



Hunters of the Great North (Classic Reprint)

Vilhjalmur Stefansson

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Excerpt from Hunters of the Great North

When first you leave home to travel in a foreign land you receive impressions more vivid than those of any later journey to the same country. If you at once rush your views and observations into print you are likely to have an interesting book but not so likely an accurate one. You will probably regret some parts of that book on grounds of mere regard for truth, for you will see later that you erred both in observations and conclusions.

When first I went to the polar regions I came back at the end of a year and a half full of enthusiasm for the Arctic and for the Eskimos. Luckily that enthusiasm was translated into the organization of a second expedition that left for the North in seven months, and not into a book to be published then. As I look over my diaries of that time I shudder to think how vastly I might have augmented the already great misknowledge of the Arctic had I published everything I imagined I had seen and everything I thought I knew.

At the end of my second expedition, after five winters and seven summers in the North, I published "My Life With the Eskimo" (New York and London, 1913). So far I have discovered (with the help of critics and through careful re-reading) a half dozen errors in that volume. Some of these have been eliminated as the book has been reprinted; the rest will be rectified in the next printing.

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