



AN ESKIMO GIRL.

AT the head of an almost unknown bay, beyond the waters of Inglefield Gulf, the *Falcon* found temporary rest; and there, under a lofty peak and in the presence of a mighty glacier, we erected our two tiny buildings. The site was chosen upon a terrace in the bed of an ancient glacier, and near a rapid brook that ran down to the bay. The studio formed a wing of the larger building, and was built of three-inch grooved pine. It was made with double walls, and had an air-space of one foot completely enveloping top, sides, and bottom, and an additional air-space of one inch formed by felt covering the walls and ceiling. On the side facing the west were placed double doors, and on the south a double skylight and a window. Over three of the exterior walls was fastened the conventional tar-paper. In this small abode, the northernmost studio in the world, with a ground-space of fifteen by six and a half feet, and with a height of less than eight, my comrade and I were to dwell for more than a year.

On August 26, 1893, the studio was made habitable with two folding-beds, trunks and boxes for seats and receptacles, and oil-cloth for floor-covering. A long shelf was run along the west side of the room, near the ceiling,

AN ARCTIC STUDIO.

(77° 44' N. Lat.)

WITH PICTURES BY THE AUTHOR.

and under the skylight was placed a series of shelves. A clock with a homelike voice gave an air of habitableness to the room, and from the ceiling was suspended a lamp with a chain for raising and lowering it—always an object of wonder and delight to the childlike Inuit, or Eskimo. Near by were two other dwellings, but of sealskin, the homes of the Innuits Myo and Kashoo, who, with their families, had been induced to leave the neighborhood of Cape Parry and come with us.

The long night was approaching, and from the time our dwelling was made ready until September 15 our days and nights were passed in long hunting-excursions. On one a distance of 190 miles was covered in a whale-boat.

We found the Innuits very quick-witted and intelligent; with unvarying good nature and a keen appreciation of fun, they proved themselves companionable in spite of their uncleanliness. Their skill manifested itself in many ways during these long excursions. Later in the year it showed itself, on one occasion, in a particularly interesting way. Having found it necessary to cross a glacier on a hunting-trip, our Innuits paused at the edge and hallooed to ascertain the direction of the echo. On the return a storm of snow and fog had obliterated all landmarks, but



KASHOO.



MEK-A-SHAH.

the Innuits easily found the way by means of the echo.

There was always a charm in their strange melodies, and particularly at night, as they slowly rowed along the black waters among ghostly, beautiful icebergs, under the starless sky. And such melodies! They were like the sighing of the winds, low, contented, full-breathed, yet with an undertone of sadness. But at times their songs are vehement with joy and action. Sometimes they are broken with recitative. I give the music of a few:



On these inland hunting-trips an ominous silence reigned. We were then having alternate day and night, and the spirit of the approaching months of darkness seemed to hold the day in thrall. The weird desolation and loneliness of the great peaks; the interminable ice-caps, lustrous and cold under the gray waste of cloud; the wide, mossy stretches, thick-set with irregular boulders of many hues, and thickly starred with white, pink, purple, and yellow flowers; the absence of life; the windless hush—all these wove a web of awe about one's mental perceptions, and made the world in which we walked seem a part of strange dreams.

By October 7 the sun like a ball of orange fire rose over the great hills at 10 A. M., and disappeared behind them, on the bay's farther side, by 3 P. M. Every one was busy, the men out on hunting-trips down the bay, or carrying provisions to Moraine Camp on the ice-cap. To sketch from the studio window we had to scrape the frostwork from the window-panes every few minutes, so near was winter to us. The brook had been frozen for some time, and to obtain drinking-water it was necessary to go to a small fresh-water lake half a mile up the valley. Soon it too was frozen, as the temperature was rapidly falling even in our lower regions; on the ice-cap it was already 11° below zero. Snow-squalls frequently blew over the valley, giving some of the wildest and strangest effects that I had seen in this strange land. One came up from Inglefield Gulf, a mass of purplish gray cloud that made the water even a darker hue, and half obliterated the long range of cliffs on



EL-EY-TING-WAH.

the opposite side of the bay with a translucent veil which gave them a pinkish tinge. Here and there on the cliffs were traces of straw-color, with lilac shadows, while just above the hills the clouds cleared to a light pearly



TONG-WING-WAH.

gray, with traces of pinkish yellow. Over the yet calm waters of the bay hosts of ice-floes and icebergs were scattered, all a delicate blue-green above the grayish purple of the sea. In the foreground a large iceberg had grounded near the entrance to Falcon Harbor, and gave the highest note to the picture—a light pinkish cream with shadows of greenish blue. This was at 1 P. M., and in a few moments darkness overtook the day, and snow fell thick and fast.

