

Dr. Cook's Long Silence In the Arctic; A Relief Expedition Is Being Agitated

WHEN an adventurous explorer sails bravely away into the perilous region known as the north pole there follow a long silence and, as far as the public is concerned, apparent forgetfulness. That is because the practice of searching for the pole has become so common that it now excites but a tithe of the interest which was formerly attached to it. The time has arrived when pole hunters go and come—some of them—without especial comment. It is only when the subject of a relief expedition is bruited that they are remembered and public interest in them is revived.

It has been thus in the case of Dr. Frederick A. Cook, one of the most fearless and intelligent men born with an ambition to plant his feet on spots of Mother Earth never before attained by his fellow man. With the renown of being the pioneer to ascend to the summit of Mount McKinley still fresh in the memories of scientific men, Dr. Cook burned with an ambition to join the ranks of those who were engaged in the almost competitive scramble for the north pole. The intrepid surgeon has been in the north for about a year and not a word has come from him. Not one of the Scandinavian sealers and whalers who have returned has brought any word from him, and fears for his safety are now so prevalent as to warrant the immediate organization of a relief expedition.

In the spring of last year an opportunity came to Dr. Cook to put his ardently cherished desire into execution. John R. Bradley, a wealthy New York Nimrod who has done considerable exploration in the far north on his own private account, fitted up a Gloucester fishing schooner and with his wife and Dr. Cook boarded the stanch little vessel at North Sydney, N. S., and sailed for Labrador and Greenland.

The millionaire skipper returned with his vessel in October of last year, but Dr. Cook was not with him. It was then and not until then that Mr. Bradley made the announcement that affairs had been going on in accordance with a regularly outlined plan and that from the first it had been the intention of Dr. Cook to leave the party at Etah and thence make his way to the pole whenever the opportunity should seem to be most promising. The following is Mr. Bradley's very interesting account of the matter from its beginning:

"Regarding the manner in which the Bradley arctic expedition took shape, I have for years desired to make a trip to the north to hunt polar bear and walrus. I often talked about such a trip with Dr. Cook, who, of course, had

much previous arctic experience. Dr. Cook expressed a desire to go with me to the arctic, so after getting back from north Mongolia I took up the matter last winter of an arctic trip with Dr. Cook, and we began to formulate plans. I finally decided to buy a vessel and outfit it and to start in the early summer. We decided that an auxiliary schooner with a gasoline engine would suit our purpose best. I therefore bought a 111-ton Gloucester fishing schooner and had her sheathed with three inches of white oak above and below her water line and steel plates fore and aft, so as to stand the strain of the ice. New rigging, new sails and a gasoline engine were added; in fact, the ship, which was rechristened the John R. Bradley, was refitted in every way to make it comfortable. I obtained the services of Captain Moses Bartlett, who was first officer of the Roosevelt, Peary's ship, and engaged a Newfoundland crew. Also I had a twenty-seven foot whaleboat built, with a ten horsepower engine, which could hold four men, this to be used in the hunt for big game. This boat weighs less than a thousand pounds and can be dragged over the ice on runners when necessary to avoid being nipped by the ice pans—a constant danger. In case we should become fast bound in the ice we took sufficient provisions for thirteen men for two years.

"While talking over our plans Dr. Cook said to me one day, 'Wouldn't you like to make a try for the pole?' I said I didn't know much about that sort of thing and didn't know whether I would care to stay through the long arctic night, but I said in any event I would outfit the vessel with everything necessary for a polar expedition and that if we found food conditions satisfactory when we got as far as Smith sound the doctor anyway could stay through the winter and make a dash for the pole.

"Therefore the vessel sailed with everything necessary for a polar expedition and dash for the pole. We sailed from Gloucester to Battle Harbor, Labrador; then across Davis strait to the South Greenland coast. We first encountered ice south of Sisoo and had the propeller disabled by striking the ice, so we put in at Sisoo, beached the ship and soon repaired the damage and proceeded on our way north. I was anxious to try for polar bear in Melville bay. I gave Captain Bartlett orders to get into the ice of the bay as soon as possible, so as to get some shooting.

"When in the ice we saw many bear, but found it almost impossible to get them without the use of native dogs,

with which the Eskimos hunt for bear, for the bear were usually on large pans of ice miles square and would take to the water and get away. We therefore decided to cross Melville bay and make

Cape York, where we were sure of finding natives with dogs. We had a hard time, for we were nipped twice by the ice and had to cut our way out. Finally, after seven days of hard work,

we reached Cape York, but found it impossible to land a boat on account of storms and ice. So we decided to go farther north in search of dogs and finally reached North Star bay. Here

we anchored, and I fired a gun to attract the natives if any were about. "Soon we saw two natives coming out in their little kayaks, and in half an hour we had thirty-five Eskimos—men, women and children—aboard the ship, the entire inhabitants of the settlement. I spent three days shooting walrus, which I found good sport. The natives were all healthy and had plenty of food.

