

because of the safety afforded them by their innumerable articles of fur-clothing. I used to pretend not to mind it, principally because the Eskimo, having a high sense of humor, I was afraid of increasing their desire to witness the operation of my flight, in more than the unavoidable occasions.

The Eskimo uses his gun as little as possible, because of the extravagant cost of its charge. Wherever possible he use his spear. In winter-time, when the deeper bays are frozen over, he has an opportunity of doing so: for then the seal feeding within its waters, has to keep certain holes open in the surface of the ice, to serve the purpose of breathing; and alongside these, the patient Eskimo will watch all day, without a move, awaiting the seal's necessity and his own opportunity. If the seals have not made holes for this purpose the Eskimo will make them for him, and trust to their being convenient to the seals purpose and his own. He generally finds that the seals have one or two in use in each of these large bays spoken of; but it shortly happens that the seals, missing their companions through this means of exit from the watery world, become too timid to use so apparent a trap, and seek either the outside waters, or some other bay. The Eskimo then goes in search of a position where the seals are likely to have to pass quite frequently, and where, being passengers, the abstraction of one of their number will not raise alarm amongst the others, who will be coming later. He therefore chooses some strait between an island and the main-land, of considerable length so that the passing seals will find the hole he has cut in the surface of the ice, sufficient of a convenience, to permit of his running the risk in any attempt at appearing out of his element. This hole is cut by the Eskimo, by means of a spike which he has on the end of his spear. Having made it, he throws a slight covering of snow over the surface of the water within, to prevent the seal catching a glimpse of him before he has come within spearing-distance. Then crouching about armslength away from the hole, he waits, without a move (which may be made at the very instant when a seal is approaching and so give a warning which would lose him his game,) till he hears the scratching of the seals flippers as he works his way up