

one of the hind-feet, which are armed with tremendous claws, and tear out the bowels. The Frenchman's advice reads rationally enough, and is a feasible theory on the art of evading unbearable compression; but, unfortunately, in the haunts of that animal those slim juvenile saplings are rarely met with, and a person closely confronted with such a grizzly *vis-à-vis* is not exactly in a tone of nerve for surgical operations.

A VISIT TO THE NORTH CAPE.

HAVING hired an open boat and a crew of three hands, I left Hammerfest at nine P.M., July 2, 1850, to visit the celebrated Nordkap. The boat was one of the peculiar Nordland build—very long, narrow, sharp, but strongly built, with both ends shaped alike, and excellently adapted either for rowing or sailing. We had a strong head-wind from northeast at starting, and rowed across the harbor to the spot where the house of the British consul, Mr. Robertson, a Scotchman, is situated, near to the little battery (*fæstning*) which was erected to defend the approach to Hammerfest, subsequently to the atrocious seizure of the place by two English ships during the last war. Mr. Robertson kindly lent me a number of reindeer skins to lie on at the bottom of the boat; and spreading them on the rough stones we carried for ballast, I was thus provided with an excellent bed. I have slept for a fortnight at a time on reindeer skins, and prefer them to any feather bed. Mr. Robertson warned me that I should find it bitterly cold at sea, and expressed surprise at my light clothing; but I smiled, and assured him that my hardy wandering life had habituated me to bear exposure of every kind with perfect impunity. By an ingenious contrivance of a very long tiller, the pilot steered with one hand and rowed with the other, and we speedily cleared the harbor, and crept round the coast of Qual Oe (Whale-Island), on which Hammerfest is situated. About midnight, when the sun was shining a considerable way above the horizon, the view of a solitary little rock, in the ocean ahead, bathed in a flood of crimson glory, was most impressive. We proceeded with a tolerable wind until six in the morning, when heavy squalls of wind and torrents of rain began to beat upon us, forcing us to run, about two hours afterward, into Havö sund; a very narrow strait between the island of Havö and the mainland of Finmark. As it was impossible to proceed in such a tempest, we ran the boat to a landing-place in front of the summer residence of Herr Ulich, a great magnate in Finmark. This is undoubtedly the most northern gentleman's house in the world. It is a large, handsome, wooden building, painted white, and quite equal in appearance to the better class of villas in the North. The family only reside there during the three summer months; and extensive warehouses for the trade in dried cod or stockfish, &c. are attached. My crew obtained shelter in an outbuilding, and I unhesitatingly sought the

hospitality of the mansion. Herr Ulich himself was absent, being at his house at Hammerfest; but his amiable lady, and her son and two daughters, received me with a frank cordiality as great as though I were an old friend; and in a few minutes I was thoroughly at home. Here I found a highly accomplished family, surrounded with the luxuries and refinements of civilization, dwelling amid the wildest solitudes, and so near the North Cape, that it can be distinctly seen from their house in clear weather. Madame Ulich and her daughters spoke nothing but Norwegian; but the son, a very intelligent young man of about nineteen, spoke English very well. He had recently returned from a two years' residence at Archangel, where the merchants of Finmark send their sons to learn the Russian language, as it is of vital importance for their trading interests—the greater portion of the trade of Finmark being with the White-Sea districts, which supply them with meal and other necessaries in exchange for stockfish, &c. Near as they were to the North Cape, it was a singular fact that Herr Ulich and his son had only once visited it; and the former had resided ten years at Havö sund—not more than twenty-five miles distant—ere that visit took place! They said that very few travelers visited the Cape; and, strange to say, the majority are French and Italians.

