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The First Crossing Of Greenland



Synopsis

This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can usually download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1892 edition. Excerpt: ... spot, for there was an excellent and well-protected harbour with a good piece of beach for their skin-boats, and, as I have said, the situation was charming. The five flat stones which were standing upright and first drew our attention to the place were long a riddle to me, but after I had had some conversation with Captain Holm on the subject, I was inclined to the view that they were stocks for the " umiaks," or large skin-boats, that is to say, supports on which the boats are raised to be dried, and to which they are fastened when laid up for the winter. There are besides many other traces of human occupation on these islands, which are, as a matter of fact, not one island, as they are given on Holm's map, but two, divided by a narrow sound, and the outer being the smaller. On several of the points also I found similar cairns of stones, or, as I suppose, remains of old fox-traps. By the outermost islet off Igdloluarsuk we found the mouth of the fjord so full of huge icebergs that we had to go seawards to find a practicable passage. On our way we tried to push between the icebergs, but were soon stopped. The floes get jammed so fast in between these monsters by the furious current that there is no possibility of moving them. So we had to return once more and go further out to sea. If in ordinary ice it is necessary to get a look ahead from some high-lying point, it is no less necessary to take the same measures among icebergs such as these. So whenever we came across one that was easily accessible we naturally mounted it at once. Imposing as these floating monsters look from below, when one rows beneath them, the effect, as far as regards their magnitude, is nothing to that produced when one sees them from above. One we ascended at...

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Customer Reviews

Fridthof Nansen in this book did more to bring skiing to the larger world than any other individual. Until his Greenland crossing on skis, few outside of Norway, or Scandinavia at the most, had heard of skiing, although of course it had existed there for centuries. The early chapter of the book on skis and "skilobing" (skiing) is a marvelous account of the sport, and particularly of Sondre Norheim and the Telemarkers who revolutionized it as recreation. Nansen writes the book in what can only be called a charming tone. He makes the crossing of the icecap seem easy, and indeed, most of the harrowing detail of the expedition relates to the efforts of the party after being dropped off at sea on the east coast of Greenland, through the ice floes with great difficulty, to an eventual landing and a hard climb up to the central ice plateau. There is also considerable detail given about the way of life of the Eskimo and Danish inhabitants of the Greenland west coast, where Nansen and his party overwintered after the crossing. A classic of "cold exploration" and a lively style and good read after more than a century.

A classic worth the read Nansen was not an Amundsen but yet he lead the way

Great!

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