



NOT MUCH IMPRESSED

ESKIMOS UNMOVED BY STEFANSSON'S MODERN WONDERS.

When the Explorer Fired and Hit a Stick 200 Yards Away They Told Him of a Native Who Could Do the Same Thing—Could He See the Events of To-morrow With His Binoculars, They Asked.

Further details concerning the life and customs of the new Eskimo tribes, brought to light by the Canadian explorer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, have been made available by the publication of his book, "My Life With the Eskimo."

This book is the record of Mr. Stefansson's second expedition to the Arctic, which began in the summer of 1908 and lasted until July of last year.

His journeys during these four years, sometimes with Dr. Anderson, the naturalist of the expedition, more often with Eskimo for his only companions, covered thousands of miles along the Arctic coast of Alaska and Northwestern Canada, as far east as Coronation Gulf and Prince Albert Land. He met many different tribes of Eskimo, and was incessantly studying their language, the customs, their beliefs. "I have lived with the Eskimo until they have become as my own people. I pass my winters in their houses and my summers in their tents; I dress as they do, eat what they eat, and follow the same across the tundra to get my food exactly as they do, and I have come to feel that I understand them as well as I do my own people."

Of the year which Mr. Stefansson spent with the Dolphin and Union Straits Eskimo he has naturally a great deal to tell us, and it is all of vivid interest.

Mr. Stefansson had only to give a hint as to what interested him, and they put all their information on that subject at his disposal; on their part they showed the greatest delicacy in asking questions. They betrayed no surprise at their guest's blue eyes and light brown beard, because these features, they explained, were much like those of some of their neighbors to the north—the "Blond Eskimo," whom Mr. Stefansson visited and whose discovery has raised such important biological and historical problems.

Curiously enough these people were not much impressed by rifle shooting. When the white man, after hitting a stick 200 yards away, told them that he could kill a bear or caribou at even three times the distance, they merely asked whether he could kill game on the other side of the mountain. It appears that a "spaman" in a neighboring tribe had a magic arrow by which he could perform this feat. And when Mr. Stefansson looked through his binoculars and saw bands of caribou that were to them invisible they applauded, and asked, "Will you not also look for the caribou that are coming to-morrow, so that we can tell where to lie in ambush for them?" They were disappointed when told that this was impossible, for they knew that their own medicine men had charms and magic that enabled them to see things the morrow was to bring forth.

It was in Victoria Island that the "Blond Eskimo" were found. "When I saw before me these men, who looked like Europeans, in spite of their garb of furs, I knew that I had come upon either the last chapter and solution of one of the historical tragedies of the past, or else that I had added a new mystery for the future to solve the mystery of why these men are like Europeans if they be not of European descent."

Of something less than a thousand persons in this tribe ten or more have blue eyes; of the men who have beards a good many are light brown; the hair of the head is generally dark brown or rusty red, and perhaps half the entire population have eyebrows ranging from a dark brown to a light brown or nearly white.

There is no reason he thinks, for insisting that the "Blond Eskimo" are descended from the Scandinavian colonists of Greenland, but looking at historically or geographically, there is no reason why they might not be. It is possible, on the other hand, that for some so-called "accidental" reason blond individuals may have been born from time to time in the past from parents of pure Eskimo blood, and that these may have perpetuated themselves.

As to supposing that it is the climate that has made the Victoria Island Eskimo blond, the theory is hardly tenable, for they live on the same food and under the same climatic conditions as do the Eskimo east of them and west of them, none of whom show the same European-like traits.

Although it is not easy to get me to admit that the present day Eskimo are far better men than their forefathers, it is easy to get them themselves to admit it. In fact, they are of late years rather prone to assert that they are better men than their ancestors. My man Davistak said to me one day: "The people of Kotzebue Sound were formerly very bad, but they are all good now. In my father's time and when I was young, they used to lie and to steal and to work on Sunday. 'But,' I asked him, 'don't they, as a matter of fact, tell lies occasionally?' 'Oh, yes, they sometimes do.' 'Well, don't they really, as a matter of fact, tell about as many lies now as they ever did?' 'Well, yes, perhaps they do.' And don't they, as a matter of fact, steal about as frequently as ever?' 'Well, possibly. But they don't work on Sunday.' They were entirely friendly, possibly because Mr. Stefansson spoke in a dialect a little different from their own. As he observes, it cannot have happened often in the history of the world that the first white man to visit a primitive people was one who spoke their language.

A recent order in bankruptcy has been made against Lord Templeton, an Irish representative peer, who is sixty-one years of age, and who has lived in county Antrim and Inverness-Shire.

INVENTOR OF TUBES.

Sir William Crookes Has Conferred Great Benefit on Race.

Sir William Crookes, who has been elected president of the Royal Society, is in his eighty-second year. His advanced age does not affect his intellectual activity, and his life's work has been such as to confer honor on the great office he has assumed.

