

HOME MISSION MONTHLY.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.



WITH the month of March the fiscal year of the Woman's Executive Committee closes. The remaining days are most precious and will be burdened with great anxiety as to results. Has no one still another gift to make to our beloved cause before the treasurer's books close? Has each given as the Lord has prospered?

Prompt aid is needed that all obligations may be met. Hasten the offerings to the treasury and multiply the prayers.

SOME of the extra-penny-a-day mite boxes have now been in use six months; others for but two or three months, while still others are constantly being sent out in response to requests from those who wish to adopt the plan. It will be remembered that the calendar is arranged for one year's offerings, with the hope that the boxes will be used for at least that period of time. Though but a portion of the year has expired, the Woman's Executive Committee requests that the contents which have thus far accumulated be forwarded in March, through the usual channels to the treasurer of the Woman's Executive Committee in order that the money may reach us before the first of April.

This need not interfere with the continued use of these extra-penny-a-day boxes, for the calendar on the back will serve to show just how many deposits have been made, and the offerings can go on uninterruptedly.

We have been confidently relying upon the accumulated contents of these little boxes to help us meet the remaining obligations of

last year, and also to aid in meeting the increased demands of the present year.

Though the contents of any one of these boxes may not be large, yet, as we have already seen from the statements made when they were sent out, their faithful use will give us immense and greatly needed assistance.

In forwarding please designate money as extra-penny-a-day offering.

WHO wishes to aid in bearing the expense of sending the HOME MISSION MONTHLY to our missionary teachers? We need about \$150 to enable us to do this. Will *you* help? and *you*? and *you*? If so, we shall soon have the desired amount.

ENGLAND proudly boasts that the sun never sets on her dominion. The United States may say as much, for when the sun sets in Alaska it is an hour high in Maine.

THE staple products of Alaska are, by some, supposed to consist of polar bears and icebergs. Such will do well to note that Governor Knapp's report shows that the exports for the past year were over \$9,840,000. A very good showing for "poor despised Alaska."

SUCH facts as the following are gratifying: A lawyer residing in the city of New York who is an Episcopalian, visited Alaska last summer. Wishing to return as far as British Columbia by canoe, he applied to the Rev. Mr. Austin for some one who could accompany him as interpreter, guide, and general helper. One who had received his

utensils at that time. But the 'snow men' put some vessels right over the blazing fire and they did not burn up. Again the Indians were petrified with astonishment.

"And so the account runs on. The as-

tonishment and dread produced by the 'snow men's' supernatural deeds causing the Indians to 'die' so many times that it forms without doubt the most unique, manifold and lengthy obituary ever recorded."

ESTABLISHING THE NEW MISSION STATION AT POINT BARROW, ALASKA.



FARTHER progress northward of the United States, Revenue Steamer "Bear" had been stopped by the great Polar ice field. As the ship lay at anchor off Sea Horse Islands, on the 30th of July, 1890, those upon deck,

2,000 miles. When the long Arctic winter sets in no power on earth could reach them with help. To provide against any such horrible tragedy Captain Healy early saw the necessity of having an ample supply of provisions stored at some central place. The plan grew and took shape in his own mind; he enlisted his friends and the men interested in the whaling industry, particularly in New Bedford and San Francisco. And finally, after many vexatious delays that would have discouraged a less persistent man, Congress voted the money for the erection of the buildings, and the purchase of the provisions.

watching the midnight sun, saw a large field of shore ice drifting toward us.

For a short time the good ship held fast to her anchorage as the great cakes broke on her bow and ground against her sides; but by and by the pressure became too great, and she dragged her anchor. Steam was at once raised, and treading our way carefully through masses of floating ice, we anchored on the morning of July 31st, off the village of Ootkeavie, near Point Barrow. Upon communicating with the shore it was found that the ice had opened two days previous, and that the first vessels had arrived the day before. Masses of ice were still floating by in the current, and grounded icebergs lay between the ship and the beach.

