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ESKIMO

OF

HUDSON'S STRAIT.

BY

F. F. PAYNE.

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ESKIMO OF HUDSON'S STRAIT.

BY F. F. PAYNE.

MUCH has been written of the Eskimo by navigators and travellers in Arctic and sub-Arctic Regions, and yet we find in almost every writing at least something new to interest us. In a short paper such as this it would be useless attempting to describe all the customs and habits common to the whole race that have so often been described before, I shall, therefore, endeavour to confine myself as much as possible to a description of the more interesting parts of the modes of life of those met with on the shores of Hudson's Strait, and more especially those at Cape Prince of Wales, many of whom had not met white men before, and with whom I lived during a period of thirteen months.

During the winter months the Eskimo, or Inuite as they call themselves, are found occupying the ground at prominent points along the coast. Here the ever changing tides flowing and returning break up the ice and here the seals, on which they mainly subsist, are found. The prevailing winds during these months being from the north-west, snow is drifted to a great depth on the south-eastern sides of the hills. This they take advantage of and soon after building their igloos many of them are completely burried and are thereby well protected from the wind. On visiting a village after a snowstorm I was struck with its resemblance to a lot of mole hills. Nothing could be seen but a little snow thrown up on each side of a hole by which a passage led to the igloo ; on a near approach, however, windows were seen a little below the surface from which the snow had been removed. Upon entering some of those igloos, passage ways were found cut through the drifted snow thereby connecting several of them, making it appear much like an underground village.

In these villages they live as long as possible, and will not leave until they are compelled to do so through scarcity of food, but at this time, when a report comes in from another part of the coast that seals are plentiful they will sometimes leave in a body, and where an hour

ago merry laughter could be heard, now you are only greeted with the snarl of a stray dog that keeps well out of your way, or the caw of a raven as it sits on a neighbouring rock watching you suspiciously.

About the month of March, most of the seals leaving the coast, food becomes very scarce and many shifts are made. Hurried expeditions are taken by the men with their dogs along the shore, their family sometimes accompanying them, but are oftener left behind, and the unhappy look of a father as he returns without success tells plainly how much he feels for those dependent upon him.

As this month advanced at Cape Prince of Wales food became scarcer and now, though at other times helping one another, it was a matter with many of life and death and every man looked out for himself and his family. If he secured a seal it was hidden as quickly as possible. At this time the old and those weakened by starvation and unable to move from place to place were left to their fate, though should a party be so successful as to capture more than would supply their immediate wants they returned at once with food to those they had left behind.

Early in April, the weather becoming milder and the snow well packed sleigh journeys are made to distant parts of the coast and seldom before this time do they undertake long trips. At this time too the deer come from inland to the coast and expeditions are made to meet them though few deer are taken until the end of the month.

The latter part of April, May, and June may be considered the Eskimo's harvest time, for besides the deer large numbers of seals are taken as they appear along the wide cracks that now form in the ice.

Towards the end of May, snow igloos melting away, the women may be seen busily engaged in repairing the seal skin covering of their tupseys which have been cached since the previous summer, and now, while some are inland hunting deer, single families pitch their tupseys at favourable places along the coast where the men spend most of the time watching the ice for seals. 97

On May 23rd, four families left Cape Prince of Wales for a large lake about one hundred and sixty miles to the southward. Here I was informed they would remain throughout the summer living upon deer, fish, and a kind of berry not found on the coast. This lake, by

their own description, must be about one hundred and fifty miles in length, and twenty-five miles broad, and apparently has never been visited by civilized being.

Early in June all the hunters returned to the coast and immediately commenced laying in a stock of walrus and seal meat which was cut into strips, sewn up in bags made of the whole skin of a seal and cached.

On June 10th the first kyaks of the season were launched at Cape Prince of Wales, and from this time until the end of August a sharp lookout was kept for the white whale which gives a large supply of food.

For the second time in the year the deer season commences about August 20th and lasts a month, during which time some exceedingly hard work is done to secure enough skins for clothing and bedding for the winter.

During the latter part of September and until the sea is once more covered with ice, about the end of November, walrus are hunted. After this date the kyaks are put away, and until the ice is firm the times are very hard; and now the caches are opened and a large hole is soon made in their small winters stock of provisions. With empty stomachs and leaky wigwams they exist until the end of December when, once more they build snow igloos and winter life begins again in earnest.

