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978-1-108-07147-5 - The Land of Desolation: Being a Personal Narrative of
Adventure in Greenland

Isaac Israel Hayes

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The Land of Desolation

Despite the fact that his previous trip to the Arctic had left him gravely ill and with a permanently injured foot, the explorer and physician Isaac Israel Hayes (1832–81) immediately proclaimed his desire to return north. In 1869, aboard the steamer *Panther*, he was granted his wish. The trip was financed by the artist William Bradford (1823–92), who planned to use it as an opportunity to paint and photograph Greenland. First published in 1871, this account gives the reader the opportunity to survey the landscape, touching also on the history of polar exploration. It is illustrated with a number of engravings. Also reissued in the Cambridge Library Collection are *An Arctic Boat-Journey in the Autumn of 1854* (1860), Hayes's account of a gruelling episode during the ill-fated second Grinnell expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, and *The Open Polar Sea* (1867).

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The Land of Desolation

*Being a Personal Narrative
of Adventure in Greenland*

ISAAC ISRAEL HAYES



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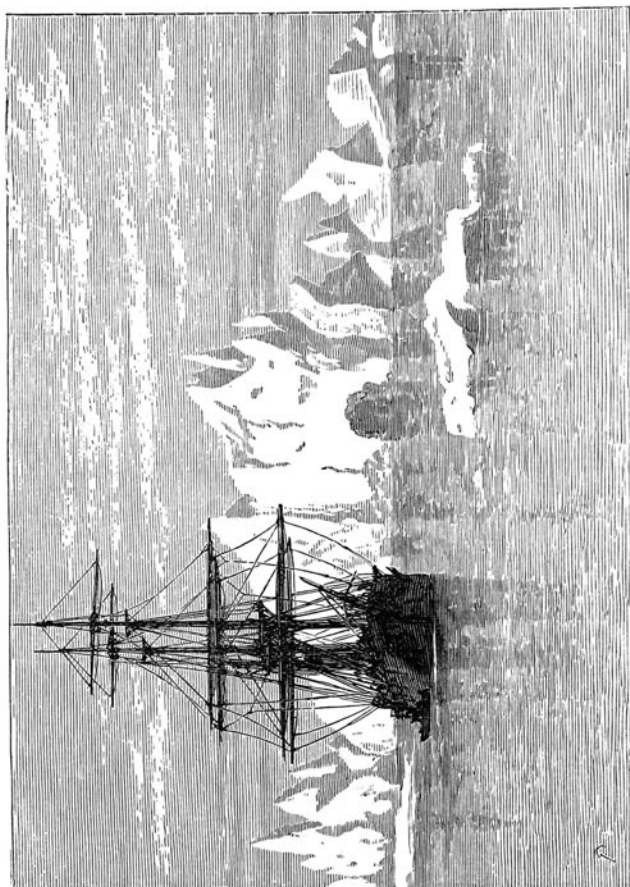
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THE 'PANTHER' AMONG THE ICEBERGS.

(Frontispiece.)

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THE
LAND OF DESOLATION

BEING A
PERSONAL NARRATIVE
OF
ADVENTURE IN GREENLAND

BY
ISAAC J. HAYES, M.D.

AUTHOR OF
'THE OPEN POLAR SEA'
ETC.

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Persons Represented.



An Artist in search of the picturesque.
An Assistant given to caricature.
A Photographer, called 'Colonel.'
Another, who was 'Major.'
A Professor who made collections.
A Prince who enjoyed himself.
A great Hunter.
A roaring, tearing tar of a Captain.
A Mate with an enquiring turn of mind.
A Sagaman who made history.
A Parson.
The Belle of a Ball in seal-skin pantaloons.
Other Ladies in the same condition.
Also a Boat's Crew.
Parliamentarians who smelled fishy.
Others equally agreeable.
The northernmost White Man and his family.
Numerous Governors.
Officers and Sailors unlimited.
A Raven.
An Antiquarian.
A Witch.
A Doctor.
Two Enemies called 'Cook' and 'Steward.'
A Cabin-boy who woke up once.
Ladies from Denmark.
A great many other People.
Dogs, Polar Bears, and other Animals.
A Devil's Thumb.

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P R E F A C E.



THE following pages are a record of a visit to Greenland, made in the summer of 1869, with a small party of friends, in the steam-yacht of Mr. William Bradford, whose widely-celebrated pictures of Arctic scenery have received such deserved commendation; for, whether we consider the difficulties of the subject which that artist has undertaken, or the unusual exposures and hazards he has encountered, his success has been commensurate with his zeal, talent, and unflagging energy.

Since Mr. Bradford was desirous only of obtaining materials for his easel, the voyage was a leisurely one, being mostly near the coast, where halts were from time to time made at such places as presented special attractions to the painter. The summer was therefore devoted to the study of the picturesque rather than to the scientific; yet numerous opportunities were afforded in the latter direction, especially with respect to observing the formation of Greenland glaciers and icebergs—subjects which have not hitherto received much attention.

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Facilities never before enjoyed by Americans were also obtained for visiting the site of the colonies of the ancient Northmen, who occupied that country from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries, and whose restless love of adventure led them even so far from their native homes as our own shores, at least five hundred years before the renowned voyage of Columbus.

Our range of the Greenland coast was more than a thousand miles, terminating a good way beyond the last outpost of civilisation on the globe, in the midst of the much dreaded 'ice-pack' of Melville Bay.

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PART I.



‘Out upon time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be;
What we have seen our sons shall see—
Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay.’

BYRON'S Siege of Corinth.