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Copyright, 1912, by Frederic A. Stokes Co. From "Tenderfoot with Peary" by George Horup
"ATTENTION!" The Sextette of Pretty Eskimo Maids Trained by the Peary North Pole Party, Getting Ready for the Dance. Photographed Christmas Day on Board the "Roosevelt."

WHAT did Amundsen and Peary and Scott do in the six months night, which every pole hunter has to spend, getting ready for his dash in the Spring? In the old days of polar exploration the parties spent practically all of their time cooped up in shacks and ship cabins, fighting with each other. The long night, six months without a glimpse of the sun, made them so nervous that parties mutinied against their chiefs and explorers plotted each other's murder. During General Greely's expedition his assistants would not speak to each other for months, and finally, when their food was gone the doctor of the expedition was accused of stealing food from his patients.

But Amundsen and Peary of today are more scientific and the long night is the busiest part of the trip.

All through the winter the commander of a modern expedition sends out hunting parties, which find and bring back dozens of musk oxen, and meanwhile get hardened for the final dash for the Pole when Spring comes. Between trips, the men build sleds, take tidal observations, boss the Eskimo squaws who sew their fur clothing, lounge in the cabin telling stories and have athletic games on the ice. Part of the expedition are kept out on the trek, laying down caches of provisions so that the final dash will not have to depend on what can be taken from the ship on one set of sledges. Between hunting and sledging, the men are kept so busy that when they get back to the ship they are too thankful for a chance to loaf and sleep to want to quarrel with each other. This new system is largely due to an American—Admiral Peary.

George Horup, who was on Peary's successful dash to the Pole and who will be part commander of the American expedition to explore Crocker Land which starts this coming Summer, describes in "A Tenderfoot with Peary" how the explorers spent Christmas Day.

"Under Peary's methods," says Horup, "travelling during the moon, always busy on the ship, if there was any monotony or dreaded darkness going the rounds, none of us crossed its trail. Constantly occupied, we were happy; the working day wasn't long enough; and I never knew till then the real joy of living.

"When Christmas came it was celebrated in right royal style. In the forenoon the Captain and I laid out a track seventy-five yards long and ten wide, smoothing rough spots—in the snow—off with picks. After that, we drummed up every available lamp aboard, so that the race-track resembled Broadway after dark. Then the North Polar Athletic Club held its first meet. The A. A. U. sanction didn't arrive in time, but we decided to pull it off just the same, sanction or no sanction. With the thermometer at minus 23 degrees Fahrenheit, it seemed very warm and springlike

compared to the minus 53 degrees of a day before.

"We had races for every one; the Eskimo men, mothers with their children on their backs, then for the white men. In the first heat for the huskies, they were not up on how to finish. They slowed up before reaching the tape, and all four or

How Polar Explorers Pass the Arctic Night

It Can't Be All Heroic

Sufferings with Trained Sextettes of Pretty Eskimo Maids, Races, and Oil Lamp Imitations of Broadway



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THE POLAR SEXTETTE IN FULL ACTION.

The Furthest North for "Floradora." The Borup Trained Eskimo Maids Wearing Many More Clothes Than the Original Sextette.

five hit the line at once. The women's race, where the mothers ran with their kids in the hoods of their kooletahs, was greeted with fervent applause. Our messroom was all decorated with Commander Peary's flags, and we had a great and wondrous spread, the inevitable climax to our ideas of enjoyment.

When not hunting and making sledges, the men were much amused by the antics of the Eskimos and their wives. Borup and MacMillan, on Peary's trip, trained six dusky squaws to dance like a "Floradora" sextette. The Eskimo mothers looked after their children and washed them just as a cat does her kittens. This is vouched for by Matt Henson. One of the ladies used to go mildly crazy, so much so that Borup writes in his book:

"There was a husky lady, a widow, dubbed 'Buster Planket' by our facetious cook, and she distinctly contrived to dispel dull care. One night we heard a commotion forward. There was the lady in a pool of water, under the bow, looking like an incubated fish, treading water, singing like a siren and banging her hands together: 'Yah! Yah! A yah yah!' If she'd had more pleasant surroundings she'd have made the Lorelei look like the hat father wore on St. Patrick's Day. It took the whole crew some time to get her back on board."

