

Pole With Peary"), is to be found confirmation of much that Nansen has written about these interesting people. History does not show any trace of their having held much intercourse with the civilized world until a very late date; and it is certain that no religion other than that of humanity had made any impression upon their character. In that weird country existed a people surrounded with all the hardships of an Arctic life, practising every virtue that Christians claim to have invented.

The Eskimo sought his fortune on the sea, his skill was displayed in the management of the kaiak, the huge prey that swarms in the Polar seas taxed his courage, and his genius is shown in the weapons he has fashioned from the bones of his prey. Activity was not only pleasurable, but it was imperative; for his skill upon the sea brought him in return food, light, heat, and clothing. But misfortune was not unknown to the Eskimo, and his position was oftentimes serious and difficult. However, there always remained one consolation to cheer and encourage him: so long as food remained in the tribe, no person would be allowed to die of hunger; and should starvation be inevitable, then all would be partakers of the same grim fate. Starvation co-existing with luxury was unknown to the Eskimo until the missionary found his way into the settlements.

Nansen makes no mention of cannibalism, and I therefore conclude that it did not exist in Greenland. Many accounts of the Eskimo depict him as a coward; but this is not correct, and is probably due to the fact that he sees neither use nor reason for an indulgence in war. England would be a far more praiseworthy nation if only one-half of the compliments Nansen pays to the Eskimo were deserved by Englishmen.

Almost daily our newspapers are sullied with uncharitable remarks or semi-refined forms of abuse, while ordinary conversation is rarely conducted without some tinge of calumny.

From "Greenland's icy mountains," however, we get a more exalted state of affairs. Nansen says: "They never utter a syllable of abuse, their language being unprovided with words of that class in which ours is so rich." Trustworthiness is one of their most striking characteristics, and when we have formed an idea of the hardships they frequently experience, we cannot but admire their keen regard for honesty. When offering any article for sale, they are extremely anxious to acquaint the purchaser with all its defects, and they go so far as to exchange it, even after a considerable time, should the bargain not have proved a good one for the buyer.

The rights of property are very carefully observed. Dr. Nansen says: "As a proof of the Eskimo's scrupulous regard for the moral law which he recognizes, I may remind the reader that he never touches driftwood which another has placed above high-water mark."

Further, before the introduction of Christianity, the Eskimos neither believed in a god nor prayed to an unseen being. Dr. Rink, in "Tales and Traditions of the Eskimos," has given a detailed account of their superstitions, which are mostly of a simple character, and much resemble

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