Sir William Crookes is a Londoner by birth, and studied under the famous Hofmann at the Royal College of Science. At the early age of twenty-two he became superintendent of the Meteorological Observatory at Oxford. Two years later he married, and he regards this to be one of the best things he ever did. He is a firm believer in early marriages, for on one occasion he remarked: "I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I believe married life is conducive to longevity. It cannot be disputed that whatever tends to increase our happiness must exercise a very beneficial influence on our health."

As a result of his researches Sir William discovered a new metallic element, "thallium," and the first specimen was shown to the public at the International Exhibition held in London in 1862. The following year he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. Continuing his investigations, Sir William invented the radiometer, which, though a very simple-looking glass tube, has been of the greatest value to science. Sir William's name is linked up with the invention of tubes of various kinds, and the "Crookes Tube" enabled Professor Rontgen to discover the X-rays.

The venerable scientist has been an ardent photographer for over sixty years, and is justly entitled to be regarded as one of the pioneers in the art. His wife was usually the victim in his early days, and he was accustomed to say to her "Sit!" to which she replied, "It sounds like a hen." Sir William Crookes has written a number of scientific treatises, has been president of the Chemical Society and president of the Institute of Electrical Engineers, and amongst other distinctions is a Royal Medalist and a Javy Medalist.

A Locust Swarm.

A novel experience for a newcomer to South Africa is to encounter a locust swarm. To dwellers on the High Veldt the sight is not unusual, but one's first acquaintance with the pest is somewhat startling.

A party of "newly-outs" was taking the journey to the Victoria Falls: When half-way across the Karoo, on a bright sunny day, the sun suddenly became obscured, and the sky seemed to turn black. The ladies screamed in alarm; they thought it meant an earthquake, or at least a violent tropical thunderstorm, but a voice along the corridor of the train, shouting, "Locusts swarming!" closed all doors and windows. Explained the peculiar darkness, and partly calmed the feminine fears. The order was obeyed, and the passengers watched developments.

The gigantic mass swooped down on the train, covering coaches and rails, and beating themselves against the windows, blotting out all light. The train slowed down to half-speed, for the crushed bodies make the rails terribly greasy, and there was a nasty, crunching sound as the wheels squashed thousands of these unwelcome visitors.

After a while the swarm (minus casualties) made off in an opposite direction as suddenly as it had come, and once more brilliant sunshine reigned supreme.

These locusts are about three inches long, and look like giant grasshoppers. Singly, they are not dangerous at all, but in a swarm they are a menace to the crops. They will attack a village or farm, and devastate it in a night, leaving all the gardens and fields perfectly bare. Not a blade of grass escapes them.

A visit from locusts is one of the many disasters which befall the struggling South African farmer.

Humor from the Hospital.

Perhaps the best story in Sir Edward Cook's "Life of Florence Nightingale" is that of a wounded Crimean sergeant who picked up a wounded comrade and stumbled back to camp. The rescued man turned out to be a general and waited on his rescuer in hospital. The latter, wrote Miss Nightingale, exclaimed: "Oh, general, it's you, is it, I brought in? I'm so glad I didn't know it was your honor, but if I'd known it was you I'd have saved you all the same!"

Medicine and Caste.

Sympathetic women must perforce gain some knowledge of remedies as they go through life, but let us avoid the example of a friend of mine in India, says a writer in The Gentlewoman, who, after mixing a dose for her native butler, tasted it to see if it were all right, then handed the cup to the man. He calmly threw the contents out of the window. The laws of his caste forbade him to drink out of a vessel contaminated by the lips of an unbeliever.

An Amiable Witness.

A Maori woman who gave evidence at a Stratford, New Zealand inquest showed a degree of amiability somewhat rare in the witness box. When she faced the jury, she made a remark, which, on being interpreted, was found to be a wish that health, wealth, and prosperity might ever abide with the jury individually and collectively. After finishing her evidence she again voiced the wish before leaving the box.

Drills Are Deflected.

Investigation of the fact that most of the deep drill holes for wells in South Africa deviate from the perpendicular generally toward the north, has led to the conclusion that the drills with which they were made were influenced by magnetism.

The ups and downs of some people consist mainly of talking themselves up and running other people down. We should profit by our mistakes, but most of us would rather profit by the mistakes of others.

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Hartington Happenings. Hartington, Jan. 28.—A number of the young men attended the stock show, J. E. Proseman is in Kingston, attending the County Council meetings. Mrs. W. Wood is with her brother, John Botting, for a few days. Morley Brown has returned from Ottawa, where he went to attend the stock show. Mrs. B. Babcock, Mrs. Edward Whitt, Mrs. B. Babcock, Mrs. Edward Whitt, Mrs. W. Wood is with her brother, John Botting, for a few days. Morley Brown is visiting at Enterprise. John Lemon is spending the winter with his sister, Mrs. B. Babcock. Mrs. Edward Whitt, Mrs. B. Babcock, Mrs. Edward Whitt, Mrs. W. Wood is with her brother, John Botting, for a few days. Morley Brown and Mrs. Gowdy, at Louis Boyce's. Mrs. Thomas Trousdale has returned from Sterling. Archibald Goslin, at Harrowsmith; Mrs. Knight, at Q. J. Lake's.