

a collection of fairy tales. Thus: "After death human souls go either to the upper or the nether world. Those who go to the upper world will suffer from cold and famine, and these are called 'Arssarut,' or ball-players, on account of their playing at ball with a walrus-head, which gives rise to Aurora Borealis." Their view of life and the cosmos is simple and rational. Dr. Rink says: "Existence in general is accepted as a fact, without any speculation as to its primitive origin. Only the still acting powers concealed in Nature, and to which human life is subordinate, are taken into consideration."

Hans Egede, one of the earliest missionaries to Greenland, deplored the absence of any religion among the Eskimos, but he was compelled to admit that they had reached a good social order. It may, therefore, be assumed that, although the Eskimo was highly superstitious, yet his moral character was not dependent upon the fear with which he was apt to regard the influence of evil spirits.

The status of the women among the Eskimo is not an ideal one, but it is considerably superior to that prevailing in many Eastern countries. Morality is always relative in idea, and while the Eskimo is likely to be accused of gross conduct, it should be remembered that he alone was the author of his moral code, and his virtue lay in adhering to its mandates. A good estimate of his character may be gathered from this passage from Dr. Nansen: "In several respects, the morality of the heathen Eskimo stands considerably higher than that which one generally finds in Christian communities. As I have already pointed this out, I will here only remind the reader of their self-sacrificing love of their neighbors and their mutual happiness, to which, indeed, we find no parallel in European society. These virtues, however, are not unfrequently to be found among primitive peoples, and are probably in the main due to the simple structure of society."

It is not alone among the adults that such a good social order exists, for the children at an early age manifest the traits of their parents' characters. Nansen says he has joined them in their games, and he never heard any disagreement or saw an unkind action during the whole time he was among them, with one exception, and in that case the culprit was a cross between a native and a European.

Greenland, I regret to learn, is fast losing its reputation. All those good qualities which so appealed to the heart of the intrepid explorer are slowly, and it is to be feared surely, vanishing before the pernicious invasion of Christianity and its grim band of attendants.

The Christian's idea of chastity does not always strike the heathen or the savage as being a very excellent one; and however disappointed the prude may be in his attempts to convert the heathen to monogamy, he is rarely treated with the cold, simple-minded rebuff that the Eskimo gave the early civilizer. The Eskimo failed to see anything immoral in the mutual exchange of wives, nor did he perceive any brutality in the abrupt severance of marital relationship. If he became tired of his