

In speaking of the moral side of the Eskimo's character it is needless to repeat the many disgusting stories that have been told so often. It is sufficient to know that according to our standard of morality they are immoral, but from what we know of other races we must admit that they at least are comparatively virtuous savages. Even our morality in which we boast seems to have the effect of corrupting what little virtue the savage possesses when it comes in contact with him and we may say, nowhere is this so distinctly seen as among the Eskimo. On the north side of the strait where vessels often call on their way to and from Hudson's Bay exchange of wives is sometimes practiced, while on the south side where there is little or no intercourse with these vessels such a thing was never heard of, and it is well known to those interested that sailors who were allowed to act much as they liked on the north side were met with virtuous scorn by those living on the south shore.

At cape Prince of Wales a few Eskimo had three wives, several had two, but the greater number by far had only one, and there were several old bachelors.

In nearly all cases the best hunters have the most wives, and a widow who is the strongest and best worker stands the best chance of marrying again if she is so disposed, especially if she has sons, for they are considered a source of strength to a household while daughters are looked upon as a weakness.

Although in most cases a second wife is taken through affection for her in many instances it is undoubtedly done in charity and there is one peculiar law or custom among those met with in the Strait that may be worth relating. If a married Eskimo has been considered only worthy of death for some offence the man who undertakes to execute him becomes responsible for his wife and children. The woman becomes the wife of the murderer, and her children are treated with kindness by him. Two instances of this strange custom came under my notice, one of which was that of my favourite Ugaluk who informed me that some years ago there lived a bad Eskimo who would not work, but stole from everybody, and he undertook to do away with him. While in friendly conversation he stabbed him and carrying his body out on his kyak dropped it into the sea. His wife and three children now live with Ugaluk, and although she stands in