact female personal beauty of any sort is not there brought to any high stage of cultivation. The faces of the women always verge towards plain, and their figures can only be described as dumpy. But if the features of these Lappish women are homely and perhaps rugged, at any rate they are invariably pleasant in expression, and such a thing as a peevish face cannot be found from one side of the country to the other. They wriggle along through life on the lean edge of starvation. They have everlastingly to confront the struggle for the next meal, and the meal after that, and this constant strain marks the forehead and wrinkles the cheek; but at least they are free from those more branding worries of larger communities, which whiten the cheek and draw lines from the mouths of the women we know so well at home.

A cuckoo clock in the great, busy kitchen hooted half hourly. In this land of the midnight sun and of midday night one cannot tell the time by the heavens as the countryman does in England and lower Europe. A timepiece of sorts is a primitive necessity, and many are the varieties which find a use. In the larger coast towns, like Vardö, the watchmakers drive a roaring trade, and dozens of watches with curious tooled brass cases dangle from the rods in the windows.

Up-country almost every hut sports its clock—some investment from a winter's marketing trip in the tiny, boat-like, reindeer sledges at Abö or Sodankyla, or even far Helsingfors.

An ordinary solid clock does not take the Laplander's eye. He likes something flimsy, and if possible novel. At one place, hung on a peg driven into the logs of the wall, we were condemned to gaze hourly upon the exasperating device of a dentifrice advertisement, wherein a smiling young female drew a tooth-brush briskly across a beautiful set of cardboard teeth between every tick. I was half frantic with bites at that halt I remember, and deadly tired, and much wishful for sleep and forgetfulness. But neither would come. Hour after hour I was condemned to remain awake, and stare at the tooth-brush clock, and read the legend (printed in my native tongue) that it was made in Germany, and that the dentifrice was put up into neat packets, priced sixpence, or one shilling, which could be obtained from any chemist with the least presumption to call himself respectable. I argued at the time that the clock had evidently drifted far from the land where the ingenious advertiser destined it, seeing that the letterpress was English, and the Laplanders do not use tooth-powder even if they could have read about its existence. And I savagely hoped that the man who sent it out had gone bankrupt as a penalty for annoying me. But at this peaceful distance of time and space I am inclined to call back that wish. And besides, I could not injure him (by conspicuously refusing to buy his wares) even if I wished, as the name of the ingenious dentrifice has completely passed away from me.

Fortune took it into her fickle head to smile on us at this halt. We got no less than two new carriers, and rare fellows they proved to be. They agreed after about an hour's palaver to take our packs upon their shoulders, and once more we started down the lake. The whole population were either on the beach, or came there to see us off. The eight ladies who were employed in the dissection of more fish, left off that employment for the moment, and stood up, and took of their head-kerchiefs and waved them diligently. And Margrete came down, and stood where the shingle was wet, and kissed her hand. Johann saw, and so moved was he that he must needs stand up on the top of the pile of packs to wave back, thereby very nearly upsetting the canoe and all of us. We got hold of his bandy legs and pulled him down, and he lay on the wet floor-boards with his head undermost, bawling with laughter, and thinking it the best joke in all the world.

He was hinting to another girl that he would die for her, at our next halt. He was a most fickle swain, this india-rubber Lapp.

We paddled eleven miles to the end of Muddusjärvi—or at least the Lapps paddled; we two foreigners lay against the packs, basking in the sun, and smoked, and lazed, and admired the colouring on the hills. And at the end of the lake we disembarked and paid off the melancholy Lapp from Enare, who took back the canoe. Poor fellow, he had had his troubles and we should have pitied him. Moreover, he was intelligent, and strong, and willing, and we should have appreciated all these qualities. But as it was, I am afraid our principal sentiment towards him was one of dislike. We had sufficient worries of our own for all practical purposes, and that mournful face hanging between us and the sun did not tend to lighten them.

The caravan limbered up and stepped out down an avenue thirty feet wide, cut from the forest to provide for the winter sleigh traffic. The stumps were still *in situ*; rocks and boulders were scattered about everywhere between the grim forest-walls. An unmeddled-with undergrowth lay breast-high all down the clearing. A tiny winding ribband of track gave us just space in which to set our feet as we marched; and even this led into quagmires and morasses, which we were forced to wade through or circumnavigate. But all these obstructions would be blotted out by the winter's snow, and the sleighs could travel briskly over the hard white crust. Scarcely a soul moved from place to place during the bright, soft, insect-ridden months of summer. Indeed this march was rendered memorable by our meeting another wayfarer. He was a man dressed in the Lapp clothes, but with a purely Tartar physiognomy, and he and we exchanged but the chilliest of salutations. Even the cheery Johann forbore to bestow on him his usual grin of greeting.

As though the mosquitoes were not sufficient plague (and their numbers, if it were possible, increased) we here passed into a belt that was peopled by still more insect horrors. Dragon-flies in millions rustled through the air, though these did not worry us. But they were accompanied by loathly great horse-flies, as thick as a finger, and monstrous blue-bottles, which were maddening in their attentions. The blue-bottle one could hear and avoid; but the attack of the horse-fly was stealthy. The beast would fly up without a sound, and alight like a piece of thistle-down, and one would know nothing of the matter until one was bitten. They could go through a coat as easily as one could push in a pin; even corduroy riding-breeches could not impede them; and on the place of each bite, there arose in the next half hour a great wen, which one wanted to tear out bodily by the

finger-nails. That part of Lapland would be a lepidopterist's heaven; but for any ordinarily constituted man it came very near to being the other place.

It must be remembered, too, that if we two foreigners suffered badly from this plague of flies, our carriers were ten times more tormented. A man with his hands free can thresh about, and to a certain extent beat the insects from him, unless he perishes with the exertion; but to a carrier impeded with a pack, this form of athleticism is necessarily limited. Our Lapps put calico cowls over their heads, which covered all except their faces, and their faces and hands they smeared with a liberal ointment of tar, and yet they suffered horribly. Still for all that they made no complaint. Johann would give out his great guffaws of laughter when things were at their worst, and the others would chime in merrily enough. They might be miserable, but they saw no reason to make themselves unhappy about it.

They were good fellows these two new carriers of ours. The younger one, Pedr, was a regular Adonis in his way, and certainly the only really handsome man we saw in Lapland. He had rare, fine features, perfect teeth, and a beautiful smile, which he laid on whenever conversation was demanded of him. He did not talk much; he seemed to find the smile much more effective.

The other addition of our force of a surety had stepped straight out of County Galway. It was true he wore a blue *matsoreo* piped with red and most dandily worked upon the shoulders. It was true he wore the Lapp shoe, and the tight white-flannel Lapp trousers (all of them rather shabby), and carried sheath-knife and tar-bottle dangling from his embroidered belt. It is true he talked only barbarous Qfinsk, but he spoke it with the softest, most insinuating brogue imaginable. His whimsical, humorous face, with its two days' stubble of hair, was the most truly Irish piece of human furniture one ever put eyes upon.

He had a blue eye and a captivating grin—grin was the only word for it. He was always willing to do the larger share of the work, and—always did the least. He lied to one, and grinned without shame when he was found out. He tried brazenly and without the least concealment to swindle us over his wages, and grinned delightedly when we objected to paying him more than his just due. He provided us with free amusement the whole time we had him, and did it all deliberately. To have called such a delicious person anything else but Pat would have been an insult both to himself and to us.

We had a desperately hard journey of it on this march, and, moreover, passed nothing sufficiently interesting to note. The broad sleigh-cut continued all the way; the forest hedged it in on either side; the path underfoot was never level and seldom dry; and the insect plagues were a torment too horrible even to think back upon. In the end we came upon the swampy margin of a lake—the Menesjärvi we had heard so much about—and there, after some searching, found a canoe pulled up amongst the lake-side rushes.

Now the canoe was thoroughly sun-dried, and when put in the water she leaked after the manner of a basket. Moreover, she was small—unmistakably small. It was quite obvious to the naked eye that she would not hold the whole caravan, and equally obvious (when one looked at each member in turn) that no one wanted any more marching. However, for Pedr and Pat to walk farther was out of the question. They were both done to a turn, and fit to drop as it was. So they were put in the canoe with the baggage, and it just held the load, and Pat (wily man) annexed the baler, whilst Pedr took the paddles. They bestowed on us one ample grin, and one of the beautiful smiles, and pushed off.

We three others had to tramp wearily round the margin of the lake to Menesjärvi Town.

We started off across grassy swamp, and put up a pair of ptarmigan in the first two dozen yards. The cock was a lovely fellow, splendid in his summer plumage. He flew off at once; but the hen waited and glared. We beat about a little to find the chickens; but we did not trouble very much. We were wearily tired; and so we stumped on without seeing them.

We got out of the swamp soon, and walked through a dry, straight-stemmed, pine forest, hung with that melancholy, lichenous growth like the Spanish moss of the Gulf States which we had seen on the trees near Ischinlisvuoni. But here it seemed younger, or else was having less deadly effect, for the pines were few of them dead, and for the most part in sturdy health. Crisp ivory-yellow reindeer moss made the carpet on which we walked, and at times, through the tree aisles, we caught sight of deer feeding.

It was a weary march that, for weary men, under the shade of those gloomy pines, but we were buoyed up with thoughts of the entertainment we should get at Menesjärvi, which the map marked as a town, or at least a considerable

village. And lo! when we did reach it, the place was nothing more than the squalid huts of one small family.

But what they had, they offered with the usual easy courtesy. A couple who were sleeping there turned out of their best room, the dairy, and we were ushered in and invited to take the vacated couch. We did not do this; we had had enough of insects of one kind and another that day; and we thought the floor would be good enough for us. And so on the floor we camped.

We dined first, sketchily. The room we were in was the dairy. Along shelves on one side were a couple of rows of wooden-hooped bowls, eighteen inches in diameter by four deep, in which milk of various dates and various stages of decomposition was set to cream and curdle. From time to time the good-wife came in from the farther room, and took up a horn spoon which lay handy, and skimmed a part of one of the bowls into a birch-wood piggin which she carried, and then licked the spoon clean so as to be ready for next time.

Hayter said he quite granted that the lady of the house was very neat and tidy in her habits, but he would not have any milk. I did. I ate a bowlful of the clammy, sour curd. I was far too ravenous to be nice about what I swallowed. And then we divided the contents of one of those unsatisfactory tins between us. There was not a scrap of anything else to be had for love, money, or blows.

Three times whilst this process was going on had we with torch and fingers cleared the room of mosquitoes; three times had fresh swarms arrived to take possession. The building was full of chinks; it was impossible for us to stop them up; and so with pain (and some profanity) we made up our minds to accept *kismet*, and let the enemy do their worst. We crawled into our sleeping-sacks, and tried to doze.

Never was there a greater failure. The stinging little pests settled on us in their hundreds, and sleep was out of the question. It was twelve o’clock at night, and the sun outside, high in the heavens, was beating on the shingle roof till the room within was like an oven. The air reeked with sourness from the milk on the shelves, and we were tormented with an unquenchable thirst as a result of our bites. Hayter, by the way, was in a tidy fever.

We tried pulling the heavy blanket-sacks over our heads and getting off to sleep that way. But the result inside was a choking Turkish bath, and as the mosquitoes got in also, we did not get much profit that way. We tried leaving our heads outside the sacks, and protecting them with hats and veils, but that was a more dismal failure still. And finally we were reduced to lying on our backs and

keeping our faces in the midst of a halo of pungent, stinging, ship's tobacco-smoke.

In the meanwhile we had not been left in our lonesomeness. Almost the entire time we had one visitor or another staring as though we had been strange and slightly amusing animals. It is a curious *trait* of the Lapps, that although in many simple ways they are a very polite people, they will enter your room at any time without knocking or asking any trace of permission, and will stare complacently at what is going on without uttering so much as a word of comment.

A weird crew they were too, this audience at Menesjärvi, and it was hard at times to persuade ourselves that we had not gone to sleep after all, and that these were merely the people of fever and nightmare. They were most of them deformed. One hump-backed girl, with pigeon breast and a livid face, had a wedding ring on her finger and a couple of puny brats at her heels. Intermarriage does dreadful work amongst some of these isolated communities. Those who have been on Fair Island, that tiny patch of land between the Orkneys and the Shetlands, where once an Armada ship was wrecked, will have seen a grisly instance of this nearer home.

The dogs alone were well-shapen and well-cared for. But then the Lapps always are kind to their dogs, just as the Northern Finns are almost invariably brutal.

Sketches at Menesjärvi

CHAPTER VII

INTO THE LAND OF HORRIBLE FLIES—(*Continued*)

We had small appetite for breakfast next morning after that horrible night, and this was a fortunate thing, for there was little enough provender available. We could not buy so much as a crumb of bread or a shred of fish. The wretched people had none to sell. Johann showed a pleasant piece of thoughtfulness. He came into the dairy with a blazing bundle of green twigs in his hand, and filled the room with clean, fresh wood-smoke, so that we might have the early morning in peace. Even the sour-milk smell fled before that billowing wood-reek.

A mark paid our poor night's lodging, and for another mark we chartered a good canoe to take us down the lake and up the Menesjoki, with a limp, small boy to bring her back. The hump-backed woman and her brood came down to the lake-shore and stared drearily at us as we paddled off.

That morning voyage down the lake lingers in the memory as one of the seven pleasures of life. The sun was bright and glorious in a blue sky overhead; a breeze fanned the fever from our hands and faces; and the canoe carried us as though it were the delightful vessel of a dream. The water tinkled and the paddles *cheeped* against the gunwales. We drank deep of the ease and gentleness of it all.

All around the lake were hills, pine-covered and highish, but, as usual, many patches of the forests were dead, and the tree skeletons stood out gray and naked amongst their feathered comrades. Only one green patch was visible on all the shores, and that was Menesjärvi, where we had come from. The eye should have dwelt on it with pleasure, but the horrors of the night we had spent there were still big in us, and we turned from it with shudders.

We got into the Menesjoki after three times grounding on the shallows, and paddled pleasantly up between its banks. Here indeed was surprising scenery. We might have been rowing by some river-side park on the Thames, the

cultivated growth of ages, the daily care of a hundred gardeners. There were graceful foliage trees, and trim, well-favoured shrubs, and clumps of flowers, and lawns of the pleasantest green, all repeated faithfully in the still mirror of the water. It was hard to keep in mind that human foot did not tread these banks once in a dozen years.

Fish rising at flies dappled the water mirror with dainty rings, and now and again the swirl of a foraging pike gashed it with a rippling fan. Even the mosquitoes, those insects of the devil, seemed to respect the sanctity of this paradise, and acknowledged that they were too evil to sully its delights.

The river wound into countless curves, and the Lapps paddled on at a steady gait. A brood of duck appeared in the water ahead of us, black in body, with a white bar across the wings. *Leenoot* was their country name. There was no drake; he was away from family cares. But Madame was fully alive to the unpleasantness of our neighbourhood. Away the whole crew of them went, splutter and splash, paddling lustily. The old lady led the way and quacked out directions, to which her family were fully obedient. One by one they left her, some diving, some swimming direct to the cover on the banks; and then she herself, with a final quack of defiance, got in the air and flew away through an alley of black pines.

The river-side park ended here, as though we had left one estate and come upon another owned by some churl with no eye to neatness or horticultural beauty. A sandy bluff reared up above the stream, and on it was a dead forest of gaunt, gray, barkless pines, standing up as an eyesore to heaven. It had not been killed by fire; it had not been ring-barked or destroyed by any device of man; but the trees, the old, the young, and the sapling, had simply got tired of life, and so died altogether in rank as they stood. The mosquitoes came back here, and set about their iniquitous work. The stream grew swifter and more hard to paddle against; the sun went in; and we were brought from our brief, pleasant dream, back to some of the more crude realities of Arctic Lapland. I remembered that my ankles were puffed like some old cab-horse’s with the bites, and I got out the bottle and rubbed brown tar on them and on my face as a preventive unguent.

Still more did the river water quicken in speed, till at last we came upon a noisy rapid, and had to put the canoe’s nose upon the bank. We disembarked. The limp boy from Menesjärvi started to paddle her back; the three Lapps shouldered their burdens; and once more we stepped out through the country under the shade of stately pines.

We found ourselves amongst a herd of grazing reindeer—if herd can be used for such a scattered flock. Now we would see one through the palings of the pines, trotting away from us into the deeper quiet of the woods. Now one would stalk out in lordly majesty, and stand, a clear mark against some sky-line, and stare in haughty wonder as to who those intruders could be who dared to bring their taint between the wind and his nobility. And then as we came up, back would go the branching antlers against the straight, strong back, and in a moment the forest would have swallowed him from view.

They were all in velvet, these deer, with the young horn hot and feverish beneath its covering, and with their antlers in many cases only half-grown. They were only just recovering from the leanness of spring. They were still casting their coats, and the old hair hung from them in faded, matted tufts, which made them look dishevelled and woebegone. Six weeks later they would be in their prime, rolling in fat, sleek-coated, and ready for heavy sledge-work, and short commons, and all another winter's stress. They would be decked, too, with new antlers, clean and unsplintered, and proudly conscious of the two new points which marked the dignity of another year's growth. But at present their one life-duty was to eat, and eat, and eat; and the crisp ivory-yellow moss which lay thick beneath the pines, and the tender shoots of the birches and the Arctic willows, provided the wherewithal.

It was Pat's delight to set off these deer into a stretching gallop. "*Porro*," he would whisper when his poacher's blue eye caught sight of one of the brown forms grazing between the tree-stems. And then the Lapps would all creep forward on their silent foot-gear till the reindeer espied them, and Pat would set back his head and let a regular Irish yell out of him till the forest rang again. The deer would start off with the last mouthful of the crisp, yellow moss hanging from its lips, and the perspiring Johann would burst into a great guffaw, and Pedr would deliver himself of one of those beautiful smiles which served to express his every emotion. And then Pat would turn to us with his droll grin, and we would have to laugh too, whether we wanted to or not. He was really a most cheery ruffian, this strayed Galwegian.

We came across a great stretch of marsh after this, with logs laid down over the worst parts, and at the farther side we made a midday camp with a fire which would cook the kettles and provide us with a smoke-shelter at one and the same time. And at this camp it was that Johann told us a very curious tale. He was not diffuse in his telling, because he had no long powers of description, and I do not think he lied over it, because he lacked the requisite power of imaginativeness. If

Pat, for instance, had told the tale, we should have taken it as a piece of genial fiction, and thought no more about it; but as it was Johann's tale, told perspiringly, with many awed shrinkings, and mostly in pantomime, it weighed upon us sufficiently to provide us with conversation for the next several days, and then we received a sort of confirmation of it which—but that will be mentioned in its place.

Briefly, and without Johann's gesticulations, the tale was this:—He was out one day in a canoe on Enare See, fishing—following his usual vocation, in fact. Suddenly in the sky there appeared to him a fish, a huge fish, a green fish, a fish eight times as long as his canoe. He put up eight fingers, and we counted them. He looked up by chance and saw it, and where it had come from he did not know. It floated quite easily in the air about the height of—of—he pointed out a black pine—about so high above his canoe. It had a tail which could move, and a great ring round its neck which whirred when it went ahead. Finally it left him and flew towards the mountains of the southward, and there was lost to view.

We attempted to get more out of Johann, but that was all he could tell. We gave him pencil and paper and told him to draw the fish; and he tried, certainly, but without any useful result; but then sketching is not a spontaneous art. And in the end we gave up trying to extract any more information on the subject, and talked over what we had got.

"Is this some sort of a legend?" said one of us.

"Not it," said the other.

"Then what do you think of it?"

"Seems to me to spell air-ship."

"Looks like it, and a good one at that.'

"Russian?"

"Who's else?"

"*Phe-ew!*" said the other. "This may mean something pretty big, if we can only come in touch with it." And so here we were provided with a topic of talk which involved the fate of navies, the policies of nations, and indeed the government of the whole wide world. It was a god-send to us. In many a camp, on many a weary march when of ourselves we should not have been able to rise above the depression of circumstances, it was enough to begin: "Touching that air-ship of Johann's, I've been thinking—," and there would start up a whirl of

talk which lifted us clean away from the insects and the domestic worries of Arctic Lapland.

To the stranger accustomed to bivouacs in other lands, it is wonderful to see the care with which the Lapps extinguish every grain of flame before leaving one of their camp-fires. The fire itself is always built close to a stream or pond of water—an ordinary necessity of camping when there is a kettle to be filled—and, if possible, on a flooring of rock. When the camp is struck, all remaining embers are tossed into the water, and then the extinguishing fluid is scooped up and soused over the hearth till not the faintest smoulder remains.

To the stranger, I say, coming raw into the country, all this laborious care seemed excessive; but before we had travelled a hundred miles into Lapland the reason became very apparent. If a breeze gets up, smouldering embers will rise from the place of fire and travel like birds down the wind. In a million cases they do no harm. But in the million-and-first they will drop upon some patch of reindeer moss, and then the mischief begins. The dry lichenous growth, crisp as cigar-ash, will carry the fire along like a train of gunpowder. Dead resinous branches of pine are licked up by the tongues of flame, and in an hour’s time the whole forest will be blazing, and a mark has been daubed across the country which will endure a hundred years. In Africa or America this would not matter. It would mean so much more ground cleared for the game or cultivation. But in Lapland it implies that valuable acreage of reindeer pasture has been taken entirely away from that generation, and human existence will be correspondingly harder; and so the man who sets the forest ablaze not only injures his neighbours, but he inconveniences that much more important personage, himself.

Even in the ordinary way of Nature, the reindeer moss is a crop requiring delicate management. Deer cannot be set to graze on it indiscriminately year after year. It demands its regular rotation of rest. In some districts four years, in others five, have to be given to a piece of fjeld to recover after a herd has grazed it for a short three weeks. And here, then, is the secret of the migratory life of the herder-Lapp of Northern Europe, which has endured down so many countless hundred years with scarcely a trace of change. To live, his beasts must live; and to find food for them he has constantly to move about over large desolate areas of the country; and so it is the scheme of his life which has divorced him from

the idea of fixed abode, and not the mere relish for vagabondage. We had not seen him in Arctic Lapland yet, this pastoral wanderer; the fishers and the farmer Lapps we had come across were only his refined descendants; and we were keenly anxious to get into his neighbourhood, and watch him herd his deer, and see the life he led in summer under the conical shelter of his *la-wo*. It was this kind of Lapp I had lived with once before on a bleak fjeld of north-western Norway; it was this nomad aboriginal we had both read of in the improving books of childhood; and because we had come so far and gone through so much to renew his acquaintance, and still not met him face to face, we felt that we had been in some vague degree imposed upon. Well, we were to see enough of him very soon; but more about that in its place.