Besides the walrus, deer, seal and whale we might include all mammals and birds found in this region as comprising the Eskimos food supply, but as several are only eaten when they are starving we may consider the following as a complete list of articles of food upon which they subsist:—Bear, rabbit, fox, dog and lemming, duck, goose, loon, young birds of all kinds, eggs, three or four species of fish, clams, mussels, shrimps, crayfish, one species of algae, the flowers of two, the roots of two and the berries of three different plants, besides the bark of the willow, large quantities of which are eaten in the spring. The fox, dog, and lemming are only eaten in cases of extreme hunger, and the hardest to swallow seems to be the former, which even the Eskimo dog would not touch while scraps of dry seal skin were to be found. In eating any vegetable food they usually preferred to dip it into oil before swallowing. Quantities of seaweed are eaten especially during

the winter months when other food is scarce, and this I am inclined to think was the cause of the illness of several children, all of whom were suffering great pain when little else was being eaten.

Cooked food is only partaken of as a change, though it might become more generally used if fuel was plentiful. It was very amusing to see them with old fruit cans boiling small pieces of seal or other meat over a fire of small weeds. It was usually eaten half cooked and thickly coated with ashes.

Apparently only two regular meals are eaten, one upon first rising in the morning and one just before retiring. At these meals they might be seen each with a knife of some kind sitting around a seal with their share, taking first a piece of lean and then a piece of fat as we would eat bread and cheese, and, as might be supposed, their faces did not present a very pretty appearance after these meals.

Much has been said of the Eskimo's improvidence and undoubtedly, like most civilized beings, when food is plentiful they do eat more than usual thereby becoming lazier and less inclined to hunt; but it may be said for the credit of those in Hudson's Strait, excepting a few, they would hunt and kill at almost any time, and not so much as a handful of food was ever wasted.

Of original genius they seemed to possess little for although many of their appliances for hunting and trapping are ingeniously made, these have all been copied from those used by the same race, we may say, centuries ago, and in proof of this statement it may be added that where simple repairs were needed in traps and other implements, and where parts of these had been lost they were quite incapable of employing other means to make them of service until shown by my men or myself.

A marked difference is noticed in the quality of all mechanical work done by the Eskimo of the north and south shores of the Strait, especially in clothes by the women, and hunting implements and carved work made by the men, those on the north shore doing far the neatest and best work. This may be owing to the great demand for these articles by the men of the whalers who are constantly bartering with them; while those to the southward never have a chance of doing so, and are content with more roughly made articles for their own use.

Occasionally one would be found who showed a far greater genius than his fellows, and here we might instance a man named Cowktooian, who, by the way, had lived many years on the north shore. With the roughest tools he was seen to make some beautiful joints in wood work, and on one occasion undertook to make the nipple of a gun, his only tool being a file. He first filed a piece of steel to the requisite shape, and then grinding one point of the file to the proper size for a drill made a very neat hole through it. Now, however, he was quite unable to file a rough thread for the necessary screw and was obliged to appeal to one of my men for aid.

The Eskimo cannot be said to excel in the finer arts, and yet we find in them the inborn love of sketching and carving, only in the latter, however, are they at all proficient. Good models of kyaks, animals and birds in ivory are made especially on the north side of the strait, where they seem to delight in vying with one another in trying to make the smallest models. The art drawing is confined almost altogether to describing figures on the level surface of the snow either with a piece of stick, or, in larger figures, with their feet, and in several instances most correct drawings of their own people were made by slowly moving along with feet close together, raising a low ridge of snow as an outline, and afterwards adding details most dexterously with one foot.

Perspective in drawing was a great mystery, and even those who had been able to look at pictures upon the wall of my house every day for a year could not understand it. Involuntarily their hands would steal up to the picture and slowly passing them over they would feel for the objects that stood out from the background, while others would shift their heads to look behind screens or doors in the picture.

Soon after our arrival at the Observatory a coloured life sized picture of a child was put up just over my bed, directly facing the window. It had not been there long when hearing a great commotion I went to see what was the matter and found half a dozen faces pressed against the window and all were calling "chimo, chimo," which is a kind of welcome, and nothing would persuade them it was not real life until they had been allowed to examine it closely.

