TRAFFIC NEAR THE POLE.

How the Trade With the Wily Eskimo is Carried On.

Manufacturers Would be Surprised to Know Where Their Goods go—Passing From Hand to Hand, the Products of Russia, England, and America Compete in a Common Market.

From the earliest times the reports of explorers in the Arctic zone show that the Eskimos who inhabit these desolate regions were in the habit of traveling from place to place along the Arctic ocean for the purpose of attending meetings at regular periods and engaging in trade.

From the early explorers we incidentally learn that there was a much larger population along the Arctic coast of North America and in the interior along the bank of the great rivers than now exist. Capt. Beechey, R. N., who spent the winter of 1826 on the western coast of Alaska within the Arctic circle, reports that when he visited the native village of Nuwuk, at Point Barrow, it had a population of over 2,000. Now it has decreased to less than 300. At Point Hope he counted 2,500, where to-day the population is hardly one-tenth that number. The decimation of the native population has not been confined to those points, but has extended over the entire known region lying within the Arctic circle. Crossing Behring straits and extending our researches along the northern shore of Siberia it has been ascertained by the investigations of Prof. Nordenskjold that even in this bleak and forbidding region people once lived, villages once dotted the low-landed plains, and long journeys were made by the hardy hyperboreans for the purpose of trade with contiguous tribes.

In Dr. Richardson's account of his exploration of the Arctic coast, from the Mackenzie river eastward to Back's Great Fish river, he notes the fact that the natives had already in their possession knives and hatchets made in England, which they claimed to have received from other coast natives still farther eastward, who in turn had obtained them by barter with whalemen frequenting the waters of Baffin's bay and Smith's sound. With the small opportunities at hand and the limited time at his command for making a thorough investigation of the subject it is possible that Dr. Richardson was deceived by the natives, and that the articles of English manufacture seen by him in their possession were really obtained by barter with the outlying posts of the Hudson Bay company on the Mackenzie river.

But whatever be the truth of this matter it is certain that in the past there existed a regular system of native trading stations extending from the mouth of the Mackenzie river westwardto Point Barrow, then southward to Cape Prince of Wales and across Behring straits to the Siberian side. After leaving East Cape the route of trade seems at the time to have followed the meandering of the Siberian coast as far westward as the Lena delta. This fact is attested by native tradition and by the discovery of many sites of ancient villages now long deserted.

EVEN TO PETERSBURG.

During the present century the route for this trade has moved to the southward after leaving the straits and after passing around the western arm of the Gulf of Anadic pushes steadily on toward the outposts of the Russian frontier, and so by gradual stages finally terminates at the great centre of the fur trade, St. Petersburg. Some of this trade is deflected to the seacoast and ultimately finds its way by ship to China, and a small portion of the annual catch of furs is obtained by American whalemen and traders, but by far the greater portion of the business still follows the old road which leads to the region of the white czar. The study of this polar traffic conducted under such difficulties and maintained without interruption perhaps through centuries of time is a most interesting and fascinating one. When and where were the meetings held? What were the articles bartered? And, above all, what means did these primitive people adopt to transact their business of exchange? These are the questions which demand solution.

It appears from the earliest accounts which we have of the Indians of the northwest coast of America that shell money was in common use among these people and was not discontinued until white people began to import large quantities of spurious shell into the country. The dentalium entalis, a slender shell found on the western side of Vancouver island, was the accepted substitute for currency and was known among the natives as allie-go-chik. The unit value was hy-a-qua, or a string composed of twenty-five shells measuring one fathom. Other authorities say the unit was a string of shells as long as a man's arm. Dr. Stearns who has made a study of shell money, is disposed to doubt the accuracy of the unit which makes twenty-six shells equal six feet in length, because this would necessitate each shell being over three inches long, while as a matter of fact the dentalium is seldom over two and three-quarter inches in length.

The shell money worked its way into the interior of Alaska and was used to some extent as a medium of exchange, but more generally as trimming for fine clothing. It could not supersede the beaver skin, which seems to have been the unit of value in use among all the tribes of interior natives from the sources of the Yukon northward to the arctic circle.