We came across traces of the nomads, however, on this very march. Johann, from the head of the caravan, halted till we came up to him. He pointed with outstretched arm down an aisle of the tree-stems. "*La-wo*," said he, and showed us a cone of birch-stems set round the ashes of a hearth. This then was some reindeer-herder's temporary rest. The vadmal cloth which made the tent-cover was gone, the fire was cold, the deer were driven away to other pastures, the Lapp herders had followed the deer. Only the tent-frame was left amongst the scent of the pines and the juniper, and beside it one human utensil. It was a "screw" of birch-bark, like those coils of paper in which the country grocer at home puts up sweetmeats for children—a flimsy vessel such as Adam might have used to scoop up his morning drink. It was new, and its edges were unfrayed; a thing made in a minute, and cast away when camp was struck to save the labour of portage. It was typical of the nomads' *ménage*. They are a people who have reduced the list of "things which one can do without" almost to the vanishing point.

We were skirting now by the side of another ample lake, about one-quarter the size of Menesjärvi, but we did not tramp along its winding beaches. We kept on through the pines, and saw the blue water only now and again through the trim paling of their stems, and the sun sailing high overhead warmed us as though we had been tramping through some wood of the Engadine instead of this grim forest so far within the Arctic Circle. But no birds sang or sent their calls through the trees; the air had been filtered clear of all feathered creatures; the swarming insects peopled it alone, and pestered us with their ravening attentions.

But if we suffered abominably from this plague of flies, it was some slender pleasure to know that they in their turn did not carry on a life of unfettered

delight. They had their enemies. At one halt, on a small oasis in the middle of a two-mile-wide morass, I saw a loathly horse-fly, which had marked me for his next meal, get checked in mid-career as he flew towards my sleeve. He had blundered into a spider's web, and lay there struggling manfully. The whole net swayed and swung; the juniper twigs on which it hung actually buckled under the strain; but not a mesh gave. And presently the proprietor, a huge, orange-bodied spider, appeared from his private residence, and laid out along a warp, and (so to speak) threw off his coat and got to work.

From a seaman's point of view that orange-bodied spider was a marvel of dexterity. He threw bowlines over the buzzing wings of the horse-fly, got a purchase on them, hauled them home against its body, and made them fast there with clever hitches. One by one he disentangled the horse-fly's legs from the mesh, and roped them up too. And then he marled the victim's body up into one helpless bundle, and carried it off to eat alive under a thatch of the juniper leaves.

Pat, to secure a longer rest at this halt, must needs change the grass in his boots, to do which entailed pulling it out, spreading it abroad to dry, and then packing it back again with one hand whilst he used the other as a last. Inserting the naked foot into the nest thus made was a matter for niceness and accuracy, and it was not usually managed at the first attempt. And then the coarse flannel trouser—which was very much like the trunk-hose of our own ancestors—had to be carefully brought round inside the mouth of the boot, and snugly made fast there with five feet of red, embroidered, inch-and-a-half-wide bandage, which sported the two orthodox thongs for tying at its outer end.

The other two Lapps filled in time by capturing horse-flies and mosquitoes and "taking it out of them," after the manner of the story-book naughty child at home. I suppose we ought to have taught them better; but we did not: we felt that a little cruelty was justifiable.

On through more forests of pines we went, and through more swamps, with cloud-berries tantalisingly unripe beside our feet. We had visions of cloud-berries from other days,—plump, yellow, juicy fruit, ice cold, and slightly acid,—and with the fever of the bites constantly upon us, and mouths like dried leather, they were visions which made us sigh. Verily in this world—especially in the Arctic part of it—man cannot get all he wants, even though he offer in exchange much fine gold.

We sheltered under a new kind of roof at the end of that march—a regular

Arctic casual ward. It was a rude house of logs twenty feet square, furnished with fixed bunks and a table set against the wall, one movable bench, and a fire-hearth in one corner built of rubble stone. The nearest human habitation was the squalid hut with the hump-backed woman we had left behind us at Menesjärvi. We were in a place of shelter built for the benefit of the sleigh traveller should he be caught in one of the whirling storms of winter. It was the distant finger of Holy Russia, showing how even the least-considered of her subjects is not left without some paternal care.

We filled the room with wood-smoke and prepared to enjoy ourselves. The Lapps undressed to their shirts, and squatted on the floor, and dined off reeking fish and strong rye-bread. We also ate from our poor store. And then we had a solemn palaver over the arrangement for the morrow, and then we lay down where we were, and slept.

The wood-smoke died away from the air, and the mosquitoes came back through the chinks; but they browsed upon us undisturbed. We did not wake.

Smoking out Mosquitoes

CHAPTER VIII

IN TOUCH WITH THE GENUINE NOMAD, WITH SOME REMARKS UPON HIS DOMESTIC DEER, HIS TREASURE-HOARDS, AND THE DECAY OF HIS PRACTICE IN SORCERY

We roused after an uneasy sleep and stepped outside the rest-hut, and looked at the hot, round sun which hung behind a hilltop close at hand. Hayter guessed the hour as 6 A.M. I considered it to be six in the evening. We had no watch, and did not in the least know which was right, nor did we remarkably care. We were in a land where the daylight endured for each hour of the twenty-four on end, and we were setting off to visit those to whom the very name of hours was an unknown thing. We were going to seek the nomad herders in the deeper recesses of the fjeld.

We might be a week before we found them, we might be only a day. Their trail grows up after them, and no one but a herder Lapp himself should know his own whereabouts. To come across the deer pack, the only way was to quarter the country in great wide beats, and to do this quickly one must travel light. So we arranged to reduce our *entourage* to the smallest possible limits.

The excellent Johann was to come with us as personal attendant, and for once in his life that cheerful person pouted and looked sad. We might get lost, he pointed out; we should probably find no herder Lapps at all; and even if we did, it was by no means certain that they would entreat us civilly. And finally—well, he did not want to go. He puckered up his face and nearly blubbered over it. He was a bit of a child, this loud-voiced acrobat in disguise. But in the end, when we did start, he had got his usual noisy spirits back again at the end of the first half-mile.

By way of baggage we had each of us a couple of tins of food, and though Hayter and I carried a tooth-brush each in addition, that was the end of our burdens. We were marching light, in the strictest sense of the word, and everything else that we possessed was left to the tender care of the other two carriers at the rest-hut. If we wished to drink, we must lift up fjeld water in the cup of our hands; when we slept, it must be *à la belle étoile*. No other methods

are possible in the heart of Arctic Lapland.

In this irresponsible trim, then, we set off, and travelled for I cannot say exactly how long or how far. We had no watch to mark the time, nothing but the weariness of the legs to check the mileage. We slept when we felt inclined, we ate frugally when the emptiness of our insides refused any longer to be humbugged by draughts of water. I fancy we were two days at this game, though it might have lasted three, and if any one insisted on four, I would not stand out very firmly. When one is on the tramp like this, and tumbles off to rest, bone-weary, it is astonishingly hard to calculate how long sleep has endured. At any rate three out of the six tins had been emptied, and we were looking longingly at the survivors.

Then we came across an encampment of the deer-herders. It was the distant bark of a dog which first gave us advertisement of their neighbourhood. We were amongst a tangle of small hills, sparsely wooded, and richly carpeted with the ivory-yellow moss. We stopped and listened, holding our breath.

The deep-toned bark came to us again, carrying over the hills and through the scattered stems of the pines and the birches. Johann stretched out an arm and swept it slowly through a sextant of space. He brought it to a rest, and looked at each of us in turn. We nodded. Then we started off again down the direction he had pointed.

On the top of each rise we stretched out our necks expecting to see the deer-herd close beneath. There was nothing but the aching emptiness of the fjeld, and the dog's bark was not repeated. Had we——

No, there was a reindeer, and another, and four more. And there were fifty grazing on the yellow side of that ravine, with two bulls fighting in the middle of them. And there was the bivouac down amongst that juniper scrub and those gray tumbled rocks beside the stream.

A watchful hound woke out of sleep, saw us, and gave tongue diligently. Some one out of sight whistled. A stunted woman bobbed up from a sky-line, and then a little bandy-legged man appeared on our flank, and came running up, shouting diligently.

Johann's face up to this had been doubtful; he was by no means certain that he, a denizen of huts, would get a civil reception from the free nomad of the fjeld. But the sight of the bandy-legged man running, or the words that he shouted, seemed to drive away all unpleasant suspicions. Johann capered to meet him, guffawing with delight; and they shook hands limply and interchanged their

views on the situation for at least ten minutes. Then the little bandy-legged man came up and smiled a welcome, shook hands limply with us also, and invited us to his residence.

By this time news had gone round, flying from mouth to mouth across the ridges of the fjeld, and there had arrived at the bivouac two small girls in leather breeches and trim *matsoreos* of skin, a wrinkled old woman, a half-grown boy, and Marie, the squat little person who had seen us first from the sky-line. We settled ourselves about upon the rocks and amongst the scented juniper bushes, and exchanged our news with vigorous pantomime.

A fire smouldered on a small hill of ashes in a handy open space. In the background stood the brown cloth-covered *la-wo*, a residence far more like the North American conical *tee-pee* than its nearer neighbour the Samoyede *choom*; and though it yielded up a thin smoke from the bristling sticks at its apex, to tell that the domestic hearth was lit inside, and all was ready for habitation, it was plainly impossible to pack so large a party under shelter of the sloping walls on a floor space which was only seven feet in diameter. And besides, the *la-wo* is not meant for a parlour; it is merely a shelter. Go all over the rest of the world, and the host will ask his guest to “come inside”; the wandering Arab will invite you to his black tent; even the Congo savage will ask one to enter his hut of reeds; but to the nomad Lapp this idea of a “home” has not yet come. He will offer his hospitality to the chance stranger; he may even be lavish so far as his starveling means admit; but he has no house-pride; the lee of a rock or the sunny side of a brae under Jove’s cold sky is the only snug corner or dining-place which it occurs to him is needed.

However, it was evident we were being pressed to “stay and dine.”

The contents of the larder ran about till they were needed—to wit, small black-and-tan lemmings. There were plenty of them around, and the Lapps got up and ranged about to catch the needful supply. We turned to and did our share. They are foolish creatures, these lemmings, in personal appearance something between a guinea-pig and a rat, and with very little notion of self-preservation. After catching your lemming you skin and gut him, and then place him to toast in front of the general fire on the end of a pointed stick, which is jabbed into the ground.

We got these preliminaries settled, and squatted in a ring round the fire watching the roasts—all, that is, except the wrinkled old woman. She, good soul, was engaged upon a much more tedious ceremony. Out of a skin knapsack she

had taken a small skin bag. From this she extracted some twelve green coffee-beans, which she proceeded to roast one by one in a small iron spoon, to the accompaniment of vast care and solicitude. When all were cooked to her taste, she bruised them to coarse fragments—and be it well understood she did not grind them—between two stones, and put the result with water into a kettle of copper, which had one lid in the usual place, and another on the end of the spout to keep out smoke and feathery wood-ash.

In the kettle the whole mixture was boiled up together into a bubbling broth of coffee fragments and coffee extract. She cleared it by an old trick which is known to campers all the world over. She put into the kettle a small splash of cold water, and the coffee-grounds were promptly precipitated to the bottom. Then she poured the clear, brown, steaming liquor into a blackened bowl of birch-root, and handed it to the good-man, her husband.

We had finished our two lemmings apiece by this time—exquisitely nasty they were, too—and here was after-dinner *café noir*. The host took the bowl in his fingers, and the old woman, hunting in the leather knapsack, produced a block of beet-sugar wrapped in a careful fold of skin. The host bit a chunk off this, and lodged it in his teeth; then he lifted the bowl to his lips and drank.

In a more civilised man this would have been rudeness, in a savage it was an act of simple courtesy. It was a plain assurance to all who beheld that the bowl contained no poison. Then he handed it on, and we drank in our turn, and I do not know that I have ever tasted more perfect coffee. The two girls and the half-grown boy went off to attend to their business with the herd, and we others sprawled back where we were, and smoked, and dropped off to sleep when we felt so inclined.

The summer herding of reindeer by these mountain Lapps is more active work than the pastoral life of an English shepherd. A sheep, of course, requires some management, and even a flock of lumbering Southdowns can at times stampede and do themselves considerable damage. But a reindeer herd of (say) 300 head, maddened by mosquito bites, and once well on the move, is a force which it requires more than the ordinary bucolic science to deal with. They may easily take a month to recollect after a successful break like this.

As a consequence, the patrol round the herd is constant and strict. Each sentry has a coil of small rope, and at the least sign of a gathering together of the

beasts preparatory to a rush, the sentry scampers at speed across the direction in which they are heading, paying out the rope as he (or she) goes, so that it lies like a lean gray snake upon the uneven ground. It is rather wonderful to watch what happens. The deer charge up with growing speed, sight the rope, and pull up with absurd haste, snuffing it and trembling. And then up comes the sentry, a leather-clad imp of perhaps three foot six in total length, and with voice and foot drives back the great antlered brutes in ignominy to their pasturage.

But, at the same time, it is not advisable to let the mosquito-plague torment the beasts too much, and this is why the summer herding is done on the high ground, where these pests are fewer. Still even there they sometimes abound; and, when they grow very bad, the mountain Lapps will (for a treat) light fires to windward of their herd, and let them revel in the sanctuary of smoke. Fancy semi-wild deer, even through the custom of ages, accepting a diet of smoke!

The domesticated reindeer of Arctic Lapland varies much in bigness, according to the age and the breed; but, taking the average, they are smaller than the wild deer of the high fjeld in Southern Norway, and smaller than the domestic reindeer of Siberia. Still they are of no puny size, and a fine red stag of the Scottish Highlands would find many equals in girth and shoulder height amongst the Arctic herds. But the Scotchman would tower above the rest by reason of his carriage of the head and antlers.

There is nothing majestic about a reindeer’s deportment. He is usually cow-hocked. His great splay-feet, with their two lateral hoofs, are excellent, it is true, for getting grip on snow surfaces, but architecturally they are far from beautiful. And the carriage of the head is distinctly bad; whether standing still or on the move, they have their ears on a level with the withers, and the hairy nose stuck out in front.

Amongst all the deer tribes of other lands the females are hornless, but the reindeer, whether she is wild or whether she is domesticated, sports antlers of orthodox shape. They are slightly smaller than her husband’s, but, like his, they begin to appear within a few weeks of birth, which, seeing that most deer do not show a trace of horn till they are at least nine months old, is an abnormally early development. The lady’s head-gear, too, although it is slimmer and has less points than monsieur’s, is worn all through the winter, and is not got rid of till the troubles of maternity begin in the spring. And here she shows her superiority, for the bull reindeer has always cast his antlers by the end of November. This trifling fact is usually overlooked by those artists who at Christmas-time draw such pleasing pictures of impossible Lapps careering in toy-shop sledges

towards a genuinely London-made *aurora borealis*. It seems a pity to cast comparison on so many pretty drawings, but let us be accurate sometimes, even if we have to forego an artistic effect.

The sledge-deer is not a natural product, but the outcome of severe training. It takes three winters of hard breaking-in before he could sell with the warranty of "Quiet to drive in single harness: has dragged a lady." He is not a picturesque animal when he is on the move, with a sledge behind him jolting along at the end of its long, hide trace. He gets over the ground quickly, it is true, but he leaves all possible grace out of the performance. His gait is a series of long, striding slides, which make one think he is eternally on the point of coming down, and predict for him wrung withers, sprung hocks, and a necessity for embrocation on every muscle of his body. He overreaches at every step, and rattles his great splay hoofs against one another like some one playing castanets. But, if not over-pressed, he can get over enormous distances at an eight- to ten-mile-an-hour speed (according to the ground), in front of a 200-lb. load, in the worst of Arctic weather, and on a miraculously small supply of forage; and he possesses climbing powers which would put even a Spanish *contrabandista's* mule to the blush.

But the nomad Lapp of this district does not exist merely as a breeder of draught animals, and not two per cent of his flock ever feel the chafe of trace or collar. He is a purveyor of meat: he breeds, rears, and tends his deer for the one sole purpose that in due time they may be driven down to a market, and there be exchanged for the luxuries of life and a balance of current coin. He needs sugar, green coffee-beans, and Russian leaf-tobacco, and the fjeld produces none of these things; but in the places where the reindeer can be sold, there they may be bought from traders.

And at the same time he uses the herd in a measure to support his own life. The thick syrupy milk—almost as dense as the condensed Swiss milk one gets in tins elsewhere—makes part of his daily meal. We came across it not unfrequently. It is carried in grimy bladders, and, after the custom of the country, is usually rather sour. At meal-times it is poured into a large bowl of birch-root, which the host holds between his knees. There is one spoon, a shallow affair of bone, which is handed from one to another, and it is always considered polite to lick the spoon quite clean before passing it on. The milk itself, either by reason of its surroundings, or because it is made that way, has a telling flavour of ancient turpentine, which clings in the memory. But I do not think that reindeer milk eaten *à la laponne* will ever be introduced as a delicacy by English

gourmets.

Farther westward in Lapland, the ownership of the deer is different. Every Finn farmer must have his six to eighteen deer for winter traffic, and as the country is more thickly settled there, a great many deer are required. In the summer these are handed over to some Lapp, who will graze them and return them when the snow comes again in good condition for the heavy work. The Lapp gets a fee for his trouble, and takes as a perquisite any increase which may occur whilst the beasts are under his charge. He runs all the deer entrusted to him in this way together in one big herd, and separates them (if so be he should forget the individuals) by their respective ear-markings, which are registered property.

The niceties of scientific breeding are beyond the crude wit of this meat farmer of Arctic Lapland, and though he occasionally does a swap, weight for weight, and age for age, to bring new blood from a distant herd into his own, and so prevent continuous in-breeding, this is about the utmost extent of his efforts. He accepts the new-born calves as they appear, and does his best to keep them in fettle and get them fit for market in the smallest possible time. In summer he drives them through the forests of Arctic willow and birch, where they may browse on the young shoots or eat the crisp moss underfoot. And for the benefit of those that have not seen the performance, I may say it is a quaint sight to watch a solemn reindeer reared up on his hind legs, with his great splay fore-hoofs against a birch trunk, trying to grab the tender foliage which dangles so temptingly just above his hairy muzzle. His one regret, then, is that Nature has not given him wings. But in winter the mountain Lapp herds his deer where the snow blanket is thinnest, so that they may most easily delve down to the moss beneath.

It is a curious sight, also, to see a reindeer-herd feeding in the gloom of the Arctic night, when a six-foot layer of snow intervenes between the glowering sky and its food. Each deer digs for itself a pit, hoeing the white mass with its prominent brow-tines, and scratching out the powdery snow with its forefeet, after the manner of a fox terrier delving for rabbits; so that when it is grazing on the succulent moss below it is quite out of sight from the snow surface above. The deer does not enlarge the floor of this pit to any great extent, and it does not understand the art of making a trench. When one patch of the moss is eaten bare, it clambers to the surface again and makes another pit.

When the sleigh traveller, driving along through the dark twilight, comes across one of these places where a deer herd has been digging down to food, he

generally has plenty of occupation before he has crossed it safely to the farther side.

The reindeer, by the way, is identical with the cariboo of Northern America, and at one time, though long ago, it certainly existed in these islands of Great Britain and Ireland. It lingered longest in Caithness, and certainly was not extinguished there till the middle of the thirteenth century. But although the American red man, and the trapper, and the pre-historic Scotchman, have all, at one time or another, made their living out of the deer, none of these ever bred them as a domestic animal—that is an occupation parochial to the Lapp alone.

Here is a very interesting proposition. Where has all the money gone to for which, during so many weary centuries, these herds have been exchanged? The Lapp does not spend it upon himself, that is evident; and if he hoards it, where is his strong room? Legend alone deigns to tell: the Lapp himself preserves a massive ignorance.

It was a Norskman of Namsdalen who taught me all I know upon the subject, and what he said was too much like a fairy-tale to be taken very seriously. He was my hunter at the time. We were after elk, and he was moved to speech by the finding of the despoiled carcass of a cow-elk which had been slain by poacher Lapps. It seems he had once been enamoured of a Lappish woman (Fin-ne, he called her) himself, and under pressure she had shown him the hoard of her tribe.

It lay in a narrow glacier which trickled its frozen stream down a bleak pass in the mountain. At one place a spur of the rock had canted away the moraine stones into the centre of the stream, and behind the spur was a little bay of rock filled, as it were, with a backwater of clear green ice. At the edge of this they knelt, and stabbed and dug with their sheath-knives, and as the pit deepened round their feet they heard the muffled groans which poured from the heart of the glacier. These were the ghosts in the ice, the Fin-ne woman told him—clammy, resistless ghosts, who strangled thieves, as they had done through countless thousands of years. And when at last their knives had slashed a way to the lip of the cave, which lay below, my superstitious Norsk hunter almost believed her.

The woman herself would not go inside—she dared not. But the Norskman, though full of shrinkings, slid down over the glittering ice fragments into the cold, black cave beyond. And there, in the half gloom, lit only by the few rays which struggled in through the hole they had dug, and the cold green light from

the ice, what a sight it was that met his eyes! He was in the treasure-house of the Lapps, a regular Aladdin’s cave, crammed with the plunder of centuries.

In ordinary sacks of skin were the *kroner* of recent years, and the national silver coinage which obtained before that. There in heaps were the heterogeneous coins of past ages and every country. And beyond was a curious litter of pewter candlesticks, jewelled sword-hilts, a gold Communion chalice, a rusted iron mace, a bone crucifix, bowls, chains, ladles, knives, some of precious metal, some mere valueless relics: and outside, the ghosts of the ice creaked and rustled incessantly.