I am now reminded of a similar incident with a crying doll, several of which I had brought up as presents for the children. A

few days after my arrival, and while a woman and her child were looking in at the window I brought out one of these dolls, for the first time, and, unseen, dressed it in a towel, and slowly brought it towards the window. At first sight of it the woman's eyes opened very widely as she stood wondering, but when I suddenly made it squeak she did not wonder any more, but turned and fled.

Besides the means commonly employed in the chase by the Eskimo in all parts of the Arctic Regions there are doubtless others only known or practiced by those living in certain localities. At Cape Prince of Wales the seals were seldom captured at their holes in the ice, but invariably along wide cracks, or in the water beyond the ice where one man might be often seen scraping with his spear and whistling in a low note while his companion lay at the edge of the ice, and if there were any seals within hearing distance they were always attracted to the spot, when rising quickly the Eskimo would throw his spear with line attached and if quick enough would seldom miss. The seal, however, is very active and often escapes by diving before the harpoon reaches it.

The gun, with which many are supplied, has almost taken the place of the bow and arrow, nevertheless they are still used by a few in deer hunting, and while one takes up a position behind some stones in one of the narrow passes of the hills others drive the deer towards him. By this means a very close shot is obtained and I was informed that often half the length of the arrow is buried in the deers side.

The fish spear used in Greenland is also found here though seldom used, the most common implement employed being a long handle with an ordinary knife firmly tied near one end making a fork, one prong of which is the end of the rod, the other the blade of the knife its sharpened edge turned inward. With this ugly weapon the salmon are speared or, more properly speaking, are slashed and are often found nearly cut in halves.

The net is also used here in catching fish in the smaller streams though the most common mode of trapping is by building walls of stones shaped like a bag about six inches above the surface, and then with sticks and stones splashing the water higher up the stream and driving the fish into the trap.

Some ingenuity is shown in setting the common steel fox-trap in winter. A wall of snow about eighteen inches high is built in the shape of half a circle the diameter of which is about two and a half feet. Near the centre from which the arc is drawn, the snow is first well pressed. A hole the shape of the trap is then dug with a knife and the trap being let into it, it is carefully covered with a thin crust of snow so that even if the fox does not actually tread upon the small pan, part of the crust when broken will start the trap. In front, and just under the wall small pieces of bait are placed so that in shifting its position to take each piece of bait the fox is certain to tread upon the trap.

The Eskimos amusements are few, and only in one or two do they seem to take much interest. Throwing the harpoon had the greatest attraction for the men, and often they might be seen taking their turns at a mark in the snow. Wrestling and running are occasionally indulged in, but the weaker side soon loses interest and gives in. Mr. Stupart informs me that while he was stationed here a large snow pleasure house was built, supported in its centre by a pillar of snow. The only game noticed, in which they took part in this house, was a kind of tilting, an ivory ring being suspended from the ceiling through which the men tried to put their spears as they walked quickly round the pillar.

During my stay here football was introduced, and in this they appear to take more interest than in any other game. The bladder of a walrus was well blown and then covered with leather making an excellent football, and it was a novel sight to see them playing. Men, women, and children all took part in it, and no quarter was allowed. Here a woman carrying her child on her back might be seen running at full speed after the ball, and the next moment she might be seen lying at full length with her naked child floundering in the snow a few feet beyond her. A minute later the child would be again in its place and nearly choking with laughter she would be seen elbowing her way after the ball again.

Catching trout in the summer in the manner described affords great amusement to the children and wild with excitement they were often seen pursuing a poor unfortunate fish in a shallow stream. The boys also spend a great deal of time in making small spears

and other implements of the chase, and practice with one another in throwing at a mark. Girls have their dolls and as with girls of civilized parents they delight in playing house; nor do they tire of this until they are married, for often groups of girls of all ages might be seen sitting in some sheltered spot in summer each having a house formed only of a ring of stones a few inches in diameter in which some short pieces of stick were laying while other pieces were propped upright. These pieces of stick represented people, and they were made to visit one another's houses while the owner kept up a continuous flow of conversation for them.

