



On the cover, *Howling Spirit and Its Young*, green stone, from Cape Dorset. Above, *Bird's Beak*, stone and inlays, from Port Harrison. A review of two books on Eskimo sculpture begins on page 11.

People have a number of strange ideas about the Eskimos. One of the strangest is that they are a little-known people. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Ever since the Eskimos were discovered, people have been writing about them. There are a number of detailed scholarly accounts covering almost every aspect of the life of several Eskimo groups. There are some general accounts and a fair number of novels. These books are an interesting mixture of fact and fiction, of understanding and misunderstanding. The reader's problem is that of distinguishing the one from the other.

So much has been written about the Eskimos it is difficult to retain a sense of proportion. In fact there are only about 80,000 Eskimos in the whole world — and fewer than 17,000 of these are in Canada. The population of the world is increasing by about 100,000 every day — each day the number of people in the world increases by many more than the whole Eskimo population.

They are the only native people who live in both Asia and America. They live on both sides

of the Iron Curtain, and form part of four nations, Russia, the United States, Canada and Denmark.

Most Eskimos call themselves "Inuit", which simply means "men". The word "Eskimo" to describe a member of this race appears to be Algonquin Indian for "raw-meat eater". They have their own language, spoken by themselves and by nobody else; they are a distinctive physical type; and they have a culture which is uniquely their own.

[THE ESKIMO LANGUAGE]

The Eskimo language is not related to any North American Indian language and appears, in fact, to be unrelated to any other group of languages, though attempts have been made to show a connection with Uralian and with Indo-European. The grammar is very complicated, and the meaning of words can be modified by adding suffixes. For instance, *tuktoo* means "a caribou"; *tuktoojuak* is "a big caribou", *tuktoojuakseokniak* "will hunt a big caribou"; *tuktoojuakseokniakpunga* is