But most of the time the squaws were too busy making fur hoods and coats for the explorers to take dancing lessons or go crazy. They had to do all the sewing in preparation for the dash. Borup says in "A Tenderfoot":

"To have the sewing done well you'd pick out one girl, make her think she was just it, tip her husband to get his good will, and give him to understand there'd be more coming his way if his wife's riveting was cold. If an Eskimo wife didn't do a good job for her hubby he attended to the make-up of her eyes. We objected to our rooms being converted into facial massage parlors, so if we found a woman taking homeward-bound stitches, one every half mile or so, we'd merely unravel them with a knife.

"The sailors," says Borup, "put in part of their time in a boxing tournament, but more in assisting in the taking of tidal observations for the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey." For his last, according to Borup:

"Marvin built a large igloo on the ice, cut a hole four feet through the ice and put in his gauge. The igloo was canvas lined, to try to keep the heat in, a two-burner stove lending a hand. We stood nine-hour watches, taking hourly observations, except near high or low tide, when they were to be read every ten minutes for one and a half hours before and after the 'stand of the tide.'"

Matt Henson, the negro, who accompanied Peary to the Pole, has also told how the explorers put in their time in the Big Dark. He says in his book, "A Negro Explorer at the North Pole," which was published this Spring:

"Hunting parties were sent out, for it was on the big game of the country that the expedition depended for fresh meat. Professor Marvin commenced his scientific work, and all Winter long parties were sledging provisions, equipment, etc., to Cape Columbia, ninety-three miles northwest, in anticipation of the journey to the Pole. Those who remained at headquarters did not find life an idle dream. There was something in the way of work going on all of the time. I was away from the ship on two hunting trips of about ten days each, and while at headquarters I shaped and built over two dozen sledges, besides doing lots of other work.

"I have a steady job carpentering, also interpreting, barbering, ill-ordering, dog-training and chasing Eskimos out of my quarters."



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Another Graceful Movement of the Polar Sextette.

A Baby Musk-Ox—A Pet of the Winter Night.



"When there is nothing else to do, says Matt Henson in "A Negro Explorer," "the men cat, always put in their time mastering the dogs."

"The dogs are ever interesting. To get together a team that has not been tied down the night before is a job. You take a piece of meat, frozen as stiff as a piece of sheet iron, in one hand and the harness in the other, you single out the cur you are after, make proper advances, and when he comes sniffling and snuffling and all the time keeping at a safe distance, you drop the sheet-iron on the snow, the brute makes a dive, and you make a flop, you grab the nearest thing grabbable—ear, leg or bunch of hair—and do your best to catch his throat, after which everything is easy. Slip the harness over the head, push the fore-

paws through, and there you are, one dog hooked up and harnessed.

"After licking the bites and sucking the blood, you tie said dog to a rock and start for the next one. It is only a question of time before you have your team. When you have them, leave them alone; they must now decide who is fit to be the king of the team, and so they fight, they fight and fight; and once they have decided, the king is king. A growl from him, or only a look, is enough, all obey, except the females, and the females have their way, for, true to type, the males never harm the females, and it is always the female who start the trouble."

The Last Tragedy of the Unluckiest Half Acre in America

BY all odds the most unfortunate half acre in America is the Peterman Farm, in Sugarloaf Township, Columbia County, Pennsylvania. Within the past fifty years no less than eight deaths by violence have occurred on the place, five times the log cabin which constitutes the farmhouse has been nearly destroyed by fire, nearly a dozen serious accidents have taken place there, one of the occupants of the place served a sentence for assault, and the sole survivor of the family is now in prison on a charge of murder.

The unlighted, perhaps, would regard the place as haunted or as cursed by a hoodoo, but the Petermans themselves

looked upon the long chain of tragedies which made the place a byword throughout the State as mere coincidences.

The Peterman log cabin was built by John Peterman just before the Civil War. The oldest inhabitants say of him that he was an honest, hard-working, God-fearing man, a careful, prudent farmer, a good father, a kind husband and a pleasant neighbor.

Almost before the mud plaster between the chinks of the logs had hardened, however, the tragic record began.

One day Mrs. Peterman was boiling soap in a large caldron that hung upon a crane in the fireplace. While she was working with her back to the fire, there was a crash and a sputtering, followed by a chorus of screams, and the woman turned to find her three little girls drenched with the boiling soap. The youngest child had pulled down the kettle in some way, immersing herself and her two playmates. All three died within a few hours.

For a short period the family lived in a shack on the other side of the farm. Their return to the log cabin after a lapse of a few months was signalized by a fire which nearly overwhelmed the entire remaining family while they slept and which did burn one of the sons seriously.

