**Anthology of Arctic Reading: Inuit and other Indigenous People**

**Bilby, Julian W.** *Among Unknown Eskimo: An Account of Twelve Years Intimate Relations with the Primitive Eskimo of Ice-bound Baffin Land: with a Description of Their Way of Living, Hunting Customs & Beliefs.* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1923.

A detailed description of Baffin Island and the Inuit way of life, with an appendix of Eskimo deities, including the vampiric Aipalookvik who 'Has a large head and face, human in appearance but ugly like a cod's. Is a destroyer by desire and tries to bite and eat the kyakers.' (p.266). His account is also notable for descriptions of euthanasia: a blind man is willingly led to an ice hole where 'He went right under, then and there under the ice and was immediately drowned and frozen. A handy piece of ice served to seal the death trap, and all was over. Nandla had died on the hunt, and had entered the Eskimo heaven like the other valiant men of his tribe, and taken his place with the doughtiest of them, where there would be joy and plenty for evermore.' (p. 153) [From John Bockstoce collection catalogue, item 10, from McGahern Books, 2019.]

p. 57: The origin of the Eskimo is a matter of ethnographical conjecture. They themselves had no written language until comparatively few years ago, and depended upon oral tradition for their history. And even to-day it is only the few who have been taught to read and write, so that legend still holds sway throughout the greater part of Baffin Land, Cock-burn Land, and the rest. Their past is lost in obscurity. In the obscurity perhaps of that neolithic or "reindeer age" of which their life, even now, has so often been cited as a close replica.

p. 85-86, on native seal hunting: No food is borne on the sled, for the hunter depends upon himself for his dinner. The duty of the boys is to watch the sled, to mind the dogs, and see they do not fight or stampede, to study the conditions of the ice, the signs of the weather, the habits of animals, to note their calls and movements and how to imitate them, to take careful notice of the topography of the country and make mental drawings of it to serve as charts and maps, to read the stars, and,

generally to endeavour to become skilled and successful hunters themselves.

p. 175-78, on the Eskimo language: Up to within recent times the Eskimo had no system of writing. But another patient evangelist, inspired by the necessity of delivering the message of Christianity in a more permanent form than by oral teaching only, invented what is known as the Syllabic Character for the benefit of the Indians, at a post called Norway House. This was the Rev. James Evans, a minister of the Canadian Methodist Church. The Syllabic Character, which is a sound (and not a letter, or alphabetical) writing, similiar [sic] to shorthand, was designed for the Cree, but proved to be easily adaptable to represent the Eskimo speech. Without such a method, it is difficult to imagine how restless and roving tribes, at this post to-day and gone to-morrow, could ever have been taught to read. By this means, however, an ordinarily intelligent individual can learn in eight or nine weeks.

The principle of Mr Evans' characters is phonetic. There are no silent letters. Each character represents a syllable; hence no spelling is required. As soon as the series of signs — about sixty in number — are mastered, and a few additional secondary signs (some of which represent consonants and some aspirates, and some partially change the sound of the main character), the native scholar of eighty or of six years of age can begin to read, and in a few days attain surprising accuracy.

Such results as these, such gifts of pure intellectual effort, are surely among the greatest blessings civilisation has to confer on the few primitive peoples still left in the world.

Of late years the British and Foreign Bible Society have taken charge of the work, and now the Gospel in Cree, Syllabic and Eskimo is widely spread.

The Syllabic Character is known far and wide to day in the arctics. It has not been spread solely by white men, for the people teach each other as they travel from tribe to tribe. The Eskimo freely write letters to their friends and hand them over for delivery to anyone taking a journey in the desired direction. The letters always reach their destination, because the postman at his first sleeping place invariably reads them all through from first to last; so that if, as often happens, one or two should

get lost, the addressee receives the missive by word of mouth; and incidentally the postman knows everybody's business and is altogether the most glorious gossip who could ever drop in and enliven the circle round the igloo lamp of a winter's night.

Pen, ink and paper, it may be noted, are innovations of the new civilisation. Prior to the advent of the white man the only idea and the only means of caligraphy the Eskimo had was the etching on ivory or bone. Many vigorous and spirited drawings exist of hunting or other scenes, scratched on blade or handle, and sharply bitten in, black and clear, by rubbing with soot from the lamps. It is not remarkable that a knowledge of writing and reading should have spread among the people in this way, for the Eskimo are avid of instruction, and eagerly avail themselves of any opportunity of being taught. Where Christianity itself has gained a footing it has been largely through the instrumentality of some among them who have come in contact with missionaries, and passed on to others all they had seen and heard.