Here, then, was the tale of how those old sea rovers, who stormed Scarborough, and burned the Humber villages, and ravaged the coasts of England and France, obtained meat to victual their galleys. Here was the plunder they had brought back from their distant piracies, peddled away to buy deer meat for fresh expeditions. But the man who looked on it all did not stop to make more than a hasty catalogue. The whispering ghosts of the ice scared him, the cold darkness of the place chilled his blood, and without, in the daylight, the Finne woman incessantly whimpered and cried out that he should come back to her....

This is the tale as it was told to me beside the relics of that murdered cow-elk in Namsdalen, and this is all I know about the matter. A glow for treasure-hunting warmed in me. I wanted to set off at once and see that cave by the glacier for myself, and finger its contents. But the hunter was not to be persuaded; he said he had forgotten its whereabouts. That, of course, was absurd for a man who knew every tree and every rock on the fjeld. But I rather think the Lapps had scared him into holding his tongue about the matter. He had a very real terror of their powers of sorcery, as I had learned already, and I was inclined to credit his tale about the hoard—he had not got the necessary power of invention to have made it up. Besides, the viking “local colour” which he gave me (and which I have forgotten) was clean beyond him.

Where these herder Lapps, who were our hosts just then in Arctic Lapland, had their strong-room we were not indelicate enough to inquire, but we did push questions, as far as they would go, upon another point—we wanted to witness some practical sorcery. We wished to see the drum brought out, a genuine active curse performed, and then watch it go home to roost. When I had lived with

Laplanders before, I had seen nothing of these things, and well-informed friends afterwards had blamed me for not furthering questions and watching real *bona fide* sorcery in full working action.

Such a thing as witch-, or rather wizard-craft seemed an anachronism, and yet it was undoubtedly done and believed in. Many a Norwegian valley farmer, who has offended his Fin-ne neighbour, has been told that his sheep or his oxen shall in consequence suffer, and has watched the poor brutes pine away and die from no apparent ailment. From a distance one glibly diagnoses poison cunningly administered, but on the spot one seems to grasp that some other influence is at work which is not so easily explained away.

We were keen, then, to see this sorcery process in full working order. We wanted to inspect the oval-headed drum with its curious figuring which is the outward and visible sign, and to watch all the ritual of spell-weaving by a recognised practitioner. We were prepared to supply him with a subject. Hayter and I both agreed that there was a certain large fat man of our acquaintance whom we would gladly sacrifice to the cause of science. Hayter should draw his portrait, we would have him thoroughly cursed, and we would go back to England and note the result for ourselves. If the fat man had dwindled appreciably, then we would credit the powers of Lapland sorcerers; otherwise we would withhold judgment, or perhaps go so far as to disbelieve.

So we broached the matter openly round the camp-fire. Our grimy host grinned and shook his head. Hayter drew the fat man's portrait and held it out alluringly. Our host sighed; the fat man was certainly a most tempting subject to carry a real good, comprehensive curse. But as he sighed, he shook his head. He said he had thrown up his practice as a sorcerer; he tried to imply he had sold it, and then he denied having ever practised at all. Yes, he quite understood what we wanted; he looked at the portrait hungrily, and rubbed his scrubby chin, and was truly sorry he could not undertake the job. But that sort of thing was past and over now—at any rate, on behalf of foreigners. And yet——He looked at the fat man's portrait again, and took an imaginary drum between his knees and tapped music from its head. And then he frowned and shrugged his shoulders, and begged some ship's tobacco, and began ostentatiously to talk about an attack of *laminitis* in one of his deer's hoofs, which we had been prescribing for.

He let us understand very clearly that the subject was a delicate one, and that he did not choose to be drawn on it; and from him—upon sorcery—we heard no more. As it chanced, his daughter Marie took a great fancy to one of us, and we thought we might get news of what we wanted from her. But although the

favoured one took many walks with the young lady over the quiet folds of the tundra (always keeping carefully on the windward side of her), he never got any definite information on the subject he had at heart. The damsel was clearly as ignorant as himself, and in the end, when he was “cut out” by the gallant Johann, he bore the pain of being supplanted like a man. Marie was very nice, but—well, one could not always manage to keep to windward of her.

And so there ended our dealing with the matter. It had been one of my aspirations to some time have the power of writing a genuine interview with a practical sorcerer, and the thing plainly could not be done. If witchcraft is still practised in Lapland, it is done with small ostentation, but I am inclined to think the whole business has died out. The degenerate Lapps,—those whose fathers have at one time failed as deer-herders on the fjeld, and who have come down to being vagabond river-fishers, or mere prosperous lake-side farmers,—are moving with the times. Many of them can read, and some can write. Schoolmasters go amongst them during the idle months of winter. And before that practical person—the schoolmaster—the practising warlock has to hide his drum.

Holy Russia is at the schoolmaster’s back, and here is another of the crimes with which that terrible country must be charged: it has elbowed out of Europe the final relics of the cult of sorcery. One could almost turn Nihilist out of sheer regret.

The Sorcerer and the Portrait

CHAPTER IX

A PRÉCIS OF LAPPISH HISTORY, AND A NARRATIVE OF TRANSIT BY RAFT AND SWAMP TO IVALOMATI

That grimy little person, Marie, guided us back to our other men, and whether she did it out of sheer good-nature, or for the sake of the one of us she was pleased to admire, or for Johann's sake, it was hard to discover. It seemed that the untutored child of the fjeld could be as arrant a flirt as any young woman with the advantage of half a dozen milliners and a London season's education. But for all that, if there was a breeze blowing, and one did not come too close to her, she really was in her way a pleasant little companion. One could hardly call her good-looking; she was too weather-beaten for that. And she followed the fashion of the fjeld in being more easy than trim in her apparel. Moreover, she was as irresponsible as a cat in her personal habits, which was a *trait* one did not get used to all at once. But, as I say, she had her attractions, and though one was inclined to smile at her waddling run at the beginning of a march, one regarded it with more respect at the end of the fortieth mile, when it was no more clumsy and no more waddling than it had been at the outset.

Marie led us through river and swamps, through forest and ravine, through all the naked loneliness of the fjeld, with never a scrap of hesitation, never more than a brief glance round when we headed a rise. She knew the wilderness as a hunting-man may know a country here at home. And she led us to the rest-hut which Johann had described, with never a deviation from the bee-line except where the corrugation of the country made curves a necessity.

Pat, with more stubble and more grin, and Pedr, with a smile if possible more beautiful than ever, were at the door to welcome us. Inside, our solid goods were laid out in an orderly row; the brown canvas sacks and the chronically sodden blankets were hung up on the drying-beam above the fire; and the room was filled with a delicious mosquito-proof smoke. It felt quite like a home-coming.

We inducted Marie to a seat on a pile of springy birch-boughs, which the excellent Pat had brought in to form his own bed, and we set before her of our best, which did not amount to much. I think it was the first time she had ever tasted larks in aspic, and unless I am much mistaken she will not greatly regret if

it was the last. One thing she did appreciate though, and that was the *Windward's* slop-chest tobacco. She saw the black cake pass from hand to hand; she drew her knife from its sheath and held out eager fingers; and when she had shredded up a sufficiency and got her iron-lined wooden pipe in full blast, it was a pleasant sight to see her. The smoke exuded from her lips and nostrils in sleek, gray clouds, and the wrinkles in her grimy, weather-beaten little face wreathed themselves into a smile of ecstatic contentment.

The question of sleeping-quarters obtruded itself. We had an acquaintance with the Lapp's casual way of regarding such matters, but we still had (from the conventions of our upbringing) some small spasm of hesitation in offering a spinster guest a shake-down on the floor of a hut containing five full-grown men. We discussed the advisability of turning out ourselves and camping elsewhere with the carriers, and leaving Marie in the orthodox virgin seclusion. But she took the matter out of our hands very simply. She said she must be getting back to her endless work with the deer-pack. She had sat down for an hour on Pat's couch of birch-shoots, and this seemed all the rest she cared for after her gentle forty-mile stroll. She shook hands with us limply all round, and then went into the sunny midnight outside. Hayter and I instinctively took off our caps, but I am afraid she did not know it was intended as a piece of courtesy, because she doubled up in a fit of merriment by way of response. And then Johann went out and walked by her side till they came to the edge of the scrub willows, and I think she appreciated Johann's attentions best, because she understood them more. They stopped there and made their further adieux, and then the squat little figure waved its hand for the last time, and disappeared in the cover, and Johann stood stupidly staring at the place where she had vanished.

We went back into the hut and sat down on the benches. The aroma of the little woman's presence clung to the place, and we could not help thinking of the endless round which had made up her life and would make up her future. Her ancestry dazzled one. Her forefathers were old at a date when the Romans laid down the first legend as a foundation for their history. They came of a fine, crusted, Ural-Altaic stock, who were accustomed to look upon the Adam-and-Eve family as vulgar parvenus. And yet they were people without observable pride or ostentation. They had no monuments, no books, no sculptured or written history. They could look back on neither a nobility nor kings. They had always been hunters and herders, and by reason of this had never acquired the gregarious idea. They were a people of camp-communities, living on their deer, and the camps were always small, because many deer cannot find pasturage in one locality. By reason of this it has never occurred to them to be patriotic, and,

as a consequence, when oppression came in their way, they have always been oppressed. In a nation of warriors the small men get weeded out by the chances of battle. In a community which has never fought, the stature of the race deteriorates. The Lapps have never been warriors. They have never even been a nation.

As the world increased in the easy lands of the South, so have the Lapps through the centuries been ever squeezed at its verge towards the bleak, unknown North. It is but rarely they have consented to band together and raise objection. The Norwegians made them serfs by proclamation in the ninth century, and serfs they remained, contentedly enough, so long as the ill-usage dealt out to them was not over-brutal. When they could stand it no longer, they took refuge in the savage forest-dingles, and made expeditions for houghing their enemies' cattle and burning down their wooden homesteads. By this means they regained a wandering independence; but in the fourteenth century the Norskmen again coveted a subject race, and made systematic raids on the nomads, and again wrote them down as serfs in their census. And in the sixteenth century the Swedes followed suit. But only a few of the Lapps were caught. The great majority were still free wanderers on the fjeld and the tundras.

The only Lapps who really suffered were those who were held by the Birkarlians—a band of Swedish adventurers who flourished from the thirteenth century right away down to the year 1700; and in the hands of these hard men they endured what was little better than slavery. They had no redress. They had no trades unions amongst themselves; they did not belong to that larger trades union which is known as a nation; and if the Birkarlians in the course of progress could have endured to this day, it is probable that they would still be holding stunted Laplanders as their unpaid menials.

But time sweeps on, and the sentiment of the world alters. The peculiar institution of slavery has for one reason and another dropped through into mere history; and governments which at one time thought the only self-respecting thing to do was to either shoot the aboriginal or shackle him into servitude, now look upon him as an amiable curiosity, and write out laws for his preservation, much in the same spirit as they appoint close seasons for the elk and the ptarmigan and the aurochs.

Under this fostering care the total Lapp population has risen to some 32,000 as near as it can be reckoned; of which 18,500 wander within the marches of Norway, 7500 are in Sweden, and the balance own as over-lords the Archduke of Finland, and his master the Great White Czar; and each government has its own

preservation rules.

The fundamental note of the Russian *régime* is “No Vodki,” and it is easy to create a Prohibition State where distances are big, transport difficult, and the inducements to smuggle small. Norway very wisely does not worry about the liquor question, as in practice there, by reason of the settlement of the country, it would be quite impossible to restrain the aboriginal from purchasing *aquavit* if he intended to do it. So the Norskman lets the Fin-ne, as he calls the Lapp, diet himself entirely according to taste; and as a consequence, at an occasional wedding, or an annual meat-selling, the little man spends one afternoon in getting blind drunk. He has all the rest of the year to get the aniseed flavour entirely out of his system, so, physically speaking, not much harm is done. Sweden, too, follows the same policy, but provides a slightly less noxious brand of drink.

The Scandinavian farmer, however, who has the Lapp reindeer-herder for an occasional neighbour, does not agree with the enthusiastic theorists who in Stockholm and Christiania make the laws for his preservation. Socially he regards the Lapp as though he were some noxious kind of ape, the which is quite understandable, because the spirit which fosters Aborigines’ Protection Societies can only exist at a considerable distance from the aboriginal. He sees the Lapp and his doings personally, and (being somewhat unread) does not regard him from the point of view of an interesting relic of the past. He merely looks upon him in the light of the present, and finds him a thorn in the flesh.

In the old viking days the Scandinavian would yield to no one in his appetite for thieving; but with advancing civilisation he has grown to be a staunch anti-pilferer. He has had game-laws set up above his head, and he respects them. He is allowed to shoot one elk on his own estate, and only one elk, per annum, and he must shoot it in a certain fixed month; and it is not pleasant for him to see the Lapp (who knows no law except the rule of appetite) gaily slaying the great deer whenever they come within range of a rifle-bullet. It annoys him, too, to have his cows milked on the mountains, and his rivers and lakes poached with system and industry. Moreover, it is his custom to leave all his worldly goods unlocked and unguarded, and he expects that no one will steal them; so that when the mountain Lapp comes out of the forest like a quiet ghost, and annexes any trifle, from a sheep to a parcel of smoked salmon which may strike his fancy, the farmer rages, and makes no allowance for the neglect of education. It is tolerably useless to apply to the Government for redress, because governments move slowly, and a Lapp moving on the fjeld, if not tackled at once, is hard to catch;

and so he takes the law (and a Remington rifle) into his own most capable hands.

Then begins the trouble. The mountain Lapp, according to his instincts, has stolen; and although under pressure he might peaceably give up the transferred goods, he has a strong dislike to indiscriminate retaliation—when applied to himself. So when he comes across the rotting carcasses of first one, then another, then a dozen, then a score of his cherished deer, ruthlessly shot down and left in their wallows, he accepts the *vendetta*, and prepares to carry it into bloody effect. He owns a rifle, this nomad herder of to-day, who rears the *rensdyr* amongst the rugged mountains of the Scandinavian peninsula; and though it is an early breech-loader, cast from the army in the early seventies, it is a deadly enough weapon when the butt is cuddled by a vengeful shoulder. And he goes down to the valley-farms and puts lead into beast or man, whichever comes in his way. Upon which the farmers, still saying no word to the Government, arm and organise a Lapp-hunt; and the mountains swallow the tale of what is done; and those who come back to the farms sit down assured that at least some of the aborigines will pester them no more.

This then is the state of things which obtains in this year of grace amongst the fjelds and forests of Northern Norway and Sweden, and as a consequence the Lapps are slow of increase. Over the border, however, in Lapland proper, and in Russian Lapland, their numbers rise appreciably every decade, though it is perhaps hard to decide which are genuine Lapps and which belong to a mixed race. In the extreme east of their territory they are apt to intermarry with the Samoyedes; and I think it is a significant fact that the outer garments of the two races—the Lapp *matsoreo*, and the Samoyede *militza*—are both fashioned on the same cut. In Russian Lapland there is an obvious intermixture with the Russian *moujik*, and in Lapland proper they naturally marry largely with the all-pervading Finn.

The inhabitant of Lapland is not so light-fingered as his more western brother, perhaps because there is less opportunity of pilfering. And he does not make himself so unpopular, because there are fewer aliens for him to get unpopular with, and no one goes out regularly to shoot him as a domestic nuisance. In fact the Lapps we were in contact with (and the Finns, too, for that matter) never stole any of our particular properties; though at the same time it should be confessed that we had remarkably little worth stealing, as the whole of our outfit after Enare (including the clothes on our backs) was not worth a couple of sovereigns, and we did keep a remarkably sharp eye on even the few trifles we had.

The life these aboriginal people lead in Arctic Lapland is undoubtedly hard, and at times they rub shoulders very closely with starvation. But they have got constitutions, built up through countless centuries to endure the privations and (what to a more delicately nurtured race would be) the hardships of their life; and from the number of very old people we saw everywhere through the country, it was plain that the orthodox threescore years and ten was by no means the average limit for the life of an Arctic Lapp. Children there were, too, in all abundance. It was a notable fact that scarcely a woman did we see of child-bearing age without a babe at breast; and though a large percentage of this progeny did not endure the chills of a second or a third winter, enough pulled through to keep the race on the steady increase in numbers. This weeding-out process also obviously did much to counteract the evils of consanguineous marriages, and so maintain the standard of physique. It was one of Nature's balances. Without it the Arctic Lapps would increase for a while abnormally, and then they would dwindle, and in a few centuries they would be gone.

We should have liked much to stay on in that Arctic casual ward, to which Marie guided us, for a day or two to recruit. We were both of us getting very hollow-eyed, and not a little fagged. The mosquito-plague had something to do with this state of things, because when a man has got a constant fever about him, he can scarcely be called healthy. And the want of food was telling on us. We had barely had a decent meal since leaving the *Windward*, and many of our meals were as much like the Barmecide's as a diet of plain water could make them. But it was this very scarcity of food which drove us remorselessly forward. Our own store of those miserable tinned dainties was dwindling, and the carriers' provisions had already been dragged out beyond their calculated time. We had no help for it but to press on to Ivalomati, which was the nearest human habitation.

So we started, and promptly there arrived another difficulty: we lost the way.

In a populated country this is a hard thing to do. Given the general direction, one can always there hit upon a town or a village if one takes sufficient time about the search. But in a land where the town consists of five houses, and a village can earn a name on the map with one roof and a haystack, it is very easy to wander on day after day and never sight anything but sheer wilderness.

In this particular instance it was Johann who failed us. The excellent Johann

had never before journeyed West beyond the squalid hut which figured geographically as Menesjärvi; but as at that place we had been unable to get either fresh guides or carriers, we had induced the three who had brought us to come on farther, and Johann had guaranteed (for a consideration) to find the way. He had laid under contribution the entire topographical knowledge of Menesjärvi (which perhaps did not amount to much), and had imbibed it noisily for three solid hours. He had started off with confidence and brought us to the first rest-house in style. Pat and Pedr had found their way from there to the second shelter, where we, with Marie's help, joined them. But before we had been travelling a mile on the final stage, it was clear that the loud-voiced Johann was completely "bushed."

He would not own it at first. We were tramping through a burnt-out forest with gaunt gray-and-black skeleton trees hedging us in impenetrably on every side. Growth and decay is slower up there, deep inside the Arctic Circle, than it is in the Tropics. In a hot, moist country a fallen tree may be blotted out of sight by vegetation in a week, and crumbled into primitive dust in less than a year. But up in the cold North, Nature does not strain herself to work with such fevered speed. A tree dies; and, erect or prone, it may survive for years as a gaunt, dry corpse. There is no jungle to hide it from the air; there are no creepers to bore into its bones and leave openings for the tearing fingers of the weather; there is only the short, crisp moss underfoot, and that rather helps than hinders its preservation. And so for years upon years these dead forests endure, as eyesores to heaven.

Mile after mile we tramped through the winding aisles of these dead trees, the acrobatic Johann waddling stolidly on in the lead. From time to time we looked at the compass, and more than once we had doubts about the direction. But we did not interfere. Johann under the stress of advice was apt to get flustered, and Johann flustered would be a very useless guide indeed. He was all we had got, and so we agreed to let him have his own way.

But at last when he calmly led us back over our own tracks which we had made not half an hour before, and still would have gone complacently on waddling through the wilderness, we called a halt and made him face the situation. He owned up at once to having wandered, which was a confession he could not very well avoid, seeing that our old tracks were by no means microscopic; and after a little more pressure, admitted that he had not the vaguest notion of where he was.

This was unsatisfactory. We had come to see Arctic Lapland, certainly, but it

looked as if we were going to inspect a good deal more than we had bargained for. A real solid hunger made us appreciate this very thoroughly.

We asked Johann if he had any suggestion to make. He scratched himself thoroughly for ten minutes and gave the matter his due consideration. Finally he said he thought he could lead us back successfully to the places from which we had come.

We did not see the force of this at all. We intended to get through to the other side of the country, and we stated the proposition with brevity and decision.

But Johann's suggestion found other ready hearers. Pat and Pedr both woke into animation. It appeared that Pat had a sore heel, and possessed a wife (or somebody else's wife) he wanted to return to, and also remembered some important business on Mattosjärvi which ought to be attended to at once. And Pedr, the beautiful Pedr, but without the beautiful smile, stated tersely that he was sick of the whole thing, and intended to go back home there and then.

It was mutiny. They leaned back each against his pack, and began making fast the thongs against their breasts and shoulders. They were frightened, and they were tired, and they were going back to the place from which they had come whether we liked it or whether we did not. It was glaring, flagrant mutiny, and there was only one way to deal with it, and we chose that way.

It was a primitive style of persuasion, and it involved the use of the heavy British hand and the heavy British boot, but it served its purpose then, as it has done thousands of times before; and after the proceedings were over, we stood still a minute to collect breath, and contemplated three very sulky, subdued carriers, squatted on the ground and waiting for orders.

The outlook was not cheerful. The only thing apparently left was to make for Ivalomati on a compass course, which sounds simple enough on paper, but was likely to prove a very different matter in practice. We had carefully checked all our travel up to this on the map, and so far we had never detected the map's accuracy in any one single point. It was a map somewhat reminiscent of those made by boys at school, where one filled in any invitingly bare space with an imaginary river, or a fancy lake, or a decorative range of caterpillar mountains. From an artistic point of view this kind of fiction is very pleasant to look upon and to create, and indeed exercises a wonderful fascination over some people. One remembers the joy poor Stevenson confessed to over the making of that delicious map in *Treasure Island*. But when you are depending on a geographer to lead you out of famine, and when a fictitious scratch of his pen may hustle

you into actual starvation, why then you come upon very different views, and cordially agree that any one who writes or draws anything but the bare and naked truth should be led out to suffer a lingering death.

In addition to all this, we could only guess at our “point of departure,” and so getting the true magnetic bearing of this problematical Ivalomati was a matter of the airiest uncertainty. However, it was Hobson’s choice, and so putting on cheerful, confident faces for the benefit of the frightened, sulky carriers, off we set.

Now this sort of quandary no doubt sounds funny enough from the distance; but viewed at first hand, we failed to catch its humour. We had hunger nipping us in the ribs all the time; we were heavy-footed with weariness; the infernal insect-plague was going on all the time; and there was nothing to tell us whether we were steering right, or wandering completely away into the savage depths of the wilderness.

