

the bodies was determined is indisputably open to objection. "Watches and silver relics," writes Vice-admiral Sir George Richards, "do not necessarily indicate a corresponding number of officers. Such light valuable articles would naturally be taken by the survivors."

But the point which has provoked more criticism than all the rest is the native evidence that the distressed crews were in the last resort reduced to cannibalism. This is set down just as it was heard, being worth neither more nor less than any testimony on an event which happened so many years ago. Between the risk of giving pain to living relatives, and the reproach of having suppressed essential parts of the story, no traveller should hesitate for an instant. Dr. John Rae, the veteran of Franklin search parties, writes to the author in the following words: "As my name is mentioned in connection with the subject of cannibalism, I must state that when I came home in 1854 I felt bound to report in as condensed a form as possible all the information given us by the Esquimaux, including the most painful part. I would have felt it my duty to do this even had my dearest friends been among the lost ones, for had I withheld any part of the sad story, it would have come to light through my men, and I should have been accused, with some show of justice, of garbling my report. I consider it no reproach, when suffering the agony to which extreme hunger subjects some men, for them to do what the Esquimaux tell us was done. Men so placed are no more responsible for their actions