

FINDING THE POLE

BY JULES VERNE.

CHAPTER X.

On May 29, for the first time, the sun never set. The glowing disc just touched the boundary line of the horizon, and rose again immediately. The period was now entered when the day lasts twenty-four hours.

Next morning there was a magnificent halo; the monarch of day appeared surrounded by a luminous circle.

The doctor recommenced his sowing, for he had plenty of seed, but he was surprised to find sorrel growing already between the half-dried stones, and even pale, sickly heaths trying to show their delicate pink blossoms.

At last it began to be really hot weather. On the 15th of June the thermometer stood at 57 degrees above zero.

By the middle of June the sloop had made good progress, and Hatteras, Altamont and the doctor went hunting.

The three hunters, accompanied by Duke, set out on Monday, the 17th of June, at 6 in the morning, each man armed with a double-barreled gun, a hatchet and snow knife, and provisions for several days.

About noon of the second day they sighted two ferocious musk-oxen, and surrounded them on a plateau.

The oxen had begun to shake themselves impatiently at Duke, trying to kick him off, when Hatteras started up right in front of them, shouting and chasing them back.

This was the signal for Altamont and the doctor to rush forward and fire, but at the sight of two assailants, the terrified animals wheeled around and attacked Hatteras. He met their onset with a firm, steady foot and fired straight at their heads. But both his bullets were powerless. They rushed upon the unfortunate man like furies, and threw him on the ground in an instant.

"He is a dead man!" exclaimed the doctor, in despairing accents.

A tremendous struggle was going on in Altamont's breast at the sight of his prostrate foe, and though his first impulse was to hasten to his help, he stopped short, battling with himself and his prejudices. But his hesitation scarcely lasted half a second, his better self conquered, and exclaiming, "No, it would be cowardly!" he rushed forward with Clawbonny.

Hatteras full well understood how his rival felt, but would rather have died than have begged his intervention. However, he had hardly time to think about it, before Altamont was at his side.

He could not have held out much longer, for it was impossible to ward off the blows of horns and hoofs of two such powerful antagonists, and in a few minutes more he must have been torn to pieces. But suddenly two shots resounded, and Hatteras felt the balls graze his head.

"Courage!" shouted Altamont, flinging away his discharged weapon, and throwing himself right in front of the raging animals. One of them, shot to the heart, fell dead as he reached the spot, while the other dashed madly on Hatteras, and was about to gore the unfortunate captain with his horns, when Altamont plunged his snow knife far into the beast's wide open jaws with one hand, with the other dealt him such a tremendous blow on the head with his hatchet, that the skull was completely split open.

It was done so quickly that it seemed like a flash of lightning, and all was over. The second ox lay dead, and Clawbonny shouted "Hurrah! hurrah!"

Hatteras was saved.

He owed his life to the man he hated the most. What a storm of conflicting passions this must have roused in his soul! But where was the emotion he could not master?

However, his action was prompt, whatever his feeling might be. Without a moment's hesitancy, he went up to his rival, and said in a grave voice: "Altamont, you have saved my life!"

"You saved mine," replied the American.

There was a moment's silence, and then Altamont added:

"We're quits, Hatteras."

"No, Altamont," said the captain; "when the doctor dragged you out of your icy tomb I did not know who you were; but you saved me at the peril of your own life, knowing quite well who I was."

"Why, you are a fellow creature at any rate, and whatever faults an American may have, he is no coward."

"No, indeed," said the doctor. "He is a man, every inch a man—like yourself, Hatteras."

"And, like me, he shall have part in the glory that awaits us."

"The glory of reaching the north pole?" asked Altamont.

"Yes," replied Hatteras, proudly.

"I guessed right, then," said Altamont.

The American stood still a moment, deeply moved. Then he spoke feelingly.

"And you have actually dared to conceive such a project? Oh! it is grand; I tell you it is sublime even to think of it!"

"But tell me," said Hatteras, in a hurried manner; "you were not bound for the pole, then, yourself?"

Altamont hesitated.

"Come, speak out, man," urged the doctor.

"Well, to tell the truth, I was not, and the truth is better than self-love. No, I had no such grand purpose in view. I was trying to clear the north-west passage, and that was all."

"Altamont," said Hatteras, holding out his hand; "be our companion to glory, come with us and find the north pole."

The two men clasped hands in a warm, hearty grasp, and the bond of friendship between them was sealed.

When they turned to look for the doctor they found him in tears.