Unlike the Indian the Eskimo is nearly always laughing, and even in times of great distress it is not hard to make them smile. On one occasion, with the intention of building a beacon in the shape of a man, I procured the assistance of an Eskimo, and cutting out the shape of a large head in wood I got my assistant to carry it to the hill upon which I proposed to build the beacon. Without asking a question he assisted me to build the man and place head and arms upon it, nor did he understand its meaning when a model of a gun was placed between the arms. Finished it stood about nine feet high and when the last stone was put up I led my assistant about a hundred yards away and then turned him round to look at it. Slowly his eyes opened widely, and then suddenly he burst into such a fit of laughter I was almost afraid of him for he rolled upon the ground. This beacon was built for the guidance of the relief ship.

As we find among civilized beings men much more conversant with nature than their fellows so we find it with the Eskimo, and while some know many of the stars, and other objects in the heavens by name, others can hardly tell one from the another. On the whole, however they may be said to be keen observers of nature, for in making collections of the birds, insects, and plants they were of great assistance, and if an insect was shown them they could usually take me where more of the same species might be found.

On the approach of summer they watched with interest its signs, and often would bring to me insects which they believed were the first of the season. The first snow bunting that appeared in the spring was hailed with great joy, and in great haste they came to inform me of its arrival.

Trading with one another and with those at distant parts of the coast is a common practice, the money standard used being a white fox skin. Most of their furs however are sent by one or two trusted traders to Captain Spicer's post on the north side of the strait and to the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Fort Chimo, Ungava Bay, and it is remarkable that, although these traders carry as many as thirty or forty parcels of furs owned by different families, they seemed quite able to remember on their return, to whom the goods they obtained in exchange belonged, apparently the only note made being a few marks with their teeth upon some of the articles.

It is generally supposed that the Indians and the Eskimo are continually at enmity with one another. This may be the case on the most northern coast of America, but it is certainly not so with those living on either the Labrador coast or Hudson's Strait all of whom spoke in the highest terms of the Indian, or Udlar, as they call them, and several Eskimo were wearing articles they had purchased from them when visiting Fort Chimo.

As it is the case with all, or most uncivilized races, many of the senses are not well developed in the Eskimo. Pain, for instance, under which we would groan is borne without flinching and in this we had ample means of judging as I was called in to dress several painful wounds. Deep cuts, too, made by the accidental slip of a knife were simply bound up with a piece of sinew and no further notice taken of them.

Their power of hearing is ^very good and it was often noticed that sounds at a distance unheard by ourselves could be distinctly heard by them.

Although many suffer with weak eyes their sight is wonderfully keen, especially at long distances as was often noticed by their being able to count the seals upon the ice that appeared to us as small specks seen very indistinctly. As the winter advanced many of them became snow blind and all were affected more or less with the glitter of the sun upon the snow. In one house visited three children were found perfectly blind, and although we did all we could for them, they did not recover their sight for nearly twenty days.

Regarding their sense of taste we need only remark, there was nothing we would eat that they could not relish, and much more we

would not eat they almost wholly subsisted upon. Smoking they dearly love, and the smallest scrap of tobacco is never wasted, even the ash from their pipes is used as snuff, and the idea of expectorating when chewing tobacco is never thought of; and further, disgusting though it is, the straw used in cleaning their pipe is always passed between their lips after each cleaning.

Although the Eskimos are cool under ordinary circumstances they become extremely nervous under excitement, and at times were seen trembling violently. This was noticed more especially when a walrus had been killed, and others were in sight, when playing a game of cards, and when leaving hurriedly for another part of the coast where seals had been reported.

Cleanliness it may be said is hardly known to the Eskimo uninfluenced by civilization, for to them apparently everything on earth is clean; nevertheless they would undoubtedly be glad to keep the dirt or dust off their bodies if they possessed such things as soap, towels, and water at a temperature rather higher than the freezing point, or we might say water at any temperature during the winter, for then it is as much as they can do to melt enough snow for drinking. During the warmest weather there was nothing they delighted in more than washing their faces when we would give them soap, and it was amusing to see them returning from a neighbouring stream laughing as they showed their faces to one another.

