

LABRADOR: THE ESKIMOS.

walrus or the seal. In the winter, when the ice covers and conceals the seal-tribe, the Eskimos make themselves snow-huts, from which they watch the seals, as they come to the surface for air: when the spear, even through the ice, will still reach them.

The capture of a walrus, after a season of scarcity, is an occasion of vast rejoicing in an Eskimo village. Oil then abounds—every dwelling is lighted up:—and the flesh, cut up and distributed, furnishes many barbarous feasts. Yet Sir John Richardson, the Arctic traveller, says of these people:—“As to intelligence and susceptibility of civilization, I consider the Eskimos as ranking above the neighbouring Indian nations.” “The success of the Moravian Missionaries, in introducing printing and the arts of reading and writing among the population of the Labrador coast, is a strong inducement to attempt an extension of the same system of instruction to the multitudes that frequent the estuary of the Mackenzie.”

The Eskimos are said to line the coasts of the northern seas for nearly 5000 miles, “from the straits of Belleisle to the peninsula of Ataska.” “Traces of their encampments have been found as far north in the new world as Europeans have hitherto penetrated; and their capability of inhabiting these regions is chiefly owing to their use of blubber for food, and their use of ice and snow as building materials.”