We met swamps, and plunged across them in curves and zigzags. We tramped through forests of graceful birches, and forests of dreary pines; we clambered over rocks, and waded streams. The land was not entirely desolate of life. Sometimes we saw tiny lemmings before our feet, and once we heard the cry of a cuckoo from far away amongst the trees. At one halt in the middle of a two-mile-wide tremulous morass, we sat beside a pond of clear water, and tried to divert ourselves by overlooking the business of three black-and-gray frogs who dwelt in its depths. We were thankful to those speckled frogs during that halt: they almost interested us. But the greater part of the way was dreary enough. And so we expended an entire day’s journey.

Finally, after wallowing painfully through another quagmire of still more horrible wetness and filth, we came upon a river, deep, swift-flowing, and two hundred feet from bank to bank. And this, unless the map was crowning its petty perjuries by the most cruel, colossal lie ever scratched upon paper, was the Repojoki.

Ivalomati, if it existed at all, was obviously on the farther side, and it behoved us to cross with as little delay as might be. But here came another difficulty. We proposed to build a raft to carry our goods piecemeal, and swim it across to the other side. But the Lapps, with the usual contrariness of those who live in a country of water-ways, could not swim a stroke, and refused flatly to be towed over, floated by a log. So there was nothing for it but to build a raft which would carry passengers, and to this pleasing business we set our hands without

further talk.

It had been my fortune to make a whole armada of rafts before. I built one in the days of youth to navigate a local duck-pond. I made another in more mature years for the easier fishing of red char in a certain lake of Northern Norway, and another in North Carolina as a lazy way of travelling down the French Broad River; and in the course of writing story-books for the young I must have turned out quite a respectable fleet of rafts—paper rafts—under every conceivable circumstance of theoretical difficulty, with glibness and ease.

But building that raft to cross the Repojoki was very different from all these previous excursions into carpentry. They had been amusement; this was a horrible nightmare. Because we wanted wood, no wood was near the river. The handiest tree lay at the farther side of the last swamp we had waded through, and quite half a mile from the bank. We had to wallow painfully back through this slough, haggle down our trees, lop them into portable lengths, and drag them back through the quaking ooze. We were hungry, we were weary, we were bitten half mad by the hateful insects, and our one utensil for cutting was a small American axe, more fitted to split kindling wood than to swing against a tree.

Two logs we laid upon the bank of the Repojoki, seven feet apart; five others we laid upon these; and then, putting two more parallel to the first two, we made withes from the shoots of Arctic willow, and bound the whole into place. And all the time that we worked, the sun beat upon us, and the mosquitoes covered us in dense, biting clouds. We were like men toiling in a delirium.

We hacked out something that would serve as a paddle, and slid the raft into the swift water. As a vehicle it did not look encouraging. It floated deep, and each log wobbled independently. But we were in no mood for niceness then. The packs were piled on and laboriously paddled over, following a diagonal course in the grip of the racing current. The raft was brought back again, and made the bank some two hundred yards farther down-stream. With a passenger on board besides the paddler, it sank very nearly out of sight, and between each trip it had to be docked for repairs. It was a moist method of making the passage, but it seemed effective.

On the last trip, the ninth, Pedr was passenger with an Englishman for his Charon; and in mid-stream the beautiful Pedr objected to the water swirling round his waist, and began to get nervous. Worse still, he commenced to wriggle, and promptly the raft began to wriggle too. The withes with which it was lashed together untwisted gaily. The paddler paddled for dear life, and Pedr, now solidly

scared, embraced him from behind. A log detached itself from the raft and bobbed off in a *pas seul* down-stream, and on the farther bank Johann and Pat held out branches alluringly over the stream, whilst the other Englishman with them laughed. But still the paddler paddled on.

Then the logs of the raft opened out like the sticks of a fan, and reared up on end, and “Rari nantes in gurgite vasto” chuckled the foreigner on the bank, who knew something about his countryman’s capabilities in the water. He had not calculated upon the clinging nature of Pedr, however, and when the pair of them vanished below the swirling surface of the Repojoki—and stayed there—he began to get a little scared himself and to strip off his coat.

However, there is a recognised course of treatment to follow under these circumstances, and the swimming Englishman took it with vigour, and some hundred yards lower down-stream came to bank with his charge. The beautiful Pedr had a big red lump over one eye, which probably explained to him then, and will make him remember in the future, that it is inadvisable to wrestle with a swimmer who is wishing for free use of his limbs in deep, rapid water. I fancy we had, on the whole, a good educational effect upon our Lappish carriers.

Raft Wrecked on the Repojoki.

Of course we all were as wet as water could make us, and our chattels were sodden, and the exertion of making the raft and navigating her had been great; but the incident of crossing the Repojoki had on the whole distinctly cheered us. On every there-and-back crossing, the raft had been swept some two hundred odd yards down-stream; and so by the time the whole train was across, we had perforce gained knowledge of some thousand yards of the farther bank, and at one place came upon indications of a track. There were no footmarks, certainly; but some bushes had been axed away as though to assist a landing, and we set out from these with renewed hopes of finding Ivalomati.

The country, too, tried to cheer us. It was true there were more swamps, and they were even wetter and wider than those we had crossed before, but their bosky pools were gilded with sunshine, and here and there clumps of pink flowers, and white flowers, and blue flowers, caught the eye and tried to gladden it. On some of the marshes, too, there were curlew; and life, after the dead

regions we had passed through, is always pleasant to look upon and hear. At one halt, a pair of these curlew got up, screaming, and went through the same pantomime one had seen them in so many times in the foot-hills at home during breeding season. Hayter must needs stroll off to look for their young. But after he had been gone a dozen minutes, I chanced to look down, and saw the chicken he was searching for squatted stolidly on the ground not four inches from my foot. In tint and shape it harmonised wonderfully with its surroundings, and had evidently received instructions to “lie close” whatever befel. Indeed it withstood a good two minutes’ proguing with a grass blade before it deigned to stir; and when the little stilt-legged oddity did get up and run, in three turns it was absorbed into the landscape again beyond human sight. And in the meanwhile its parents were getting more daring. They were making such determined swoops at our heads that we actually had to drive them off. They were as fierce in their respect as nesting Richardson’s skuas on the outlying islets of the Shetlands.

Cloud-berries grew on these swamps, but though we looked thirstily for fruit, we could see none even approaching ripeness. Most of the berries were green, or half formed; only a few were scarlet; none had got the amber tint which one has learned to love so well on a Norwegian shooting. And once, too, on a scrap of stony, rising ground, we saw a woodpecker at work, digging grubs from the trunk of a gaunt, dead pine.

We came into another forest, where the air was heavy with mosquitoes, and the weary carriers could hardly drag one foot up to the other, and still on we plodded. And then through the trees we caught a gleam of broad water.

No word was said, but instinctively the pace quickened. A breeze was blowing towards us, and down it came the faint scent of wood-smoke. It seemed the most delicious smell that had ever met our nostrils.

We came out of the cover and stood on the bank of a broad, sluggish river. On the farther bank was a canoe drawn up, and beyond it stood a rude hut of logs. It was Ivalomati, and we did not forget to congratulate ourselves. Johann exploded into roar after roar of laughter, and became the genial acrobat again, as though he had never been anything else; Pedr turned on the beautiful smile to its most beautiful pitch; and Pat forgot his tiredness, and his sore heel, and danced a jig of triumph, and let out of him a regular string of Irish yells for some one to bring across the canoe.

CHAPTER X

ON TO POKKA, WITH AN INTRODUCTION TO PRINCE JOHANN OF LAPLAND

Here then was Ivalomati, the village we had looked for so long, a place made up of one small house of logs, one squalid barn with yawning sides, and an adult population of three souls—a woman and two men. The adult population was away fishing, or rather attempting to fish, for, as it turned out, the toil of twenty-four hours brought forth no catch. A swarm of children of every age, from the crawler upwards, was left in charge. It was the eldest girl, a shy, wild creature, almost pretty, who took the canoe and brought us across the river; and she it was who offered us all the poor house could afford—a small, bare room.

There was more evidence of real poverty open to the public view in Ivalomati than at any other place we visited in Arctic Lapland. The children had not got summer clothes—the first we had seen lacking them. They wore the tattered rags of some winter furs, exposing three-quarters of their wretched skins to the intolerable bitings of the mosquitoes. We made a half-hearted attempt to buy food, and learned definitely what we had guessed, that they had no food even for themselves.

Life there might be hard, but the adults of Ivalomati were not the sort to make it most endurable. The two men were Finns, slack, doltish, and indolent. The woman was a Lapp, worn out with much child-bearing. The large-skulled, hybrid children seemed to have no occupation except to play about on a mud heap and try and stay their bellies by chewing the sappy river-grass.

A tattered, ancient net with birch-bark floats fluttered from the rotten drying-posts, a plantation of weeds flourished inside a broken-down fence, and these were the only indications of how a livelihood was made. Judging from the fly-blown, grass-covered midden outside the crumbling barn, there once had been a cow in Ivalomati, and a cracked iron cauldron, still holding the traces of a stew of reed grass and fish offal, gave indications that the cow had been fed according to the orthodox fashion of the country; but when we saw the place the cow was not, and all that stood between the wretched bipeds and starvation were the few small fish they could manage to dredge out of the Ivalojoki.

We “killed a tin” that night, and washed it down with a dose of weak cocoa; and after dinner the door opened and our three carriers came in with a peace-offering. Each had an armful of mouldy hay, which he deposited on the floor, and Johann gleefully waved a foul brown-calico sheet, which he pointed out would make us a most luxurious mosquito-bar. It seemed as though we were really going to get a comfortable night’s sleep, and we wanted it.

The hay smelt of mustiness, and the sheet smelt of something worse, but we were in no mood for niceties. The room was alive with mosquitoes. Once, twice, and three times did we make raids upon them, and burn thousands with flaring torches, and for a moment the place would be clear. But only for a moment. Through the innumerable chinks of the walls of the roof there flew in constantly fresh thousands, who would drum their *pas de charge* and set to work on our suffering bodies with heroic disregard of consequences. Desperately weary though we might be, there was no sleep to be got whilst one lay exposed to that horrible, relentless biting.

So we ranged the hay diagonally across the room into one long bed, and took the dirty sheet, and with strings to form the ridge, and thorns to pin the ends, and stones to hold down the sides, built us a tent some four feet long, on which we placed high hopes. To be sure it would only hold a head and shoulders of each of us, but the sleeping-sacks would sufficiently protect all parts which projected.

It required skill to get inside. We rolled our coats and put them in the middle of the tent to serve as pillows, and then we got into our sodden blanket-sacks, lay down on the hay, and cautiously wriggled our heads in under the opposite ends of the tent. There were three lusty mosquitoes inside when we arrived, and as these objected to being slaughtered without a chase, we had managed completely to disarrange the tent before they had met their due reward. This entailed a reconstruction of the entire edifice, and as Hayter said he was the least clumsy of the two of us, he crawled outside, replaced the stones on the sides, and jabbed in fresh thorns where they were needed. Inside I had plenty of work killing the mosquitoes which he let in during the process. Finally he crawled in again, and after the slaying of two others of the little pests which had managed to secrete themselves up till then, we lay still in the ecstatic hope that we were going to taste again of that almost forgotten luxury, easy sleep.

But did we so much as get into a doze? I fancy not. We lay there motionless on the hay, with our lower extremities hidden from the insects by the wet blankets, and our heads roof to roof beneath the odorous tent; and the sweat dripped out of us at every pore. A midnight sun was blazing high above the hut,

and the air in the room was like that of an oven. The heat under the tent was stifling. Ever and again first one mosquito, and then another, and then a third, would get inside our defences, and we would have to bestir ourselves to slay them. The hay, too, was full of ticks, which added to our torments. When we lay down, our faces were puffed and blotched with the bites till we could scarcely see from our eyes; our hands were puffed out like boxing-gloves; and our arms were swollen till they fitted tight inside a coat-sleeve. And each of the million bites was a centre of irritation. Yet every minute this state of torture was being added to.

We passed that night in a condition bordering on frenzy, and let not those who merely know the mosquito in Africa, in India, and the Americas, judge us too hardly when I say that at times we wished most heartily we had never set foot in so detestable a country. Cold, we could have endured; privation, we were prepared for; but this horrible stew of flies ground upon the nerves till we were scarcely responsible for our actions.

In that plan of route we originally laid down at Enare, we had expected to find Ivalomati to be a village of tolerable size, and hoped to get carriers there who would take us on across the country to Pokka, and possibly to Scurujarvi. This idea was of course exploded, and so we set to work to try the power of blarney upon Pedr, Pat, and Johann, and persuade them to come farther on.

They did not see it one little bit. They said they had come much too far from home as it was, and had not the least wish to go farther. They were quite pleasant over their refusal, and quite determined. Johann mimicked the pair of us carrying the loads ourselves, tramping through the country, getting bogged in swamps, and losing the way, and finally dying of hunger and being covered up (like the babes in the wood) with a drift of grass and branches; and he roared with laughter at his own witty pantomime. Pedr glanced towards the direction in which Pokka lay, turned his back on it with decision, and smiled beautifully. And Pat, the unshaven Pat, looked so obsequious and so sly, and referred to his imaginary sore heel with such a roguish eye, that one really expected him to throw away disguise, and address us as “yer honours,” and beg for John Jamieson’s whisky there and then on the spot.

It was funny, but it was not business. Was our tramp across the country going to be broken after we had got so far and gone through so much, so very much?

We rubbed our aching bites, and reasoned with the carriers still more earnestly. We besought them almost *in formâ pauperis* (seeing that we had not got the power to command), and gradually their mood changed. It is humiliating now to remember how our spirits rose as they began to yield. And at last they consented to go with us as far as Pokka; but no farther. Be it well understood, they pointed out, they would only escort us to Pokka—only. Well, sufficient for the march (we told ourselves) were the carriers thereof. Subsequent marches must be left to provide for themselves.

Once they had agreed to go, there was no more delay. We borrowed a canoe, a very rotten canoe, got on board, and set off up the Ivalojoki.

We had trouble at first, because the river, which was almost as wide as a lake, was full of weeds, which clung to the canoe and clogged the paddles. But these cleared as the river narrowed, and we worked up between low banks where scrub birches grew amongst angular blocks of gray, lichened stone.

The banks came closer together as we paddled on, and the river increased in pace, and the way of the canoe grew less. Johann, with his mouth open and the sweat dripping from his chin, tugged manfully at the sculls in the bows. Pedr, who was squatted aft with the steering paddle, had his work cut out to keep clear of rocks round which the water swirled noisily, and occasionally there was a *bump-bump-bump* as we dragged over some submerged boulder which he had not seen.

The little old canoe strained and shivered in the stress of the stream, and leaked so abundantly that Hayter, who was labouring mid-ships with the baler, could barely keep the water under; and presently, as she showed a disposition to swamp altogether, we had to run into the bank and lighten her burden. Pat, much to his disgust, was ousted from his rest among the baggage, and made to force his way through the tangle of shrub and swamp and grasses which made the river-bank; and we two foreigners went ashore with him. The two Lapps unshipped their paddles, and punted cannily up the rapids with eight-foot poles. They had hard work, but we on shore did not exactly find it easy going. Back-washes branched off the stream, sown with yellow lilies, and some we jumped across, and some we jumped into; and when the rapids came to an end some half mile higher up, and we were able to get on board again, liquid mud oozed from us into little black pools.

Half a mile of smooth brought us to another set of rapids, and once more a land party of three had to press its way through scrub and morass. Johann and

Pedr punted the light canoe cleverly. One took the stern, the other perched in the bow. They stood up to put the pole in, and dropped it vertically. Then came a violent shove, and a sudden sit down at the end of the thrust. The canoe danced about like a twig in the rapids, and the waves slopped bountifully over her sides, and every now and again she had to be brought to the bank to be baled clear and ship a fresh crew. And finally the rapids got too bad for poling at all, and we made fast thongs of reindeer hide to the canoe at bow and stern and towed her empty up-stream with these, pressing through the scrub on the bank when we could, wading in the river-edge when it was too thick. It was the only way we could get her along. The river-banks were too swampy and overgrown to make a portage possible.

As a reward for labour we got some mile of easy water to finish up with, and then we left the flimsy little canoe finally, and set off once more on the solid tramp.

Again we came across the winter sleigh-track, a broad swathe cut from the forest, and left for the snows to smooth down into a road, and in a couple of miles this led us to a vast, quaking swamp set with a line of white, bleached crosses to make the trail. But till the frosts of winter came to harden it, the swamp here was quite impassable; it was a mere floating quagmire, and we had to skirt it tediously. Acres of cloud-berries, still unripe, lay upon its surface. The air was musical with the cries of curlew and other marsh fowl. And from above, the sun beat upon us with brazen power. Take away the Lapps, take away our sure knowledge that we were still far within the Arctic Circle, and we might have been tramping across some primæval land at the back of the Gold Coast or the Congo.

The ground rose as we toiled on, and for once the mosquitoes were almost entirely absent. It was bliss to be alive. There was a fine country all around, and we lazed off for an hour, and made a temporary camp to enjoy it. Beside us was a pool swarming with tadpoles, and we lay over the edge and searched and searched in hopes of finding a juvenile frog in the intermediate stage. But as usual we could not do it.

It was a subject which interested me. At an early age I was taught that from frog-spawn grew tadpoles, and from these grew frogs. Being of an inquiring, or a sceptical turn of mind, whichever way one likes to look at it, I used to catch the little black tadpoles, incarcerate them in pickle-bottles, and inspect them diligently; but never did the wished-for result arrive. It may be that a watched tadpole never changes; and certainly tadpoles do seem to suffer from nerves,

because if one disturbs the surface of a pond where they are occupying themselves, away go the whole crowd like a lot of animated commas. But I am inclined to think that nervousness is not the reason of their coy refusal to do their advertised change-act in public view. It is beginning to grow on me that they cannot do it. Of course science says flatly that they do change; but when it wishes, science can lie like photography or a newspaper; and for the future the tadpole metamorphosis is eliminated from my private creed. If I am wronging tadpoles as a nation, I am sorry.

By this stage our Lapp carriers were all very foot-sore, though we ourselves were quite sound, which does not say much for the theory that it is always advisable to adopt the foot-gear of the country you are travelling over. At every halt one or other of them would take off his boots, extract the grass, spread it out to dry, and add more grass from the store each carried in his personal knapsack. It was the same grass which is used for the same purpose in Norway—crisp, dry, green, fine stuff, without knots, and without seeding tips. It has to be twisted up and kneaded between the hands to break the fibre; but once so prepared, it is much like a pad of soft horse-hair in texture. However, as I say, it chafed badly, and for summer work the bare foot inside the shoe would probably have been better. That was the way I was going myself; as the lower extremities of my stockings had long before worn away, and my feet had grown as hard as a nigger’s.

We seemed to be passing away from the birdless region which lay inland from the Arctic coast. But still there was no great abundance of feathered creatures. On the swamps one could usually see a pair of curlew, but seldom more; from behind the forest trees one sometimes heard the cuckoo’s hoot, though from one side of the country to the other we never saw the bird itself in the actual flesh and feather; and once, a little ringed dotterel came out into an open space before us and went through its pitiful pantomime of being wounded, just as one may see it on the shingle of a Shetland tarn. It was the breeding season for all of them of course, and even if we had possessed a gun, and from sheer stress of hunger been willing to slay nursing parents, we should have got little for our pains; certainly not enough to live on.

It was during a halt on this march, I remember, that Hayter suddenly exploded into a fit of (apparently) causeless merriment. I asked him what was

the matter. He chuckled and said, “If only it would not cost so much,” and stopped and laughed again.

I did not understand, and asked him to explain further.

He pointed to Johann, who was going through one of his quaint, domestic exercises, and said, “I wish we could get that beauty to London, and dump him down in (say) Willis’s rooms, and bribe a waiter to put a smart luncheon in front of him, and then watch from a distance to see the result.”

It was a luscious theme, and we enlarged on it with infinite enjoyment.

We pictured the result of taking Johann back to our native Islands and launching him upon Society. It would be a thing quite easily done, and as it happened I knew a parallel case where it was carried out, and many who read this will probably recollect (perhaps with some discomfiture) the hero of it. The matter happened quite recently.

Now, who remembers it? There arrived at Liverpool by a B. and A. steamer not four years ago a jet-black negro from the West Coast of Africa. He had a little money and more self-confidence than any white man on earth ever possessed. He wanted to have a good time in England, and he had it. He had come up from the Coast on the B. and A. boat in the ordinary second-hand clothes of civilisation, because, of course, plenty of people on board knew him for what he was. But once ashore in a London hotel (which is a very long way from a Liverpool quay or the West Coast of Africa), he took off his shoes and socks and started sandals and bare legs, he doffed his trousers and coat and shipped long embroidered robes of green and white, clapped a Haûsa hat on his head in place of the brown billy-cock, and announced that he was Prince H’umaduya, of some unpronounceable place behind the British Gold Coast.

Did any one doubt his statement? Not a soul who cared to speak. Childish, snobbish London took him at his own valuation, and competed for the honour of fêting him. He went everywhere, did everything, was fawned upon by everybody. White women waited on him—because he was a prince. The Lord Mayor gave him a dinner—because he was a prince. And he accepted it all with the self-assurance he had learned professionally, and asked for more.

But before his vogue was done, he wisely took himself off, and departed for Liverpool *en route* for home and business. I saw him six months later, in the principal town on the Gold Coast, engaged in his professional avocation. He was selling a consignment of black, second-hand, wearing apparel, with noise and industry. Of course he had gone back to the ordinary boots and trousers and shirt

of pseudo-civilisation, and was in fact very like any other third-rate auctioneer with a pitch in a back street. His name, as it appeared on his license and on his signboard down there on the Coast, was John Henry Brown, and he was reputed to be making money hand over fist, and saving it. He had tasted the sweets of being an imported prince in London once, and (as a year or two has passed since then) he is about due to turn up again and once more offer himself to the lionising public.

