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AN ANCHOR.

Weathering a Gale in St. Lawrence Bay—
Social intercourse with the Natives—An Exquisite Crafter—A Great Reindeer Owner—
Native Appetite for Strong Drink—Glacier Markings.

STANDER CORWIN.

St. Lawrence Bay, Siberia, June 6, 1861.

Yesterday morning at half-past 1, 0'clock, when we were within 23 miles of Clover Bay, where we hoped to be able to repair our rudder, we found that the ice pack was crowding us closer and closer inshore, and that in our partly disabled condition it would not be safe to proceed further. Accordingly we turned back and put into St. Lawrence Bay, to await more favorable movement in this ice.

DROPING ANCHOR IN ST. LAWRENCE BAY.

We dropped anchor at 7:30 A.M. opposite a small Tscheltchi settlement. In a few hours the wind began to blow fresh from the north, steadily increasing in force, until at 10 P.M. it was blowing a gale, and we were glad that we were in a good harbor instead of being out at sea, slashing and tumbling along, with a broken rudder among the wind-driven ice. It also raised and tossed most of the afternoon, the blue and gray sheet mingling in grand uprising with the white sea, except where the crests of the waves, making about as stormy and gloomy an atmosphere as I ever had the fortune to see. Now and then the elevations broke and lifted their ragged edgework enough to allow the mountains along the sides and around the bay of the shaft to be dimly seen. Notable, however, as to hide the crests of the heavy glaciation to which they have been subjected. This long bay, as shown by its trends, its relation to the ice frontals at its head and the sculpture of its walls, is a glacial form that only a short time ago was the channel of a glacier that poured a deep and broad flood into Bering Sea in company with a thousand others north and south along the Siberian coast.

MEETING AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

In a party of natives that came aboard, soon after we had dropped anchor we discovered the remarkable Tscheltch orach, Jarrochak, whose acquaintance we made at the settlement on the other side of the bay, during our first visit, and who had so vividly deplored the condition of the lost whaler Viscayan. To-day, after taking up a favorable position in the pilot house, he for surpassed his previous efforts, pouring forth Tscheltch in overbearing tones, satirical obloquies to the presence of his rival, the howling gale.

NATIVE APPETITE FOR STRONG DRINK—AN ANTI-TEMPERANCE SPEECH.

During a sudden pause in the melody of his voluble eloquence he inquired whether we had run to trade for walrus ivory, when he explained, in local abracadabra phrases, that rum was very bad stuff for Tscheltch, and by way of illustration related the effects upon the Esquimo natives of St. Lawrence Island. Nearly all the natives we have thus far met admitted very readily that whisky was not good for them, Jarrochak was not to be thus easily silenced, for he at once began an anti-temperance argument in saloon-and-moderate-drinker style, explaining with vehement gestures that some whisky was good, some bad; that he sometimes drank five cups of the good article in quick succession, the effect of which was greatly to augment his happiness, while out of a small bottle of the bad one, small doses made him sick. And as for whisky or rum causing people to die, he knew, he said, that that was a lie, for he had drank much himself, and he had a brother who had enjoyed a great deal of whisky on board of whalers for many years, and that through new an old gray man he was still alive and happy. This speech was warmly applauded by his listening companions, inditing a public opinion that offends but little hope of success for the efforts of temperance societies among the Tscheltches.

Captain Hooper, the surgeon, and myself undertook to sketch the orator, Wic, who had gravey examined our efforts, laughed boisterously at one of them, which, in truth, was a stenographic caricature of even his countenance, malicious as it was. In trading his ivory for supplies of some sort other than alcohol, he tried to exact some trifling articles above what had been agreed on, when the trader threatened to have nothing further to do with him on account of the trouble he was making. This set the old chief on his dignity, and he made haste to declare that he was a good and honorable man, and that if the trade was stopped he would give back all he had received and go home, leaving his ivory on the deck heeded of what became of it.

RIDING OUT A GALE—WHALEERS IN COMPANY.

The gale increased in violence up to noon to-day, when it began to abate slightly, and this evening it is still howling hard. The Cosmin commenced to drag her anchor shortly after midnight, when another sleet was held in readiness to weigh on, which held, so that we rode in safety. The whalers Francis Palmer and Hidalgo came into the bay last evening from Bering Strait and anchored near us. This morning the Hidalgo had vanished, having probably parted her cable.

MATURE INDEPENDENCE TO THE WEATHER.

