

# LITTLE FOLKS

[For the 'Messenger.'

## Queer, But Still Our Brothers.

It would be hard to find, I am sure, a single boy or girl who would like to change places with a little Eskimo, and yet the boys and girls in the Eskimo huts enjoy themselves very much after their own fashion.

They live in houses very different from ours. In summer these are tents made of walrus hide. Did you ever see a walrus? You have seen pictures of one, surely. If not, watch out for one in every picture book or paper you get and you will surely see one before long.



ESKIMO ON BOARD THE MISSION SCHOONER.

The walrus is a great friend of the Eskimo. You wouldn't think so if you saw the Eskimo spearing every one they can get near, but when you think that the walrus supplies the skin for summer houses, for all sorts of other purposes, even for covering their boats, meat for their people and their dogs, strong thongs to harness their dogs to the sledges, bone for knives and needles and many more things too numerous to mention, you are not surprised that the Eskimo is very fond of his good friend the walrus.

In winter, the Eskimo live in igloos or dome-shaped houses made from blocks of snow. The door into these houses is very small and generally has a long passage leading up to it, along which you have to crawl if you want to get in. In these houses are raised platforms,

also of snow, which covered with sealskins, fox skins and bear skins, make very cosy beds. Often a number of igloos will be joined together by the snow passages, one of the larger rooms being used as a kitchen, the rest as sleeping rooms. In the coldest part of winter, the boys and girls may safely climb all over the tops of the houses, but when the short summer is coming on and the snow gets soft, lots of scolding has to be done to keep frisky lads and lasses off the roof. In spite of all this, sometimes, I am told, a luckless chap will come down—crash—through the kitchen roof,

bringing down with him an avalanche of snow, and perhaps a couple of dogs on top of everything and everyone.

The Eskimo live mostly on raw meat, flesh of seal and other animals. In fact that is what their name means, 'raw meat eaters.' That does not sound nice to us, but really it shows the very wonderful way in which God has provided for these people who live where it would be very hard to get the wood needed to cook their food, if they had to do so.

Their clothing seems almost the oddest thing about these strange people—all made of skins, and often edged handsomely with soft fur as a trimming. It is cut out with a bone knife, sewn with a bone needle and fine strips of skin, then, to make it soft, the women chew the inside

of the entire suit. A long skin coat, a pair of leggings and boots of seal skin, fur hood and mittens, all help to keep out the severe cold. In the worst part of winter they wear two full suits of fur, one with the soft side in, the other with the soft side out. Women and men dress much alike, but the women have an extra fur hood or sack in which the baby may be carried.

From the time they are very small, the Eskimo boy and girl learn to go on the water in very curious boats, made of walrus hide stretched over a frame made of wood or whalebone. The man's boat or kayah holds only one, is covered in at the top, all but the opening to let the owner sit in. When once in, he laces his oilskin coat (made from the inner skin of the seal) down over the opening, and then even if he gets upset by a walrus or in any other way, not a drop of water gets in. If he is clever, he often can turn a somersault in the water, boat and all. I don't think any of us could beat that, do you?

A good many of the Eskimo live along the coast of Labrador, where Dr. Grenfell spends so much of his time. Generally now they live in little villages near some good Moravian missionary, who teaches them all about the Father in Heaven who loves them and wants them to love Him.

While Dr. Grenfell is sailing up and down the coast to help the poor fishermen, he goes to these Eskimo villages, too, and always doctors any who may be sick, or takes them away to the hospital with him, so that they, as well as the fishermen, are glad to see the 'Stratheona' and count the hospital people among their best friends. Who knows but what some day or other, they will put into that cot we are going to have in one of the mission hospitals which Dr. Grenfell has built, a very sick little Eskimo boy or girl? And as the child finds his pain growing less, and strength coming back, don't you think his smiles of happiness will show how glad he is that in the homes of those children far away some loving little hearts sent