Now what we have got in mind is to do the same with Johann. The only thing necessary will be to teach him a working knowledge of English. We shall leave his personal habits severely alone; there is a surprisingness about them which is bound to be appreciated. And to alter his clothes (for general wear) would be to paint the lily.

John Henry Brown must have been at considerable pains to invent so picturesque a name as H'umaduya, but a name for our man comes glibly to hand. *Prince Johann of Lapland* could not well be improved on for such a purpose. Get him to London, spend a guinea on a *Morning Post* announcement of his arrival, and the thing would be done. Cards would rain in upon him, and people would scuffle with one another for the honour of getting him to their houses.

It is appetising to picture his behaviour. He would not be bashful in the very least: there is no shyness about Johann. And he would not be conventional: no, one could safely swear he would be quite the reverse of conventional. He might start a dinner seated on an orthodox chair, but if by any chance a bone came in his way, I am sure he would promptly retire to the hearth-rug and squat there cross-legged and gnaw it at his ease. Johann has a peculiar affection for bones. And after that he has fed, he will take a little tar from the bottle at his belt and anoint his face luxuriously, in view of a possible inroad of mosquitoes. Later on, if many people are admiring him excessively, and he feels very friendly disposed towards them, he will take off his boots and change the grass in them with care and deliberation. I can imagine the audience clasping their hands and saying, "How charmingly original it is of the dear prince to do such a thing!" I wonder, though, how they will stand it when he begins to scratch himself?

Afterwards I think we shall ship him across to Boston and New York. They love a prince there too, but they will not have him coloured. H'umaduya of the Gold Coast would not have gone down at any price in the States. The Americans have too many niggers at home to tolerate the *bouquet d'Afrique* otherwise than in the appartments specially appointed to contain its assertive flavour; but Prince Johann of Lapland would be a very different matter. Every paper in New York

would publish a personal interview illustrated with his photographs six hours before he landed. His political relations with “Czar Nicholas” would be dished up spicily; and the “barbaric splendours of his princely court” would be written of with vivid (and a slightly indecent) realism by gentlemen of the press, who know to a headline what their public want.

But unless there is absolutely no other competition on the carpet, I am afraid that he would not have so long a reign in the States as he had in England. In my own, my native land, we like curiosities; in the States they prefer culture. Curiosities are a drug in the States, and a slightly impertinent drug at that. Culture is rare, and so they imitate and talk about it all day long.

Except for the absence of game, the country we were travelling through was much the same as the Thames valley must have appeared to those hairy, naked savages who first looked out upon the levels where London now stands. Here was a forest of fire-slain pines, still reared up gaunt and gray, defying heaven. Young birches and hazels were growing up round them. And then would come mile after mile, and mile after mile, of spongy morass, seamed by rivulets, and smeared by stagnant ponds. The Thames valley became of use to man, so man drained it, and penned all the streamlets into one orderly river, and created dry land out of the swamps. But it is hard to fancy that these great wildernesses so far within the Arctic Circle will ever be reclaimed by the ditcher for his master, the factory builder.

We met, though, with some traces of man’s handiwork, and man’s toil for his own convenience, as we journeyed on. We came upon a great circular morass, four miles in diameter. It was ringed in by a jagged paling of pines, and in the exact centre was a hummocky oasis of gray, lichened stone. Years before logs had been laid down over the worst parts of the swamp; they were crumbling and insecure, but they showed a distinct attempt at road-making; and over these we picked our way in easy peril of sprained ankles. But still there were many places where the logs had melted, and through these we had to wallow in the fashion which we had learned so very thoroughly. I think that this frail path accentuated the general desolation.

A few miles farther on we met with some more advanced engineering. We had seen the Tokkaharo River on the map, and had wondered much whether we could find a ford, or whether we should be forced once more to go through the

operation of rafting. And here before us was a bridge, a veritable bridge. It was primitive, certainly, and it was not above suspicion of being rotten. It had two piers of crossed logs, and the roadway was formed by single trunks, over which one progressed with the dainty step of the rope-dancer.

It was on this bridge, I regret to say, that Johann belied the reputation we had made for him, and proved to be not so perfect an acrobat in practice as he was in personal appearance. He stopped before the airy structure and looked at it with a puckered face, and it was evident that he stepped out on it with a failing heart. He travelled along the first log all right till it began to sway under him, and then he got demoralised, and landed on the first pier spread-eagle fashion, being grabbed in the nick of time by Pat and Hayter. The middle span he did not attempt to walk, but sat a-cock-stride of it, and worked himself over with his hands. He suffered severely from splinters *en route*, and the workings of his face were so utterly funny that I regret to say the entire audience of four shouted with laughter during the whole of his passage. However he gained the second pier safely, picked a few of the more obvious splinters out of his person, and contemplated the farther bank. It was temptingly close. He stepped on to the end of the log, where it rested on the pier, and stood there for a full minute. He found the process quite easy; so he set out to walk along it. At the third step he stretched out his arms, balancing with them. The log was beginning to sway and buckle under his weight. At the fourth step he lost his head and his nerve, and made a rush for it. And then he lost his footing altogether, cannoned against the log with his haunch, grabbed at it with eager hands, missed, and went souse into ten feet of icy water in the Takkaharo below. A swirl of the stream put him on the bank, and he clambered out, and rolled on the green in an ecstasy of merriment over his own clumsiness.

The log bridge had looked neglected enough, but its reason of being soon began to get apparent. We came upon a clearing full of old-cut stumps; wood had been taken from here for building. Then we passed some quarter-acre patches of rye growing amongst unkempt weeds, enclosed by rail fences. Then came more patches of clearing and more stumps, sprawling over two miles of ground. And then, from the top of a knoll, a high well-derrick rose into view, and directly afterwards we saw beneath us the scattered settlement of houses which made up the village of Pokka. Three houses were in sight, sprawling over a square mile of ground, and each house had its attendant barns and cowsheds. A streamlet ran between them, broadening out here and there into sedgy lagoons. And beside the lagoons were nets, with birch-bark floats and pebble sinkers, hung out to dry upon weather-bleached rails.

We marched up wearily enough to the front of the nearest house, and then arose a difficulty which was new to us. Our Lapps did not march straight inside. They did not even knock at the door. They dumped their packs on to the ground, and hung about near them, three perfect images of bashfulness.

Presently the mystery was explained: the house belonged to Finns, an alien race. We two foreigners, however, were not troubled with any qualms of inferiority. The wandering Britisher seldom is worried that way. He is a very complacent animal over questions of nationality, and is rather apt to thank God in his prayers that he is not as other men are, "even as this German, or this Chinaman, or this Finn," or whoever he may have had brought under his lordly notice last. So we knocked at the door of the house, and presently a man came out. He shook hands limply with us; he even shook hands with the three Lapps. He was a long, slack-jointed Finn, with one ear missing and a face as unemotional as a slab of board. He gave us one of the two rooms his house contained, the sour-smelling dairy-bedroom; and better still, on pressure, he sold us food.

A woman brought it in—rye-cake and a double handful of small pieces of raw fish, semi-dried, and a tub of thick, sour milk. As an after-thought she produced a wooden spoon, which she thoughtfully licked clean, and set beside the repast.

With regard to that brown rye-cake of Lapland, I brought a piece home to England, which my dog saw and annexed. He is a fox-terrier of lusty appetite, and he tried to eat it. He tried for a whole afternoon, and finally left the cake alone on a lawn, very little the worse for the experience. His master, at Pokka, did better. He was sick with hunger, and devoured two great slabs of the cake, and with it a handful of the stinking fish.

Looked back at from a distance, those rye-cakes of Lapland do not carry pleasant memories. The grain from which they are baked grows with little tending. It is sown; and it is suffered to come up as the weather and the weeds permit. When it is as near ripe as it chooses to get, it is reaped, and with the husks, the bran, a larger part of the stalk, and a fair percentage of the companionable weed, it is chopped into meal. It is not ground; it is more hay and bran than anything else. Baking days come seldom, and a large supply is made at once. The dough is pawed out into discs a foot in diameter and some five-eighths to three-quarters of an inch thick. Each disc has a hole in the middle, and when they are baked, the cakes are strung on a stick and hung up on the rafters for use as required. Age neither softens nor hardens their texture; years could not deteriorate them.

There are two varieties of these delectable cakes. One sort was like india-rubber, and on this we could make no impression whatever. But with the other kind, which was of the consistency of concrete, we could, as a rule, get on quite well, if we were given time. It was more or less flavourless, unless it had been packed with stale fish, and it was not stuff to hurry over. It was not strengthening either, as the system could assimilate but very little of it. In fact, of all the foods that ever got past my teeth (and in rambling about the back corners of this world I have come across some uncanny morsels) the bread of Arctic Lapland carries the palm for general unsatisfactoriness. But still there is no denying that the cakes did fill the stomach, and for this purpose we employed them ravenously whenever they came in our way. There is no ache so bitter as that of empty belly.

In that sour-smelling dairy-bedroom however at Pokka, Hayter was in small temper for food. The bites of the preceding night were giving him the most abominable pain. From scalp to heels he had no sound square inch on all of his skin. The whole of his body was puffed and reddened, and each bite was its own centre of irritation. When he scratched himself he bled, and he had to scratch. He faced the poor meal with visible shrinkings; he was tormented with a furious thirst, but he could not eat; and finally, out of sheer weariness, he slid from his stool on to the floor and dropped off into some sort of sleep.

For the morrow, trouble loomed. Our host, the expressionless man who lacked an ear, came in and said flatly that no carriers were to be had. But for myself I heard the news without much stir. I had eaten; and with food inside him, a man is apt to let the morrow take care of itself.

It seemed good to me to go outside for a whiff of sweet air before turning in. I strolled across the short-grassed green in front of the house, and sat me on the well-platform, and stared sleepily at what was around. From the mistal behind my shoulder came the breathing and chewing of a couple of cows; from the little two-roomed house at the other side of the clearing there droned out the snores of the tired Lapps.

In front of me, the stream widened out into a lagoon, smooth as a sheet of gleaming metal. Just outside the weeds a fish was rising accurately in the same spot. The sun lit the forest trees on the opposite shore with a lurid glow. Mist, like miasma, was rising in gray billows from some of the farther creeks. I watched it drowsily, and imagined that somehow or another I was looking upon a sunrise in the Tropics, and that I had earned a touch of fever. And then I pulled myself together, and remembered that this was Arctic Lapland, and that it was midnight by the cuckoo clock in the Finns house, and that the insects were biting

me to pieces. So I got heavily up from the well-cover, and went again to the sour-smelling dairy, and forgot all things in deep, unconscious sleep.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORST MARCHES OF ALL

One of the ladies of the house, a tall person with a vague squint, aroused us next morning by coming into the sour-smelling dairy to deposit the morning produce of the cows. We woke with evil-tasting mouths and went outside. In the kitchen, across the narrow lobby, the man with one ear was making a bowl out of a knob of birch, and as he seemed the person of most consideration available, we demanded from him that three carriers should be ready for us in a couple of hours' time to convoy us and our chattels to Scurujärvi or Küstula. We did not request; we demanded. We understood the Arctic Finn by this time, and were quite aware that he only construes civility as weakness.

At first the one-eared man refused to understand what we needed. He went on with his work upon the birch-root. He had a long-handled felling axe, and his sheath-knife, and he used them both, and was rapidly evolving a shapely bowl out of chaos. But we had no special wish just then to watch him carpenter, so we gently but firmly took the utensils away from him, and backed him up against a wall, and spoke to him in a language which he could understand.

He admitted that he knew of our needs, but protested his inability to supply them. He said that all available males were far away from Pokka on one errand and another, and he alone was left as protection of the women and children. We pointed out that failing other carriers, we should impress him into our service himself, whether he liked it or whether he did not. And upon that he remembered where there was one man, and set out there and then to find him.

We accompanied him into the lobby. Pat was there with the squinting lady, making a purchase of butter. The butter-store was pressed down into a tub without salt, and emitted a fine rancid scent. The lady with the squint gouged it out with her delicate fingers and packed it in a birch-bark box, which she afterwards weighed on a steelyard. Pat in the meanwhile was helping himself from an ancient cask of evil-smelling buttermilk, in which the grimy dipper hung ready for all who chose to thirst.

It is curious to note how the Lapp and the Northern Finn contrives to make his food unappetising. Of course a constant diet of fresh milk would entail

constant biliousness; milk curdled, or slightly acid buttermilk, is much more wholesome. But they go to the far extremes of decomposition. They never eat fresh fish: they split, gut, and partly dry the produce of the river, and then allow it to go half rotten, and then they eat it. They prepare their reindeer meat and their cow meat in the same way. A French peasant, even if he were as slack and lazy as the Finn, would out of the Finn's provisions live deliciously. But this slouching fisher-farmer of the North prefers to feed on carrion, and any luckless foreigners who come into his country must accept his diet (if indeed they can persuade him to sell them food) or else they must starve.

We took a turn outside to sketch an iron cresset for winter fishing, like the one we had seen at the upper end of Enare See; and then we went back to the dairy and did a little tailoring at the more important rents in our garments. The children of Pokka were brought in to stare; it was an education for them to see strangers; and at intervals an unattached female with soft, cows' eyes came and loafed in the doorway. She had rather pretty feet, and Hayter set to work sketching her with one hand whilst he beat off the flies with the other. But as soon as she saw that portraiture was in the wind, she brisked up. She bade him wait a minute, and trotted away. And presently she came clumping back again, in a pair of brand-new, light brown top-boots with turn-up toes all complete, and posed against the log wall with her skirts drawn tightly back so as to show as much leather as possible. She was very proud of those boots.

Whilst this portrait was progressing, the master of the house came back, bringing with him a tall, gaunt Finn with a black chin-beard, a haggard face, and sunken eyes. He wore his trousers stuffed into high boots, and his upper man was decorated with a red striped shirt. A huge sheath-knife dangled from his broad-buckled belt, and at intervals he delivered himself of a most dramatically racking cough. As the imitation of a stage pirate struck with illness and remorse he was very fine, but as a carrier he was obviously useless.

We pointed this out, and the man with one ear admitted it. He mentioned that he had told us so already. He said it was a solemn fact that Pokka had no men in residence who could come with us as carriers, and suggested that we should take on the three Lapps who had brought us so far. The pirate took a keen interest in the proceedings. He went out and fetched the Lapps, and they stood against the doorway with expectant smiles. They thought they were going to be paid off.

The proposition was put to them that they should take us on farther through the country, and promptly their faces grew gloomy. They pointed out their sore feet and galled shoulders, and explained volubly that they had already come a

great deal farther from home than they had originally intended. They were very like children in their changes of facial expression. Johann, in particular, who came into the room on the full, broad grin, looked for all the world as though he were on the verge of blubbering.

What a weary argument it was! First Hayter spoke, then the one-eared Finn lifted up his voice, and then I chimed in; and between each separate piece of talk the pirate expostulated and coughed and explained till he was breathless. The three Lapps did not reply in words. They merely stood in the doorway, shifting from foot to foot, and looking sulky and frightened and sullen. Only one thing kept them from being complete masters of the situation: their earned wages were still in our pockets.

The beauty of acquiring a still further store of marks did not appeal to them in the least; what was owing already was a fortune to each; and from time to time they besought us to pay up honestly and let them begone, and we as steadily refused. There were no new arguments to bring forward, no new objections to raise, and we, and the pirate, and the one-eared Finn with the expressionless face, talked on for four mortal hours, before the delectable three saw fit to give way. I believe they enjoyed the harangue; I am sure the pirate did; and I am equally sure that we two foreigners did not.

The three Lapps were certainly foot-sore and shoulder-galled, and when at last they did start with us, one could not but be sorry for them, and they were undeniably sorry for themselves. But they soon made the best of the inevitable. We started off in a narrow canoe up a shallow creek between beds of tiny reeds and horsetails, and as soon as the paddles began to get into swing, their sulkiness passed from them like clouds from a summer sun. Pat grinned, and began negotiations for securing the lightest load; Pedr smiled beautifully over the steering paddle; and Johann broke out into a series of yells and roars which I think he intended as a boating song.

We landed by the other third of Pokka, a new house with two glass windows and a chimney of rubble stone. It seemed silent and deserted. The Lapps swung on past it at a limping gait, making the best of their ailments now that we were really on the road; and in three or four miles we found ourselves coming into a new phase of scenery. The trees of a great forest were round us, but they were older and finer trees than those we had come across heretofore. Reindeer moss

carpeted the ground, and little black and tan lemmings ran about amongst the moss. As usual there were frequent swamps. But even these had changed in character. In the distance—and before we got to them to discover their wetness—they looked like lawns. It was hard to realise we were still deep within the cold, black Arctic Circle. In fact the whole country had that "park-like" appearance which is the great feature that always strikes every one about certain parts of Central Africa.

If all Arctic Lapland were like this slip of territory between Pokka and Scurujärvi, it would be worth the visits of lovers of beauty. The long tree-aisles bedecked with every shade from banana green to black, and peopled with the moving forms of deer, the green and silver of the birches with the living lace-work shadows, the glorious heaven above, and the ivory-yellow moss beneath, made up a marvel of colour and form which we told ourselves it would be hard to equal in a more Southern land. But it must be confessed that such oases of comeliness were rare; and perhaps from contrast with the aching wildernesses in which they were set, we were slightly apt to over-estimate their beauty.

There was some indication of a trail, too, nearly all the way. We would come upon a swamp, and see a broken path of logs winding across it like some long, gray snake, which disappeared here and there in the grass. Very good ankle-traps these log-tracks were too, for they were all shockingly rotten, and would turn sometimes almost before one trod on them. Nobody was interested in keeping them up, and one wondered why they had ever been put down. There is no summer traffic between the scattered farms of Arctic Lapland.

At one place we sat down for a halt in a broad savanna of grass, which must have been a dozen miles in circumference. There was not a bird to be seen, and, for once, there were comparatively few mosquitoes. But instead there were millions of dragon-flies, artificial-looking insects, which irresistibly reminded one of tin and clockwork mechanisms from the Lowther Arcade.

It was here, I remember, that the Lapps gave us a fine example of their fastidiousness about drink. The prairie was pitted with ponds and seamed with rivulets, and Hayter and I quenched our thirst from the stream which was nearest to our bivouac. Johann went and sampled it carefully, and then spat the water from his lips. It was not sufficiently cold for his taste. He went on farther and tried again, and farther and tried again, and still farther and farther, sampling and spitting. He was very tired, very foot-sore, and very thirsty; he was absolutely without the most elementary niceness in his food requirements, but in this matter of drink he did not mind how much trouble he spent so that he got his water icily

cold. He spent an hour searching for a suitable tap, and when he had got it, consumed just one half-pint. And then Pat, who had been to much engaged in scratching himself to take part in the hunt, went off to share in its fruits.

Hills rose up ahead of us as we marched on, the highest we had seen since Enare, and our way lay through an alley fenced in by silvery birch-stems. The Lapps waddled wearily with their burdens; the Arctic sun beat fiercely on us from overhead; and the mosquitoes came out again to remind us that the flesh indeed was weak. The miles rolled themselves up most tediously.

One soon loses count of time under these conditions of tiredness, and insufficient food, and fever from bites; and marching becomes mechanical after the first few miles, and even the joy at seeing new country is staled. Only one thing puts spirit into the pace, and that is the sight of axe-work, which heralds the neighbourhood of man. Scurujärvi as usual advertised itself in this way. We topped a ridge and found ourselves amongst the stumps of a clearing. Unconsciously we all straightened ourselves. There was nothing in sight yet, but the next bridge showed us the town—of one house—and the long, narrow sliver of lake from which it took its name. The carriers' limping waddle quickened into almost a run. We swung down the slopes, threw open the slip-rails of a fence—veritable slip-rails!—and brought up before the front of the house in quite dashing style. A sloping-way of planks led up to the door. A hard-visaged, capable madame beckoned us up, and with business-like promptitude showed us into the inevitable dairy-bedroom.

It really looked as though we had stumbled into decent quarters at last. The room was clean, and held a high, white, stone stove garnished with bunches of juniper. The milk-tubs stood orderly on rows of shelves, and their sourness was not obtrusive. And on one of the shelves was actually a book—a large, heavily-bound, religious book, with metal clasps and dull-red edges. The sight of it cheered us; it was the first time for many a weary mile we had come across folk human enough to possess a book. But as we got to know the people of Scurujärvi better, doubts assailed us on this point; and we looked inside the book, and found it was printed in the black letter; and we were driven to the conclusion that it was there more as a fetish than a thing of use.

The family lived in the big kitchen, and consisted of a long, feckless Finn, who was the owner of Scurujärvi; his limp, sickly wife, who was a new-made mother; a swarm of tow-headed, bare-legged brats; and two older boys who had grown to the stage of high boots and private tar-bottles. These two boys we were destined to see more of. The elder came into our room first to inspect us. He

wore his ragged trousers tucked into the high boots aforesaid, and suspended by one brace over a gratuitously red shirt. His face and his whole get-up was one which we knew—one which a great many thousand other people know also.

"By Jove!" said Hayter, when the boy came into the room first. "Look there. 'Huckleberry Finn!'"

"No other," said I.

And then the younger brother came in, and we stared in wonder upon "Tom Sawyer." It seemed as if the pair of them had stepped direct from Mr. Mark Twain's book and merely forgotten the soft, drawling mother-tongue of the Mississippi Valley in transit.

But they were not permitted to enjoy the luxury of staring at the foreigner, and posturing before him for long. The bustling, hard-visaged madame came in and sent them off about some farm business, and then she brought us in a couple of armfuls of hay to make up beds on the floor. But we knew the ways of Lapland hay, and with the naked eye we could see the live-stock pervading the hay she brought. So we thanked her profusely, and said we preferred to sleep on the boards of the floor. She did not seem inclined to give way at first. She was a masterful woman, accustomed to having her own wishes carried out to the letter, and she had all the rest of that slack, Finnish household (with the possible exception of Huckleberry and Tom) under her large and most capable thumb. In fact, to be precise, she was a travelling midwife, and she had come to the house professionally, and at a time when her wishes would be obeyed. But sleep on that tick-pervaded hay we would not, and so finally after a lot of loud-voiced expostulations—she always spoke in a shout—she took it out and left us in peace.