One of the most puzzling aspects of Eskimo is its "agglutinative" character. The words all run together. All the parts of speech may be joined to the verbal root and then conjugated in its various moods and tenses, so that the word finally produced by this process may be sixty or more syllables long. Students find the principal difficulty, not so much in building up and saying these peculiar words, but in correctly understanding what the natives say.

[p. 180-83 has a lengthy passage on further aspects of the Eskimo language, concluding as follows]:

p. 183: It is for the future to reveal whether or no the newly found gift of writing will lead these people on to extensive literature. The Moravians have published some well known books, such as "Christie's Old Organ," etc. If so, by the analogy of every literature in the world, it will begin with verse, by the enshrining of the folk tales immemorially dear to every nation, and by the composition of some sort of Eskimo saga. The Greenland Eskimos composed long songs in honour of Fridtjof Nansen before he took leave of them, after the first crossing of their icy continent. It may be that these Eskimo poems, printed in his book, together with Dr. Rink's collection of "Tales and Traditions of the

Eskimo," and Dr. Boas' similar collection of the fables of this people ("The Central Eskimo") and the present writer's contribution to the same subject, constitute so far the bulk of the offering made by these children of the arctic to the literature of mankind.

p. 199-202, The Conjurers: The accomplished conjuror must be able to detect and affix guilt. Here he is concerned entirely with the minds of his fellow men, and trying to fathom and read them. The Eskimo mind is as tortuous as the Eastern. The conjuror pursues his own method, which may have a good deal to recommend it in the eyes of those who have made a study of the occult, but which is not the method of direct evidence and deduction. He throws himself into a perfectly genuine trance, and stakes everything on the intuitions of that state and the awesome effect of it upon the interested beholders.

To do this the conjuror sits down with his face to the wall, and drawing his hood well over his features, rocks himself backwards and forwards, calling the while on his familiar spirit (his Tongak) to come to him. He continues this howling and rocking until such concentration of mind is effected that he becomes unconscious; he foams at the mouth. Whilst in this condition of self-induced hypnotism — or however the spiritists may explain it — his spirit, it is believed, goes below to Sedna, or above to the regions of beatitude, to find out what has been the cause of the guilt in question, and discover the requisite punishment.

The interesting thing about this performance is that it is by no means the tissue of imposture one might suppose. The Eskimo conjuror may be no more and no less a fraud than the medium of a spiritistic seance. The writer has been creditably assured by these practitioners that the trance ensues in the vision of a great white light (like the light thrown on a sheet by the magic lantern), and then in that illumination they see the whole scene of the supposed crime re-enacted, all the people implicated in it, and its every detail. They are told, or inspired, what penalty to inflict. On returning to consciousness, the vision is not forgotten, but sharply remembered. The conjuror is able to accuse the offender, to question him, and extort a confession from him. The penalty generally takes the form of some obnoxious task to be performed or some fine to be paid in kind.

This power to see the white light and to project in it the thoughts, probably, of the assistants at the conjuration — for the performance, when genuine, amounts to nothing less — is really a remarkable psychic feat. Probably the conjurors understand it as little as the laity; they have only trained themselves to achieve it, and they explain it according to the fantastic body of superstition which constitutes the Eskimo religion. It is only after long practice and the sustained effort after great mental concentration that the manifestation is attained, that the light can be seen, and incidents recorded in it. This is the final test for the honours of full conjurorship. The candidates sit night after night with the teacher, faces to the wall, and the lamps burning low, shutting out all extraneous objects and distractions, in the endeavour to see the light, to pass into trance. Those who remain for ever unable to arrive at this, fail to pass the test, and are rejected from the class of the full-fledged. They must content themselves with minor dignities in the order of conjurors. One of these inferior grades is that of the Kunneyo, the one who incants for the seal hunters. Another is the Makkosâktok, the one who goes round with the ship during the Sena ceremonies; and a third is the Noonagecksaktok, another official at the great annual celebration.

On the completion of his training and on his passing the final test for the witch-doctorate, the candidate is publicly acknowledged as a Conjuror. He makes a visitation of all the dwellings in the settlement, performs incantations in each, and receives in payment a number of charms, such as small pieces of carved ivory or bits of deerskin fringes. These things are valueless in themselves, but signify that the tribes - folk have accepted the new conjuror.