"Ah! friends," he said, wiping his eyes; "you have made me so happy it is almost more than I can bear! You have sacrificed this miserable nationality for the sake of the common cause. You have said, 'What does it matter if only the pole is discovered, whether it is by Englishman or an American?' Why should we brag of being American or English when we can boast that we are men?"

The good little man was beside himself with joy. He hugged the reconciled enemies to his bosom, and cemented their friendship by his own affection to both.

Calming themselves the men cut up the oxen and made their way back to camp. At supper the doctor said:

"My dear old Johnson, I took out an American and an Englishman with me, didn't I?"

"Yes, Mr. Clawbonny."

"Well, I bring back two brothers."

This was joyous news to the sailors, and they shook hands warmly with Altamont; while the doctor recounted all that had passed, and how the American captain had saved the English captain's life. That night no five happier men could have been found than those that lay sleeping in the little snow-house.

Bell completed the sloop; the ice began to break up.

A trial was made to Cape Washington. This short sail of six hours sufficiently proved her excellent qualities.

On the 22d of June, Hatteras began to load the sledge. They put in 200 pounds of salt meat, three cases of vegetables and preserved meat, besides lime juice, and flour and medicines. They also took 200 pounds of powder and a stock of firearms. Including the sloop and the Halkett boat, there was about 1,500 pounds weight, a heavy load.

However, the distance to the pole was not 355 miles at the outside, and as they did not intend to go more than twelve miles a day, as they could do it comfortably in a month. Even if land failed them, they could always fall back on the sloop, and finish the journey without fatigue to men or dogs.

On Sunday, the 23d, all was ready, and it was resolved to devote the entire day to rest.

They retired early to rest, for they needed to be up betimes. So passed the last night in Fort Providence.

CHAPTER XI.

Next day at early dawn, Hatteras gave the signal for departure. The well-fed and well-rested dogs were harnessed to the sledge. They had been having a good time of it all the winter, and might be expected to do good service during the summer.

It was at 6 in the morning when the expedition started. After following the windings of the bay and going past Cape Washington, they struck into the direct route for the north, and by 7 o'clock had lost sight of the lighthouse and Fort Providence.

During the first two days they made twenty miles in twelve hours, devoting the remainder of the time to rest and meals. The tent was quite sufficient protection during sleep.

The temperature began to rise. In many places the snow melted entirely away, and great patches of water appeared.

Hunting was not forgotten during the march, for fresh meat was a necessity. Altamont and Bell kept their guns loaded, and shot ptarmigan, guillemots, geese, and a few young hares.

Hatteras advised them not to go more than a mile away, as there was not a day, nor even an hour, to lose, for three months of fine weather was the utmost they could count upon. Besides, the sledge was often coming to difficult places, when each man was needed to lend a helping hand.

For several days the expedition had been attended with no fatigue. The travelers had only suffered from the intense glare of the sun on the snow, which threatened them with snow-blindness.

At another time of the year they might have avoided this by walking during the night, but at present there was no night at all. Happily the snow was beginning to melt, and the brilliancy would diminish as the process of dissolution advanced.

On the 8th of June the thermometer rose to 45 degrees, and the rain fell in torrents. Hatteras and his companions, however, marched stoically on, and even hailed the downpour with delight, knowing that it would hasten the disappearance of the snow.

As they went along, the doctor often picked up stones, both round ones and flat pebbles, as if worn away by the tide. He thought from this they must

be near the Polar basin, and yet far as the eye could reach was one interminable plain.

There was not a trace of houses, or huts, or cairns visible. It was evident that the Greenlanders had not pushed their way so far north, and yet the famished tribes would have found their reward in coming, for the country abounded in game. Bears were frequently seen, and numerous herds of musk-oxen and deer.

On the 29th Bell killed a fox and Altamont a musk-ox. These supplies of fresh food were very acceptable, and even the doctor surveyed, with considerable satisfaction, the haunches of meat they managed to procure from time to time.

"Don't let us stint ourselves," he used to say on these occasions; "food is no unimportant matter in expeditions like ours."

"Especially," said Johnson, "when a meal depends on a lucky shot."

"You're right, Johnson; a man does not think so much about dinner when he knows the soup-pot is simmering by the kitchen fire."

On the 30th they came to a district which seemed to have been upturned by some volcanic convulsion, so covered was it with cones and sharp, lofty peaks.

A strong breeze from the southeast was blowing, which soon increased to a hurricane, sweeping over the rocks covered with snow and the huge masses of ice, which took the forms of icebergs and hummocks, though on dry land.

