

than others. The men in these wealthy families, as might be supposed, were either physically stronger or better hunters than their fellows.

Very few Eskimo who had become useless by age or accident were met with and those that were seen appeared to be a great burden upon their people, and although they were treated with great kindness while food was plentiful it required no great prophet to predict their death by starvation at any time when food was scarce.

Early in spring, when for many days we had not been visited by an Eskimo, and supposing they had left this part of the coast, I wandered over to a deserted village and entering an igloo was surprised to find an old woman and her son apparently dying from starvation, and from them learned that a crippled man and his child were in the same condition in another igloo near by. Here was a worse case than the first, for with a little strengthening food we were enabled to move the woman and her son to an igloo near the station, but the man was too far gone, nor would he allow his child to be taken from him. Each day food, and a large piece of snow was put by his side, and although unable to use his arms, his child, a little girl three years old, fed him. Days went by and little improvement could be noticed in his condition, and one afternoon when it had been thawing I walked over to the igloo. Calling as usual as I approached, I received no answer and coming nearer found the roof of the igloo had fallen in, and there he lay with marbled face, his eyes now fixed and turned to space, and his child lay sleeping by him. Wrapped in his bedding we placed the body between a crevice in the rock and covered it with stones, this being the usual mode of burial with the Eskimo. The child was given in charge of the woman and son, and for some time all were dependent upon us for food. Through neglect the child soon died, and this recalls to my mind a sad scene, but it is needless to relate it here.

Eskimo opinions upon theological questions are not easily obtained and undoubtedly their faith in all their beliefs is extremely weak, for when asked to explain they would laugh and would tell you they only performed any of their rites because other Eskimo did so. Another difficulty to contend with is their extreme shyness or fear of being laughed at, for on this point they are most sensitive.