It is easy to see how the conjurors acquire the power they undoubtedly have over the people, and easy to imagine how much of fraud, imposition, hypocrisy and sheer self-seeking could be practised under the thick cloak of their rites, incantations, superstitions, and — last, but not least — their clever trickery and legerdemain. What may be perhaps not quite so easy is to convey to the reader an idea of the real good faith and of some demonstrable if inexplicable occult command underlying much of the conjuror's art. The whole subject is too big, either from the point of view of primitive superstitions and procedure, or

from that of occultism, to be dealt with at much length here and now; but by way of illustrating the point that the Eskimo conjuror can perform miracles (collective hypnotism?) as striking as the well-known Eastern trick of the mango-tree, one of the incidents of the Sedna ceremony may be instanced.

At a certain stage of the Sedna proceedings, the conjuror, who has the spirit of a walrus or bear for Tongak (familiar spirit), spears himself through the jacket, or is speared by others, deep in the breast. When this whole performance is not merely a spectacular trick, it seems to be quite genuinely done. A line is attached to the deeply imbedded, barbed spear-head, and the people catch hold of this and pull on it and haul the impaled man about, to prove that he is fairly caught, as the victim of a hunt might be. The conjuror is bathed in blood. At length, however, he is let go, and he makes his wounded way alone to the seashore. Here the Tongak releases him from the spear, and after a short space of time he returns to the festival whole and well as ever, with no sign about him except his torn clothing to indicate the rough handling he has undergone.

**Boas, Franz.** *The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay*…. [*Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*. Volume XV, 1901] New York: AMNH, 1901.

Boas's work says nothing about Inuit reading but is included here for his lengthy accounts of oral tales from Cumberland Sound (81) and from the West Coast of Hudson Bay (30). Here is one brief example chosen at random:

p. 202-03: [Stories about Dwarfs.] An old woman and her grandson were living all alone. Their people had deserted them. They were staying in a small side room of a large hut. In the evening a number of dwarfs arrived. They entered at the door, and when they did not see a light, they thought that the house was deserted. They brought in the walrus-meat that they had on their sledge, made their beds, and went to sleep.

The old woman heard the dwarfs talking, and finally noticed that they had become quiet. Then she said to her grandson, "Go into the porch, where they have their meat. Touch your tongue, and draw your

finger along the meat where it lies on the ground, touching both the meat and the ground, and be careful not to make any noise." The boy did so, and then crawled back to his grandmother.

The dwarfs were up again with the dawn, and prepared to depart. While the man was getting the sledge ready, his wife was taking the meat out of the porch. She found that one of the pieces of meat was very heavy, so that she could not lift it. She shouted to her husband, "Yesterday it was not heavy, but now I cannot lift it." Her husband retorted, "Then leave it here," and they went off. The old woman and the boy were now supplied with food enough to keep them for a long time.

(According to the version recorded by Rev. E. J. Peck, this story runs as follows: An old woman and a boy were left in a house. A dwarf arrived, carrying some bags of meat, and said, "Is any one here? I wonder if there is a person here that is asleep." While the dwarf was asleep, the old woman said to her grandson, "Grandson, spit upon one of his bags." The boy spat upon a bag. When the dwarf awoke, he tried to take the bag away, but it stuck to the ground. Then the dwarf said, "One of my bags is fast. This is the case, for I thought there was a person here. But, never mind, take it!" Then he went out.)

**Carpenter, Edmund Snow.** *Eskimo Realities.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

A beautiful evocation of the Inuit culture, its orality, its spiritual essence, and its pictorial sensitivity.

p. [134] (most pages are unpaginated): There are several reasons why Eskimo art lacks perspective or the favored point of view. The primary one is absence of literacy. As with non-literate people generally, the Eskimo can perceive without difficulty what we regard as 'inverted' figures. Another reason is their attitude toward the 'given.' For example, walrus tusks are carved into aggregates of connected but unrelated figures: some face one direction, others another. No particular orientation is involved, nor is there a single 'theme.' Each figure is simply carved as it reveals itself in the ivory.

