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AN ARCTIC JOURNEY.
SWEDEN'S SUCCESSFUL VOYAGE TO ICE-BOUND REGIONS.

Naturalists' Make a Northern Trip of Unusual Length—Find an Archipelago Never Before Explored!—Summer on the East Coast of Greenland.

A party of Swedish naturalists under the lead of Gustave Kolthoff made a northern voyage of more than usual length last summer for the purpose of studying the fauna in arctic waters and lands. They started in a little vessel from the northern coast of Norway on June 4, and four days later they arrived at the icy coast of Spitzbergen, where they visited some of the deep fjords and clusters of islands. Then they steamed far northeast to the waters between Spitzbergen and Franz Josef Land, where they reached the southwest coast of Prince Charles Island, which, it will be remembered, was visited for the first time two years ago. They found there an archipelago of considerable extent which had never been explored. They procured a great deal of information about this almost unknown region, and the account of it which they will publish is expected to be very interesting. They were disappointed, however, in not finding any more relics of the lost arctic aeronaut, Andree. One of his buoys had been picked up in the neighborhood of King Charles Island, and this was believed to be the likeliest place to find other objects that might throw light upon the fate of the explorer.

Then the party steamed on their way to the coast of East Greenland along the edge of the polar ice. They found the great ice pack impenetrable, but they kept on westward, close to the ice edge, as far as the island of Jan Mayen. This is the bleak arctic land that will always be famous as the place where in the seventeenth century a large party of whalers spending the polar winter perished to a man of scurvy. The record they left of the tragedy was nearly complete, for it was brought down to within a day or two of the time when the last survivor probably died.

Here the explorers found the pack ice stretching away to the west as well as to the north. They were able, however, to push into it and slowly pick their way westward. Here and there were great hills of ice, where the pressure had piled the pieces high. The ice was everywhere covered with a thick layer of snow, and their description of it shows that it was old polar ice that perhaps had been slowly drifting southward for many months.

The expedition finally reached the East Greenland coast at Mackenzie bay on July 31. They found the ground entirely free from snow, and under the summer sun a good deal of vegetation had developed. On Aug. 14, after studying animal life on sea and land for some days, the vessel entered Franz Josef fjord, though seven days before it had been completely blocked by ice. In a week all the ice had entirely disappeared. They remained in the fjord until Aug. 23, and secured the unusual prize of two young musk oxen, which they took home with them to Sweden. This is probably the first time that live specimens of the musk ox have been carried to civilized lands, though the whale has several times been made.

Mr. Kolthoff says that last season was a bad ice year in the neighborhood of Spitzbergen and Baer Islands. On the other hand, the east coast of Greenland, which is frequently locked with ice all through the summer, was almost free from this impediment to exploration.

VALUABLE SECRET.

One Family Has Furnished Stamp Cancellers for Sixty-Five Years.

Since 1835 all the machines by which postage stamps are cancelled and envelopes marked with the name of the post-office, the date, etc., have been made by one family. In the year named the Postmaster General entered into a contract with Benjamin Chambers, a citizen of Washington, to furnish a device by which postage stamps might be canceled so that they could not be used again, and, although there have been a multitude of competitors on several occasions, that contract has been renewed year after year for sixty-five years with Mr. Chambers, his son, and his grandson, who have a secret process by which the dies are made of malleable iron and carbonized into steel at a cost of from 50 cents to \$2.75 each. It is certainly the only government contract, and probably the only contract in the United States, that has been renewed so often and continued so long. The department buys about \$25,000 worth of new cancellers every year. Bids are advertised for annually, and every now and then some ambitious manufacturer who thinks he has a good thing offers a proposal, but the Chambers family are invincible. They have improved the device until it is now almost perfect.