"We sailed from North Star bay to McCormick bay, Bowdoin bay and Robinson bay and had good shooting all the way; also we came across more natives, all in good condition. Finally we reached Etah, Peary's former winter quarters. Here we enjoyed a view from the high hills of Smith sound. There was no great amount of ice in the sound, so Dr. Cook, the first mate and myself took the motor boat and went north through Smith sound to 79 degrees north latitude. There are the farthest settlements of the Eskimos, and we spent several days among the natives, many of whom remember Dr. Cook and greeted him heartily. Dr. Cook speaks the Eskimo language and so was able to converse with his old time friends. We brought the greater part of this settlement back to Etah with us.

"Conditions looked so favorable for a dash for the pole later on that we decided at Etah to land the expedition at 79 degrees north latitude. We found we could get all the dogs we wanted and all the natives that Dr. Cook wished to have with him. As the natives had already cached their winter supply of food I helped them to kill walrus, seals, white whales and narwhals to augment the supply. The Eskimo women kept busy catching arctic hare and birds to make their winter clothing.

"Dr. Cook concluded to stay and make a dash for the pole as soon as feasible after the long dark night begins to break. We then took most of the natives from Etah and the others that we had brought to Etah and transferred them all to 79 degrees north latitude, where Dr. Cook had decided to make his winter quarters. When we reached this latitude we found the conditions changed from those we had experienced in the motor boat some days before; there was much ice, and we had great difficulty in landing the provisions, which we towed in dray loads and strewed the boxes along the coast. These Dr. Cook will gather together.

"Dr. Cook has now about fifty Eskimos—men, women and children—and some 150 dogs in his winter quarters. I thought it better that a white man

should remain with Dr. Cook, so a call for volunteers was made, and Rudolph Franco, a young German, was selected. He is a strong man and an enthusiastic would be arctic explorer. Dr. Cook was left with ample provisions for three years and with everything else in the way of tools, sleds and other necessities for the explorer. During the winter Dr. Cook will get everything in readiness, and about Feb. 1 he will cross the ice of Smith sound and take a northwesterly course through Ellemereland and try to strike the polar sea at 80 degrees north latitude. He will travel as lightly as possible and then make his dash for the pole."

Etah, the point at which Dr. Cook and Mr. Bradley parted company, is about 650 miles from the pole. As soon as Cook's plan for reaching the pole was made public about every one who knows anything definite concerning arctic exploration was of the opinion that his scheme was not promising. Those who are acquainted with Dr. Cook believe that he would not have attempted anything which he had regarded as impracticable. He is a man of a singularly practical turn of mind and has never shown himself to be at all visionary in his projects.

Resides, Dr. Cook is a veteran in arctic exploration. He has spent several summers and at least three winters in the far north and was a member of Peary's most important expedition. His experience in the Belgian antarctic exploration party made him wise as to polar matters, and his subsequent sojourn in the Alaskan mountain regions proved him to be endowed with an endurance unequalled by any living explorer. In view of his splendid achievements the public has more faith in him than in the widely exploited and vacillating gentlemen who would fly to the pole and back again in an incredibly short time. Those who believe that the heat, the sledge and the legs are the arctic traveler's only sure means of locomotion are ready to put their faith in the brave man who has accomplished much and talked modestly.

Those who have been Dr. Cook's companions on any of his previous journeys into the arctic are not disheartened at his protracted silence. They are reminded by it that it is his custom to speak only when he has something to say that is worth while. That he did not take the public into his confidence until his scheme was well under way is proof of his absolute good faith in undertaking the decidedly strenuous business of discovering the north pole. RUSSELL HASTINGS.



DR. FREDERICK A. COOK, DARING POLE HUNTER

STRING IMPORTANT IN JAPAN.

Writing from Japan, an American says: "You must come here to appreciate some of the quaint customs and usages which contact with other

people has not yet driven out. To read about them gives you only a poor idea. For instance, did you ever know what an important thing a piece of string is here? The children, workmen, idlers, servants, all carry pieces of string for

use in case of emergency. With us the emergencies would arise only when a parcel had to be done up, but the Japanese use his piece of string as a first aid to the injured, to repair a rent in his clothing, to fix a broken-down jinrikisha, to mend tools, to take measurements, and, in fact, the string is his universal tool chest. The queerest use to which it is put, according to my way of thinking, is when a police officer arrests a man, ties a bit of string

around the arrested man's wrist and then leads him by the loose end of the thin heppen fetter to the lockup. You ask: "Why doesn't the Jap crook break the string and find a getaway?" He could, but he would not. That's

where his respect for the law comes in, and the bit of string holds the man as securely as though he were manacled by our own humane chilled steel, nickel-plated and snap-locked method."—New York Tribune.

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