In handling these tusks I found myself turning them first this way, then that, orienting each figure in relation to myself. The Eskimo do not do this. They carve a number of figures, each oriented—by our standards—in a different direction, without moving the tusk. Similarly, when handed a photograph, they examine it as it is handed to them, no matter how it is oriented….

p. 137: Igloo walls are often covered with magazine pictures obtained from the trader. These reduce dripping; perhaps they are enjoyed for colors as well. Some—but little—effort is made at vertical rendering, and the over-all result is haphazard. When children wanted to imitate me, a sure way to provoke delighted laughter was to mimic my twisting and turning as I tried to look at the LIFE pictures.

p. 176: The object isn't seen at an artistic remove: instead, the carver enters into it, mingles, fuses with it. He doesn't remain apart contemplating, controlling, but to the extent his cognition impinges upon it, he participates in Seal-ness or Walrus-ness. This participation isn't limited to the sense of sight, for Aivilik art doesn't render the visible: it renders visible. It portrays not merely what is perceived, but what is known and true, and since truth here involves all senses, plus tradition and imagination, it enhances all cognition.

All essentials are therefore brought to the fore, including those made invisible by the optical. [See scene on p. 176.]

p. 197: Eskimo stone art was made for, used by, and believed in, solely by Westerners—that is, until recently. Now it also serves to give identity to the Eskimo themselves. Having deprived him of his heritage, and even the memory of his heritage, we offer him a substitute which he eagerly accepts, for no other is permitted. And so he takes his place on stage, side-by-side with the American Indian whose headdress comes from a mail-order catalog, who learned his dances at Disneyland, and picked up his philosophy from Hippies. He knows no other identity, and when he is shown the real treasures of his culture, when he hears the old songs and reads the ancient words, he aggressively says, 'It's a lie, a white man's lie. Don't tell me who I am or who my ancestors were. I know!'

*Eskimo books***:** "List of Eskimo Books." Manuscript in John Johnson Collection: Explorations box 1. Bodleian Library, Oxford University., n.d.

This short list of "Eskimo Books" is in the John Johnson collection of printed ephemera in the Bodley. The list contains 13 titles and 14 volumes but is largely indecipherable apart from a note at the bottom: "Books presented to the Hartwell Library. By Admiral Sir John Ross June 1853." The list includes the Old Testament, New Testament (2 v.), 6 titles given in Inuktitut, a catechism, a spelling book, a book of history?, a question book?, and articles of religion. All are in Eskimo languages.

**Gilberg, Aage.** *Eskimo Doctor.* Translated by Karin Elliott. New York: W.W. Norton, 1948.

A simple and charming book about a doctor's year in Thule and environs [1938-39], providing medical services to the Inuit. There with his wife, he found the Inuit "The truly good people."
p. 19 and 69, he alludes to plenty of books he took, but never mentions reading any of them.
p. 103-4: The first time one enters a house like this, one's attention is inevitably drawn to the walls, which have a brightly colored, international character, being thickly plastered over with sheets of newspapers and the like, partly for filling in crevices and partly for decoration. There are figures from the comic strips and brochures from medical suppliers, mixed up with glowing advertisements of smart skirts, motor cars, laxatives, whisky, brassieres, and many other things for which there is not much use in Thule. The advertisements come from English and American magazines left behind by the various expeditions. (p. 139 and 142 have pictures of such interiors.)
p. 106: Some people, too, indulge in the habit of moistening their fingers when they turn the pages of books or papers; in Thule this is considered a dirty habit.

p. 150: *7th December*. More and more travelers are coming to Thule to pay visits and to trade before Christmas…. Ole called on me immediately to tell me that his little daughter, who had been a patient here at the hospital was all right, and that everyone in Siorapaluk was well. I played a few gramophone records for him. It is always nice to hear which are the favorite records. Ole was very fond of the overture to the *Barber of Seville*; I have seen others completely fascinated by my Bach records, and a good many could whistle the melody of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*. A remarkable thing is that they are not particularly interested in jazz; they think it is good fun, but they do not even bother to dance to it: for dancing they prefer a real Viennese waltz, and if invited to choose a good record for themselves they usually ask for good classical music….

**Grant, Shelagh D.** *Arctic Justice: On Trial for Murder, Pond Inlet, 1923.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

Fascinating book on the introduction of European-based law into a culture that had no reason to understand it, given its communitarian consensual approach to justice. Well-written and badly proofed, but worth the read.

p. 18: In 1876 Reverend Edmund Peck founded a mission at Little Whale River on Ungava Bay, where he began working on a syllabic alphabet to represent Inuktitut, based on one created by Reverend James Evans for use with the Cree Indians. In 1894, armed with syllabic prayer books and Bibles, Peck established the first Christian mission on Baffin Island, a whaling station on Blacklead Island in Cumberland Sound(??). A rudimentary school was set up as well as a one-room mission hospital.