I declined to avail myself of the pressing offer of a bed, and spent the morning in conversation with this very interesting family. They had a handsome drawing-room, containing a grand colossal bust in bronze of Louis-Philippe, King of the French. The ex-king, about fifty-five years ago, when a wandering exile (under the assumed name of Müller) visited the North Cape. He experienced hospitality from many residents in Finmark, and he had slept in this very room; but the house itself then stood on Maas Island, a few miles further north. Many years ago, the present proprietor removed the entire structure to Havö; and his son assured me the room itself was preserved almost exactly as it was when Louis Philippe used it, though considerable additions and improvements have been made to other parts of the house. About sixteen years ago, Paul Garnard, the president of the commission shortly afterward sent by the French government to explore Greenland and Iceland, called on Herr Ulich, and said he was instructed by the king to ask what present he would prefer from his majesty as a memorial of his visit to the North. A year afterward, the corvette of war, *La Recherche*, on its way to Iceland, &c. put into Havö sund, and left the bust in question, as the express gift of the king. It is a grand work of art, executed in the finest style, and is intrinsically very valuable, although of course the circumstances under which it became Herr Ulich's property add inestimably to its worth in his eyes. The latter gentleman is himself a remarkable specimen of the highly-educated Norwegian. He has traveled over all Europe, and speaks, more or less, most civilized

languages. On my return to Hammerfest I enjoyed the pleasure of his society, and his eager hospitality; and he favored me with an introduction for the Norwegian states minister at Stockholm. I merely mention these things to show the warm-hearted kindness which even an unIntroduced, unknown traveler may experience in the far North. Herr Ulich has resided twenty-five years at Havösund; and he says he thinks that not more than six English travelers have visited the North Cape within twenty years—that is to say, by way of Hammerfest; but parties of English gentlemen occasionally proceed direct in their yachts.

Fain would my new friends have delayed my departure; but, wind and tide serving, I resumed my voyage at noon, promising to call on my return. In sailing through the sound, I noticed a neat little wooden church, the most northern in Finmark. A minister preaches in it to the Fins and Laps at intervals, which depend much on the state of the weather; but I believe once a month in summer. The congregation come from a circle of immense extent. If I do not err, Mr. Robert Chambers mentions in his tour having met with the clergyman of this wild parish.

Passing Maas Oe, we sailed across an open arm of the sea, and reached the coast of Mager Oe, the island on which the North Cape is situated. Mager Oe is perhaps twenty miles long by a dozen broad, and is separated from the extreme northern mainland of Finmark by Magerösund. Although a favorable wind blew, my crew persisted in running into a harbor here, where there is a very extensive fish-curing establishment, called Gjesvohr, belonging to Messrs Agaard of Hammerfest. There are several houses, sheds, &c., and immense tiers of the split stockfish drying across horizontal poles. At this time about two hundred people were employed, and one or two of the singular three-masted White-Sea ships were in the harbor, with many Finmark fishing-boats. The water was literally black with droves of young cod, which might have been killed by dozens as they basked near the surface. My men loitered hour after hour; but as I was most anxious to visit the North Cape when the midnight sun illumined it, I induced them to proceed.

On resuming our voyage, we coasted along the shore, which was one mass of savage, precipitous rock, until the black massive Cape loomed very distinctly in the horizon. I landed at a bluff headland called Tunces, and collected a few flowers growing in crevices in the rock. A little beyond that, in Sandbugt, a fragment of wreck was discernible, and I ordered the boat to be pulled toward it. It proved to be a portion of the keel of a large ship, about fifty feet long, and much worn. It had evidently been hauled on the reefs by some fishermen, and the fortunate salvors had placed their rude marks upon it. I mused over this fragment of wreck, which was mutely eloquent with melancholy suggestiveness. How many prayers had

gone forth with the unknown ship! how many fathers, brothers, sisters, lovers, and unconscious widows and orphans, might at that moment be hoping against hope for her return! To what port did she belong? In what remote ocean had she met her doom? Perchance this keel had been borne by wind and tide from some region of thick-ribbed ice, and was the only relic to tell of the dark fate of a gallant bark and brave crew! Alas, what a thrilling history might that weed-tangled piece of wood be linked with, and what food did it supply for the wanderer's imagination!

