

ship on the evening of 14 April 1912 forms the climax to the story. The iceberg (quite a small one according to a later sighting from a German liner) begins its life in 1910 in Jakobshavn Ice Fjord. From there with hundreds of companions it drifts north up the east side of Baffin Bay. On its way it encounters Knud Rasmussen, hunting for seals and folk tales; the whaleship *Morning* on her last season of bowhead-hunting in Melville Bay; the Polar Eskimos hunting seals, bears and dovekies; and Captain Bernier on sovereignty patrol in the *Arctic*. By 1911 it is drifting south off Baffin island and runs into Forsyth-Grant, the pirate sealer, who is lost with all his crew after trying to rob a trading post. It runs aground on the Funk Islands, drifting free in time to sail through the 1912 Newfoundland seal hunt. Then it drifts far southward in a streamer of drift ice which stretches away off the Tail of the Bank into the shipping lanes.

Meanwhile the well-known story of the *Titanic* is retold through the eyes of her passengers, from first class to steerage. On a calm, clear night, with sea ice around her and with radio reports of icebergs coming from other ships hove-to for the night, *Titanic* continues at full speed, an act of appalling seamanship on the part of her captain. The shortage of lifeboats is a product of outdated Board of Trade regulations designed to apply to much smaller ships. The tragedy is a monument to British complacency. Dick Brown is an ornithologist who has sailed the polar seas, north and south. The iceberg's story is an attractive vehicle by which he introduces the reader to the history and wildlife of the Canadian Arctic. Re-telling the *Titanic* story is also a timely service; now that she has been photographed on the seabed it is well to remember how completely unnecessary was her loss. (Peter Wadhams, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

EARLY ACCOUNT OF THE TLINGIT OF ALASKA

TLINGIT INDIANS OF ALASKA. Kamenskii, Archimandrite A., translated and edited by Sergei Kan. (Rasmussen Library Historical Translation Series 2). 1985. Fairbanks, University of Alaska Press. 166 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-912006-18-18. US\$15.00.

The Rasmussen Library has followed up the excellent edition of Holmberg's *Ethnographic sketches* with this equally excellent version of Kamenskii's material on the Tlingit. An indigenous group of great significance to the social history of Alaska, the Tlingit often acted as middlemen between interior natives and traders from abroad. Kamenskii was a Russian Orthodox priest who arrived in Sitka after the sale of Alaska in 1895. This was the period just before the Klondike gold rush, which did much to transform Alaska and its native peoples. Kamenskii was not a 'neutral' social scientist, and much of Tlingit society, especially the matrilineal basis of its social structure, met with his disapproval. As we might expect, he was also adamantly opposed to shamanism. However, in the course of attacking these features of Tlingit culture and society, he also gives us some important information, and this monograph, translated from the Russian edition published in 1906, is a significant example of the Orthodox perspective on native life. Whilst there is much on which we might disagree with Kamenskii, this is a sensitive translation of an important historical document. The editors of the series in which it appears deserve both our congratulations and our gratitude for making a hitherto obscure account so available. (Ian Whitaker, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada V5A 1S6.)