It is needless to repeat that the Eskimo will steal, for it is a well established fact, yet it is interesting to note some of its effects. Generally speaking all excepting the thief seemed to look upon the act as a great joke when it did not effect themselves, and as far as could be seen it is only fear that keeps them from stealing more from one another. Repeatedly we were asked to guard their goods while they made a journey, and every means possible are used to hide their caches. If during hard times an Eskimo discovers a cache his friends think it a great joke and all join in helping him devour its contents. At the same time the thief stands a chance of being punished by the owner.

During times when food was scarce they seemed to become careless and would then steal anything, and at one time some daring

attempts at a raid upon my storehouse were made. In spite of a watch being kept, and a warning issued to them that those attempting to force an entrance would stand a chance of being shot, while going my rounds about midnight I was startled to see a number rush out of the building with their hands full of provisions. They had pried the door off the hinges as noiselessly as any professional housebreaker, and now they made off as hard as possible. Determined to frighten them I started in hot pursuit, and when a short distance from them fired several shots over their heads. For some time after this they prowled about at night, and Ugaluk my favourite Eskimo strongly advised us to always go out armed as several threats had been made by his people to fire upon us if we thwarted them again. No further attempts, however, were made and I feel confident it was the bold front we showed that induced them to reconsider their threats.

Among those living at Cape Prince of Wales were three desperate characters who, some years ago, attacked part of the shipwrecked crew of a whaler named "Kitty" while they slept in a tent on the shore not far from the observatory. At first they treated them well often bringing them food, but their blankets and guns were too great a temptation, and with knives they despatched them all, excepting one poor fellow whose feet had been badly frozen. This man, strange to say, they took care of and Ugaluk my informant said he lived with him in his fathers igloo during the winter, that both his feet came off, and he died in the following spring. In the fray one Eskimo was shot dead the rest escaping without a wound.

Either from fear or seeking favour several Eskimo returned stolen goods, but in each case they requested payment and were most indignant when we refused to give them anything. Our best friend in this way was a good looking girl name Checkooaloo who acted as our detective and very often brought back articles stolen by her people.

Physically the Eskimo do not seem as strong as civilized beings for in many trials of strength with my men who were not above the average in muscle development they were quite unable to cope with them.

In speaking of the moral side of the Eskimo's character it is needless to repeat the many disgusting stories that have been told so often. It is sufficient to know that according to our standard of morality they are immoral, but from what we know of other races we must admit that they at least are comparatively virtuous savages. Even our morality in which we boast seems to have the effect of corrupting what little virtue the savage possesses when it comes in contact with him and we may say, nowhere is this so distinctly seen as among the Eskimo. On the north side of the strait where vessels often call on their way to and from Hudson's Bay exchange of wives is sometimes practiced, while on the south side where there is little or no intercourse with these vessels such a thing was never heard of, and it is well known to those interested that sailors who were allowed to act much as they liked on the north side were met with virtuous scorn by those living on the south shore.

At cape Prince of Wales a few Eskimo had three wives, several had two, but the greater number by far had only one, and there were several old bachelors.

In nearly all cases the best hunters have the most wives, and a widow who is the strongest and best worker stands the best chance of marrying again if she is so disposed, especially if she has sons, for they are considered a source of strength to a household while daughters are looked upon as a weakness.

Although in most cases a second wife is taken through affection for her in many instances it is undoubtedly done in charity and their is one peculiar law or custom among those met with in the Strait that may be worth relating. If a married Eskimo has been considered only worthy of death for some offence the man who undertakes to execute him becomes responsible for his wife and children. The woman becomes the wife of the murderer, and her children are treated with kindness by him. Two instances of this strange custom came under my notice, one of which was that of my favourite Ugaluk who informed me that some years ago there lived a bad Eskimo who would not work, but stole from everybody, and he undertook to do away with him. While in friendly conversation he stabbed him and carrying his body out on his kyak dropped it into the sea. His wife and three children now live with Ugaluk, and although she stands in

his estimation as second to his first wife she appears to be quite happy, and during our stay here gave birth to her third child. A similar instance was met with at Cape Chudleigh, and in each case it seemed to be understood that those who were benefited by the death of these worthless fellows should give the executioner some assistance in supporting his family.

One man who had three wives, I was informed by Ugaluk, would have been content with one, but having no family he had married a second and a third, and now poor miserable wretch he was hardly able to support one, and all were childless.