Resuming the voyage, we came to a long promontory of solid rock, stretching far into the sea, where it tapers down to the level of the water. It is called Kniuskjærødden; and I particularly draw attention to it for the following reason: at Hammerfest the consul favored me with an inspection of the charts recently published by the Norwegian government, from express surveys by scientific officers of their navy. The instant I cast my eye over the one containing Mager Oe, I perceived that Kniuskjærødden was set down *further north than the North Cape itself!* The consul said that such was the actual fact, though he will not consent to its disputing the legitimacy of the ancient fame which the Cape worthily enjoys; since it is merely a low, narrow projection, of altogether insignificant character. I walked to its extremity, and narrowly escaped being washed by the roaring breakers into the deep transparent sea.

Rounding Kniuskjærødden, the North Cape burst in all its sunlit grandeur on my delighted view. It was now a dead calm, and my vikings pulled very slowly across the grand bay of Kniusværig, to afford me an opportunity of sketching the object, which is one enormous mass of solid rock, upward of a thousand feet in elevation. I can compare it to nothing more fitly than the keep of a castle of a tremendous size; for it very gently tapers upward from the base, and presents a surface marvelously resembling time-worn masonry. The front approaches the perpendicular, and so does much of the western side also. The color of this mighty rock is a dark, shining, speckled gray, relieved by dazzling masses of snow lying in the gigantic fissures, which seem to have been riven by some dread convulsion. The impression I felt as the boat glided beneath its shadow was one of thrilling awe; for its magnificent stern proportions—its colossal magnitude—its position as the lonely, unchanging sentinel of nature, which for countless ages has stood forth as the termination of the European continent, frowning defiance to the maddening fury of the mystic Arctic Queen—all combine to invest it with associations and attributes of overpowering majesty. My ideas of its sublimity were more than realized; and as I landed on its base, in the blaze of the midnight sun, I felt an emotion of proud joy, that my long-feasted hope of gazing upon it at such an hour, and under such circumstances, was literally fulfilled.

The only place where a landing can be effected is on the western side, about a mile and a half from the head of the Cape; and it is usual for those who ascend it to go many miles round from this starting-place to gain the summit, because a direct upward ascent is considered impracticable. But having much confidence in my climbing capabilities, I resolved to adventure the latter feat; and although burdened with my sea-cloak and other things, I instantly commenced the task, leaving the crew to slumber in the boat until my return. I found the whole of the western side, opposite the landing-place, clothed with the most luxuriant vegetation to the height of about a hundred yards. There were myriads of flowers, including exquisite white violets with hairy stems; purple, red, and white star-flowers; the beautiful large yellow cup-flower, growing on stems two feet high, and called by the Norwegians *knap-sullen-öie-blomster* (literally, button-sun-eye-flower); and many other varieties of species unknown to me. There were also several kinds of dwarf shrubs, including the juniper, then in green berry. Butterflies and insects flitted gayly from flower to flower. After resting on a ledge of rock to take breath, and look down on the glassy waters and the boat at my feet—now dwindled to a speck—I resumed my clambering; but to my extreme mortification, when I had ascended two-thirds of the way, at no small risk to my bones, I was mastered by overhanging masses of rock, all trickling with slimy moisture from the congealed snow above. Here I had a narrow escape from being killed by a fragment of loose rock giving way beneath me, and drawing down other pieces after it; but I clung tenaciously to a firm part, and the heavy stones bounded harmlessly over my head. I descended with difficulty; and after carefully surveying the face of the rocks, tried at a more favorable place, and even then I was above an hour in gaining the summit. I understand that I am the first adventurer who has scaled the Cape at that place; and I certainly was thankful when I could throw my weary frame down, and eat some frugal fare, slaking my thirst with a handful of snow from the solid patch by my side. Though I had been more than forty-eight hours without rest, bodily fatigue was little felt. I could behold from my airy elevation many miles of the surface of the island. The higher peaks and the sheltered hollows were clothed with snow, glittering in the midnight sun, and several dark lakes nestled amid the frowning rocks.