Peck's travels and those of his assistants were generally limited to nearby camps, although one years he visited camps along the coast as far north as Qivittuuq while returning home to England on a whaling ship. A number of lay preachers traveled further afield, distributing Bibles and spreading word about the new religion. Several families from Cumberland Sound were reported to have migrated to Igloolik with their Bibles. In this manner, many Iglulingmiut learned to read and write in

syllabics without ever having met a *qallunaat* [European] missionary. Understanding the biblical passages was more difficult.

Literacy grew at an astonishing rate, but the meaning of the words was not always understood. This gave rise to a number of 'syncretic movements' that combined traditional spiritual beliefs of shamanism with those of Christianity….

Other references to these syllabic Bibles are on pages 22, 28, and 39.

p. 146: When introduced by lay preachers, the new religion sometimes incorporated certain traditions of shamanism, resulting in syncretism, otherwise described as a 'syncretic' form of religion. McInnes reported that some camps were 'very enthusiastic over religion, which they follow in their own crude style, singing hymns and reading from their testament several times a day. The most attractive pastime, however, is trying to count the numbers of the pages and the hymns.'" See also p. 218-19.

p. 184, an interpretation of the murder sentence, according to Freuchen: He had been promised room and board for ten years in the great house of Canada. The house was kept warm in the winter there would be women to sew clothes for him, and he would never have to go hunting for his food (see *Vagrant Viking*).

**Lefroy, John Henry**. *In Search of the Magnetic North: a Soldier-Surveyor's Letters from the North-West 1843-1844.* Edited by George F. G. Stanley. Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1955.

Overland scientific expedition in mid 1840s written by a staunch Anglican gentleman, concerned about the spiritual welfare of natives but fairly bigoted about it.

p. 3: I take very little personal equipment, it can be better got at their posts—a few red flannel shirts etc—none of the common sort—a change of clothes, a few books, Gun and fish tackle, and a most excellent equipment of Instruments, amounting to a dozen, for various uses.

p. 18: It is a great regret to me that our Sundays are not distinguished from other days in any way, except that I read the service as we go along to my N.C. officer.
p. 23: As a general rule I carry a very tolerable load for a Bourgeois (so the voyageurs call the gentlemen), Gun, Baromr Desk, haversack with books, Etc—and have to make myself useful, if time is to be saved, by cutting wood, lighting the fire, and so on, while they get on with the work.
p. 27: There is a missionary (Wesleyan) at the village, not doing much however, for he can only speak through an interpreter, and there are great difficulties in inducing these wilder Indians to accept Xtianity or to send their children to school. Not the least of these arises from the rivalry between Church of England, Church of Rome, Wesleyans and Baptists, all of whom have missionaries in the country, and the Indians are quite acute enough to take advantage of their divisions.
p. 36: I forgot to mention that Sir Geo. S[impson]. Lent me on starting Cottrell's *Siberia*, which disappointed me; from a man who had led rather a dissipated life, I expected a light sketchy work, full of anecdotes and lively remarks; the only thing lively about it is his running fire at that unfortunate Captain Jesse, which is rather impertinent than otherwise. Moreover there are some very badly written passages….
p. 37: Unfortunately I forgot to provide myself with a French dictionary and grammar, so while I am daily speaking if possible worse and worse French by learning their patois, I cannot take the opportunity of increasing my stock of words and phrases.
p. 41, at York Factory: The schoolmaster was brought out from England and seemed rather above par. He certainly had more refinements and comforts about him than any man else in the settlement. I was introduced to only one of the three clergy, Mr. Cochrane, a man much respected, zealous out of the pulpit, in fact a good man, unhappily however the quintessence of dullness and badness as a preacher. Never did I hear his equal. What a pity it is that there should be such an idea as that men of the most inferior talents are good enough for the Colonial Church….

