

rence of stealing from each other, as any nation upon earth, and therefore keep nothing under lock and key; but leave all so free that every body may come at it without any fear of losing it.

They are, however, charged with having no idea of a God, and some authors have said that their language has not any expression to denote a Supreme Being; though they themselves acknowledge, that they are convinced of the immortality of the soul, and believe that as soon as a person dies he goes to the land of spirits, and there enjoys the felicity of hunting from age to age; while the body remains behind and moulders in the dust.

They maintain that there is a spirit which they call *Torngarfuk*, to whom they ascribe a supernatural power, though not the creation of the world. The *Angakuts*, or prophets, form very whimsical ideas of this being, some representing him as without form or shape, others giving him that of a bear, and others pretending that he has a large body and but one arm. They assign him his abode in the lower regions of the earth, where they tell you is constantly fine sun-shine weather, good water, deer, and fowls in abundance. They likewise maintain that a spirit resides in the air, whom they name the *Moderator*, or *Restraint*; for these *Angakuts* pretend, by his order, to command the people to abstain from certain things, as preservatives from evil and danger. They also believe that there are spirits who govern the elements.

Their notions of the heavenly bodies are also very whimsical; they say the moon was once a young man, and the sun a young woman his sister, with whom he was familiar in the dark; but that she being desirous to find out her lover, rubbed her hands with soot, with which she marked his white bear-skin coat, and hence they say came the spots in the moon. The sun flying from his embraces, ascended the air, whither the moon followed her, and still continues to pursue, without being able to overtake her; but this is probably only a fiction of their poets, like those of *Ovid* in his *Metamorphoses*, who also represents the loves of *Diana* and *Endymion*.

They do not compute or measure their time by weeks or years, but only by months, beginning their computation from the sun's first rising above their horizon in the winter, from whence they tell the moons, in order to know exactly the season in which every sort of fish, sea-animals, or birds, seek the land, that by this knowledge

they may regulate their different employments. According to their astronomical system, the heavens turn around the point of a huge rock.

What seems most extraordinary in these people, thus seated in frozen regions, which might be supposed to damp the genius and extinguish the fire of imagination, is their talent for poetry, in which they take extreme delight. The poems they compose are a kind of lyric odes, the harmony of which depends both upon rhyme and quantity, there being a visible regularity in the number of syllables of which their verses are composed, and a plain regard to cadence even in their manner of reading them. They use this sort of poetry, which, all things considered, is as far from being rude, as it is from being exact, to express all their passions, such as love, joy, grief, but more especially anger; for when two people quarrel in this country, it is said they challenge each other, not to fight, for that they never do but in jest, or by way of diversion, but to contend in verse; and he who first wants words to express himself in this poetical duel, is held to be conquered, and so the controversy ends without either blood or law-suit.

Mr. *Egede*, who was sent to Greenland by the Danish Society for propagating the Gospel, lived among this people fifteen years, which he spent with the most indefatigable zeal and laborious application, by which means he made a great number of converts. He returned to Copenhagen in 1736, and by his solicitation a seminary was founded in that city for educating able missionaries and catechists to be sent to Greenland. The Mission-college also sends young lads to Greenland to learn the language, and to be instructed by the missionaries there, in order to qualify them for that station.

The Greenland trade is at present carried on by the Copenhagen company, who send thither three or four ships every year, and the Dutch are prohibited from coming within several miles of their colonies. The commodities Greenland affords for commerce are whale-blubber, whale-bone, sea-unicorns horns, the skins of rein-deer, bears, seals, and fox-skins, which they barter for the following merchandizes; shirts made of white, blue, red, and striped linen, coarse woollen cloth; knives, saws, needles, large fishing-hooks, and other hard-ware; looking-glasses, rafts, poles, deal boards, chests, kettles of copper, brass, and tin, with other articles.

A NEW

known, three to
in the middle
over.

It is bounded
pole; on the ea
it from Greenl
which divides it
by the vast Se
Pacific ocean, w
bably another v
Japan, and the

It is very rem
rica are many d
in the same latit
is nearly in the
sufferably cold
frozen country
rence, and Cape