Farther east among the natives of the Mackenzie river and Great Slave lake region and southward along the coast southeast Alaska wealth is now estimated by the number of blankets of which a native is the possessor. The blanket system was introduced by the Hudson Bay company, whose stations were planted all over the country. The blankets were of several different qualities, ranging from a very poor one, worth in trade about $1, to a very good one, worth as much as $10. The quality of the blanket was shown by the number of "points" or marks woven into one edge of the fabric. By common consent the "three point" blanket, worth about $1.50, was recognized as the unit of value.

THE FRAUD DIDN'T WORK.

A peculiar instance of the native ideas of finance was once told me by Frank Mercier, an old French voyageur and Indian trader, whose life had been spent in this country between Montreal and Fort St. Michaels. It happened at one of the isolated posts of the Hudson Bay company a lot of blankets had been marked by a greater number of "points" than their real quality merited. The agent then declared that a mistake had been made and that the blankets could be had at their value regardless of the "point" marks. But just here the shrewdness of the Indians unexpectedly asserted itself. They refused to trade for the blankets under any conditions, stating for a reason that if they allowed these fraudulent blankets to be put into circulation the whole system of trade value, would be destroyed, and thereafter every blanket in possession of the Indians would be subject to the suspicion of being one of the fraudulent issue. The result of the matter was that the counterfeit blankets were returned to headquarters and such "mistakes" were carefully avoided in the future.

Now, it is a peculiar fact that among the Eskimos within the Arctic circle there is no established court of value. In spite of their proximity to some of the more southern tribes and their frequent intercourse with white traders their primitive methods of doing business have not been changed a particle. Except in the variety of articles of which contact with civilization has taught them the use, barter among the Eskimos is carried on to-day exactly like it was 100 years ago. Certain articles of trade goods, such as powder, caps, lead, flour, needles, and drilling, have, it is true, an apparent fixed value, but that it is not a real value may be shown by a brief examination.

For instance, two boxes of powder, one box of caps and five pieces of lead may represent the market value of either a beaver or a lynx skin. But it does not follow from this that in bartering among themselves a beaver is worth a lynx skin or vice versa. Nor does it follow that because a bag of flour will obtain a lynx skin it will also purchase a beaver. It may be well imagined that these incongruities of exchange cause some confusion and unless great patience is exercised the trader will end by breaking off negotiations in disgust. But the first essential to remember in dealing with the Eskimos is that time is absolutely of no value to them, and, second, that the value set upon his goods by the white trader has not the slightest influence on the native.

Good Advice on Marriage.

Probably few persons who read the brief newspaper reports of President Elliot's recent address to young men at Harvard on the subject of marriage thought of it as anything of deeper significance than the advice of a wise pedagogue to his pupils. Since civilization began young men have been urged to marry, but not in haste, and it seems a matter of course to give that advice to any healthy young man at any time. It is always cheap and wholesome. Yet the President of Harvard University spoke with a degree of force and earnestness that indicated his belief that the advice to choose a wife with care was particularly appropriate at this time. There never was a time, indeed, when the evil effects of the ill-assorted marriage in the United States were more conspicuously in evidence. The divorce lawyers are doing a thriving business, and the sensational newspapers in this month of March have had so many stories to print of woes resulting from that tiresome and seemingly incurable social malady called "incompatibility" as to give to their columns the undesirable effect of sameness. The advantages of free education and all the enlightenment of the nineteenth century have not seemed to make people a bit more careful about choosing companions for life. The impressionable reader of the daily newspaper must sometimes be possessed by the idea that a large proportion of his fellow-beings select a wife or accept a husband with far less seriousness and expenditure of thought than they would bestow upon the selection of a hat or a box of cigars, or the acceptance of a trinket or an invitation to a dance. This preposterous carelessness about the most serious thing in life is illustrated in a hideously-grotesque light when the gay young wife of a sober-minded, irritable husband, of whose character she seems to have had no knowledge at all previous to marriage, deliberately kills herself because he will not permit her to go out into society as much as she wants to. There used to be a theory that any suicide was necessarily more or less insane, but law does not countenance that theory, and the known facts about many recent suicides do not credit it. The ill-assorted marriage in the States has lately been a prolific cause of self-destruction, and it is, indeed, natural enough for a man or woman who will marry off-hand, as it were, to blow out his or her brains in the same easy and reckless manner. Modern civilization is infinitely better in some respects than any other civilization that ever was; it affords liberty to all, and places educational advantages within reach of the masses. It fosters art and letters and the spread of knowledge. Yet, after all, there may be something lacking in it that was not lacking in simpler times, when the people had to be content with little. The training school, the university, the printing press, the free library, the higher education of women, all will avail but little if they do not combine to strengthen and keep pure that one institution which is the foundation of all civilization—the family.

