

NOTE 6.

Page 606. The same feast was celebrated in 1886 in Umanagtuag, in Cumberland Sound, where all the Talirpingmiut had gathered. The witnesses of this festival describe it exactly in the same way as I described it above. One thing ought to be added, which I did not mention because it seemed to me accidental, but as it was repeated in the same way in 1886 it must have some meaning. I noticed that the Qailertetang, after having invoked the wind, hop about, making a grunting noise and accosting the people. When doing so they are attacked by the natives and killed. According to the description of the whalers they imitate sometimes deer, sometimes walrus. Perhaps this fact gave rise to Kumlien's description of the "killing of the evil spirit of the deer." It is remarkable that in 1883 in Qeqerten, and in 1886 in Umanagtuag the festival was celebrated on exactly the same day, the 10th of November. This can hardly be accidental, and does not agree with the idea sometimes advanced, that the festival refers to the winter solstice. Unfortunately Hall (I, p. 528) does not give the dates of the festival in Nugumiut. On the western coast of Hudson Bay a festival in which masks were used was celebrated about the end of January, 1866 (Hall II, p. 219), but it is hardly possible to draw conclusions from Nourse's superficial account of Hall's observations.

NOTE 7.

Page 615. It may be of interest to learn that in 1885 and 1886 two instances of this kind occurred in Cumberland Sound. There was a very old woman in Qeqerten by the name of Qaxodloaping. She was well provided for by her relatives, but it seems that one of the most influential men in Qeqerten, Pakaq, whom I mentioned above (p. 668) as the executioner of a murderer, deemed it right that she should die. So, although she resisted him, he took her out of her hut one day to a hill and buried her alive under stones. Another case was that of an old woman whose health had been failing for a number of years. She lived with her son, whose wife died late in the autumn of 1886. According to the religious ideas of the Eskimo, the young man had to throw away his clothing. When, later on, his mother felt as though she could not live through the winter, she insisted upon being killed, as she did not want to compel her son to cast away a second set of clothing. At last her son complied with her request. She stripped off her outside jacket and breeches, and was conveyed on a sledge to a near island, where she was left alone to die from cold and hunger. The son who took her there did not use his own sledge nor any other Eskimo sledge for this purpose, but borrowed that of the Scottish whaling station.