p. 50, at Norway House: The school children amounting to 60 were soon got together although it was seven o'clock in the evening, and we heard them read and spell and sing in Indian and English. They are Crees, their language a pretty one; the astonishing thing was to hear them repeat long exercises, such as the creed, sing hymns, read the Testament etc. in English: ***not one word of which*** any of them understood. The missionary wishes to prepare the way for their learning the language but I think goes too far…, in fact the teacher who is a Chipewyan Indian seems to have the same sort of pride in their proficiency that a bird fancier has in an ingenious collection of piping bullfinches.
p. 69, at Lake Athabaska: Time passes very rapidly and to me agreeably enough, I borrowed a few books at Norway H. and found some here. These, with chess, fill up the short time to be disposed of out of the observatory….
p. 71ff, passage on the "neglected and churchless state of this part of the world."
p. 89, at Fort Chipewyan: They [the inmates of the Fort] have few resources, few books, yet they seldom complain of dullness. A sort of dreamy inactivity takes the place of other enjoyments, and prevents them from feeling what to one brought from other habits would be the supreme of dullness.
p. 99-100, at Fort Simpson: Mr. Ross at Norway House very judiciously opened the two small boxes sent out by the vessel of last year, and sent me in by the winter express a few of the most portable articles, a Nautical Almanac, Annuaire, Report British Association, letters &c. much to my pleasure and surprise. The Report, I thought rather less interesting than usual….
p. 107, 29th March 1844 at Fort Simpson: My dear Anna, Of all possible books, what would you suppose to be the very last one might meet with in this corner of the world. I think London's *Cyclopedia of Villa and Farm Architecture* is one of the last. Yet here I found it, fresh and new.
p. 111: With a few solid books few situations would be better adapted for study and reflection that that of a 'winterer' in this country. 'The world forgetting, by the world forgot' he has just enough of occupation

to relieve the mind, and nothing to hinder study for the remainder of his time….
p. 147, interesting passage on missions and schools: The most obvious way to make Christians of the rising generation of halfbreeds would be to establish a Sunday School, conducted by the trader himself, at every Fort—but one might as well propose to found a Greek professorship at every Fort. [As usual he is apprehensive of R.C. dominance.]
p. 158: Who have I to thank for *Grant's Lectures*? I suppose you [his brother Anthony]. I have been reading them with great interest.

*Looking both ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiq People.* Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2001.

p. 60-61: "Forgotten Literacy" by Lydia Block: Literacy in the Alutiq language developed in the early 19th century thanks to Russian American schools, parish and secular (1741-1867). Some youth were taken to Okhotsh and Irkutsz in Siberia and a school started in Kodiak by monks of the First Mission. A text of the Lord's Prayer in Alutiq survives (printed 1816); a Catechism of 1847; also a primer and Gospel of St Matthew (parallel Alutiq and Slavonic, printed in St Petersburg in 1848).

**Lopp, Ellen Louise Kittredge, 1868-1947.** *Ice Window: Letters from a Bering Strait Village 1892-1902.* Ed. and annotated by Kathleen Lopp Smith and Verbeck Smith. Fairbanks, AL: Univ. of Alaska Press, 2001.

p. 55, April 1893: I have learned a great deal about the Natives and their language and customs. Mr. Lopp preached his illustrated sermon all the way up and once on the way back. The folks asked for it twice, but once his throat was too sore to give it. We had two charts illustrating the life of Christ—two quarters' lessons. Everyone who saw them was interested and gave good attention. We read from the Bible and had prayer every time and sang sometimes.

I am just home from Sunday School, where I have been telling the little Eskimos and some of their mothers how Saul couldn't be king any more because he stole sheep. That sounds bad, I know; but if you knew

how hard it is to explain to people who know so little about even the simplest things that they would need to understand the story of Saul's disobedience, you wouldn't wonder. And he did steal. They didn't belong to him, and he took them. I might have said he disobeyed God, but I don't know any word for disobey. These people don't use such a word much. They have no government to obey, or Bible. And parents' orders, I think, are often on the order of, "Go to school or if you don't want to, go fishing."
p. 65, June 16, 1893: I send some copies of *The Eskimo Bulletin*, our new newspaper [several pages are reproduced in this volume].

**Murray, Thomas Boyles, 1798-1860.** *Kalli, the Esquimaux Christian: A Memoir.* London: S.P.C.K., 1856.

p.23: Some books and prints were placed in the hands of the youth, and he expressed the greatest delight in seeing views of ships in the ice, and the figure of an Esquimaux watching for a seal. After gazing for a few minutes at the latter, he uttered a cry of pleasure and said, 'This one of my people!' [p. 24 shows an engraving of a seal hunter. Among other places, Kalli was taken to the British Museum, the Crystal Palace (1851), the Horse Guard's Stables, and finally enrolled at a missionary college in Canterbury, St. Augustine's.]
p. 29—slow progress in reading, but Murray offered him books.
p. 31, Kalli reading daily passages of scripture. Baptized in 1853.
p. 41, Kaliharui had received a very handsome present in the shape of a beautifully bound Bible and Prayer Book, as a baptismal gift from the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.
p. 45, in 1855 at Admiralty expense he was sent to St. John's Newfoundland for further study under the Bishop of Newfoundland, but where he died, apparently of natural illness.