The Duke of Bedford.

The Duke of Bedford, who died on Thursday, the 23rd inst., had enjoyed his great title only about two years, his father having committed suicide while suffering from temporary melancholia in January, 1891. Theold Duke had the reputation of being a cold-hearted skinflint, and the son is reported never to have said a wise thing or performed a notable action. Truly the great house of Russell is running out. The late Duke was born in 1852, was graduated at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1874, and was a member of Parliament for Bedfordshire from April, 1875, to November, 1885. He married the daughter of Earl Somers, but as he had no children he will be succeeded in title and estates by his brother, Lord Herbrand Arthur Russell, who served in the Egyptian campaign in the Grenadier Guards and was an aide-de-camp to Lord Dufferin when the latter was Viceroy of India. The new Duke of Bedford will inherit 118 acres of land in London, including that on which stand Covent Garden Market, Covent Garden Theater, and Drury Lane Theater, beside 84,424 acres scattered through the middle and west of England, the entire estate being valued at £10,000,000.

The purple cloth worn bythe Roman emperors was dyed with an extract from a shellfish, now extinct, which was found on the shores of the Mediterranean.

RALPH THE ROVER.

"Here, Ralph! Ralph! Hi, you scamp! Come back here, sir! There, he's gone! Off for a two or three days' tramp again. Beg pardon, sir. I didn't see you. I was that busy callin' the dog, I reckon I nearly walked over you. The matter, sir? Well, it's that dog, Ralph. You heard me call, him, I daresay. A grander old fellow you could not find in a day's travel, but he has one bad habit. Most humans have more than that, and I ain't sure in my own mind that he ain't human.

"The habit? Well it's just this. He will follow every blessed old tramp as passes here, and keep followin' 'em, sometimes for two or three days. He's a queer one. Did you notice him just now? Didn't see him? Well, he keeps just far enough behind the fellows so they won't drive him back; sniffin', sniffin' along, and kind of castin' his eye back to let me know he's hearin' me, but not heedin' me. Just the same way he acts every time he goes off. He'll be back all right when he does come; and he's been actin' that way ever since I've had him. Stolen? Why, sir, I don't believe the one's livin' could steal him or fasten him up ever so tight he couldn't get back, ever since—an' a right queer way I got him too.

"Is he mine? Well, yes, in one way; an' then no, in another. It was a queer story anyway.

"Tell it, sir? Well, if I had time I might. Ah, thank you, sir! A fine gentleman like you can afford to be generous.

"Now, let me see! As near as I remember, it was June, two years ago, as I came downstairs rather early one morning to light the fire for my old woman. She warn't very strong then; the youngster there was only a couple of months old, an' I was gettin' the things all handy for her to get breakfast. When she come down the fire was lightin' an' the kettle singin'—for joy of seein' her, I'm thinkin'.

"Mollie was always a great one for fresh air, so as soon as she saw everythin' was goin' right in the kitchen she walks to the front door, turns the key an' opens it.

"Well, quick as a flash she came runnin' back to me with her face kind of white and scared.

"'Oh, Jim, come out here to the door! Quick!" says she.

"An' when I followed her blessed if I don't see the rummest sight I ever did, an' there I stood, stairin' like an ape.

"You see, these seats on the porch are rather com'or'ble to sit on, an' with the vines hangin' over this way makes it 'most as shut in and quietlike as a bedroom; then the posts here and at the corner form good rests for the back. Well, anyhow, good or bad, right here, a-leanin' back in the most uncomf'blest way, was the trampiest looking tramp I ever saw, sound asleep. An' on the seat beside him with his head on the man's lap, was the dandiest setter I ever expect to see. A vallyble dog, sir, too, as I knew soon as I set eyes on him. I always know a good dog, being rather in the sporting line myself, an' this was a genuine Gordon setter.

