

the discussion of matters that would be classed as "gossippy."

The youth of civilization, when seeking a partner for life, sets up an ideal character in his mind, with certain characteristics which are essential, and then, quite often, marries someone without any of them. The Eskimo, although not perhaps such an idealogue, insists upon his materialized ideal possessing certain traits: she should be fat, for choice; she is certain to be hard-working; she *must* have good teeth. Teeth, anywhere, are a convenience; amongst Eskimo women they are an essential. It would be like depriving the seamstress of her work-box, for an Eskimo woman to have the toothache. She would be as a drug upon the matrimonial market did she show any incipient signs of weakness in this department, for every article of wearing apparel which is made out of the seal or walrus-hide has to be patiently chewed in the mouth to bring it to the condition required to receive the stitches, as a piece of such a hide, is about as unmanageable, before undergoing this process, as a piece of sheet-iron would be—not if either were to be operated upon by a cold-chisel—but as far as the effects on it of a needle are concerned, and I can assure my audience that they can have but a faint idea of the amount of chewing which is required to keep even the smallest Eskimo family in boots, to say nothing of the remaining articles of attire. Even when the boot is made, it gets hardened with use, so that in wearing they are constantly subjected to this re-juvenating process. If you are paying them a visit, and they wish to show you the highest form of civility, the father will say, "Ung-ar-low (one of the children), remove this gentleman's boots, and give them to your mother to chew"; and there, whilst you are about your business, will this patient being sit, taking a dis-

jointed part in your conversation, at such moments as her occupation will permit.

I have described their kyacks, or water vehicles; let me describe their "kom-mit-ticks," or winter sleighs. Fashioned as our sleighs are with "runners," of about ten to twelve feet long, secured by cross-pieces securely lashed to them, made out of drift-wood, or the wreck of some unfortunate vessel; they are shod with bone, just in the same way that our sleighs are with iron. This bone shoeing, when they are travelling, is covered with a film of ice by squirting water over it, and smoothing the surface rapidly with the hands whilst it is in the act of freezing, so as to ensure an even surface. You would be astonished at the length of time that this ice covering will last; once in a day's march being generally sufficient to renew it, which they do from water that they carry with them in a bag made of seal-skin, which has been wrapped away amongst a heap of furs to keep it from freezing. Into this sleigh are harnessed from ten to possibly fourteen dogs, each attached to a separate line of white-porpoise hide; the leader on the longest line, and the rest in pairs, one on either side of the leader's line, and the pairs one behind the other on lines of the necessary length. This is the theoretical arrangement, and to some extent the arrangement on starting, but, once started, the dogs arrange themselves in a fan-shaped way, and cross from one side to the other either to change the direction of the hauling strain, or out of sheer perversity. The whole is controlled by the Eskimo's voice, and a perhaps more effective whip, which has a handle of eighteen inches in length, and a lash of eighteen or twenty feet. An Eskimo wields this weapon with unerring precision and effect; a white man with even greater effect, but with much less precision,