Ootkeavie, next to Cape Prince of Wales, is the largest village on the Arctic coast, and numbers about 300 Eskimo. It is also the Government refuge station for shipwrecked whalers. Within the past ten years some 2,000 sailors have been wrecked on this Arctic coast; so far they have been fortunate in finding vessels within reach to carry them south to civilization; but the occasion is liable to come any season when they will be compelled to winter here. This, to a large body of men, means slow starvation and death. The bleak, bare country could not afford subsistence, and there is no adequate supply of provision within 1,500 or

Last year Captain Healy brought up the materials and erected the main building, which is a low, one story building, 30 x 48 feet in size. The walls, roof and floor are made double as a protection against the intense cold of this high northern latitude in winter. It will accommodate 50 men comfortably; it can shelter 100 if necessary. The house has provisions for 100 men for twelve months.

Ootkeavie is also one of the villages selected by the U. S. Bureau of Education for the establishment of a school, the contract for which was given by Dr. Harris, U. S. Commissioner of Education, to the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church. The money needed for its establishment was generously contributed by Mrs. Elliott F. Shepard of New York.

The teacher is Professor L. M. Stevenson, of Versailles, Ohio, who reached the place on July 30th, 1890.

Owing to the shortness of the time and the great distance from the source of supplies, and the dangers of navigation, I was able to secure material this season for only two of the school buildings and teachers' residences to be erected in the Arctic. These were placed at Cape Prince of Wales and Point Hope. Next season I hope to erect one at Point Barrow. In the meantime, through the courtesy of Captain Healy, representing

the Treasury Department, I secured a room for the school in one of the Government buildings.

This is the most northern school in America and, with but one exception, in the world, being in latitude $71^{\circ} 26'$ north.

At this point the trend of the continent turns to the eastward; a low ridge of sand however extends from eight to ten miles farther north. On the end of this sand spit is a small village called Nuwuk.

On the sand spit, midway between the villages, is a hunting station where the natives congregate for some weeks to kill ducks as they pass to and fro over the spit from water to water. Thousands upon thousands of ducks are killed here every season.

On the day of our arrival I spent much of the time arranging for the school. During the following night the wind developed into a southwest gale, and heavy masses of ice drifted by. The Captain, for safety, steamed around to the northeast side of Point Barrow, whither sixteen vessels of the whaling fleet had preceded us.

All day long the gale howled and shrieked through the rigging, but the "Bear" rode it out in safety. In the evening a new danger presented itself. It was found that the great ice field was closing in upon the shore, threatening to imprison us in an ice trap from which there would be no escape until the wind changed and drove the ice again off shore.

A repetition was feared of the experience of August 3rd, 1888. On that occasion a number of the whalers had shifted their anchorage for protection from the west side of Point Barrow to the east side. The wind that had increased to a gale suddenly veered around from the southwest to the north, causing a heavy sea to break upon the bar. At nine o'clock that night, the schooner "Jane Gray" parted her cables and drifted against an iceberg, knocking a large hole in her side. She filled rapidly and sank, the crew taking to the small boats.

The next to slip her moorings was the bark "Phœnix." She struck the bar and sank. Her crew drifted about in small boats for six hours in that terrible storm before they were picked up.

Then the barks "Mary," "Susan" and "Fleeting" went on the bar and pounded to pieces. Several other vessels parted their cables and went on the bar, sustaining more or less damage.

In that fearful storm, when the waters of the Arctic were lashed into billows of foam, hurling huge masses of ice about like driving snow-flakes, in the midst of snapping chains and crashing spars and tattered sails, when it seemed certain destruction to lower a small boat, the Revenue Cutter "Bear," rode the storm in safety, and her trained crew, under the direction of Captain Healy, ventured their lives, performing prodigies of valor in rescuing shipwrecked sailors. When the storm abated, 160 rescued men were on the decks of the "Bear."

Fortunately for us on this occasion, the storm abated without doing us damage, and August 2d gave us a beautiful afternoon, of which I availed myself to go ashore.

On the east side of the Cape is the native village of Nuwuk, which consists of a number of underground houses. But few families were at home at the time of our visit and they were living in tents outside of their winter huts.