Then the Lapp carriers came in to be paid off, and as they took such pains to assure us that the way down to Küstula was now easy, and that we should have not the smallest difficulty in finding transport on the morrow, we began to have distinct visions of a further block in the journey. However, carriers or no carriers, it was a certain thing that we could get no more work out of these three Lapps, and we were rather ashamed of ourselves for having pressed willing men too hard already. It was a fact that they were terribly foot-sore and knocked up. So we gave them their hard-earned wages, and a trifle beyond, which they did not expect; and presented them with a black cake of *Windward's* tobacco apiece, and our united blessings; all of which luxuries they accepted with delighted noise and laughter. As a fitting climax to all his other pleasing eccentricities, Johann

tried to sell us the little brass finger-ring which he wore tied in the end of his neck-handkerchief. He said it was his betrothal ring and was made of gold, and he would sacrifice it to us for the absurdly small sum of twenty marks. But as he had become engaged, according to his own account, to every marriageable woman we had met along the road, we thought that others would have a better claim on it than we, and so forbore to present him with a further sovereign. At which he nearly lifted the roof off with his great shouts of laughter: it was all the same to Johann whether he swindled us successfully or whether he got caught in the act; he was equally amused with either occurrence.

The Lapps were to sleep in one of the barns, and as it was the last time we should probably meet on this earth, we escorted them across to their bedchamber. We passed through a tiny field of growing barley, the first we had seen in this northern latitude, and then we came upon the wooden outbuilding of the farm. Half was hay-chamber, half mistal, and set between the stalls for the cows was a great square stove of rubble stone to give the beasts heat during the perishing cold of winter. And there we said our last good-byes to the men who had served us so well, and went back towards our own sleeping-place.

The lake below the house lay like glass, and the narrow cones of the pines on the opposite shore were mirrored exactly in its surface. Pink clouds swam below them. On the lake-shore was a bath-house with its empty doorway blackened by smoke, and in the eaves a couple of martins had built a nest in a coil of birch-bark. From the dwelling-house came the voice of the midwife, scolding.

Now, to give a full account of the exasperations of Scurujärvi would be quite impossible in this place, because some of the remarks which we felt compelled to make to that lanky, feckless Finn who owned the place were intended for his private ear alone. We had to tell him exactly what we thought of him many many weary times.

In the first instance, further progress by carriers was obviously out of the question, because, except for the feckless one himself, there was not a man about the place. But there were sledges. There were no horses or reindeer available, but something in the cow line would serve our purpose, and we demanded therefore a sledge and a cow. Upon which there fell an avalanche of talk. The limp woman with the new-born baby stood in the doorway of the dairy-bedroom to listen, and the gaunt midwife came inside and added her clatter to the rest. It seemed that

for a thousand reasons a cow and a sledge were unavailable.

We ceded the point; we had an alternative plan. Our romancing map depicted a lake before this town of Scurujärvi, and our eyes showed us that the lake was there. This propped up the map's credit. It also showed a stream running out of this lake and joining the main river at Küstula, which drained into the Gulf of Bothnia. So by way of discovering whether this linking stream did really exist, we boldly demanded a canoe, which should take us down to Küstula by water.

The feckless Finn seemed struck with the idea; it had not occurred to him before. He said we should start immediately, and after the trifling delay of three more hours, and by dint of unremitting exertions on our part, we did start. There were four of us in the canoe: ourselves and our baggage amidships, Huckleberry forward with the paddles, and Tom Sawyer aft, with solemn importance on his face, and the steering paddle under his arm. The two boys had provisioned the canoe with a pyramidal keg of buttermilk, and evidently looked forward to the perils of this expedition through the unknown with keen and gloomy pleasure. Huckleberry wore a sheath-knife two feet long dangling from his belt, and Tom by way of armament had by his side the most enormous wood-axe I ever put eyes upon. The accuracy of their get-up would have delighted Mr. Mark Twain wonderfully.

We started in style, and a mob of tow-headed children came down to the edge of the shallows as we pushed off. Huckleberry paddled us across a small bay of the lake, and then Tom, with set teeth, steered the canoe into the mouth of the six-foot-wide stream which drained it. The water was too narrow for paddles here, and so they stood up and punted, insisting on our keeping our places; and really the sight of those two boys solemnly playing at being explorers, was one of the funniest things we had seen for many a long day. If it pleased them to do the work, we did not mind. We had gone through enough toil recently to make us glad of the rest, and later, when they got tired, and the stream grew wider and swifter, we could take over the canoe from their charge.

In fact we formed a quite appetising dream of what the voyage would be down the Scurujoki to Küstula, and so it came all the more unpleasantly to us when we found that this river-passage was impracticable. First we arrived at a tree fallen squarely across the stream, and we got out and lifted the canoe across this by main force. Then the Scurujoki widened into mere trickling shallows, and we waded and lifted till we were tired. And then, lo! the stream vanished altogether, being absorbed into a vast green quagmire which filled all the valley-floor. So we sat down on the baggage and stated exactly to one another what we

thought of the feckless Finn who owned Scurujärvi farm, and then with toil and weariness set about to work the canoe back to the place from which she had come.

We were tolerably savage at being let in for this *fiasco*, and should probably have explained to the feckless one with energy how remiss it was of him not to know the country five hundred yards away from his own front-door; but when we set foot again on the lake-shore below the house, these thoughts of war were swept from us by a feeling of wonder and surprise. Another caravan had arrived from the direction in which we were going, and the principals of it were walking in even then to take possession of the dairy-bedroom. Their carriers sat outside the house-door on the sloping-way of planks. There were three of them: two sturdy down-country Finns, and a weird Lapp with lank, black hair, and yellow, pock-marked face, and a square Lapp's cap of dead-black cloth.

These were the first travellers of any sort we had met in all Arctic Lapland, and we marvelled at what could be their business. Presently the two principals came out of the dairy-bedroom and talked with us. The elder was a huge man, deep-bearded and heavy-paunched, with a frown on his face and few words to spare. The younger was aged perhaps thirty, had a cut-away chin, and brimmed with words. We tried one another in a whole continent of languages, and finally pitched upon Latin as the only one we had any working knowledge of in common. It was on both sides schoolboy dog-Latin of the most canine variety, and because of the difficulties of pronunciation we could not interchange ideas even through this medium by word of mouth. So every syllable of our chat was scrawled with a stub of pencil upon the rough-hewn door of Scurujärvi farm.

"Potesne nobis dicere," we wrote, "si possibile est invenire equum nos portare de Kittila ad mare?"

And the man with the cut-away chin replied; "Currus est in Kittila."

"Estne via bona?" we asked.

"Est via, sed non bona. Sed via est."

It was quite a delightful exercise conversing through the rags of this dimly-remembered tongue. But we did not talk for long, and we only learned some vague facts about our future course. Theirs was only a temporary halt. They were soon on the march again, and our curiosity concerning them grew high. The two principals started off first, the carriers following them; but when these last were just on the move, one of them, a Finn, turned back to us and pointed to his Lappish companion. We looked, and for the first time saw strapped outside

the Lapp’s pack a pair of leg-shackles, bright and ferociously heavy. The Finn laughed and pointed to the big man with the heavy beard ahead, and then he turned away from us and set off on the march.

Whether he meant that the bracelets were destined for the big man’s ankles, or whether the big man was going to put them on some one else, we never discovered. None of the party wore the least vestige of official garb, and yet heavy leg-shackles are not usually part of the travelling kit of private individuals. Was the big man a political offender, doomed to exile in fetters amongst Lapland swamps? Or was he an officer of justice on the road to capture some sinning Lapp? Or was he some invalid, suffering from occasional fits of madness, and taking heavy curative exercise under the care of an attendant who had repressive measures handy? We never found out.

An American would have solved the problem by bluntly asking; but we somehow lacked that simple directness of questioning which is the birthright of the great nation across the water. Besides, the man with the cut-away chin had said that they had come up through Küstula and Kittila, and we promised ourselves satisfaction for our curiosity at these places. And lo! when we did reach them, and pushed inquiries, it was plain that we had been fubbed off with a lie, for the other caravan had passed through neither spot. And so out of what part of the wilderness they did come, or what was their errand, we do not know to this day, though later on we certainly did make a conjecture.

Now all the while we had been engaged in these other matters we had not been forgetful of our own business. We took the feckless Finn in hand, turn and turn about, and (to use the beautiful symbolic language of the sea) we twisted his tail. He did not like being roused from his lethargy; he much would have preferred that we should have taken permanent root at his expense in Scurujärvi; but four hours of energetic tail-twisting produced its effect. A reindeer sledge, carvel-built and boat-shape, was dragged out from beneath the flooring of the house; a single-tree was made and lashed to the drawing thong under the sledge’s bow; a pair of shafts were cut and made fast to the single-tree; and then Huckleberry was despatched to find a suitable animal for traction amongst the grazing grounds of the forest. He was not long away; he came back towing a steer, a little liver-and-white fellow with an inquiring eye, and backed it in between the shafts. A collar with wooden hames was put on the steer’s neck, and

the ends of the shafts were made fast to these, and then a half-hoop of wood was put over the steer's withers and lashed to the shafts, *à la Russe*, to keep them from chafing. The feckless one roused sufficiently to make a grummet of withes to put round the steer's nose, and Tom Sawyer made a head-stall out of string, and bent on a check-rope to the grummet. We put our bundles into the sledge, and lashed them there, and turned to give a final curse to the feckless Finn. But he had dropped into contemplation again, and so he missed our words, and we had to set off without the satisfaction of leaving him stung.

The two boys were our escort, and the way at first was rough enough. Thick forest was on the outskirts of the farm, and under the forest trees were stones uncovered by moss or lichen. The little steer picked his way over these cannily enough, but the sledge would only follow if assisted, and so one or other of us had constantly to tail on behind to keep it in the paths of rectitude. And then we had to pass across the swampy valley. Logs had been laid down here to make some sort of a footway, but it was more than the steer could do to make the passage across these with the sledge bumping and sheering in his wake. So we had to unyoke, and drag the sledge over ourselves; and when we got to the other side, we found that the vehicle showed distinct signs of disintegration. It was pinned together by wooden pegs, and these had got dry and were falling out; and so there was nothing for it but to unload, and sink the sledge in a pool of water till it swelled and tightened, and in the meanwhile rest as philosophically as we could in the worst stew of mosquitoes we had yet met in the Arctic Lapland. It was one of the heaviest hours of torment I ever lived through.

Still at last the sledge swelled sufficiently, and we got limbered up again, and this time the procession set off in more real earnest.

First came Tom Sawyer, high-booted, one-braced, preternaturally solemn and important. He marched with knapsack on back, axe over shoulder, and coat slung to knapsack, though of course he might just as well have put these impedimenta on the sledge. He "blazed" unnecessary trees, and peered into every thicket. He was evidently on the look-out for the local story-book equivalent for "Injuns." He was inexpressibly funny. Then came the little liver-and-white steer, half maddened by the mosquitoes, rushing under every foliage tree on the way to brush off the intolerable insects. At its heels the sledge bumped and swerved, and beside the sledge stalked Huckleberry Finn, with the check-rope in his hand and words of direction on his lips. And behind the tail-board of the sledge came us two foreigners, ready to lend a hand when the sledge threatened to capsize, which it did some four times every three minutes.

The pace was not exhilarating. When everything went well, we covered some four thousand yards to the hour. But every mile or so the steer would get tired and flop down to rest, and on these occasions Huckleberry would groom down its back with a sponge of moist pink moss, and anoint its nose and eye-sockets with tar out of his private bottle; whilst Tom Sawyer, in full panoply, stood afar off on watch and guard; and the mosquitoes bit all of us still more terribly.

During one of these halts a figure showed itself amongst the tree aisles which we had left, and presently who should come up but the grim-visaged midwife we had left in Scurujärvi. She trudged on sturdily with a pack on her back and her head well up, and she was soon out of sight amongst the zigzags of the trees ahead. She had done her work at Scurujärvi, and was going on to take up her next piece of employment fifty miles away.

There was nothing new in the country we passed through: forest alternated with swamp, and swamp with forest, and the mosquitoes would have done justice to the worst corner in hell. The journeying was infinitely tedious. In one of the morasses it seemed as though we should get stuck permanently. Only the sledge floated on the treacherous surface. The steer was stuck in to the shoulders, and we four were sunk to the breasts in trying to pull it out. There was no piece of sound ground within a mile to get a purchase from, and how we ever did get clear I do not know. That march is bad even to look back at. It seems like the torment of some ghastly dream.

About half-way (I should think it must have been) we came upon men again. They were builders, and they were making a house. For temporary shelter they had run up a rough lean-to of slabs, and when we came up they were eating, and the midwife, who had joined camp with them, was eating also. Huckleberry and Tom joined in at the meal, producing their own provision.

There was a good deal of difference between these builders of the Arctic Zone and the sturdy British workman at home. The artificers here get their orders, take provisions, a pair of axes, a grindstone, and a couple of cross-cut saws, and start off to the site of their work. The forest provides materials, which they cut as they want them; and from these materials, and with their simple utensils, they evolve the whole house and all the furniture thereof. How they live in the meanwhile I have shown; and when they were not asleep they were at

work. Remarkably well they looked, too, under the experience.

We got into talk with one of these builders, and he told us a strange thing. He said that a week before he had chanced to look up from his work, and saw something “like an enormous bird without wings” move quickly across the clearing far above his head. It was coloured green, and he guessed it to be some sixty feet in length. Round its neck was a big projecting ring, which made a whirring noise. He had never seen anything of the like before, and did not know what to make of it. Could we give an explanation?

Well we had ideas on the subject—distinct ideas—but we did not let them out just then. This seemed very much the same thing that Johann had talked about, describing it as a green fish, and which we had discussed together over so many marches afterwards; and now we wanted to know more about it. But that was all the builder could tell. He was a man of fair intelligence, but he had only seen the thing for a very few seconds, and had not gathered anything but a general impression. We asked him if it was an air-ship, but that was a conception he could not understand. He was certain, however, that he had seen no men on the concern, though there was plenty of room for men inside—for twenty men for the matter of that; and he was equally certain the whole thing was not an illusion of the senses. He had seen what he said, neither more nor less, and he stuck to it doggedly. And having said his say, he got up, and took an axe and set it on the grindstone preparatory to work.

We got our caravan under way again after that, and perfunctorily tried to talk on what we had heard; but the labours of the journey and the horrible mosquito-plague were too heavy to give mere empty speculation much of a chance. And when later on we discerned that the travellers with the leg-shackles we had met at Scurujärvi had not been at either Küstula or Kittila, as they asserted, then the subject got a new interest. We connected them, somehow or other, with this mysterious air-ship—we had convinced ourselves it was an air-ship by then—and formed a thousand theories as to what might be their business. I wonder if at any time we guessed anywhere near the truth?

A drenching dew came down as the night wore on, and the mosquitoes lessened somewhat in their maddening attentions, and we marched a trifle more easily. But we carried the marks of their work written on us in ugly letters. Our arms were swollen from wrist to elbow, so that they fitted tight in the gloves; we were bitten, bitten, bitten all over, through corduroy, under boot-laces, under hair. The scraps of paper in my pocket, on which I had been scribbling notes, were splodged with blood till they were unreadable, and in this torment we had

been marching for ten consecutive hours before the dew came and brought relief.

At last we came to an unmistakable track, which grew with use till it became a real muddy lane running between two walls of forest. It was made by the feet of men and cattle, and never had we been so pleased to see mud before. It led us to a lake, which we skirted; and then we came to another lane, and then another lake with fishing canoes drawn up and nets hung out to dry. And there on the flank of a gently sloping hill we saw a fine settlement of quite a dozen farms, well built and prosperous. It was Küstula, and we had got there at last.

But the houses lay at the farther side, and to reach them we passed between potato gardens, and a water-cress pond, and rye and barley fields all fenced in and well tilled.

The steer was very nearly done, and so were we; but ahead of our caravan there still marched the indomitable Tom, with the axe across his shoulder and the knapsack dangling from his back. We drove up to the biggest house and came to a halt in the courtyard, formed by the farm buildings at its back.

There was a well in the courtyard, with the column of water sheathed in white transparent ice. We rushed to it, lowered the bucket on the end of the derrick, and hoisted again and again. I think we must have drunk a bucketful apiece of that ice-cold water before the fever of our throats was satisfied. It was six o’clock in the morning, and our clothes hung on us dank with perspiration. The sun had never ceased beating upon us and our hurts all the way from Scurujärvi.

CHAPTER XII

DOWN THE RAPIDS TO KITTILA TOWN

Huckleberry Finn announced our coming, and after we had taken toll of the ice-well, we went into the house. Inside the door was a huge room strewn with sleeping men and women. At one side was a stove with cooking-places; at the other stood a hand-loom with a piece of chequered blue-cotton fabric in the course of manufacture. Beside it there straddled a couple of spinning-wheels.

The room we were given for ourselves, after what we were used to, seemed an actual palace. It had two windows, a table, a white stone-stove, and hung on one of the walls was the picture of a gorgeous young lady working a Singer's sewing-machine. There were two box-beds in the room, and one of them possessed a mosquito-bar. Ye gods! think of the luxury of it! Beds and a real mosquito-bar!

The man who received us was the Squire of Küstula, and a great man indeed. He was a Finn, and yet he was civil and kindly. He set before us for our entertainment a great bowl of curdled milk, and trotted about bare-footed beside us, and besought us to eat. But we were a bit too knocked up to have much appetite then, and we got on to the beds; whereupon he produced a second mosquito-bar, rigged it, and left us. Imagine the unspeakable luxury of it! sleep! on a real bed made of boards and mattressed with hay; and without either fleas or ticks or mosquitoes to bite one into wakefulness. We revelled there in sleep for three solid hours.

The noise of the housework roused us, and we got up, very swollen and stiff from the bites. The tub of curdled milk was on the table, and we ate it thirstily. The Squire heard us moving, and paddled in on his bare feet, and grinned affably. His name by the way was Johann Sanmelli Myal, but we called him Squire from the first, as that name seemed to suit him best.

We mentioned that we wanted a canoe and men to take us to Kittila, and he said he had guessed it already, and we could set off whenever we chose. Here was thoughtfulness and civility! It seemed marvellous to find such qualities and such a house within a day's march of that dreadful, listless savage at Scurujärvi.

Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry were hanging about waiting to be paid, and we

gave them what we had bargained for with the feckless one, and a *douceur* over for themselves, and then we went out and strolled about in the open air.

The settlement was very different from any we had seen before, and I only hope for the sake of the civil people who live there, that it was as prosperous as it looked. Viewed from a distance, so that one could not tell whether the green crops were rye and barley, or lanky maize, it might have been a settlement in North Carolina or the Western States, except for one thing—there was no litter about. There were none of those heaps of disused meat, and yeast, and tomato tins, so inseparable from new American civilisation. All was trim.

There were a few Lapps about the place it is true, but they were merely in Küstula as dependants. Not one owned a farm. The people of Küstula, however, had dealings with the aboriginal in another way. For all winter traction and transport they used reindeer, but when we visited the village there was not a single one within its boundaries. Each farmer had an agreement with a Lapp, and sent away his ear-marked deer to be pastured under the Lapp's charge on the distant uplands of the fjeld and tundra.

We made no long stay in Küstula. For the first time since we had set foot in the country, transport was made ready for us without a weary haggle of words; and the unaccustomed easiness of it was too delightful not to be taken advantage of. We limped stiffly down through the slip-rails of the fields, a bevy of men and children and women all accompanying us, and we came upon the river some half mile away from the house where we had slept. The map names it the Loukinenjoki, but the Finns of Küstula, knowing nothing of imaginative maps, and being taught on these matters merely by the tradition of their forefathers, preferred to call it the Loosnen.

The river here was young, being born of rills in the blue mountains only a few miles away, amongst their swamps and pines and comely birches; and it ran round bends and curves innumerable. Sometimes it widened into lagoons, sometimes the banks hemmed it in to narrows, and the waters spouted with waterfalls and rapids.

On the short grass of the bank lay a new canoe, bottom upwards. I sat down on her, and discovered also that she was newly tarred. She was eighteen feet long, and built in the usual way, with two stakes aside, coming to highest points forward and aft. The Squire himself came with us as skipper; we ourselves and our baggage were stowed amidships on a green cushion of springy birch-shoots; and in the bows was Nilas Petrie Karahoola, a tall, clean-made young Finn, who

owned a bottle of smuggled cognac and a natty little liqueur-glass. When we were all on board, the canoe showed just seven inches of free-board.

We shoved off, and the population of Küstula on the high bank above, waved their head-gear and wished us God-speed. But we ourselves could not linger long over the farewell. A dozen strokes brought the canoe into the swirl of rapids, where the brown water raced over and between a tangle of jagged rocks, which the Squire, crouching in the stern with the steering paddle, had all his work cut out to negotiate. A dozen times he bumped on some unseen boulder; and once the canoe grounded amidships, was caught by a swirl on her stern, and was within an ace of broaching-to and being swamped. But a lusty effort set us free again, and on we raced; and then after a final dive over a churning three-foot fall, we reached the deep and placid stream again, and were a mile below the last field of Küstula. It was quick travelling.

The Squire wiped the perspiration from his face and sat down; Nilas brought out his cognac-bottle and handed a nip all round; and then the pair of them settled themselves to steady paddling. We ourselves were glad enough of the opportunity for *far niente*. We had come through a surfeit of ill-usage, over-exertion, over-biting, and under-feeding, and as regards personal appearance we were a couple of gaunt, blotched, hollow-eyed wrecks. So we lay on the baggage and the springy green boughs, and watched the banks go by in luxurious idleness.

Comely banks they were too, laid out by Nature with grasses, and planted with birches, hazels, and pines. They were like bits of the Thames at Mortlake, or the Dee above Chester. It was hard to realise that in winter all this was a place of howling gales and tangled snow-drifts.

Now and again we passed a fisher’s camp by the water-side—just a fire, some drying nets, and a piece of cotton cloth which served more as mosquito-bar than tent; and now and again we met a woman paddling a boat whilst a man in the stern fished. Some were Lapps, but most were Finns.