"Well, sir, I suppose I must have said somethin', with surprise, for to wake them up. The dog turned the solem'est eyes round to me, askin' me not to make so much noise; an' the man, all rags an' tatters, yawned an' set up. An' then, seein' Mollie right behind me, I'll be shot, sir, if he didn't stand up, take off his piece of a hat to her, and begin to appolergise for settin' on our doorstep. Said he'd been 'overcome with fateek.' My eye? For the manners of him I could hardly believe he weren't a swell cove, dressed in the latest fashion, with a full-blooded stepper at the gate waitin' for him.

"I know I must have stared at him considerable, but, bless you, Mollie didn't spend no time a-starin' till she'd asked him into the kitchen, an' when the breakfast was ready she gave him an' his dog, too, a good one.

"His feet were blistered with walkin' in shoes that left half of his feet outdoors an' half in; an' as he could scarcely take a step we made him stay with us a day or so till they got better; but he couldn't bear it, an' the only reason, I think, was that he was afraid of burdenin' us. But, Lord! He did as much for us as we did for him, I'll be bound. He filled the yard with kindlin's, an' I believe he'd 'a' chopped all the wood in the village if Mollie hadn't seen his hands all blistered an' bleedin'. That give him away, sure. 'A gentleman born,' says I to myself when I see those hands.

"Then nothin' would do but Molly must doctor and bandage them up for him. An' while she was doin' it she heard a sound like a child tryin' not to cry, an' he just bends down and kisses her hand, an' then he says, kind of low and choked like, more like a groan than words. 'Oh, mother!'

"An' the way the little kid took to him was a caution. A mite like he was—no sense at all; only puckered up his face and cried when I went near him. He'd smile up in Robert's face (that was what he told us to call him) an' hold on to his finger like he was his nurse.

"Now, to be sure, sir, three days don't seem much in a life, and you'll maybe think it foolish the store we set by man an' dog before that time was passed. Ralph would lay down besides the baby's cradle, an' nothin' would move him till his master left the room; and then he'd get up and shake himself, it was time to go, an' he was goin'.

"Molly said he was human, an' if ever a soul gets into an animal's body—I hear there's folks as think so—there was a good soul inside of Ralph.

"Yes, we all liked Ralph, and Robert even more. The fact is, he was a real gentleman, that was plain enough, brought down as low as he was by Lord only knows what. But a true gentleman, an' I know the right kind when I see them. He never lot on for one moment, though, a single word about himself but once, an' that was the last evening he was here.

"The dog was sittin' beside him, with his head restin' on Robert's knee, when I says, kind of suddenlike:

"'I bet Ralph's a very vallyble dog, Robert.'

"'Yes, yes,' he says, sort of slow, 'too vallyble,' stroking Ralph's head with a lovin' hand, while the dog looked at him with just as much love. 'Twas the humanest eyes you would ever see, sir.

"'He's worth a great deal of money,' he said again, after a moment's thinkin'. 'I am very sorry for it sometimes. I've been in many hard straits at times, and I've been afraid—ay, afraid of myself—that I'd be tempted to sell him. Not while I was myself, old fellow, you understand, but when—I—was the brute I sometimes am."

"By George, sir! you wouldn't believe it, I dare say, but I take my affydavy that dog looked up, sort of sadlike, and shook his head.

"To make the story short—though, all told, it was not so very long—when we came downstairs the next morning Ralph lay on the floor guardin' his master's stick, but his master wasn't nowhere round.

"Tell me the dog didn't know! He knew a well as we did why it was done; that the master he loved an' who loved him had left him, but he had been told to watch the stick, an' with the saddest eyes an' droopin' he lay there all day long. An' I truly believe if we hadn't got the stick away from him an' burned it he'd 'a' been watchin' it yet.

"An' his master! Yes sir; gone—clean gone. An' we've never heard a word of him since. Ungrateful? No, sir; I don't take it so. I think he couldn't trust himself with the dog he loved, when he was not himself, you see, an' so he left him where he knew he'd be well taken care of. Yes, that's the way I see it anyhow. An' then he got so far away before the dog would quit watchin' that the scent was lost for poor Ralph. But he ain't never give up. Not a day, sir!