Last evening a second party of natives came aboard, having made their way around the head of the bay or over the ice. Both parties remained on board all night as we were unable to reach the shores in their light-keeled boats against the wind. Being curious to see how
they were enduring the cold. I went on deck early. They seemed scarcely to feel it at all, for I found most of them lying on the deck among the stumps and sleeping soundly in the clothes they wore during the day. Three of them were sleeping on the broken rudder, swept by the icy wind and sprinkled with snow, and fragments of ice that were falling from the rigging, their heads and necks nearly bare. I supposed their reindeer parka were made without hoods, while those of the Eskimos of St. Lawrence island had them, and seemed far more comfortable in stormy weather, keeping the head and neck warm and dry. They replied that they had to hunt hard and look quick all about soon for a living, therefore it was necessary to keep their heads free: while the St. Lawrence Eskimos were lazy, and could endure to suffer hardships. They gave the same reason for cutting off most of the hair close to the scalp, while the women wear the hair long.

SOME NATIVE-ORATORY ELOQUENCE.

The old orator pointed forth the many eloquence, hair and early, like a perennial mountain fountain, some of his deep chest tones sounding in the storm, like the roar of a lion, raising his wolfish eyes and tossed his brown, skinny limbs in a frantick storm of gestures, now suddenly forsaking himself to less than half his height, then unloosing aloft with jack-in-the-box rapacity, while his people looked on and apparently half in fear, half in admiration. We directed the interpreter to tell him that we thought him a good man, and were therefore concerned, lest some accident might befall him from so much hard speaking. The Tchou, as well as the Eskimo we have seen, are keenly sensitive to ridicule, and this discovered him for a moment and made a sudden pause. Happily recovered and not under way, however, like a wave withdrawing on a shelving shore, only to advance and break again with gathered force.

SOME NATIVE-SOCIAL PRACTICE.

Shortly after we had breakfasted the reindeer chief having intimated that he and his friends were hungry, the Captain ordered a large pot of tea, with hard-bacon, sponge and molasses, to be served to them in the pilot house. They ate with dignified deliberation, showing no nonsense, but eating rather like the people accustomed to abundance. Jaroochah, who could hardly stem his eloquence even while eating, was particular about having his own invited to share in the meal; also, two boys, about eight years old, grinning as a reason, "they are little ones." We also called in a young woman, probably about 15 years old, but none of the men present seemed to care whether she shared with them or not, and when we suggested the cause of this neglect, telling them that white men always served the half bred first. Jaroochah said that while girls were "little fellows" their parents looked after them, but when they grew they went away from their parents with "some other fellows," and were no more use to them, and could look out for themselves.

Those who were not invited to shin do not seem to mind it much, for they had brought with them plenty of what the sailors call "black skin"—the skin of the white whale, which is about an inch thick, and painted his half from half a bush to an inch of silver attached. This I saw them eating raw with hearty relish, snow and ashes the only sauce, cutting off angular blocks of it with butcheries, while one end of the tawny black rabe her-like man was being held in the left hand, the other by their teeth. Long prairie grass enabled them to cut off mouth fulls in this way, saving their long, hurry back and forth, close to their faces, as it playing the violin, without cutting their lips.

After the old orator left the stageam, the reindeer man accused him of being a "bad fellow, like a dog." His evidently was afraid, that we were being fooled by his over weighting eloquence into believing that he was a great man, while the previous truth to be impressed upon us was, that he, the reindeer man, whose face covers a big mountain, was the true chief. I asked his son, who speaks a little English, who he did not take a trip to San Francisco, to see the white man's big town. He replied, as many a civilized man does under similar circumstances, that he had a little boy, too little to be left, and too little to leave home, but that soon he would be a big fellow, so high, indicating the hoped for stature with his hand, then he would go to San Francisco on some whale-ship, he where all the big ships and good money come from.
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Around the shore opposite our anchorage the ground is rather low, where the ancient glacier that filled the bay swept over in smooth curves, breaking off near the shore in an abrupt wall 70 to 100 feet high. Against this wall the prevailing north winds have piled heavy drifts of snow that curve over the bluff at the top and slope out over the fixed ice along the shore from the base. The gale has been loosening and driving out large masses of the ice, capped with the edge of the drift, past the vessel without doing us any harm; and now that the wind is abating, we hope to get away from here tomorrow morning, and expect to find most of the ice that stopped our progress yesterday broken up and driven southward far enough to enable us to reach Plover Bay without further difficulty.

John Muir.