The studio was gradually becoming picturesque on the outside, as the eaves were decked with great pieces of reindeer meat, and the top with antlers and kayaks. At noon the lurid sun began its westerling course behind the hills, giving the most beautiful effect of the day; but it moved so rapidly that one had to work with great speed to accomplish anything. I made sketches daily from the window, and then sallied forth up the valley or over the hills back of the house, which looked down upon the great glacier and Bowdoin Bay. One would need a hundred hands as well as a hundred eyes adequately to cope with the rich color harmonies of the North. I took several photographs of the glacier, and then made a quick sketch—quick perforce, for I came near freezing my fingers. Happily, the addition of some petroleum kept the colors pliable long enough to complete the sketch.

By October 18 all bird life except the ravens had deserted us. Five were counted that afternoon around the walrus cache on the rocky point that jutted out into the bay opposite the camp. This was also the resort of a number of Eskimo dogs that had never been caught since their landing from the *Falcon*. Some of our ice-cap party returned toward evening, leaving the others in a snow-hut. They brought tidings of severe storms and winds, which rendered it impossible to see about them for more than ten feet during the whole of their stay.

We did much entertaining, as we were continually visited by different members of the tribe of two hundred or more. They were content to sit and share the warmth and shelter of our house, and gaze on the curious things it contained. They would turn the pages of a magazine by the hour, and, holding the book upside down, ask questions about the pictures. What particularly pleased them was anything in the shape of gun, knife, or ammunition. Of eating they never tired. The amount of food they consumed was astonishing, and they particularly reveled in our coffee, biscuit, and pemmican. This love was manifested by a little ditty that they sang quite often :

« Uh-bis-e-ken,
Uh-pem-e-ken.»

The women are very clever with the needle, and as most of us had adopted the Inuit boot of sealskin, which required frequent mending, they were always in demand. In mechanical ingenuity they are remarkable. Both men and women are carvers in ivory, and the tiny figures—human as well as animal—that they fashion in this material, although somewhat crude, show no mean ability. This skill is also to be remarked in regard to the use of the pencil. One of them, As-sey-e-yeh, drew from memory a steamer in perspective, with the reflections in the water, and that, too, in a suggestive and artistic way.

Arctic literature dwells on the monotonous life of the polar regions, but it cannot be such to a lover of nature. The beauties of nature in those high latitudes are far more varied than in any other part of the world that I have seen. On October 26 the last view of the sun's face was denied us by the rushing clouds. The winter's routine began with the setting of a day and an all-night watch. We had the moon by day—a day full of beautiful color harmonies and twilight in tone; for although the sun had disappeared, a radiance of rich orange, succeeded by yellow and yellowish blue,

merged in the blue of the heavens, which was brightest at noon. The reign of night was upon us, and with it the beginning of a series of color-poems that the art of the painter could only faintly portray. The thermometer registering 4° below zero F., and the bay having frozen over, I took daily trips in the uncertain, mysterious light that shone in the far south—an orange radiance that brooded over the rich gray of the southern hills, fad-

spires very freely in these hard, steep journeys, but cools rapidly when a stop for rest or breath is taken, which adds to the discomfort. We reached the camp at last, a snow igloo at an elevation of 2500 feet. The igloo is built in two parts, through the small openings of which we crawled to the inner room. The floor of this room was strewn with hay; sleeping-bags of skin, an oil-can and a stove, and a quantity of canned goods, completed the



DRAWN BY FRANK WILBERT STOKES.

ESKIMOS AT INGLEFIELD GULF MAKING STONEWARE.

ing toward the zenith successively into orange madder, lemon, and dark lilac.