The stamper is a circular cast-steel box (with a screw thread), one end of which is closed, and is provided on the outside with a square shank to secure it to the hardwood handle. The cover of the box is a disk of steel. A portion of its thickness enters the box by means of a screw thread around its periphery of almost twenty threads to the inch. This permits of a space between the inner face of the die and the bottom of the box, while the remaining thickness of the disk forms a flange with the edge, which is coarse milled, so that the disk may be turned with the hand or a wrench. On the outer face of the disk are characters of the body of the cylindrical die. These combine the marking and the canceling devices, one being on one side of the disk, inclosing the name of the postoffice in a circle.

There are three slots for removable type, for months, dates, hour, and half-hour. Diametrically opposite the circle is the canceling device, the side of which is parallel with the edge of the disk. Any required number or letter is cut in relief in the center, while three grooves are cut into it. The removable types are of steel, and have on the ends opposite their faces projections from their outer edges, so that when inserted in the slots the projections can be clamped and held in place.

Until 1880 Captain Chambers manufactured the cancellers here in Washington, and he is still required to maintain a repair shop in the neighborhood of the Postoffice Department, but he moved his factory to Northumberland county, Virginia, on a log of land at the mouth of the Potomac, where he has a little village composed exclusively of employees and their families. No one can enter his grounds without permission, and those who have been there say it is quite an ideal little village, safe from spies of competitors who would like to get the contract away from him.—Washington Correspondence New York Tribune.

THOMAS KEARNS.

The Late Silver King to Enter the United States Senate.

Though he represents a comparatively unimportant State, Thomas Kearns, the new Senator from Utah, will be one of the most conspicuous figures in the upper house of the Fifty-seventh Congress. His great wealth is responsible for his election to the Senate. Like his colleague, Clark, of Montana, he has wrested a fabulous fortune from the mines of the West, after tasting the bitter cup of toil and privation for many years.

Born in New York in 1832 he went to Nebraska as a young man and worked on a farm. He dug potatoes and drove a freight wagon. It occurred to him that in the Black Hills of Dakota he



SENATOR THOMAS KEARNS.

might find a fortune and thither he went. But he failed to strike it rich and went to Utah in 1883. In the famous Ontario mine in Park City he went to work with pick and shovel. From the savings out of his weekly wages he accumulated enough to buy himself a partnership, with several others, in a claim near the Ontario mine. They met with success. Other claims on adjoining land was purchased and the whole combined into the Silver King mine. Its product of silver, gold, copper and lead last year amounted to an even \$1,000,000, of which one-fourth went to Senator Kearns. He is now worth about \$5,000,000.

Kearns is exceedingly generous. Not long ago he gave \$50,000 for the establishment of an orphanage in Salt Lake City and he also gave \$10,000 toward the building of a new Catholic cathedral in the same city. He is now building a marble palace in Salt Lake City, which will be one of the finest in the country, in marked contrast to the dugout which was his first Nebraska home and the humble cabin which sheltered him during his early career in Utah.

Walled In.

While excavating for a cellar in Marietta, O., a few hundred feet from the famous Mound Cemetery, the workmen dug into a mound builder's grave, which was supposed to be two thousand years old. The grave was covered with three layers of heavy stones with three inches of fine white sand between each layer. When the third stone was raised, the bones of a large man were discovered. In the bones of each hand were solid copper axes. The bones crumbled on exposure for an hour. Large bits of charcoal were found in the grave, as were the bones of wild animals supposed to have been deer. The grave was walled in on all sides, and also the top and bottom, with heavy stones. The body of the mound builder sat in an upright position, with the hands in a position as if supporting the body. The grave was two and a half feet wide by two and a half feet long and five feet deep, and the stones surrounding it were easily broken with the fingers, as they were very soft.

Not There.

A farmer once wrote to a distinguished scientific agriculturalist, to whom he felt under obligation for introducing a new variety of swine:—"Respected Sir:—I went yesterday to the cattle fair; I found several pigs of your species. There was a great variety of beasts, and I was very much astonished at not seeing you there."

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