

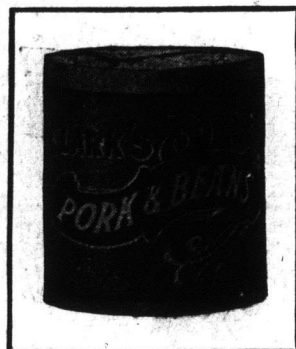
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They are cooked ready—simply warm up the can before opening

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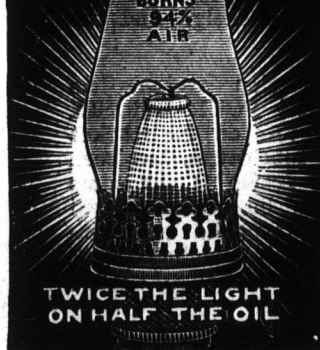
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are permitted. A brief recital of a few of these is enough to show how hard, after all, is the way of the goodly Eskimo who lives up to his beliefs in their entirety.

When the men are away hunting sea animals; such as the walrus, seal or polar bear, the women must do no work upon hides of land animals. Also, when the men are hunting land animals the taboo works vice versa. The men must do no work on iron until three days after hunting the polar bear. The first seal killed must not be brought through the door of the igloo, but a special hole cut for its entrance. Before bringing the seal in, a knife is run into its dead eyes, to prevent its soul seeing the interior of the home—or some such reason; it is very often difficult to exactly understand their explanation of certain things. Too, when the men are hunting on the ice, the women must touch none of the bedding in the igloos for fear of causing ice cracks to make open water and cut the men off from land. But one could go on endlessly, and still overlook some of the things that the poor Eskimo must not do. In comparison, the religion of Christianity, be it Protestant or Catholic in faith, is a sinecure.

To call such things by the name of religion, may seem to many as rather far fetched. But, as far as I can see, this is about all the religion these people have. Their idea of a hereafter is very vague in conception, but in many ways resembles the Indians; in that after death the body still lives on having corporeal wants, which are, however, always supplied abundantly in a marvellous land of game and fur. When an Eskimo man dies, his body is carefully wrapped in furs. It is then buried under a great cairn of stones, probably for the reason that the ground is nearly always too hard frozen for a grave to be dug, or too rocky and hard for their primitive digging tools. At least, I have never heard any spiritual reason advanced for it. Around the grave is placed all the dead man's guns, knives, his kayak and lamp and food cooking utensils. A tall pole is erected among the stones, to which at the top is attached some rags or moss. This, latter, blowing in the breeze, fends off evil spirits. For five days after the man's death, his nearest of kin, generally the oldest son, goes daily to the grave and holds a one sided conversation with the corpse. This is to keep the spirit of the deceased from getting lonely, for it is not supposed to leave its earthly shell until five days after death. At the end of this time, no further communications are held. Then, also, the goods of the dead man may be removed, as these are only needed for a few minutes while he makes his journey to the next world. These things, boat, rifles, etc., may be disposed of by relatives of the deceased to Indians or white men, but on no account to any other Eskimo. So, in case whites or Indians do not happen to be in the vicinity, the things are destroyed. In the case of a woman, or young person, such rites are not adhered to, women being an inferior animal according to Eskimo standards, which same shows the crying need of a visit to that land of a Mrs. Pankhurst, or Nellie McClung, to preach the gospel of suffrage.

Their principal deity is known as Nuliyok. However, unlike most deities, Nuliyok was of human origin, being a beautiful Eskimo maiden. Around her is woven the Eskimo tale of the creation of the water animals, and the why of the different races of people. The first tale is a very interesting one. In fact they both are, but the second, like so many of the Eskimo legends deals with subjects that are impossible to re-tell in print. This fact, unfortunately, concerns practically all the folk-lore tales of the Eskimos. Many of their religious rites, known as an Angekok, are of highly indecent order, or so they seem, judged from civilized standards.

The first I can, however, give, also the manner in which I was able to hear it, for these folk-lore tales are only to be heard on certain auspicious occasions, when the relater is in the right mood, and the circumstances conducive to conversation.

"Icky Whoo!" Polniak said to me making a wry face, and then in English: "Blizzard come purty soon." Promptly the dogs were turned loose, to immediately curl up near the corner of a drift where later the snow would cover them, but not so deeply as to cause danger of their being smothered. In a remarkably short space of time, twenty-five minutes

to be exact, Polniak and Atoomikseena, had thrown up an igloo, solid, permanent, strong, that would withstand the fiercest of Arctic storms. Then we crawled in, pulled the hole in after us, so to speak, and there lay holed up for three long days, while the blizzard roared without. Often times, during those three days, I could have sworn the storm was over, so quiet and soundless was it inside the igloo. But every time I ventured to suggest a resuming of the journey, the men laughed. They knew better. To convince me, Polniak cut a small hole through to the outside, and instantly the roar of the storm struck my ears and a fine powdery snow drove through the aperture.

So we lay in our sleeping bags, and smoked and talked. Such are the times when your Eskimo will tell you stories, and among the many that he related was the tale of Nuliyok, and how the world came to have certain animals. The interpretation of the story is mine, as Polniak's English, though good, what there was of it, was still rather limited.

"Nuliyok was a beautiful Eskimo maiden living on the shores of Hudson Bay. Nourak, the god of the gulls, fell in love with her. But Nuliyok's father, Anautlick, was opposed to the match. But one day when he was away, the gull, in the form of a beautiful young man, came for Nuliyok and carried her away in a boat. When Anautlick arrived home, he at once set off in pursuit in his kayak. Being a very swift paddler,



Tallest Eskimo in the world on right, 6 ft. 2 in. Living at Herschel Island.

he quickly caught up to the eloping pair. Just as he came abreast, the cowardly gull, instead of defending his loved one, once more changed back into his original shape and flew away. Nuliyok was then forced to climb into her father's boat. But the gull controlled the storms, and in revenge immediately caused a great blow to come on. Anautlick's boat was not built for carrying two people so to save himself he threw his daughter overboard. But Nuliyok clung on desperately to the boat's side, threatening the boat with capsizing. In anger and fear her father drew his knife and slashed off the first joint of her fingers. These dropped into the sea, and from them sprang the race of 'natchuk,' the hair seal. Still the girl clung on. Next the father slashed off the fingers to the second knuckle, and from them came 'oog joug,' the ground seal. When she still clung after this, her father cut off the rest of the fingers to the last knuckle, from whence sprang 'ivik,' the whale. Then, being unable to longer grip the side of the kiak, Nuliyok sank to the bottom of the sea, where she became the goddess of the sea animals. To her all the souls of the animals go after death."

Crude as this legend is, it still, in many ways resembles some of the legends of the ancient Greeks in its conception.

Missionaries are to-day to be found in many parts of the Canadian Arctic. Perhaps one of the principal ones worthy of mention is the Reverend C. E. Whitaker of Fort McPherson who has been in the country for a good many years