About the middle of November I visited for the first time Moraine Camp, five miles away from the studio. We started in clear, calm weather, climbing all the way. On our right, rocky walls supported ice-caps from 1500 to 2500 feet in height; to the left coursed that most majestic of rivers, the glacier, cutting its way through lofty, precipitous crags of dark brown rock from the sea of ice which ran in great swells far inland. The path was very steep, and lay through deep snow, swept by an icy wind which nipped our faces and converted the hair upon them into a solid mass of icicles. One per-

furnishing. What little light the room obtained came in through a small opening in the roof and through its semi-opaque walls of snow. It was, as one may well imagine, a close and ill-smelling place, from which I was glad to escape.

In the last days of November the Inuit arrivals were numerous, and the hospitality of Kashoo's igloo and the lodge was taxed to the utmost. The light was lessening day by day, though the beauty of this ice world did not wane. I think I never felt the strength, the glory, of silence so vividly as on the 26th of the month, standing on a rocky height above the bay. Across the heavens beautiful auroras streamed at fre-

quent intervals in colors of faint orange, green, and blue, scarcely dimming the myriads of brilliant stars that glittered in the deep blue vault, which lightened to turquoise at the horizon. Majestic cliffs swept away across the bay, with its shadowy greenish-blue bergs, all bathed in one shimmering veil of transparent gold from the light of the moon. In a silence that made the beating of the heart and the pulsation of the blood in the veins seem almost audible, I was suddenly attracted by a peculiar, occasional crackling sound. Presently the sound came very near, and, turning, I perceived a yellowish-white object, about three feet in length, steadily approaching. The little creature gradually

the year, was upon us. In the absence of a moon the light of the stars was so strong that on several occasions I detected shadows on the snow, while their penumbrae were full of prismatic colors. A condensation of frost had by this time completely covered the windows of the studio, and a wainscoting of the same material girded the entire room to the height of three feet. The accumulation of ice was fully an inch and a half thick on the inner door of the studio, and made it impossible to close the door completely. Every morning the door was so thoroughly frozen in the jamb that it was necessary to chop the ice away to get out. Everything in the bottom of our trunks and boxes was frozen, being covered



DRAWN BY FRANK WILBERT STOKES.

THE GREAT INLAND ICE—ENCAMPMENT OF PEARY PARTY, MARCH, 1894.

circled about, until it paused about fifteen feet away. As I had remained motionless, its curiosity led it to sit down upon its haunches and deliberately stare at me. Twice it seated itself, and then, running behind a boulder, peeped over the edge, until, satisfied or alarmed, it disappeared. It was an Arctic fox.

Thanksgiving Day passed with a little dinner, and December, the darkest month of

with ice crystals. Even poppy-oil, sperm-oil, and ammonia placed upon the shelves were in a state of milky consistency. Everything of a perishable nature had to be kept free from contact with the floor and the walls, and the only safe place for canvas, drawing-paper, etc., was on the long shelf near the ceiling. A corridor surrounded the lodge and part of the studio. Here was always the



Frank Wilbert Stokes

DRAWN BY FRANK WILBERT STOKES.

AN ESKIMO AND HIS DOGS RESTING ON INGLEFIELD GULF, MAY, 1894.

darkness of midnight. Eskimo dogs, alert for food, were continually underfoot; and several burros, with carrier pigeons whose days were numbered, made it an abiding-place. The remaining portion, stored with provisions, was separated by partitions.

On December 15 I noticed innumerable fox-tracks on the hills back of the camp. The south light had now grown paler and paler; a dark mass of purplish gray clouds settled over the region, leaving only a faint greenish-yellow streak. At one end of the streak the light flickered fitfully, as if a storm were raging there. The hills rose dark and gray under their mantle of snow; in the valley below two dark spots showed where our dwellings stood. A thin column of smoke ascended silently from a chimney, and a little to the right a larger column arose, lighted now and then by a fitful ruddy flame from a fire built to thaw walrus-meat for the dogs. The cries of men and dogs rose on the still air—so still that the sounds echoed and reëchoed, making strange noises in the hills.

Christmas came almost before we were aware. Sports had been arranged for the occasion, and at half-past two we assembled

on the bay in front of the camp, with the stars shining overhead and the moon's light streaming over the dark hills.