"Do? Well, there's not a tramp comes past here—an' the worse looking they are the wilder he is to get after them, sniffin' at their tracks, and then his tail will drop so disappointed like, yet he'll keep on an' follow 'em for a day, or maybe three days, till he gets sure he ain't comin' to his master, when he'll come back. Seems to me as if he kind of thought they might know him. How does he find out they don't? Bless you, sir, don't ask me, but dogs know a heap more than people think.

"He ought 'a' been named Rover, for he's been in more different places round here than I have, an' always turns up all right when he has settled the matter.

"Why, ain't that him now, a-sniffin' along the other road? Of course it is. Well, now, how'd he get over there, I wonder; seems as if he was scentin' somethin', don't it?

"Hi, Ralph, Ralph! Ah! there he comes a-boundin' along towards us just as he used to go for his master. Looks as if he thought he could find him, sure. See, now! Ain't he a beauty?

"Here, Ralph! Good old fellow! Come here, sir! Eh! What! Straight for you, sir, he's gone, without a look for me! All over you in a minute! A fine gentleman like you! What! you, you, sir! Robert! Great Scott! An' Ralph knew you! Well, well; I give in. Dogs is human!"

A LINCOLN COUNTY MIRACLE.

The Terrible Experience of a Well-to-do Farmer.

Mr. Ezra Merritt Suffers Untold Agony—Told by a Physician that only Death Could End His Sufferings—How he Secured His Release From Pain—Anxious that Others Should Benefit by His Experience.

Grimsby Independent.

How often we hear the expression "Hills are green far afar" as a term of disparagment. So it may be with many of our readers when they hear of anything occurring at a distance from home bordering on the wonderful. They may place little confidence in it, and even if they do believe it allow the matter to pass from their minds without leaving any permanent impression. Not so with local affairs. When anything startling occurs in our midst, affecting people whom we all know well, every one is interested, and all are anxious and even eager for the most minute details. For some months past there have been published in the columns of the Independent from time to time, accounts of remarkable cures made by that now justly famous medicine—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. Possibly some of our readers have looked upon some of these accounts as describing cures highly improbable, it not impossible. And yet this should not be the case, for they are all vouched for by respectable newspapers, who could have no object in stating other than the facts, and who would be discredited by their own readers were they to do so. However, seeing is believing, and Mr. Ezra Merritt, of South Grimsby, stands forth to-day as living testimony to the wonderful curative powers of this not at all over-estimated medicine—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Having heard that a most remarkable cure had been effected in the case of Mr. Merritt, the editor of the Independent, with that desire possessed by most newspaper men for verifying things coming under their notice, resolved to investigate the case and satisfy himself as to the truth of the story. Some days ago he drove over to Smithville, and at once called upon Mr. D. W. Eastman, druggist, a straightforward business man whose word is as good as his bond with all who know him. Mr. Eastman stated that he knew of the case of Mr. Merritt, and considered it a most remarkale one. Mr. Palmer Merritt had come to him one day and asked him if he could give him anything that would help his brother, Ezra Merritt who was suffering untold agony in all his joints, his back and his head. Mr. Merritt stated that his brother had tried everything, and could find nothing to help him and that the doctors could give him no ease: One doctor from the United States had told him positively that there was no help for him, and that death only could set him free from his agony. Mr. Merritt further told Mr. Eastman that his brother wished to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and asked him if he thought it would be any use. Mr. Eastman advised him to try them, as wonderful cures had been worked by their use. Mr. Merritt acted on his advice and continued the use of Pink Pills until he is now a well man and sound as ever.