Undoubtedly some of the matches between the sexes are arranged by the parents when their children are very young nevertheless there was a good deal of love making. This was especially noticeable in the early summer when they were often seen together and apparently without asking leave of anybody several started their own igloos. Much, however, as we dislike to think of it, it must be said, their love is little more than that of the birds of the air, excepting in constancy. Affection for one another they have, but such a thing as secrecy in any of the many phases of love is hardly thought of.

As far as could be seen no such thing as a marriage ceremony is performed. Girls marry at sixteen and even earlier, and when two are agreed they can be happy together they either start their own igloo or the bride is received into the house of her husband's family and there they might be seen, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters all living happily together in one room or igloo.

The affection existing between parent and child is of the roughest kind, and is very interesting to watch. Little display is noticeable, and yet there appears to be intense earnestness in looking after the child's welfare, while the child is a pattern of obedience to its parents. The affection between husband and wife is much the same, but rapidly wanes if one becomes useless in the support of the other.

Partly in natural affection and partly from selfish motives all help one another, but it is a mistake to suppose that when a hunter returns with success he immediately shares his catch with his neighbours, for some were always found richer in food and household goods

than others. The men in these wealthy families, as might be supposed, were either physically stronger or better hunters than their fellows.

Very few Eskimo who had become useless by age or accident were met with and those that were seen appeared to be a great burden upon their people, and although they were treated with great kindness while food was plentiful it required no great prophet to predict their death by starvation at any time when food was scarce.

Early in spring, when for many days we had not been visited by an Eskimo, and supposing they had left this part of the coast, I wandered over to a deserted village and entering an igloo was surprised to find an old woman and her son apparently dying from starvation, and from them learned that a crippled man and his child were in the same condition in another igloo near by. Here was a worse case than the first, for with a little strengthening food we were enabled to move the woman and her son to an igloo near the station, but the man was too far gone, nor would he allow his child to be taken from him. Each day food, and a large piece of snow was put by his side, and although unable to use his arms, his child, a little girl three years old, fed him. Days went by and little improvement could be noticed in his condition, and one afternoon when it had been thawing I walked over to the igloo. Calling as usual as I approached, I received no answer and coming nearer found the roof of the igloo had fallen in, and there he lay with marbled face, his eyes now fixed and turned to space, and his child lay sleeping by him. Wrapped in his bedding we placed the body between a crevice in the rock and covered it with stones, this being the usual mode of burial with the Eskimo. The child was given in charge of the woman and son, and for some time all were dependent upon us for food. Through neglect the child soon died, and this recalls to my mind a sad scene, but it is needless to relate it here.

Eskimo opinions upon theological questions are not easily obtained and undoubtedly their faith in all their beliefs is extremely weak, for when asked to explain they would laugh and would tell you they only performed any of their rites because other Eskimo did so. Another difficulty to contend with is their extreme shyness or fear of being laughed at, for on this point they are most sensitive.

As far as could be learned they believe in a supreme spirit who rules over the earth and sky, and some minor spirits who rule the tides and other changes in nature, with whom their Angekok has power to converse.

Of a future life they believed in a heaven and a hell, the former to be a place where those go who do not lie and are good. This place is southward where the sky and earth meet, where there is no snow, plenty to eat, and no work to be done. Hell is a place where the wicked go especially those who have told lies and have done wrong to their fellows. Here it is always snowing, is very cold, and those that go there have to work as they did upon this earth.

The Angekok is only a man or woman rather shrewder than their fellows who exhorts the spirits to do whatever the people want, for which service they are paid. They are treated with little or no deference by their people excepting at times when they are employed. An Angekok, who often tried to make me believe he was better than his people, was entrapped by the rising tide one day while gathering seaweed, and in spite of his influence with the spirits the tide continued to rise driving him back under a steep ice cliff, and being unable to scale it he perished miserably.

During my stay in the Strait they were never seen praying but Ugaluk who often saw us at our prayers when told to whom we were praying said his people did the same.