A double row of ice-columns led away in dim perspective over the ice-covered bay for more than two hundred yards, reminding one of an alabaster colonnade forming the approach to an ancient Greek temple. Over these were laid bamboo poles, and at each end of the course a red torch-light was thrust into the snow. We then indulged in hurdle-racing and other sports. It was a strange spectacle, with the wild figures of the Innuits and the fur-clad members of the party, now in the cold blue light of the moon, now in the bright red light from the torches, grouped about the contestants, and the towering, gloomy mass of Mount Bartlett in the background. The games were hurried through, for it was cold sport with the thermometer 24° below zero.

Now the light of the sun began visibly to return. To our vision, sharpened by the long darkness, every change, even the slightest, was noticed. What new life and joy it brought! I never knew the blessedness of light before. The dull glow seen through the

ice-coated windows was succeeded by a manifest light at noon. Winter was surely passing, and comparative comfort would soon be ours again. No one who has not been denied the sun's light for so long a period can appreciate the sensations that its return produces.

On March 6, 1894, the start was made for the inland ice, and passing successively Moraine Camp and several previous stopping-places, guided by the bamboo poles stuck in the snow, we went some twenty-six miles inland. Even on this great ice-desert the effects are continually changing, especially at this season of alternate night and day. The wind blew ceaselessly from the far north, and with the exception of our little party there was not a sign of life. The Innuits who accompanied us built a snow-house, the eight teams of eighty-four dogs were tied to stakes driven into the ice, and the tangled traces arranged. Our petroleum and alcohol stoves furnished us with tea, which, accompanied with frozen pemmican and biscuits, formed our repast. Then every one turned into his sleeping-bag, where the inner garments, saturated with perspiration from the exertion incident to travel, became clammy and cold. This, together with icy drafts down the back, cramps, and miniature snowfalls inside the tent or igloo, and with the breath condensing in icicles about the hood of the opening, rendered the situation anything but comfortable.

Early one morning, after vainly endeavoring to sleep, I went outside. The stars were shining in a sky of dark, rich purple lightening to a yellowish tone on the northern horizon; the vast desert was a great mass of delicate lilac and green, and the igloo a brighter note of the same color. The dogs, curled up in balls and almost covered by the snow, were

so many black spots. The wind blew shrill and chill, and the snow streamed and eddied in long veils over the lonely desert. The tents flapped like great birds alighting, and the wind-gage kept up a monotonous *tap-tap-tap*. The utter loneliness and desolation of the scene were so penetrating that I was glad to creep over the recumbent forms of my companions into the shelter of the sleeping-bag, where I shivered and dozed until the bright sun called us again to life and action.

With the return of light came the wild call of the kittiwake and gull, the chirrup of the snow-bunting, the peculiar note of the wheatear, the hoarse quack of ducks and many others of the feathered tribe, the re-awakened roar of cascades, and an occasional cannonade as some mighty fragment of ice, becoming detached from a glacier or an iceberg, fell with a roar into the sea. Butterflies, bees, and flies flitted over the bright green moss and grasses spangled with dainty wild-flowers.

The interior of the studio became very damp as the higher temperature melted the ice between the walls, the wainscoting of ice, and the frost accumulation on the windows. The water dripped over everything, forming pools on the floor. What with Inuit models posing until midnight, and walks across the bay or climbs in the hills for a sketch, the long Arctic day gave little rest. On July 30, during one of these excursions, a startling cry of "Oo-me ok-suah-tig-eh-lay!" ("The great ship has returned!") rang through the silent air; and hastening back with joyful trepidation to camp, I learned that the *Falcon* had been sighted. Two Innuits had traveled over the ice of the bay, anxious to be the first heralds of the good tidings and earn the promised reward of a gun.

Frank Wilbert Stokes.

CAPTIVE.

WHEN in the dark of some despairing dream
Sorrow has all her will with me, and ease
Is full forgotten, through her dear degrees
Steals Music, beckoning with a hand supreme
For me to follow. Straight I see the gleam
Where the winds dip them in the far, bright seas
That roll and break upon the Hebrides;
See white wings flash, and hear the sea-birds scream.
Or it may be in palace gardens falls
The moonlight on wide roses, where the swell
Of one great lover's heart in passion calls
To deeps in other hearts. And, listening, well
I know, while sink my slow dissolving walls,
So Music lured Eurydice from hell.

Harriet Prescott Spofford.