For the next three years accidents came thick and fast. For example, Peterman, anxious to sell his farm and escape further misfortunes, hired a surveyor to straighten out a disputed line. The chairman fell over a stone pile back of the corncrib and broke a leg in two places. Such minor accidents there were by the score, but the

ACCIDENTS AND CRIMES ON THE UNLUCKIEST HALF ACRE.

1. Three children scalded to death.
2. Son burned in cabin fire.
3. Surveyor made a cripple.
4. Old John Peterman killed by storm-struck tree.
5. Grandchild breaks his neck.
6. Another grandchild killed with pitchfork.
7. John Peterman, Jr., nearly killed in fight with his brother Abram.
8. Abram destroys the sight of a relative and is sent to prison.
9. Old Mrs. Peterman dies of a broken heart.
10. Abram kills his brother in a fight.

next important one was the death of the elder Peterman.

The sky became overcast while he was playing, and a heavy storm came on. He hurried to the barn, put away his horses, and was running to the cabin when a big oak tree blew down on him, breaking nearly every bone in his body.

The widow lived on in the evil place with her two sons, John and Abram. In the course of years Abram married, and once more the cabin was made bright by the faces of little children. It seemed as though they might heal the deep wounds in their grandmother's heart and certainly they had twined themselves about the affections of Abram as no one else had ever done.

But the Nemesis of the place was too much for them. The youngest fell off a hay wagon at the barn door and broke his neck. The other was accidentally jabbed in the head with a pitchfork and died from the injury.

Many persons who knew Abram in his early manhood think that his mind was unbalanced by the shocking deaths of his children. He became morose, and then a homicidal mania developed. He would assault men with whom he had previously been on the friendliest terms, and on one occasion he rushed at his brother with a pitchfork, thrusting it into his back several times. John was rescued in time to prevent murder, but another incident had been added to the bloody chapter connected with the place.

From this time on there was a deadly feud between the brothers. Abram on several occasions tried to burn down the house and barn, but the watchful John thwarted him. Each man was constantly on the lookout for the other.

Just before their mother died Abram was carried off to serve a sentence in the penitentiary, not for any crime that was committed within the confines of his accursed home. To be specific, it was for gouging out the eye of a relative by marriage.

Seventeen years ago Abram was released from prison and returned to the cabin. He was still as dangerous as ever. On many occasions he threatened to "have John's life blood."

Returning late one afternoon about a year ago in this mood, he unluckily encountered his brother as he entered the front yard.

"I'll have your heart's blood!" he shrieked, as he closed the gate behind him and stood panting with rage inside the fatal confines of the farm. "I'll have your life's blood, I say! And I'll have it right now!"

He sprang at John with a knife in his hand as John bent to pick up a stone. The impact threw the two old fellows sprawling on the ground, for they were far from agile, John being seventy-one and Abram seventy, and both as full of "rheumatics" as is usual in countrymen of their age.

But no full-blooded youth was ever swayed by a more furious passion than led these unnatural sons of one mother to "tear and bite and claw and kick at each other in the shadow of the old log cabin that had seen the ruin and degradation of their clan.

How long they fought John does not know, although he thinks "it might have been an hour or two." He remembers that they were both covered with blood that blinded them and choked them, and caused Abram to matter over and over:

"His life's blood! His life's blood!"

His wind not being so good as it once was, they would lie quiet in each other's embrace for a minute at a stretch, but when the inertia of complete exhaustion had passed, they would begin again, gouging, striking, scratching, biting, clutching, with never a thought of asking or receiving quarter.

Finally John's right hand came in con-

tact with a stone about the size of his two fists. With all the strength that was left in him, he brought it down upon the head of Abram, who lay quite still and ceased his monotonous murmurs of "Blood, blood, blood!"

John was too near gone to rise, but he managed to crawl to the doorway, where he fainted. Thus the neighbors found them, frightfully haggled, the one apparently dying, the other dead with a grisly smile upon his face and bunches of bloody gray hair locked in his stiffened fingers.

And now John, the only survivor of the ill-fated Peterman family, is awaiting trial for the last tragedy of the blood-soaked half-acre.

They Ended Only When Abram Peterman Was Killed by His Brother



John, the Last of the Petermans.



The Misfortunes Began When 3 of the Peterman Children Were Scalded to Death.

John, the Last of the Petermans.