Resuming my progress, I passed over the surface of the Cape. It is covered with slaty *débris*, and, what struck me as very remarkable, quantities of a substance resembling coarse white marble, totally different from the Cape itself. The only vegetation on the summit is a species of moss, which bears most beautiful flowers, generally of a purple hue, blooming in hundreds and thousands together. These dumb witnessses of nature's benevolent handiwork filled

my soul with pleasing, grateful thoughts, and uplifted it to the Divine Being who maketh flowers to bloom and waters to gush in the most desolate regions of the earth. In the bed of a ravine, crossed in my way toward the end of the Cape, I found a rapid stream of the purest water, which proved deliciously refreshing. I wandered along; and, after skirting much of the western precipice, drew nigh the bourne of my pilgrimage. The Cape terminates in a shape approaching a semicircle, but the most northern part swells out in a clear appreciable point. About a hundred yards from the latter I came upon a circle of stones, piled nearly breast high, inclosing a space some dozen feet in diameter. This had evidently been erected by a party of visitors as a shelter from the winds. Not far distant, a block of black rock rises above the level, which is otherwise smooth as a bowling-green, and covered with minute fragments of rock. Within two or three yards of the extreme point is a small pole, sustained in the centre of a pile of stones. I found several initials and dates cut on this very perishable register, and added my own. I believe it was set up by the government expedition three or four years ago as a signal-post for their trigonometrical survey.

I can not adequately describe the tide of emotion which filled my soul as I walked up to the dizzy verge. I only know that, after standing a moment with folded arms, beating heart, and tear-dimmed eye, I knelt, and with lowly-bowed head, returned thanks to God for permitting me to thus realize one darling dream of my boyhood!

Despite the wind, which here blew violently, I sat down by the side of the pole, and wrapping my cloak around me, long contemplated the grand spectacle of nature in one of her sublimest aspects. I was truly alone. Not a living being was in sight: far beneath was the boundless expanse of ocean, with a sail or two on its bosom, at an immense distance; above was the canopy of heaven, flecked with snowy cloudlets; the sun was gleaming through a broad belt of blood-red horizon; the only sounds were the whistling of the wind, and the occasional plaintive scream of hovering sea-fowl. My pervading feeling was a calm though deep sense of intellectual enjoyment and triumph—very natural to an enthusiastic young wanderer upon achieving one of the long-cherished enterprises of his life.

With reluctant and wildly-devious steps. I bade what is probably an eternal adieu to the wondrous Cape, and effected a comparatively easy descent to the place whence I had started. My men had dropped grapnel a considerable distance from the rock; and being unwilling to disturb their slumber, I spent some further time in exploring the western base. There is a very curious cavernous range of rock washed out by the terrific beating of wintry storms, so as to form a species of arcade. The sides are of immense thickness, but the sea has worn them

open at the top. The water here, as along the whole coast of Norway and Finmark, is marvelously transparent. Weeds and fish may be seen at a prodigious depth clearly as in a mirror.

