

sky from the arc to the zenith was aflame. It flickered and blazed, it whirled round like a whirlwind (moving with the sun), rays darted backward and forward, now red and reddish-violet, now yellow, green, and dazzling white; now the rays were red at the bottom and yellow and green farther up, and then again this order was inverted. Higher and higher it rose; now it came on the north side of the zenith too; for a moment there was a splendid corona, and then it all became one whirling mass of fire up there; it was like a whirlpool of fire in red, yellow, and green, and the eye was dazzled with looking at it. It then drew across to the northern sky, where it remained a long time, but not in such brilliancy. The arc from which it had sprung in the south was still visible, but soon disappeared. The movement of the rays was chiefly from west to east, but sometimes the reverse. It afterwards flared up brightly several times in the northern sky; I counted as many as six parallel bands at one time, but they did not attain to the brightness of the former ones.

“And this is Christmas-day! There are family dinners going on at home. I can see the dignified old father standing smiling and happy in the doorway to welcome children and grandchildren. Out-of-doors the snow is falling softly and silently in big flakes; the young folk come rushing in fresh and rosy, stamp the snow off their feet in the passage, shake their things and hang them up, and then enter the drawing-room, where the