**Nansen, Fridtjof.** *Eskimo Life.* Translated by William Archer. Second Edition. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1894.

This work is best seen as Nansen's defense of the Greenlanders against the onslaughts of "civilization."
p. viii: I am weak enough to feel compassion for a declining race, which is perhaps beyond all help, since it is already stung with the venom of our civilisation. But I comfort myself with the thought that at least no words of mine can make the lot of this people worse than it is, and I hope that the reader will accept my observations in the spirit in which they are written. Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, magis amica Veritas—the truth before everything. And if in some points I should appear unreasonable, I must plead as my excuse that it is scarcely possible to live for any time among these people without conceiving an affection for them—for that, one winter is more than enough.

p. 172-73, in Chapter X on Greenlandic Morals: It appears, however, that even the married Greenlanders are not by nature devoid of what we understand as moral feeling, for their everyday behaviour is, as a rule, quite reputable and void of offence; on that point all travellers must agree.

If a heathen—and in many cases even a Christian—Greenlander refrains from having to do with another man's wife, whom he has looked upon with favour, it is generally, no doubt, more because he shrinks from quarrelling with the husband than because he regards adultery as morally wrong; but we may gather from the following saying, current at Angmagsalik, that even on the east coast there is a vague feeling that it is not the right thing. "The whale, the musk-ox, and the reindeer,' so the saying runs, 'left the country because men had too much to do with other men's wives.' Many men declared, however, that it was 'because the women were jealous of their husbands.' The jealousy of the women was also alleged as a reason for the fact that the channel which formerly went right through the country, from the Sermelik Fiord to the west coast, had been blocked with ice.

Egede relates that, strangely enough as he thought, the women before his arrival had felt no jealousy when their husbands had more wives than one, 'and got on very well with each other'; but as soon as he had preached to them the wickedness of such proceedings, they began to

show much annoyance when their husbands wanted to take second wives. ‘When I have been reading with them,’ he says, ‘and instructing them in the Word of God, they have often urged me to bring the seventh commandment sharply home to their husbands.’ The men, as may be supposed, did not at all approve of the missionaries’ influence over the women in this respect, and one of them, whose two wives had fallen by the ears, said angrily to Niels Egede: ‘You have spoiled them with your teaching, and now they're jealous of each other.’ It appears to me that the man's anger was not without justification. What should we say if Greenlanders came to our country, forced themselves into our houses, and preached their own morality to our wives?

Before we utterly condemn the morality of the Eskimos, we ought also, perhaps, to remember the golden maxim that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. European morality is in many respects of such doubtful value that we have scarcely the right to pose as judges. After all is said and done, it is possible that the most essential difference between our morality and that of the Eskimos is that with us the worst things take place behind the scenes, in partial or complete secrecy, and therefore produce all the more demoralising effect, while among the Eskimos everything happens on the open stage. The instincts of human nature cannot be altogether suppressed. It is with them as with explosives: where they lie unprotected on the surface, they may be easily ‘set off,’ but they do little mischief; whereas when they lie deeper and more concealed, they are perhaps, less easily kindled, but when once they take fire the explosion is far more violent and destructive, and the greater the weight that is piled upon them, the greater havoc do they work.

p. 193-94: To prove that their natural parts are good, I may mention that they learn to read and write with comparative ease. Most of the Christian Eskimos can now read and write, many of them very well; indeed, their faculty for writing is often quite marvellous. Even the heathen Eskimos learn to play dominoes, draughts, and even chess, with ease. I have often played draughts with the natives of the Godthaab district, and was astonished at the ability and foresight which they displayed.

p. 338-39: Of what profit, then, to the Eskimo, is his ability to read and write? He assuredly does not learn hunting by help of these arts. It is true that by means of the few books he possesses he may gain information as to other and better countries, unattainable conditions and alleviations, of which he before knew nothing and thus he becomes discontented with his own land which was formerly the happiest he could conceive. And then, too, he can read the Bible—but does he understand very much of it? And would it not do him just as much good if the matter of it were related to him, as his old legends used to be? There can be no doubt that the advantage is dearly bought. We must bear well in mind that the Eskimo community lives upon the very verge of possible human existence and that a concentrated exertion of all its energies necessary to enable it to carry on the fight with in hospitable nature. A little more ballast and it must sink. This is what is already happening, and all that wisdom in the world is of no avail.