On all sides nothing could be heard but the noise of cracking ice and falling avalanches.

The travelers had to be very careful in avoiding hills, and even in speaking aloud, for the slightest agitation in the air might have caused a catastrophe. Indeed, the suddenness is the peculiar feature in arctic avalanches, distinguishing them from those of Switzerland and Norway.

Often the dislodgement of a block of ice is instantaneous, and not even a cannon ball or thunderbolt could be more rapid in its descent. The loosening, the fall and the crash happen almost simultaneously.

Happily, however, no accident befell any of the party, and three days afterwards they came to smooth, level ground again.

On the Fourth of July there was such an exceedingly dense fog that it was very difficult to keep the straight course for the north. No misadventure, however, befel the party during the darkness, except the loss of Bell's snowshoes.

At Bell's suggestion torches were contrived, made of tow steeped in spirits of wine and fastened on the end of a stick, and these served somewhat to help them on, though they made but small progress; for, on the 6th, after the fog had cleared off, the doctor took their bearings, and found that they had only been marching at the rate of eight miles a day.

Determined to make up for lost time, they rose next morning very early and started off. Bell and Altamont as usual going ahead of the rest and acting as scouts. Johnson and the others kept beside the sledge, and were soon nearly two miles behind the guides; but the weather was so dry and clear that all their movements could be distinctly observed.

Storms blew up again and the tent was pitched in a ravine for shelter, as the sky was dark and threatening, and a violent north wind was blowing. "I'm afraid we'll have a bad night," said Johnson.

"A pretty noisy one, I expect," replied the doctor, "but not cold. We had better take every precaution, and fasten down our tent with good big stones."

"You are right, Mr. Clawbonny. If the hurricane swept away our tent, I don't know where we should find it again."

The tent held fast, but sleep was impossible, for the tempest was led loose and raged with tremendous violence.

"It seems to me," said the doctor, during a brief lull in the deafening roar, "as if I could hear the sound of collisions between icebergs and ice fields. If we were near the sea, I could really believe there was a general break up in the ice."

"I can't explain the noises any other way," said Johnson.

"Can we have reached the coast?" I wonder?" asked Hatteras.

"It is not impossible," replied Clawbonny. "Listen! Do you hear that crash? That is certainly the sound of icebergs falling. We cannot be very far from the ocean."

"Well, if it turns out to be so, I shall push right on over the ice fields."

"Oh, they'll all be broken up after such a storm as this. We shall see what to-morrow brings; but all I can say is, if any poor fellows are wandering about in a night like this, I pity them."

(To be continued.)

A Positive Proof.

"My dear child, have you reason to suppose that Mr. Flirty entertains a frank liking for you?"

"Well, ma, last night he handed me a box of chocolates with the remark that they were his candied sentiments."—Baltimore American.

An Instance.

Knicker—Time brings strange changes.

Bocker—Yes; the boy whose mother can't make him wash his neck grows up to be a rich man who goes abroad for baths.—Harper's Bazar.

The lungs of an adult human being have 175,000,000 cells.

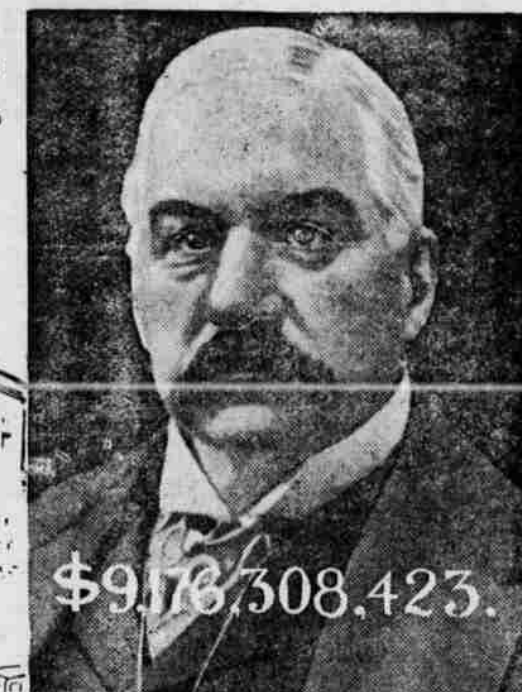
WEALTH MORGAN CONTROLS SHOWN IN DIAGRAMS.