On the return voyage, we ran into a creek near Sandbugt, and the crew went ashore to a Lap *gamme* (hut) to sleep; but as I had no desire to furnish a dainty fresh meal to the vermin with which every *gamme* swarms, I slept soundly on my reindeer skins in the boat, although it was now rainy and intensely cold. After the lapse of a few hours I joined them at the *gamme*, and bought a fine *pesk* or tunic of reindeer skin from an old Lap; and learning that his herd of reins was in the vicinity, I had a long ramble in search of them, but without avail; for they had wandered far away, influenced by that remarkable instinct which impels reindeer to invariably run *against* the wind. I gathered some fine specimens of sponge in marshy hollows. In the course of our subsequent voyage, I made another pause of a few hours at Giesvohr, where I examined the works for curing the fish and extracting the oil, but declined taking any repose. Next morning, being favored with a powerful wind, our little craft fairly leaped over the waves; and I noted her dextrous management with the eye of an amateur receiving a valuable lesson. The old pilot kept the sheet of the lug-sail constantly ready to slip, and another hand stood by the greased halyard to let all go by the run; for there are frequent eddies and squalls of wind along this very dangerous coast, which would upset a boat in an instant, were not great tact and unremitting vigilance exercised. The sea ran exceedingly high, and we shipped water from stem to stern every time we settled in its trough, in such a way that the baling never ceased. Safely, however, did we run into Havörsund once more at about eight o'clock.

Young Ulich welcomed my unexpectedly early return at the landing-place, and I was delighted to again become the eagerly-welcomed guest of his house. Happily, and only too quickly, did the time speed. I chatted in my sadly-broken Norwegian—the first to laugh at my own comical blunders; and the eldest young lady sweetly sang to me several of the most ancient and popular of her native ballads, accompanying them on her guitar—the fashionable instrument of music in the North, where many things which have fallen into desuetude with us universally flourish. As she could understand no other language, I in return did my best to chant the celebrated national Danish song, *Den tappr Landsoldat*, the fame of which has penetrated to the far North. So popular is this song in Denmark, that its author and composer have both recently received an order of knighthood for it. In the library were translations of Marryat, and other English novelists; and they showed me a copy of—Cruikshank's *Bottle*! I thought that if that gifted artist could have thus beheld how his fame and a genuine copy of his greatest work has penetrated, and is

highly appreciated in the vicinity of the North Cape, he would have experienced a glow of enviable, and not undeserved satisfaction. The only teetotaler, by the way, whom I ever met with in Scandinavia, was one of the crew of the boat with me. He invariably declined the *brandiivin*, as I passed it round from time to time, and assured me he drank only water and milk.

The young ladies had about a score of pretty tame pigeons; and to my extreme regret a couple were killed, to give me an additional treat at a dinner served in a style which I should rather have expected to meet with in an English hotel than at a solitary house on an arctic island. They afterward conducted me to their—garden! Yes, a veritable garden, the fame of which has extended far and wide in Finmark; for there is nothing to compare to it for at least four hundred miles southward. It is of considerable size, inclosed by high wooden walls, painted black to attract the sun's rays, which are very fervid in the latter end of summer. Potatoes, peas, and other table vegetables, were in a thriving state, but only come to maturity in favorable seasons. I had some radishes at dinner, and excellent they were. Glazed frames protected cucumber and other plants, and many very beautiful and delicate flowers bloomed in the open air. The young ladies gathered some of the finest specimens of these, including large blue forget-me-nots, and placed them within the leaves of my Bible. Highly do I treasure them, for they will ever vividly recall a host of pleasant and romantic associations.

Most pressing were they all to induce me to stay some days with them, and gladly indeed would I have complied had circumstances permitted; but I felt compelled to hasten back to Hammerfest. In the afternoon, therefore, I bade adieu to a family which had shown me a degree of engaging kindness greater than any I had experienced since I left my wammly-attached Danish friends.

The remainder of our return voyage was wet and tempestuous. We sailed and rowed all night, and reached Hammerfest at eight a.m. on July 5, much to the astonishment of the good folks there, who had not anticipated seeing us again in less than a week or ten days. The consul and many others assured me that my voyage had been performed with unprecedented speed, the whole time occupied being not quite three and a half days.

A CONVERSATION IN A KENTUCKY STAGE COACH.*

I CAN not refrain from giving a conversation which I heard as we came by the coach to Louisville. One of the speakers was a very agreeable and apparently well-informed gentleman, who seemed to have seen a great deal of

* From Lady Emeline Stuart Wortley's "Travels in the United States in 1849-50," in the press of Harper and Brothers.