The editor then drove over to see Mr. Merritt, and found that gentleman sound and hearty, looking over his cattle in his farmyard. Mr. Ezra Merritt is a well-to-do farmer owning two fine farms about 3½ miles west of Smithville, in the township of South Grimsby. When the newspaper-man told the object of his visit Mr. Merritt expressed his willingness to give the fullest particulars of his case, and we cannot do better than give it in his own words: "The first time I was troubled," said Mr. Merritt, "was on July first, 1891. We commenced haying on that day and I felt sore and stiff in all my joints. I now believe the trouble originated through my washing some sheep in cold water the preceeding April, when I went into the water and stayed so long that when I came out my legs were numb, but I did not feel any bad results until July as I have said. I gradually grew worse until I could scarely do anything. I kept on trying to work but it was a terrible struggle, and the way I suffered was something awful Every joint in my body was stiff and intensely painful. As time passed on I gradually grew worse, and pains went into my back and at times my agony was almost unbearable. I tried all home-made remedies but without avail. I then consulted a doctor but his medicine had no effect. At the time of the Smithville fair a doctor was over here from the States and I consulted him. He said that my case was hopeless, and I need not expect anything but death to release me from my pain. As winter came on the pain got into my head and my sufferings were something terrible. About dark the pain would start about my ear and work up until it reached the crown of my head. As morning came on the pain in my head would subside, but the pains in the rest of my body never left me, and at last I grew so bad that when I would lie on my back I could not get up to save my life without assistance. Although I had not lost my appetite I became weak, so bad that though I could walk around I could not stoop to lift a pound. I became so weak in this way that I got discouraged and lost all hope of ever getting better. It was about this time that I heard of the wonderful cures by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and Mr. Eastman, of Smithville, advised that they be given a trial: My brother got me a box and I took them but felt no good results. I took still another box and still no perceptible benefit, and I felt so weak and discouraged that I decided not to take any more. At this time a lady from Hamilton come to visit at our place and she strongly advised me to continue using the Pink Pills She had known Mr. Marshall at that city and knew that his case was bona fide. I thought it useless to continue, but at the urgent solicitations of my friends did so, and by the time I was through with the third box I began to feel a benefit from them. This gave me hope which did not again waver, as I found myself steadily growing better, and continued the use of the Pink Pills until now I am as well as ever I was in my life. I know that it was Pink Pills that saved me when all else had failed, and I have no objections whatever to having the story of my cure being published, as it may be the means of helping some other sufferer back to health and strength and gladness." Mr. Merritt further said that he had now no fear of a hard day's work, and has not had the slightest return of the pains or the stiffness in the joints.

Returning to Smithville the editor again called upon Mr. Eastman and was informed by that gentleman that his sales of Pink Pills were something enormous, Mr. Merritt's cure having something to do with the increase in sales lately. There are other cases also in this vicinity little less than marvellous of which we may speak later on.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are a perfect blood builder and nerve restorer, curing such diseases as rheumatism, neuralgia, partial paralysis, locomotor ataxia, St. Vitus' dance, nervous prostration and the tired feeling therefrom, the after effects of la grippe, influenza and severe cold, diseases depending on humors in the blood, such as scrofula, chronic erysipelas, etc. Pink Pills give a healthy glow to pale and sallow complexions, and are a specific for the troubles peculiar to the female system, and in the case of men they effect a radical cure in all cases arising from mental worry, over-work or excesses of any nature.

These Pills are manufactured by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockville, Ont., and Schenectady, N. Y., and are sold only in boxes bearing the firms' trade mark and wrapper, at 50 cts. a box or six boxes for $2.50. Bear in mind that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are never sold in bulk, or by the dozen or hundred, nor in any form except in packages bearing the company's trade mark and any dealer who offers substitutes in any other form is trying to defraud you and should be avoided.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills may be had of all druggists or direct by mail from Dr. Williams' Medicine Company from either address. The price at which these pills are sold makes a course of treatment comparatively inexpensive as compared with other remedies or medical treatment.

Clifford Blackman

A Boston Boy's Eyesight Saved—Perhaps His Life

By Hood's Sarsaparilla—Blood Poisoned by Canker.

Read the following from a grateful mother: "My little boy had Scarlet Fever when 4 years old, and it left him very weak and with blood **poisoned with canker.** His eyes became so inflamed that his sufferings were intense, and for seven weeks he

Could Not Open His Eyes.

I took him twice during that time to the Eye and Ear Infirmary on Charles street, but their remedies failed to do him the faintest shadow of good. I commenced giving him Hood's Sarsaparilla and it soon cured him. I have never doubted that it **saved his sight,** even **if not his very life.** You may use this testimonial in any way you choose. I am always ready to sound the praise of

Hood's Sarsaparilla

because of the wonderful good it did my son." ABBIE F. BLACKMAN, 2888 Washington St., Boston, Mass. Get HOOD'S.

HOOD'S PILLS are hand made, and are perfect in composition, proportion and appearance.