One of their most interesting and peculiar religious customs is the offering of food and other things to the spirits. By the graves of many of their dead were found scraps of food, tobacco, powder, shot and other articles and at first it was supposed that these were offered only to those who had died. To my surprise, however, a number of like articles were found upon the beacon we had built in the shape of a man. Still more surprising was the fact that when we found two cannons upon the shore near Cape Prince of Wales, that had undoubtedly been left by some of the early explorers, and standing them on end a quantity of bullets, shot, and other rubbish rolled out. On enquiry as to how this had got there I was informed it had been given as an offering to the spirits.

Amulets though believed in are not much used, and only one Inuit was seen wearing one. This was Checkoaloo a sister of Ugaluk who had a small piece of carved wood firmly sewn to her dress, and the only answer we could get from her as to its use was: she would "be no good" if she lost it. A similar piece of wood was found carefully protected with stones by the side of a grave.

Here, as elsewhere, the Eskimo take two days rest after killing a walrus, and become very indignant if asked to do work during this time.

During the walrus season they will not put needles into deer skin and, although often pressed, nothing would induce them to do so. Nor will they sew anything when one of the family is ill.

When a seal is killed a little fresh water is sprinkled over it before it is cut up, this custom, however, they would not always carry out, and if done in our presence would explain with a look of bashfulness that other Inuits always did so.

Walking along the shore near low tide mark with some young Eskimo who were gathering shellfish, I was surprised to find one of the young women would not pick any of them up although I had often seen her do so before. Nothing would induce her to touch them for she said she would be "no good" if she did so for a few days.

The graves of the Eskimo are found everywhere along the coast, some well built over with stones while others only show where the body was laid, the bones being scattered in every direction. The favorite place of burial is an island where the foxes and wolves cannot get at the bodies, and near Cape Prince of Wales an island about ten acres in area was seen literally covered with graves; and monuments ten feet high were erected here and there throughout it. These were evidently built for service in common, and like our beacon were covered with scraps of food.

Many other religious customs common to the race were noticed, but as nothing dissimilar was seen in them it is needless to relate them as they have often been told before.

Although Mr. Rink has shewn the Eskimo are rich in legendry, only one legend that was at all connected could be understood by ourselves. This was told by Ugaluk, and ran as follows: Not many years ago there lived a Cubloonack, or whiteman, on the eastern shore of Hudson's Bay where there were lots of Inuite and a few Udlers, or Indians. This Cubloonack was a very bad man, and used to speak to a lot of them, and taught them to sing different songs. One day an Udler came into the village and the Cubloonack caught him and calling all the Inuite about him he tied the Udler to a stake, and piling weeds and brush about it burned him alive. Nearly every day he used to walk up a hill by a circuitous path and as he walked he sang songs, all the Eskimos following in procession and when they reached the top of the hill he would talk to them about the sky. One day when the procession had gone up half way the Inuite refused to go any further so the Cubloonack went on alone, and he was never seen again, but they were sure he went up to the sky.

It is to be regretted that owing to our time being taken up with other matters while in the Strait little can be added to our present knowledge of the language; it may be worth noting, however, that although there is so little communication between the north and south shore of the Strait there is greater similarity in the pronunciation than there is between those living at Cape Prince of Wales and Cape Chudleigh. The chief difference in all cases being the use or disuse of the final sound of k which is one of the main characteristics of the Eskimo language. As for instance at North Bluff the Eskimo say nannoo (bear) whilst at Cape Prince of Wales it is pronounced nannook.

Wonderful though it is that the language remains so intact, it does not seem to be generally known what communication there is between the Eskimo at one place and those at a distant part of the coast. Regarding this I can only instance the case of one man who, with his family, I met at Cape Prince of Wales. This man,

not long ago, had lived far up Fox Channel and had crossed the Strait with a number of others in an omiak or large seal skin boat. Another man who lived nearly two hundred miles to the westward made the journey four times in the spring of 1886 travelling nearly eight hundred miles with his wife and child, It is a common thing to run down to Fort Chimo a distance, there and return, of six hundred miles and a brother of my favorite Eskimo Ugaluk returned in ten days as I received a dated letter written on the day he started.

In conclusion we may add that in spite of many revolting customs of the Eskimo, after living with them for some time we are forced to conclude that a civilized being transported to these regions and living under the same circumstances would soon adopt much the same mode of life. Remembering this and considering many fine traits in their character, savages though they are, we cannot help looking upon them as fellow beings in the same race for life, and consequently loving them.
