

PREFACE.

The following account of the life of the Labrador Eskimo is the result of a trip undertaken in the season of 1914 to the coasts of Labrador, for the Geological Survey of Canada. As the author had already an intimate knowledge of the general culture of the Eskimo from a three years' residence among them in Alaska, an attempt was made to cover as much territory as possible, so as to get a comprehensive view of the culture of the Eskimo of the entire coast of the Labrador peninsula, and to note its variations from other sections. With this end in view, the early part of the summer was spent in Sandwich bay and Hamilton inlet, in an endeavour to ascertain the southern limit of the Labrador Eskimo, and the remainder of the summer and autumn in company with the Carnegie Magnetic Expedition¹ which continued up the coast as far as Cape Chidley, and then visited both sides of Hudson strait, and the east coast of Hudson bay as far south as Cape Dufferin. This completed the circuit of the Labrador peninsula. The west coast of Hudson bay, between Port Churchill and Chesterfield inlet, was also visited, as well as several islands in the bay. A considerable ethnological and archæological collection was obtained from these districts.

This paper does not attempt to offer a complete ethnology of the Labrador Eskimo, but to bring out the main facts of their life, and particularly those differences which mark them off as a separate division of the Eskimo world. After all, the ethnological divisions of the Eskimo are geographical rather than cultural. The author has drawn on his own experience for comparisons with the western Eskimo and on standard authors for other sections.

The ethnological literature on the Labrador Eskimo is scanty and devoted to sections of Labrador rather than to the Eskimo of the Labrador peninsula as a whole. Turner's interesting account is limited to Ungava; the Moravian writers have given us some descriptions of Eskimo life on the east coast,

¹Thanks are due to Captain Peters, leader of the expedition, for many courtesies.