We would pass mile after mile of river-bank which had never been touched by man since the river carved its channel, and mile after mile of forest which had never felt the axe; but still there was not wanting occasional evidences that we were getting into a country less sparsely populated than the aching wilderness we had so wearily tramped through, and the idea made us think back at some of the halts where we had stayed. Those at the farther end were already growing faint and hazy: we seemed to have gone through so much since we had left them.

“I can dimly recall,” said one of us, “that years ago we came up to the Polar Sea in a canoe called the *Windward*. But where was it from? I forget.”

“A settlement called ‘London,’ wasn’t it?” said the other.

“Which was that? I’m getting mixed.”

“The place where we got something to eat.”

“Ah, I remember, sour milk, wasn’t it, and that dog-biscuit stuff? And the natives came to see us off.”...

We were talking half seriously too. All those early stages of our expedition seemed so distant and nebulous. We had lived a good many years in those last few weeks.

From all that toil and starvation and strain this river-journey came as a delightful revel. The paddles *cheeped* against the gunwales, and the water trickled musically. Cuckoos called to us from behind the woods. We took our eyes from one beautiful picture on the shore, only to drink in the pleasures of the next. And then the Finns would take their paddles out of the water altogether, and we would drift down the stream and bask in the sweet, warm silence.

The river would widen out into a still lagoon, walled in by mysterious pines, a dancing-place for dragon-flies, and we would drowse off almost into forgetfulness. And then of a sudden the lagoon would empty over a fall into a narrow gut, and the canoe would leap upon the backs of sleek brown waves, and frisk through spray, and grate over shoals, and shave black-fanged rocks by a hand’s-breadth. It was work which required the skilful navigator. Once, after we had gone ashore to boil up the kettles for a meal, the Finns changed about when we got on board again, and Nilas at the steering paddle took us down the next rapids and half filled the canoe with water before she reached their foot. We had to pull ashore again to bale after this, not because our own sodden properties would have hurt in the water, but because of some goods of the Squire’s which he was taking as cargo. He, canny man, had a bale of hides which he wanted to exchange for money in Kittila, and by getting them down in our hired canoe he was saving a journey.

Other streams joined us as the canoe paddled on, and the river grew in bigness and use. Hay barns became quite frequent on the banks, on spots where some distant farmer came to cut the rich grasses, and dry them on wooden racks and rails, Norwegian fashion, till they turned into scented hay. This would be sheltered in the rude houses of logs against autumn rains, and in the winter

months, when the river was ice, he could come with sledge and reindeer and drag the hay home to his farm across the frozen surface.

Nilas paddled and the Squire steered. There was high ground ahead, and always on our left-hand side was a great wooded bulk of mountain. The river scenery changed like the setting of a play: we shot down noisy rapids with the speed of a running fish; we paddled across leisurely lagoons; we saved journeys round wide bends by forcing the canoe through narrow “cut-offs,” like those one meets with on the Mississippi; but always close above us the mountain remained, grand and vast and immovable. On the hills ahead there were snow patches. On our mountain there were none. From the waters where its feet were bathed, to the billowy clouds which cooled its head, trees covered it like a rentless garment, and nowhere was its naked side exposed.

Nilas put leather gloves over his fingers and paddled on, and the Squire steered tirelessly. The scenery grew wilder as we drew nearer to Kittila, and flights of small duck whirred past us down the stream. The grass was gone from the banks, and the river was hemmed in by arid bluffs, and walls of rock, and lines of tumbled boulders. The trees were sterner in shape and colour, and grew into thicker and more gloomy forests.

Then abruptly it changed again. The forests disappeared. A natural clearing began, and man had taken advantage of the gap to set up a farm.

The Squire ran the canoe ashore, and we got out and climbed a steep forty-foot bank. The farm lay before us, trim, orderly, and prosperous, and the usual fishing implements lay spread about on the bank. The Finn farmer came out and invited us inside his dwelling. It was probably an accidental resemblance, but in personal appearance he might have passed for twin-brother of the estimable President Krüger, of African ill-fame, in clothes, beard, and everything, with the trifling detail of steel-rimmed spectacles added. He accepted us first of all as a joke; but when he heard we had come across from the Arctic Sea, he looked upon us as a pair of barefaced liars, and regarded us with more respect. He gave us milk, and then brought all available members of his household into the farm kitchen, and preached them an improving sermon with us as text. To the casual observer then we certainly must have looked a pair of “awful warnings.”

In the kitchen a woman was working a hand-loom, and except when a thread broke in the warp, and demanded repair, the machine clacked away industriously during the whole of the excellent Krüger’s sermon. She was weaving a checked blue-cotton cloth, and beside her a couple of old crones span yarn industriously

from humming-wheels. Hayter, callous to the sermon, sat down to sketch the hand-loom weaver. Ever and again a small fluffy-headed girl edged across into his line of vision, and was ruthlessly dragged away again by the farmer. She was rather pretty in a scared sort of way, and at last she got her desire, and was faithfully depicted in black and white on a page of the sketch-book. Her name was Edla Dahlgren.

We left the farm at eleven o’clock by the timepiece in the kitchen, and put out once more into the river. We were in the broad Ounasjoki now, a river as wide as the Thames at Richmond, but vastly swifter.

The canoe ran away down past the shores, and once more forests hedged us in above the high banks. The river was all swirls and grinding pools, and oily overfalls, and noisy rapids. At the foot of the banks were camp-fires sending up trails of thin blue smoke from tiny crumbs of flame. Filmy mist rose from the tangle of waters, and amongst it here and there were men and women in canoes, fishing. From behind the pines on the western bank the sun sent a glow like new-tapped blood.

We passed close to one of the canoes. A woman was in the bow, poling. Five rods were trolling from the stern, and a man with a calico mosquito-cowl about his head tended them. The rush of the river drove us past, and the canoe faded into a black dot amongst the mist. It was the likeliest looking fishing-water I ever saw.

More fires came up on the banks, winked redly, and disappeared. From bank to bank the rapids shouted, and the yellow waves spurned us on to pools of black, sliding water, and the oily rocks sucked us towards them as we tore past. The dew came down more heavily and the mists closed in; the river slacked in speed again, and the canoe rode with an easier motion; and when we looked back, the fishers and their fires were blotted out against the black background of the pines.

It was midnight. Astern, wrapped in thin blue mist, there loomed up the great wooded mountains we had voyaged round so long. Ahead, the river widened out into a still lake, and reflected into it was a cluster of red and ochre houses above a bright green bank, which made up the outskirts of straggling Kittila. Well-derricks sprawled amongst the houses, and the smell of farms and agriculture hung on the air. The sun was coming up egg-shaped and blood-red from out of the mists and the pines. It was midnight, and all Kittila slept.

We had been carried three-and-sixty miles from Küstula by the tireless fingers of the river. We got out of the canoe and turned our backs on it. Beyond us lay fields gleaming with dew-diamonds. Beyond again, lay the dwellings of Kittila.

The Squire led us up to a house and woke the inmates. We were given a

room with walls actually papered—with newspapers. A sleepy woman shuffled off her bedclothes and put on a second garment; but she brisked up when she saw the strangers were curious people from a far country. And in a while supper was set before us: the dog-biscuit of the country, the shell of a Dutch cheese, and thirteen bay-leaf anchovies in a tin. And then we were given beds with sheets. Here was refinement: we actually undressed to do justice to it.

A road fit for wheeled vehicles runs through Kittila, and another road, though a bad one, intersects it lower down and leads to Sodankyla. The houses of the little town are scattered picturesquely on either side of this road, and are for the most part stained dragon's-blood red, or turmeric yellow, with white window-sashes. They have a fine taste for colour in Kittila. All the better houses are enclosed within their own neat fences, and of its sort it would be hard to find a more comely townlet. Even the shops are no disfigurement, and they are more than twenty in number—quite one-third of all the houses. They display no sign-boards, and they do not exhibit goods in the windows to give possible buyers cheap views from the public thoroughfares.

Every house has its well or wells, straddled over by a huge hoisting-derrick, of the same construction one may see in Spain, or Southern France, or elsewhere. No house is very large. The risk of fire is always in the air, and a man as he grows richer, or as his family increases, does not add an *annexe* to his original home, but builds a second house a few yards away, and then others, following a rectangular plan, till at length he has made himself a courtyard, walled round with barns and dwellings.

A marvellous tidiness pervades everything. All is kept in good repair. Not a shingle is displaced from the neat brown roofs, not a scrap of the farm middens is allowed to straggle. There is no litter anywhere. And yet these people are Finns of the same race as those squalid, listless savages we had been living amongst only a few days before. The country Finn and his long boot are inseparable; even the Squire and Nilas wore them, although they had telescoped the tops almost down to their ankles; but in Kittila the high boot was no longer *de rigeur*. Lace boots were the ordinary wear. Even shoes were not uncommon.

The two largest buildings in Kittila were a big, square schoolhouse with a high, red stockade, and a large, high-spired church. The school was having holiday when we were there, and does its business during the bleak, black

months of winter.

The church, in magpie black and white, was hideous. But it was an elaborate building for all that, with granite foundations, an interior of grim massiveness, and shutters in the belfry of its wooden tower, opening and closing like a swell-box of an organ. At the back of the church was a cemetery, grass-grown and neglected, with wooden and cast-iron crosses and devices at the grave heads, most with all inscription quite obliterated. One, over a new grave had the formal *hic jacet* scrawled in pencil. Another, which was practically a log-built mausoleum, had crumbled in places and fallen in, till the dry bones of the dead shivered at the draught from the crevices. It seemed as though the Finn once out of life dropped out of memory also, and all care for his resting-place ceased. It was a utilitarian trait, perhaps, but it was not quite an amiable one.

There is a chemist in Kittila with whom we foregathered and drank lemonade, and I do not think it is maligning him to say that he had a greater liking for winter sledge-exercise than for the mere compounding of drugs and prescribing for human ailments. He owned six driving-deer, did this Arctic chemist, which of course, when we were there, were running out on the fjeld and getting into fettle. He had his private earmark, drawn on parchment, and stored in an envelope. It was a mere outline of two bows—thus , divided vertically down the middle to separate the two ears, with the distinctive markings traced in with pen and ink. A copy of this was posted with others in a public place, so that all men might know that deer marked so were the chemist’s property.

When the snows fall, and the time comes for driving, then the little chemist begins to find life worth living. With pride he showed us his gear: the smartest outfit imaginable. First, there was a pulling collar for the deer with two wooden hames bound with iron. Then there was a saddle of leather, most elaborately worked and embroidered with red. For the middle of the deer’s long neck was another red collar, decorated with a fine brass bell. The trace was of raw hide, plaited square. There was one single-tree of bent wood, with a looped thong made fast to its middle. This thong was passed through a hole under the forefoot of the sledge, and the loop was slipped over the bit on the stem-head, so that the deer could always be cast adrift from the sledge at a moment’s notice.

The boat-shaped sledge itself was a miracle of light-blue paint, but a cranky thing for a beginner to sit. It would roll forty-five degrees without capsizing, but it was apt to exceed the forty-five. There is a pole to guide with, and the pole is a thing of use; for riding at speed in these sledges over an uneven snow-field is distinctly a matter of balance.

We saw that the little chemist was a man of taste from the trimness of this turn-out; but when he showed us his own personal attire for winter journeys, we saw that he was a man of luxury also. Everything was cut after the mode of the Lapps, and cost was a neglected detail.

He put on his winter rig for our gratification, and we admired him from head to foot. On the top of him came the *lapinlakki*, the heavy, square-topped Lappish cap, with the crown made of bright scarlet cloth, and the band round the head, of otter's fur. Round his neck was the *sieppura*, a collaret of bear's fur, with the bear's mask hanging over his breast. The *matsoreo* (or *peski*) which covered his trunk was of soft gray-brown reindeer skin, with the hair exquisitely dressed and finished. The fingerless gloves (*kinteaat*) on his hands were of white reindeer skin, with the hair outside. He had short, hairless, leather breeches underneath, but these were joined in mid-thigh by the *săpăkkeet*, which were reindeer-skin leggings that reached down to the ankles, where they were made fast to the leather boots, the *kallakkoat*, by narrow, red cloth *paulat*, which may be defined as bandages.

The day happened to be blazing hot, and the little chemist almost melted under the weight of his furs, which plimmed him out to nearly double his normal size; but he told us that in winter there were days of bitter frost and driving gale, when it was dangerous to venture out of doors even in that Arctic panoply. Here in the interior of Lapland, out of all distant influence of the Gulf Stream, far greater extremes of temperature prevail than in more northern spots like, say, Vardö.

The little chemist was a fisherman at times during the summer months, and being somewhat of a naturalist besides, he had collected on paper the names of his possible catch. He had not succeeded in finding a specimen of each in the Ounasjoki so far, but the fish were undoubtedly in the country, and some day he hoped to complete his basket. I give the list here, in case somebody may find them interesting:—

Salmo salar	Coreogonus lavaretus
Salmo eriox	Coreogonus albula
Salmo alpinus	Esox lucius
Osmerus eperlanus (North of 68º)	Leucuscus grislagine
Thymallus vulgatis	Perca fluviatilis

He warmed up when the talk got on fish, and took us across to the house of a neighbour who made his living out of fish-catching as an industry. The

neighbour gave us spruce beer, a flat decoction, which we found somewhat insipid, and then he started to talk. We warmed as we heard him; it was quite like being at home again. I have only met one man to equal him, and he was a Lincolnshire pike-fisherman who never seemed to catch anything less than a yard in length, or the size of a man's thigh in girth. This fisherman of Kittila was not quite so artistic in his yarns as the man of Lincolnshire. He rushed his statements too much, and did not wait till they were dragged out of him; but he never flinched at anything. He illustrated his conversation by diagrams with a piece of charcoal on the floor as he went on; and when his imagination failed him, one or other of us foreigners would start on a fish story, and he would take the words out of our mouths and go on again at redoubled speed.

Verily fishermen are quaintly alike all the world over. There must be some sort of bacteria in fish which infect the catcher and impel him to expand facts whether he will or not. I knew an eminent bishop once—but perhaps he does not count. He was an Irishman as well as a votary of the fly-rod.

Drinking cups
ARCTIC LAPLAND TYPES.

CHAPTER XIII

THROUGH TO THE SEA: A PROGRESS IN POST-CARTS, WITH INTERLUDES OF RIVER-FERRIES

The river Ounasjoki is navigable the larger part of the way from Kittila down to its outfall in the Gulf of Bothnia; but prices run high for the hire of canoes, as they have to be poled back tediously up against the current, not to mention suffering damage from the several spots where bad rapids compel lengthy portages. Transport down to the coast is done by wheeled vehicle, and for this purpose a road has been built.

The local vehicle for human transport is the *karre*, which spells post-cart in Qfinsk. It is a word which covers a multitude of shapes. The best *karre* is like the Norwegian *stolkjarre*, and has two bodies set one behind the other on one pair of shafts, with remarkably little room for the legs in either. The two wheels are small and sturdy, and have long projecting hubs which remind one of the ancient British scythe-chariot. The bodies of the vehicle may be made of wicker, leather and iron, cane and iron, or eke plain deal board, and it is rare to see a *karre* which is not approaching the last stage of decrepitude. The horse draws from the fore-end of the shafts, to which his collar is made fast by a six-inch trace and a toggle. The passenger usually drives himself—always if he will so consent—and the man, or boy, or top-booted girl in charge, sits on the back seat on the top of the baggage, and smokes and contemplates.

We set off posting seawards from Kittila on a day which happened to be set apart for some Lutheran celebration, and the little town was taking holiday. We took our last look upon the gaudy oleograph of the Czar and Czarina hung up in the post-house to inculcate loyalty amongst the lukewarm Finns, and then the *karre* was brought out, and we drove away in style. A swarm of bare-footed, tow-headed, mud-complexioned children saw us off, who would have passed very well for the progeny of tar-heelers amongst the Alleghany Mountains.

There were few men in evidence, but the women were all out in the street dressed in their smartest, with white kerchief on head, blue print gown, and white cotton apron. They were clean, all of them, and not unpicturesque; but it would have been hard to find a neat figure or a comely face in the whole of

Kittila.

It might be described as a cluster of farms, this trim Arctic town, and gates are swung across the road every few hundred yards. Between the houses lay fields of barley, breaking into silky waves beneath the sun, and fields of rye with stems higher than a Laplander’s head. Beside each house was a pile of sledges with the runners new-tarred, ready for the winter. Beside the roadway, herds of liver and white cows grazed under the care of bare-legged urchins.

The road, after what we had been through, seemed delightful to us, though it was little better than a sandbed in places. At orderly intervals, sturdy red kilometre posts stood sentinel along its flank, with black figures on their squared white heads saying how far it was from the last station, and how far to the next. Red bridges of log and trestle crossed the streams. Red wooden parapets guarded the awkward corners when the road climbed round a hillside. The Great White Czar was taking care for the necks of his subjects, and red was the sign of his official hand.

It is fashionable to speak of Russia and her dependencies as being the worst police-ridden lands amongst all the wide acres of earth; and what they may be in other districts I do not know—I have not been there—but of Lapland and Northern Finland I can speak with authority. We went into the country prejudiced against the Government; we left it prejudiced in its favour. We expected to meet a harassing police; we never even saw a uniform. We were prepared for official delays, and were ready to give bribes to get on; there were no officials either to make the one or to take the other. Our British Foreign Office passports with their hieroglyphical visés never emerged from the envelopes in which they were originally packed. We went through the country with as little interference as we might have met with in a trip through Yorkshire or Vermont.

But though the Government does not obtrude itself to the passing eye with a bristle of uniforms and weapons, as it does in luckless countries like Germany and France, it makes its comforting presence felt through all the populated parts of the country. Without some one to look after him, and be competent if necessary to twist his tail, a slack and slovenly person like the Northern Finn would never have produced a high road for his traffic, he would never have built substantial bridges, and most of all he would never have organised the post-cart system.

It is on the usual Russian model, this posting system, but it is a triumph of

quiet routine for all that. The stations vary in distance from ten to twenty kilometres apart. You drive up, go into the house, and sign a requisition for as many horses and *karres* as you want. The horses are passable on the whole, for the most part roans, chestnuts, or bright bays, standing about fourteen hands to fourteen-three, and cobby about the neck. The *karres* I have described. With wonderfully little loss of time, the new vehicle with horse and man appears ready in the courtyard, and you pay off your old one according to the tariff in the post-book, and start off again on the next stage of your journey. The pace as a usual thing is tolerable. The horse walks uphill, trots on level, and gallops on the down-grades as fast as he can put feet to the ground. You may have your own theories about the advisability of these paces, but they are the custom of the country, and you cannot change them. You drive with a loose rein, and when you want increased pace you make a Zulu-like noise something like *pop-pop*, and if that does not have the desired effect you cut a stick and use it with vigour. The horse shrugs his shoulders and quickens; it is all in the day's work. When you want him to stop, you say *pr-r-r-mph!* just as you do in Denmark.

The horse of the post-road is not accustomed to atmospheric warmth, and sweats on small provocation. Under these circumstances he must not be pressed. On our first stage out of Kittila—it was one of the longest, by the way, being twenty-two kilometres to the change-house—the sun above us blazed with true Arctic heat and fervour, and the pace could not be pushed beyond the steadiest of jogs. When we pulled up in the grassy courtyard of Rantatalo at the end of this first stage, the man in attendance drew bucket after bucket of icy water from the well, and sluiced it over the horse's loins. It seemed a crude sort of proceeding, but one supposed they knew their business; and, besides, it was their horse.

In this same courtyard at Rantatalo the score of people who made the village were collected to amuse themselves with one of their number who had contrived to get drunk. How he had procured the liquor in this Prohibition State was a mystery apparently to them as much as it was to us. But drunk he was, and as specimens in that condition were rare, they made the most of him before he was sober again.

From out of this jeering crowd round the drunkard there came to us a battered, shaggy, half-naked, wreck of a man, who spoke "leetle Anglish." He had been born in Rantatalo, and had tired of it; he had tramped to the coast, and had worked across the ocean; he had drifted on to a railroad somewhere in America, though he did not know whether it was in California or the Carolinas, and had there worked in a line-gang till home-sickness and body-sickness drove

him back to Finland again. Poor wretch, it did not require much skill to diagnose consumption as his ailment. He said he was “mighty glad to see us.” It evidently gave him much pleasure to be thoroughly profane in English again.

The Ounas River runs in a tolerably straight course north and south from Kittila to the sea; but being a river it has some curves, and the road to cut these off has to make crossings at intervals. We came upon our first ferry, a flat and shallow boat, just outside this post-house at Rantatalo, and the wreck from America, and an ugly young woman with a pipe rowed us and our new horse and *karre* across.

We were out of the sphere of cultivation again in half a kilometre, and then the road led through a big burn-out of forest, which made a huge, unsightly scar across the country. In the first third, some of the trees were merely charred and left dead and standing; from the next third, the furnace of fire had mopped them up entirely, and the charred ashes had been swept away by wind and rain; and over the balance of ground which the flames had mowed, the stumps of the old trees were left, and young shoots were beginning to show beside them. A house had stood by the roadside in the middle of that ruined forest, but only the rubble foundations were left. The fire had driven the farmers away, and licked up their crops, and destroyed their woodwork, and they had no heart left either to rebuild or to recultivate. They had fled before the draught of the flames, and had returned no more.

The forest closed in again after this gap, and the road brought us once more in sight of the river, which ran here as a big, strong stream between high pine-covered rocks. A red-shirted Finn was poling himself about the rapids, with rods trolling over the stern of his canoe.

There was the post-house of Kakkonaara just beyond this point, and whilst the new horse and *karre* were being got ready, we went and looked at some brick-making in a field beside the house. The work was primitive. The clay was ground up in a barrel-shaped churn by a lethargic horse; a besplattered woman worked it with her hands into wooden moulds; a small tow-headed girl carried the bricks away and laid them higgledy-piggledy to dry; and a man with ear-rings, and a woman with a baby strapped up like an Indian papoose, took gentle exercise by standing still and looking on. A small pile of perhaps half a thousand bricks lay near, intermingled with wood ready for burning; and a few specimens, red, soft, twisted and irregular, lay here and there to show the fashion of the finished article. They use these bricks for stoves, and the demand is not large. A thousand would last a family a lifetime. All building and flooring and roofing is,

of course, done with wood.