The first white man to visit this place was Master Elson of H. M. S. "Blossom" (Captain Beechney's expedition) in August, 1826.

One hundred and forty-six miles to the east is Return Reef, the westernmost point reached by Sir John Franklin in his journey to form a junction with Captain Beechney's expedition.

Soon after returning to the "Bear" from the village, a shipwrecked crew were received on board the Government vessel to be taken back to civilization.

As the Captain had on board, the materials for a Government storehouse at the Point Barrow Refuge Station, he concluded to return at once to that place and discharge his freight, that more comfortable quarters might be made for the shipwrecked sailors.

The weather was beautiful, the ocean smooth, and the sail exhilarating. At midnight the sun was visible in the southwest and the full moon in the southeast.

At 1 A.M. August 3d the ship again anchored at Ootkeavie, where we remained a week while the Captain inspected the refuge station, and the ship's carpenters were building the Government storehouse.

In 1882, Lieutenant Ray's party dug a well to the depth of $37\frac{1}{2}$ feet for observing the temperature of the earth. The entire distance was made through frozen sand and gravel. At the bottom of the shaft the temperature remained winter and summer uniformly at 12° F. At the depth of 20 feet a

tunnel was run 10 feet, and then a room excavated for a cellar. In this room the temperature never rose above 22° F. Birds and meat placed in this room froze solid and remained so until taken to the kitchen and thawed out for cooking.

On Saturday, August 9th, the inspection of the Refuge Station being completed, the storehouse finished and arrangements for the school perfected, preparations were made to return southward.

At 4:10 P.M. we hoisted anchor and the vessel steamed a few miles north to procure the last letters of the whaling fleet. The stars and stripes were hoisted to the top of the mainmast as a signal that we were about to sail.

Soon after anchoring in the midst of the fleet, the boats began arriving bringing off packages of letters. At 9:15 P.M. the flag was lowered, and the "Bear" steamed slowly away en route to civilization. As we passed

by, the ships, one after another, dipped their flags and bade us an Arctic farewell with many wishes for a safe voyage. Great masses of heavy black clouds lay along the whole northern horizon, like a curtain to hide the unknown regions beyond. To the east lay the low sand spit that marks the northern limit of the continent, the native village of underground huts and skin-covered tents of the visiting natives from the interior.

To the west of us was the midnight sun, and south of us, as if symbolical of the land of light and privilege and comfort to which we were to return, there was not a cloud to be seen in the beautiful, purple sky.

At 10 o'clock P.M. we passed the refuge station and school, and soon they faded from sight and were left far behind us in their Arctic solitude, until the "Bear" again visits them a twelvemonth hence.

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HOW THE PUPILS ARE CHOSEN.

(From Mrs. Willard, Juneau, Alaska.)

IT is often hard to turn away those pleading for admission to the Home and our hearts ache in doing it, yet a certain good results from this very fact that only a few can be taken. A tourist asked:

"How do you select these children?"

For a moment I hesitated, then I answered low: "The Master does that *for us*."

In a still more imperative tone came the next question. "Don't you use your own common sense?"

To this more readily came the answer: "Yes, what we *have*."

In these simple questions and answers lie a volume of the economy of missions. Our best "sense" is so "common," and circumstances, possibilities, and necessities are at once so limited, so far-reaching and obscure as to demand the power of God and the wisdom of God."

"Common sense" would have excluded from our Home the very ones who have yielded the greatest interest on the Home investment. "Select the perfectly healthy—those of the best intellect—etc." That is

common sense. And yet "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise—and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty—and the base things of the world, and things which are despised to bring to nought things that are." Of this there is abundant proof in the consumptive, the lame, the half blind whom He has sent us *among* the bright, strong and healthy children who make up the larger number of our family. But my tourist gave me no time to answer at length or give examples.

"How do you bind these children—do you have papers of agreement binding them?"

"No; we have no papers."

"Well, I think you show very little judgment," my candid visitor exclaimed, with chilling warmth.

My answer was ready but came slowly. "Perhaps *your* judgment would be different if you knew more of the peculiarities of our work." I believe the hardest thing I ever said to a child in our school was, "If you