

in a restricted area; not that an attempt is made to minimize the conservatism of the Eskimo—one sees and hears everywhere evidences of its being a conservatism well-nigh incomprehensible to members of our race. Language, processes, and modes of thought, furnish, however, more convincing evidences of a common origin in a restricted area than do songs, tales, isolated beliefs, and portable artifacts. The Alaskan Eskimo in our employ were not quite a year in contact with the people of Coronation gulf and Victoria island, yet there are few persons now in Coronation gulf that do not know one or more songs from Port Clarence, Alaska, and the Mackenzie delta, while songs composed at Bathurst inlet will within a year or two be sung at Port Clarence, Alaska. One of the most popular songs now heard in Coronation gulf, celebrates the merits of the tea sold at Fort Macpherson, Mackenzie river, and another tells of the wreck of the whaler "Alexander" at Cape Parry (1906), yet these people, when they learnt the songs from us, had never tasted tea nor seen a ship. They talk of mountain goats (as the Greenlanders talk of mammoth) wisely, after seeing my sleeping bag and listening to the hunting adventures of one of our men. They accepted fragments of Christianity promptly on the say-so of my companions—not very orthodox Christianity naturally, for the mental processes of my men are not quite the same as those of the missionary who taught them. They had, when we first came to them, imitations of white men's articles of which few or none had seen the original—e. g., scissors. Knowing the continuity of trade routes between east and west, the rapidity of traffic, the readiness with which new ideas are adopted (modified, of course, to fit into the recipient's scheme of thought), may we not say that identity or similarity (e.g.) of needlecases in Smith sound and Alaska is as likely to be an evidence of the activity of commerce as of a common culture home and rockbound conservatism? And may not a song or story heard in Smith sound and Alaska have accompanied the needlecase from its source in Kotzebue sound? Or, be the needlecase of a material peculiar to Smith sound, then may it not have been made in imitation of an imported article, just as Coronation Gulf Eskimo to-day make scissors (of caribou