They were bringing new ground into cultivation just beyond this, by cutting dykes across it and throwing the subsoil of sand and clay over the vegetation. It was an old river-bed, thickly grown with heather and juniper, and I cannot say that it gave much promise of being speedily fertile.

At Lahiniva, the little wayside farm which made the headquarters of the next stage, we fell in with bad luck. The only available vehicle was a ramshackle wooden box, horsed by a worn-out chestnut stallion, which was pathetically incapable of dragging us. The road was deep with sand, and whacking the poor old horse (after the custom of the country) was sheer brutality without adequate return. So in the end we had to turn out and walk; and as the mosquitoes came out for the first time that day in full vigour, we had a pretty dreary time of it, and we did not get into Murtola till 1.30 ">A.M. We had posted eighty-four kilometres from Kittila that day, and, *tout compris*, it had cost us M. 14.

We could have managed very comfortably with a solid meal after this drive, but little enough was forthcoming. All the post-houses have a list put up on the wall, beside the oleographs of the Czar and the Czarina, on which there is set forth in Russian, Qfinsk, and Svensk, the lists of viands which are officially procurable, with the official price of each. But few of these were ever actually on sale, and at Murtola a little curdled milk, some adamantine rye-cake, and some scraps of fish so stinking as to be uneatable were all we could collect. So we fared poorly enough.

We started off from Murtola next morning in an even worse *karre* than the one we had driven up in. It did possess springs, it is true, but as they were venerable, and tender with age, and had been reinforced by a pine log, the motion of the *karre* on the road was, to use the Chinese phrase, “bumpy, bumpy, all-e-same ridy gee-gee.”

For the whole of that stage we drove between forests of slim, straight pines, absolutely without undergrowth higher than six-inch grass. All the big trees had been cut from near the roads, and only the second growth was left. Heavy timber for exportation has to be sought now on the more distant hills, sent down log by log by a specially dammed stream to the main rivers, and there chained and lashed and spiked together in long, sinuous rafts to float down to the winches of

the shipping on the coast. Acres of these rafts did we see new-cut in the rivers, huge bristles of logs did we come across stranded in angles of dried-up tributary streams; and yet so small a part did they make of the whole growth of the country that one could look from across a valley at the hillside from which they had come, and never find the spots which the axes had weeded. A fire of a day can do more in the way of forest destruction than the work of a dozen logging camps in a year.

Water is the one and only means of transport on which the woodcutter has to depend upon for bringing his wares to the rim of those seas which carry them to the markets of the outer world. And at one time he only cut trees which would fall directly into deep rivers, which would carry them without further ado; but as the harvest of the river-banks and the accessible parts got reaped, he had to go with his axe farther back amongst the fastnesses of the mountains, and amplify his methods of transport. The logs have to be floated somehow, and as he has no river ready-made to his hand, he manufactures one. He picks upon some gully in the wilderness of the hills with a streamlet trickling through its mosses, and throws a dam of logs and turf and stones across its lower end, with a broad gate of logs in its middle. Axe in hand he goes down the hill-flank beyond, notes the direction which a sudden gush of water would take on its journey to the nearest stream, and clears the way of all the larger obstructions. And in the meanwhile the trickling streamlet above is with infinite slowness beginning to fill his dam.

When these preparations have been made, he goes back to his gully in the wilderness, and starts felling in real earnest. The great pines crash before his axe; their heads are lopped of; and they are rolled down the slopes into the tediously-filling dam. For the whole summer this work goes on, till all the trees which can be rolled or dragged there are jostling one another in this artificial lake, and the water of the streamlet no longer collects, but squanders itself over the top of the log sluice-gate. And then comes the moment for the realisation of his labours, and the moment to see whether the engineering of the work has been true. The sluice-gate of logs is knocked away; the water gushes out with a solid flood, carrying with it a prancing, lancing, dancing bristle of trunks, and roaring along with them at galloping speed down the slopes of mountain. It is no little thing which will cause a jam then. Obstructions are sheared away with infinite violence; the ends of the logs splinter themselves into paint-brushes; great trees crack off like reeds; and when the torrent, with its convoy of timber, ends its mad gallop in the river for which it has been aiming, there is a swathe ploughed across the green face of the country unsightly as the new cutting of a railroad.

But if there has been a jam, tedious pains must be expended before the logs can be sent along their journey again; another and a greater artificial freshet has to be created; and it is very often more remunerative to leave one of these knotted tangles of trunks to rot where they have stuck, and to start work again *ab initio*. So that, on the whole, the tapping of one of these mountain dams, and the subsequent half-hour's voyage of the logs, is a matter of pretty vivid excitement to all those concerned.

Again we had to cross the Ounasjoki, this time in a square ferry-boat rowed by a woman and a man, and steered by a solemn, small boy. Our progress was not swift. One of the wheel tyres of the *karre* was loose, and every few hundred yards some one had to get down to hammer it into place again with a stone. A gray-backed crow showed interest in the proceeding, and followed us for a couple of miles to find out what it was all about. But we came upon a hen capercailzie and her family dusting themselves in the road, and the gray-backed crow forebore to follow us farther. Still I do not think there was much in his line to be got out of them. Eggs of course were his speciality, but the egg season was long past, and the capercailzie chicks were as big as partridges.

At Juopperi, the next post-house, the only available horse had thrown a shoe, and as we had to wait till it was re-shod, we joined the community in the big farm-kitchen and watched them at work. It was a room twenty feet square with a big white stove that had cooking niches and drying racks and a ladder to reach its top. Strings of rye cakes hung from the rafters. Two pairs of antlers were nailed on the walls for hooks. A woman worked at a clacking hand-loom; a travelling cobbler was putting the finishing touches to a pair of yellow top-boots with a bone pattern-punch; and a couple of men carpentered at a table in the window. These were the workers: there were a dozen drones, flabby women and slack, corn-stalky men, who did nothing, without intelligence, and wearied themselves in the process.

Take the average Finn farmer of the North, and you will find a man who never works if he can help it, a man with an inferior liver and a chronic grievance. He hates his country, hates himself, hates his unobtrusive Government. If he were ruled by a committee of archangels, he would hate them equally. He will never create an insurrection; he could never summon up the energy. He will never make a Nihilist: he has not sufficient brain to be a plotter.

It is only in the days of youth that his discontent ever simmers over. Then it is that he sometimes gets so sick of everything that he scrapes a few marks together, puts them in his high boots, and tramps down to Torneo-Haparanda, and takes steamer for the States or Canada. As a rule, unless he dies, he does not stay there long. In North America they do not appreciate men with a distaste for work, and they are quite willing to let any one starve who does not choose to toil. They are a very practical people over there, and, unlike the English, have no taste for collecting useless human lumber. So unless the Finn manages to die there, which he not infrequently does, his great object from the moment he sets foot in the Land of the Free, is to get away from it again as soon as he can collect a steamer-fare.

Still, unpleasant as he is in his ways and his personal appearance, he does at times contrive to make his homestead outwardly picturesque. He does it by accident, to be sure, but still the result is there. The architecture of his house is not produced by studying after effect: it is the only species of architecture which occurs to him. The red dye with which he colours it is merely daubed on as a preservative. Yet these dark red houses cuddling down in the green landscape make very beautiful pictures, and they seem, moreover, to have an emblematic significance. Red is the official colour. Even the stones at the roadside are red with some queer lichenous growth as if in deference to the huge, invisible power which steers the country.

For the last stage of that day's sixteen hours' drive, the *karre* was horsed by a young black stallion, which systematically ran away with us up hill and down ravine, over bridges and through sand-mires. The pace was exhilarating, but as we were bruised all over with the previous jolting, we could have put up with a somewhat slower gait.

On this stage we were due to recross that imaginary boundary, the Arctic Circle, and come once more into that Temperate Zone which was our more native atmosphere, and we were on the keen look-out for some official recognition of its whereabouts. I do not quite know what we expected to see—a cairn or a wooden notice would have satisfied us—but the absence of any mark whatever jarred upon us. That a country which could mark off the kilometres on its roads with fine red posts, should ignore a geographical acquisition like the Arctic Circle, seemed a piece of unappreciative barbarism.

It was after midnight when the galloping stallion brought us into the town of Rovaniemi. It was the most considerable place in the North, and the post-house was almost an hotel. At any rate, after some dilatoriness, it provided us with a meal, which was an item we were severely in need of.

The place was quite awake. In fact all through this land of staring daylight there never seemed to be any hour when some at least of the population were not awake and doing. When we turned into our beds at 2 A.M. I noticed a ploughman still at work in the field across the road. It was a curious instrument he was handling—like an overgrown garden-hoe, with a pair of shafts instead of one. A lean horse was between the shafts, and the ploughman held the angle of the hoe and lifted the whole thing bodily round with one hand when he came to the end of a furrow. For a shallow cut in light soil it was rather effective.

Under a scorching sun next day we went out to look at the town. There is one main street of unobtrusive stores in Rovaniemi, with dwelling-houses lying back on one side, and the river swirling along in rapids at the other. At one end of the town was a hospital, each little room with its own white stove; and next it was a curious campanile in the form of a pagoda of brown, white, and yellow, with roofs of dragon-scale shingling, and a lofty, slender vane, whilst the Lutheran church, for which this campanile rang its bells, was a hundred yards away. This church was rather a fine old building, in cruciform, with its yellow walls striped with white, and a white cross high above the silver-gray shingling of its roof. On the church door were posted the private earmarks of the reindeer owned in the neighbourhood, which, for the sake of curiosity, we copied.

We went back to the post-house again for a meal—it was fine to be at a place where one could get food for the mere buying—and we saw there a woman swinging an infant in a cradle slung from the ceiling. How it did arouse memories! How often we had seen in a Lapland farm-kitchen a basket dangling from the rafters at the end of reindeer traces, and a youngster packed in it, and the fond mother crooning the Lappish equivalent of “Hush thee, my baby,” and launching the small unfortunate back through fifteen feet of space every time it swung up to her.

A well-dressed cripple hobbled into the room when we were eating, with his knee-cap half cut off by the jamming of a log-raft. He persisted in exhibiting the wound, and then rubbed his sleek, round belly to intimate that he was starving.

As he was one of the most prosperous-looking men we had seen in Rovaniemi, it did not occur to us for some time that he was soliciting alms, and it was not till he had put the matter still more forcibly, that we exuded coinage to the extent of three halfpence. He put it in his pocket and shook hands cordially with each of us, and intimated in a few simple and carefully-chosen words that we should receive our reward in due course from on high. In fact he was really so business-like about his begging, that we quite expected that he would bring out a book of printed forms and give us a receipt.

We did not get much privacy at Rovaniemi. The landlord regarded us much in the light of a travelling circus, and brought us in relays of callers whenever we were on the premises. We were not too shy, however, to make use of them. We pumped them on every subject on which they could give information, and amongst other things on how we were to continue our journey down to the coast, and where we should best find shipping for England. We had had a sufficiency of the bumpy-bumpy motion of the Finnish post-cart to prefer other means of transport if it was available, and so we asked with interest about the river route. There seemed a good deal of diversity of opinion. Finally the best steersman in Rovaniemi was brought in, a white-haired old fellow, with a clever, clean-shaven face, and he offered to take us down as far as a series of falls twenty kilometres above Kemi, and no farther. He proposed to take us so far for M.50, a tremendous sum in Northern Finland when one remembers that the rates for posting, all inclusive, varied between M.0·14 and M.0·19 per kilometre, the mark being about tenpence English.

There were a good many opinions, too, as to where we ought to go to find the requisite steamer. Some said Kemi, some insisted on Torneo-Haparanda, whilst some were equally certain that we ought to push on down the Finnish coast of the Gulf of Bothnia to Uleaborg.

In the meanwhile two or three merchants had been trying to incite us to buy peltries. We were not anxious to burden ourselves with the extra weight, and prices were not very tempting. A good bearskin cost between M.175 and M.200, and though we had one small gray skin offered for M.70, it had been shot almost to pieces, and was not well cured. These skins, of course, are much used in the country for winter wear. Reindeer pelts were cheaper. A fine skin, thick and gray, could be bought for M.8; but then it must be remembered that a whole deer, fat for killing, was only worth between M.25 and M.50.

There was a great store of reindeer antlers in a barn behind one of these stores at Rovaniemi, which we inspected to the accompaniment of giggles from

the crowd. They could not see what possible interest lay in a heap of stinking old bone; and when Hayter started to make diagrams of a few of the more curious shapes, they doubled themselves up with laughter. It was funnier than any circus they had ever seen before. We did not mind; it amused them, and the antlers amused us. There must have been five hundred pairs in that barn, and no two pairs could we find anywhere approaching the same pattern. It was the brow-tines which varied most, but the upper branches were also irregular. Some were palmated almost like an elk's; and one which I saw had complete twists in every tine like a narwal's horn.

As a final climax to the entertainment, the landlord chose out a few choice spirits and took them with us down to a hollow on the river-bank out of sight of the town. He had a bottle in his pocket, and with considerable mystery (seeing that it was smuggled) he produced it, and we saw by the label that it was caloric punch. It was half full; and as it had been on tap some time with the cork out, there was a good two inches of black sediment at the bottom, consisting of flies. But nobody stuck at this. It was doled out in a liqueur-glass, and we toasted one another with effusiveness.

Time and again quaint scraps of English had dropped upon our ears from Rovaniemi lips, and here on the river-bank the secret came out as to where they had come from. It seemed that a Britisher had long been resident in Rovaniemi, and we were told his name, and the town in Wales where he came from. He was not "merchant," he was "tourist"—that is, he was not engaged in business. And as his "tour" had apparently lasted ten years, during which time he had not moved outside Rovaniemi, we wondered what he had done at home to make so long an absence advisable.

Judging from the few scraps of Anglo-Saxon which he had left behind him, this Welshman must have been a person of pretty wit, or else a fellow of most blasphemous habits. Each of the Finns who had been his cronies possessed a sentence of English, laboriously taught and remembered; and each, as he tossed off his peg of fly tincture, pridefully repeated his lesson as a toast to our health. Need one add that the time-honoured joke had been repeated, and that each Finn's *repertoire* of English consisted of a fantastic soul-curdling oath? Still, as the Welshman had occupied ten years in manufacturing the joke, one cannot do less than record his complete success.

We made many friends in Rovaniemi, and left the town with real regret, but we had to be moving on. The courtyard was crowded with people come to see us off, and I think they were sorry also. Circuses are rare in Rovaniemi.

We drove out past the church, and the white shutters of its pagoda-shaped bell-tower were open, and the bells were ringing out and carrying their message to the scattered farms up and down the valley.

Slowly they dimmed into the distance behind us, and for forty kilometres we travelled through forests of slender pines peopled apparently by noisy, quarrelling magpies alone. And then habitations began again, with fields set before and behind them, though most of these were little better than half-drained swamps, which would grow nothing richer than reeds and rushes.

We were getting very bad horses on these stages, and the crudest possible vehicles. As I have said, the short trace on the horse-collar is joined to the shaft with a toggle, and the backhand of the saddle is fastened to the trace, and so if this toggle falls out, down go the shafts on to the ground, and nothing short of a miracle can save a bad spill. We saw ten such miracles in one day.

We crossed the river by a wire-rope ferry just below a chain of booms set across to intercept log-rafts, and fetched up that night at a farm post-house which was almost luxurious. The sun went below the pines as we sat down to sup, and the after-glow scattered reds and dull yellows and crimsons far and wide over the landscape. The great river below the house looked like a stream of ice, which glittered in its smooth parts, and lay heaped with drifts and whorls of snow where the currents raised their mounds of eddies over the hidden rocks below.

And then there dawned our final day for the road. We zigzagged back and forwards across the river as the road came upon the ferries, and we passed log-booms, and log-rafts innumerable. The air was sweet with the scent of hay. Wild raspberry trees grew by the wayside with the fruit set but not yet ripe.

At one place where the river broke into noisy rapids, we got down to look at some fish-traps. Great trestles built of trunks straddled out over the roaring water, their lower ends notched in the rocks, their tops ballasted by heavy stones. They were fenced in below by whole birch trees, with here and there gaps in which were placed the wicker traps. There were trestles on either side built to suit all heights of the river, and the catching was brisk, for the fish were many. Silver-bellied salmon jumped by the hundred in the tawny cataracts, and a bevy of pock-marked Finns gathered the harvest from the traps to pack in ice and send down to Stockholm to be kippered.

Once and again did we cross the river by ferries, and changed horses and *karres* at the post-houses, and then left the Ounasjoki behind us, and set off across the sandy delta to the other great river on which stand the twin-towns of Torneo-Haparanda, through masses of harebells which made the ground as blue as a sky.

The Torneo River lay before us, broad, solemn, and deep. A great sailing-ferry lay beside a wooden wharf. The *karre* was unhorsed, and, with two other vehicles, was run on board. The horses followed. Then a mixed company of six nationalities took their places, the sprit-sail was sheeted home, and we drifted off. The twin-towns lay on the opposite bank: Swedish Haparanda trim and red to seaward, Finnish Torneo notable for the minarets of its Russian church farther up-stream, and at the back, the slim black spire of the Lutheran church. And the sunset bathed it all with an impartial glow.

Slowly the clumsy ferry-boat drifted across the river, amongst firewood, carrying schooners, and rafts, and the boats of fishers, and at last she landed beside a fussy launch which did a passenger traffic with the villages up-stream. We drove off at speed through sandy streets between great blocks of wooden houses, and then we left Torneo and turned inland, circling round the head of a lagoon from which mist wreaths were rising like rolls of cotton wool.

By the wayside there loomed out a square pillar adorned with a split crow, elaborately gilt. It was the boundary of Holy Russia, and it stood there grim and cold and deserted.

Farther on we came upon another pillar bearing the Swedish arms, but this also was solitary and unguarded. We drove on and came to Haparanda. Of our own free-will we pulled up at the house of a custom’s officer to report. He was away. His wife heard the tale and shrugged her shoulder. “Oh, Englanders,” said she. “Go on.” It was the only piece of official formality we met with during all our journeying.

There was a hotel in Haparanda, and we went to it and dined *à la Suède*—that is, mostly off *hors d’œuvres*, and washed down the meal with some alleged Roederer, which was more than half liqueur. We felt that we were indeed getting into civilisation again, and as we were lucky enough to hear of a steamer leaving for Stockholm in a couple of days, we were prepared to slack about and enjoy

ourselves in the interval.

As a first luxury we went and bathed. Moored off the shore were half a dozen little schooners with two large gaff-sails, and the foremast stepped right up in the bows, and no bowsprit. Their crews live aft in a little house, and employ themselves with bringing in cargoes of split birch-logs for fuel from the nearest forests. We swam off to these, and disported ourselves in the water after the manner of porpoises. And then we got into our clothes again, lit up mild, bad cigars, and strolled around without any cares about meal-getting, carrier-engaging, route-finding, or mosquito-slaying.

The town of Haparanda is rectangular in plan, and pretty when viewed from a distance. It is well be-telephoned, and possesses two banks and an ugly church. The town of Torneo, the only piece of Russian territory west of the Torneo River, is reached by foot-passengers over an unpainted wooden bridge, which straddles across the mouth of the lagoon like some monstrous gray-legged centipede. The lagoon divides them, as the Danube does Buda and Pesth.

Torneo, as a town, is less neat. It is liberally planted with gardens containing little creeper-covered arbours, in which it is the height of the Finn’s ambition to sit and smoke, and gloat over the fact that other people are fools enough to work. There is a pretty Lutheran church in black and white outside Torneo, with a tall, slender spire, and away from the church is a quaint bell-tower, also in magpie colours. An enclosure of stone hedges them both in, and inside the enclosure is a coppice of mountain ashes shadowing the graves. The Russian church in Torneo is set at a street corner in the middle of the town. It is an ornate little building in white and two tints of brown, with an elaborate cupola and coloured windows. It was suggestive of a kiosk in an exhibition where one might reasonably expect to buy somebody or other’s cocoa from comely young damsels in uniform.

There is a hospital in Torneo, which held two curious patients. One was a Lapp, the only one in the district. He had come down to Matarangi, which is fifty miles farther up the Torneo River, to sell his deer at the annual fair. He was outside Russian territory there and drink was plentiful, and in that commodity he made heavy investments. During his subsequent adventures he broke both thighs, nobody seemed to know how, and his friends brought him down to hospital, and left him there to return to their eternal deer-herding.

The other patient was a Tartar, and he also was in the accident ward. He was by no means an uncommon person to find so far out of his native latitude. Swarthy Tartar tramps, in face almost as dark as a mulatto, permeate the country

as beggars and horsedealers. They wear European clothes, and are generally accompanied by their women and children. Very often they have been born in Finland. They are thieves and vagabonds, the horses they sell are poor, and they occupy much the same position as the gipsy did a hundred years ago at home. They are hedge-bottom nomads, and the *Wanderlust* is too strong in them ever to let them settle for long. It is on record that at times they have taken farms and tried to sit down and breed horses; but it is not on record that they have ever succeeded in staying three years in one place. They are quite without shame, morals, or common honesty; their most valued roof is a farmer's outhouse; their one ambition in life is to keep just beyond starvation. Even the Finns despise them, just as the Swedes despise the Finns.

The Northern Swede is a cheerful, *bourgeois* creature, all belly and laugh, who browses on odds and ends of victual, and nips caloric punch all the day long; and for the short time we were with him in Haparanda, he amused us. But then we were not with him for long. The educated Swede of Stockholm is a very different person: he is a gentleman, and one of the most delightful gentlemen in Europe.

I think we left Haparanda without any keen regret. We drove a couple of miles past reedy lagoons to Salmis, the port, and there got on board a coaster, which was waiting. She was going to take us down the waters of the Bothnia to Stockholm, the capital of Gustavus Adolphus, of Bernadotte, of Oscar II., the Venice of the North; and afterwards we would get back to England, which of all countries on this terrestrial globe is the most desirable.

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Transcriber's Notes

page 30: fleased *changed to* flensed

Inconsistent place naming left as originally printed.

Hyphenation has been standardised.

Artwork has been placed between paragraphs. The page numbers within the List of Illustrations etc., as a consequence will not always be correct; they appear as originally printed.

Small capital text has been replaced with all capitals.

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