

a description of the sublime spectacle presented by the Midnight Sun at Spitzbergen.*

He speaks of the stillness, the deadness, and impassability of the scene as its most striking feature. Ice, and rock, and water were everywhere around him; not a sound of any kind interrupted the silence; the sea did not break upon the shore; no bird or any living thing was visible; the midnight sun—by this time muffled in a transparent mist—shed an awful, mysterious lustre on glacier and mountain; no atom of vegetation gave token of the earth's vitality; a universal numbness and dumbness seemed to pervade the solitude.

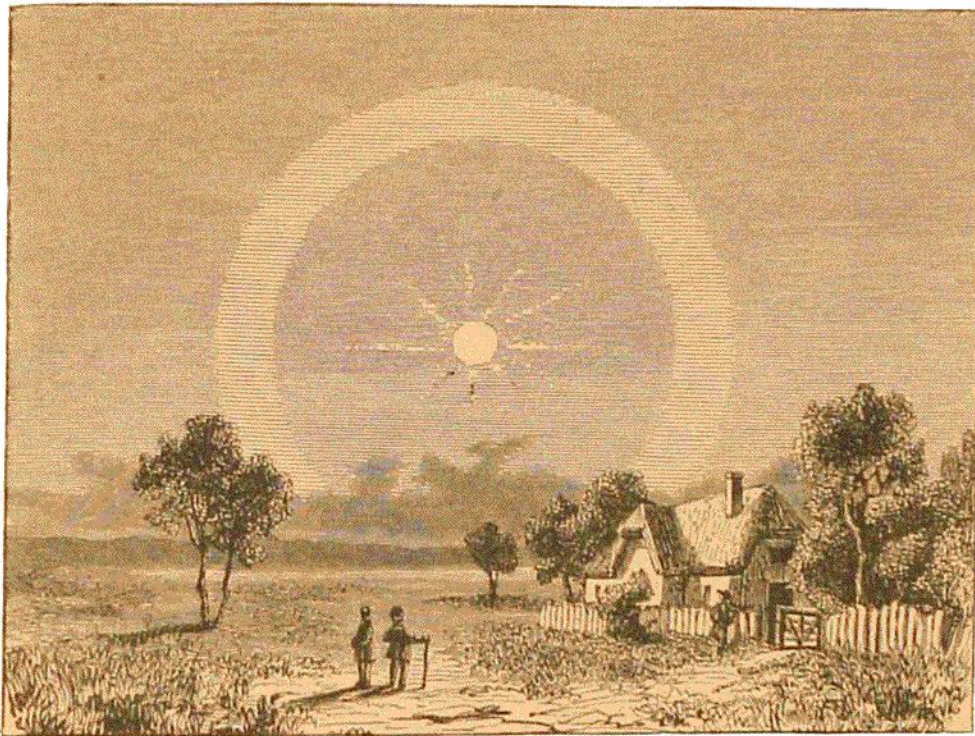


FIG. 234.—HALO IN NORWAY.

In scarcely any other part of the world is this appearance of deadness so strikingly exhibited.]

When the sun or moon is visible in the polar regions, the sphere very frequently appears surrounded by *halos*, or accompanied by the phenomena of *parhelia*, *anthelia*, and the like. Often a host of these meteors will simultaneously illuminate the heavens, as if the gods of the old Norsemen were holding high festival.

Such is a general view of the wonders of the Polar Seas. Let us now consider those which are peculiar to either pole.

* [Lord Dufferin, "Letters from High Latitudes," p. 192.]