RAILWAY GROUP
\$4,723,453,945

INDUSTRIAL
\$2,313,099,000



TRUST CO. GROUP
\$438,806,800



\$671,322,500

J. Pierpont Morgan.

The discovery in New York that J. Pierpont Morgan controls one-ninth the wealth of the United States, through his railroad, banking, insurance and industrial connections, has caused financiers to look upon the "Colossus of Wall street" as a close rival to John D. Rockefeller. Many have expressed the belief that he will become the most powerful capitalist on earth. The total wealth controlled by Mr. Morgan is estimated at \$9,176,308,423. The diagrams show how this is distributed.



keep the rivers of the country free from snags and other impediments to navigation the government maintains a fleet of thirty steamboats and spends \$500,000 a year.

A railroad in Pennsylvania is experimenting with ties made of old rails, cut to the right length and anchored with the broadest side upward in rock ballast. The new rails are clamped on them by steel fastenings.

Officers of the new battleship South Dakota, which is equipped with turbine engines, says there is absolutely no vibration of the fire control masts, a difficulty always found in the reciprocating engine driven vessels.

Petrol driven street cars, seating forty-eight passengers and capable of a speed of ten miles an hour, are supplanting horse cars in Karachi, India, without necessitating the expense of changing the system into an electric line.

A statistician has figured out that last year's broomcorn crop was so small that each American family can have but one and one-seventh brooms this year, without allowing for business houses, corporations or municipalities.

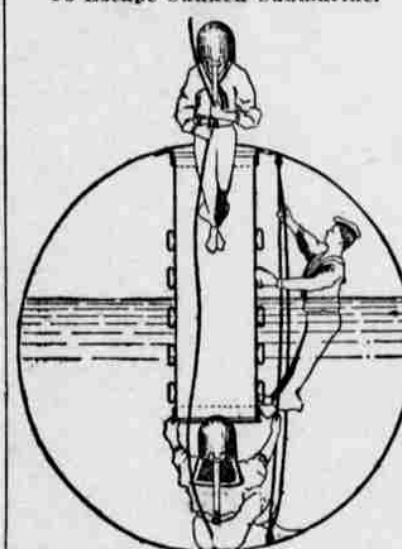
A Scotchman, Mr. John Lowden, has invented a "smoke tintometer," which, it is thought, may be of use in prosecuting cases of "smoke nuisance." It consists of a tube with a single eyepiece and two object openings. One of these is clear, but the other contains a revolving diaphragm in which are set five circles, one of clear glass and the other four of tinted glasses corresponding with the standard tints of a scientific "smoke chart." In examining smoke-defiled air the diaphragm is turned until the tinted glass coincides in darkness with the air seen through the clear aperture. The various glasses are systematically numbered, so that a glance suffices to show the degree of defilement of the air.

Archibald Sharp described at a recent meeting of the Institution of Automobile Engineers in London his system of air-springs for road vehicles. As applied to the saddle pillar of a bicycle, the apparatus consists essentially of a vertical cylinder with a piston or plunger, made to work air-tight by a specially constructed "mitten," and supporting the weight of the rider. The same device has been applied to motorcycles, and experiments have been made with a light motor car. On the front fork of a heavy motorcycle the "life" of the "mitten" covered from 2,000 to 5,000 miles, but on a back spring fork it was only equivalent to

1,000 miles. The effect of the air springs is described as luxuriously comfortable.

Since its invasion of the Salton Sink, and the struggle of the engineers to hold it under control, the Colorado river has found a new mouth, 20 or 30 miles southeast of the old one. The consequences of this change, says Dr. D. T. MacDougal, are somewhat momentous. For one thing, the bore which formerly ran many miles upstream, affecting both the Colorado and the Hardy rivers, will probably disappear, since in the new channel the water reaches the sea by a more gradual descent and with a gentler current. New mud-flats will fringe the shore for a distance of 50 miles. Eventually, it is probable, a brackish lake, 50 or 60 miles long, will be formed, into which the seepage of the Hardy river will flow; and serious disturbance of the plants and animals over an area of several hundred square miles may ensue.

To Escape Sunken Submarine.



Water compartment and diving bell hood tested with success.—Cassier's Magazine.

Hope.

"All is over between us," said the emotional youth. "She despises me." "Has she sent back your letters?" "Yes."

"Then cheer up. If she really despised you she would hold onto your letters to be read in court or used for the amusement of her friends."—Washington Star.

Breaking It Gently.

"Sir, your son has just joined a college fraternity. These college fraternities—"

"Never mind breaking it gently. What hospital is he at?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

You can't, as a rule, judge a man's interest in history by the number of occasions he celebrates