but a few heaps of sand beneath the water marked the spot, and at these my men worked patiently for many days. Complete as was our search, however, we only succeeded in finding a portion of a broken chariot wheel, which immediately fell to pieces, and the tablet you see before you. It remains for you to read its secret.

The words of Sir John wrought my curiosity to the highest pitch, and the strangely familiar lines of the face upon the stone haunted me night and day. At night, as though under the influence of some spell, I would leave my bed to study the tablet, to twist the letters about in every possible way, until at last, by the aid of frequent references to a copy of the Rosetta stone which I found on board, I thus, and I have every reason to think, correctly translated the markings upon it:

O King, live forever. Know, O King, that to me, L—dia E. P—nkhan, born in the third year of the reign of thy predecessor, has been given to add another and greater one to the plagues which have been sent upon thee! Waking or sleeping, my face shall haunt thee, thou or thy people shall have no rest from me, nor thy descendants to the last generation. Selah!

CHAPTER VII.

All this time the plesiosaurus had been slowly but steadily moving toward the north. This and the fact that it was early summer made me think that Sir John was falling a prey to his old passion for Arctic exploration. I said nothing, but watched him closely. He seemed moody and abstracted. One day he would spend in carefully measuring with the sine galvanometer the amount of electricity stored up in the battery, or else in examining with the same care the condition of the stores on board; the next he would arrange his collections with a feverish activity, as though trying to drive something from his mind. After a few days of this mental struggle he said to me one morning, as we were passing Cape Chudleigh on our way into Davis Strait:

"It is useless, Professor, for me to try to deceive either you or myself any longer. We are on our way to the pole."

The sudden announcement neither surprised nor disturbed me. I had been prepared for it for several days, and I was quite aware of the futility of escape. I therefore merely said,

"Is the plesiosaurus in a condition to enter upon so serious a journey?"

"Everything is ready and in perfect condition," replied Sir John. "I have had this plan in mind for years, and have only been deterred from entering upon it by the want of a companion to make life bearable through the long Arctic nights. Such a companion I have found in you."

"I am in your power, Sir John, and must of necessity accompany you. With the chances for success which we have, however, I can truly say that I do it with all my heart."

Sir John became enthusiastic and communicated his high spirits to all on board. Every preparation possible was made. The electrical apparatus was everywhere examined, and the large platinum sponges, which, by their resistance to the electrical current, warmed the interior of our craft, were so arranged as to give the greatest possible amount of heating surface. Nothing seemed lacking for success. The speed of the plesiosaurus was increased and each day found us from two and a half to three degrees nearer the Pole. Our advance would have been much greater had it not been for the circuitous nature of our path, which the numerous ice floes rendered necessary. The cold was nowhere very great, on account of the season of the year, and our suits of sealskin would have defied any temperature.

We passed with little difficulty up through Baffin's Bay and entered Jones Sound, intending to pass to the north of Parry Islands. As our main object was to reach the Pole, we stopped for little else; but each night found us on deck admiring and taking measurements of the beautiful aurora which, at times, half covered the sky. Light played strange antics in this lonely region. The effect of refraction was particularly noticeable; mirages and mock suns were of everyday appearance.

At the head of Jones Sound our course was stopped by an enormous ice-field, which stretched far away to the north. It was vain to attempt to go around it, or to wait for its breaking up; so after much hesitation Sir John decided to endeavor to pass beneath the floe. Then the advantages of our strange boat became strikingly apparent. Hardly a movement of the knobs and