

Hospitality is so great among them that a stranger is, indeed, made welcome, and some of the women—as in the Marquesas, with regard to a poor, innocent missionary on landing there—are often very curious and inquisitive to know the cause of any refusal by strangers of kindness offered them.

The younger women are very communicative on once becoming friendly with a stranger. Possessed of extraordinary mental powers in some things, they will sketch out for you a coast-line, or pilot you about, remarkably accurate.

They are occasionally left to die, when their fate is doomed by the dictum of a wizard-man or medicine-doctor. Sometimes they are actually sealed up in a living tomb, with food and water placed within their reach. If in a week, on being visited, she is not dead, the wizard-man or woman is again consulted, and the door once more sealed, if so ordered, and the poor creature is left to die alone, while the husband, even before the breath has gone, gets another wife.

These people are very superstitious. Their dances and ceremonies are all intended to please, to cajole, or to frighten certain spirits that they dread. A most curious ceremony came under the observation of Doctor Simpson. It was performed at the village, in the course of one winter, when food had become scarce, in consequence of the ice continuing very close, from a continuance of northwesterly winds. On the sea-beach, near one of the dancing-houses, a small space was cleared, and a fire of wood made, round which the men formed a ring, and chaunted for some time, without dancing or the usual accompaniment of the tambourine. One of the old men then stepped towards the fire, and, in a coaxing voice, tried to persuade the evil genius, from whose baleful influence the people were suffering, to come under the fire to warm himself. When he was supposed to have arrived, a vessel of water, to which each man present had contributed, was thrown upon the fire by the old man, and immediately a number of arrows sped from the bows of the others into the earth where the fire

had been, in the full belief that no twin'-gak (or spirit) would stop at a place where he had received such bad treatment, but would depart to some other region, from which, on being detected, he would be driven away in a similar manner.

The women are more poetically superstitious than the men. The firmament above, they consider to be filled with fiery bodies, as proved in their estimation by the shooting stars, which they look upon as portions thrown off by fixed ones. They form them into groups, and give them names, many of which they explain. And here again the women show more intellectual power than the men, being better astronomers as well as geographers.

The star Aldebaran, with the cluster of the Hyades and other smaller ones around, are called Pa-chukh'-lu-rin—"the sharing out" of food; the chief star representing a Polar Bear just killed, and the others the hunters, around, preparing to cut up their prize, and give each hunter his portion. The three stars in Orion's Belt are three men who were carried away on the ice to the southward, in the dark winter. They were, for a long time, covered with snow, but at length, perceiving an opening above them, they ascended further and further, until they became fixed among the stars. Another group is called the "house-building," and represents a few people engaged in constructing a winter hut.

Invisible spirits people the earth, the air, and the sea. Some are good, some bad. Sometimes they are seen, and resemble the upper half of a man, but are likewise in many other forms. Ghosts they believe in. Once two young girls, going from a ship, in the short twilight of a winter's day, turned back in breathless haste on seeing a sledge set up on end near the path to the village. They fancied the sledge was an evil spirit.

They believe in spiritual influences, as may be inferred from the following: A man was once carried away by the ice, during the time one of the exploring ships was in the vicinity. His wife then had a long, thin thong of seal-skin stretched in four or five turns around the walls of her