The upshot, then, of European activity in Greenland has been degeneration and decadence in every respect. And the only compensation we have made to the natives is the introduction of Christianity. In so far we have achieved a happy consummation, for, in name at least, all the Greenlanders of the west coast are now Christians. But the question seems to me to be forced upon us whether this Christianity, too, is not exceedingly dearly bought, and whether the most ardent believer ought not to have some doubts as to the blessings it has conferred upon this people, when he sees how it has cost them their whole worldly welfare?

p. 340: From the Eskimo standpoint at any rate, the answer cannot be doubtful. If he could see his true interest, the Eskimo would assuredly put up this fervent petition: God save me from my friends, my enemies I can deal with myself.

**Sullivan, Alan.** "When God Came to the Belchers," *Queen's Quarterly* 51 no 2 (1944) p. 14-28

On the Belcher murders connected to a religious frenzy by hunters who thought they were God and Jesus:
p. 24, the judge's cross-examination:
What have you to say about her [Sarah's] clothing being burned?
*It is true. The igloo was full of smoke.*
Was it from the lamp flame?
*I think it was from the fire of books.*
What books?
*We had a lot about God and Jesus, but only Keytowieack could read in them.*
And the people were not burning them?
*Yes.*
Why?
*Now that God and Jesus had come we did not need them any more.*

**Tester, Frame James and Peter Kulchyski.** *Tammarnitt (mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63.* Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1994.

Examines government involvement in Northern Canada which led to relocation of Inuit from the east coast of Hudson's Bay to the high Arctic, the Henik Lake and Garry Lake famines, the establishment of Whale Cove in response to inland famines in the Keewatin, and the second wave of state expansion in the 1950's.

*Tammarniit* begins with an account of the debate over which branch of government should be responsible for the Inuit and whose budget should cover the costs for providing relief. This debate was resolved in 1939 when the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the federal government was responsible. The following chapters cover the first wave of government expansion in the north, which coincided with the evolution of the postwar liberal welfare state; the policy debate that resulted in the decision to relocate Inuit from relatively southern communities on the east coast of Hudson Bay to the high Arctic; and the actual movement of people and materials.

The second half of the book focuses on conditions following relocation. A great deal of attention is paid to the Henik Lake and Garry Lake famines, both of which occurred in the Keewatin district in the late 1950s, and to the subsequent establishment of the community of Whale Cove. The book concludes with an examination of the second wave of state expansion in the late fifties and the emergence of a new dynamic of intervention. Description from publisher (first paragraph), and an unknown source).

**Wasson, David A.** "Ice and Esquimaux," *Atlantic Monthly* 14 (Dec. 1864) 728-34; 15 (Jan 1865)39-4; (Feb 1865) 201-12; (April 1865) 437-48; (May 1865) 564-72

A series of articles on his 1864 voyage to Labrador on the *Benjamin S. Wright* with artist William Bradford. Passengers included a Colonel: A Greenland voyager, and better read than any man I have met in the literature of Northern travel.
p. 41: Bradford…quickly got out his photographic sickle to read this unexpected harvest.
p. 43: Here was a mother…. who had instructed her children. One of them…owned and read a volume of Plato, and had sent to LAnse du Loup, twenty-four miles, to borrow a copy of Wordsworth. This was her delight.
p. 46, re Noble's book on icebergs: Finding a copy of his book on board, I read it with pleasure…--and refer to him any reader who may have appetite for more after concluding this chapter. [The book is Louis L. Noble's *After Icebergs with a Painter* (1861).]
p. 205, "Boy's Play in Labrador" has to do with hunting birds both for sport and specimens. Refers to a book called "Out-Door Papers" which I infer was aboard.
Chapter IV. Authchthones, on Esquimaux whom he meets at Hopedale on the Labrador coast, along with the local missionaries (Moravian).
p. 442-43: I confess to some spleen that day against the missionaries. When I expressed it, Captain French, the pilot, an old, prudent, pious man, "broke out."

"Them are traders," said he. "I don't call 'em missionaries; I call 'em traders. They live in luxury; the natives work for 'em, and get for pay just what they choose to give 'em. They fleece the Esquimaux; they take off of 'em all but the skin. They are just traders."

Wasson calls the natives pre-Adamite, honest, a part of physical nature rather than human history, and change easily though unchangeable.

p. 564-72 "Terra Incognita" is a lyrical burst in praise of Labrador, but the last section "Life on Board" describes the heavy sense of ennui that the voyage takes on, what we would call "channel fever."

**Whitney, Harry.** *Hunting with the Eskimos: The Unique Record of a Sportsman's Year among the Northernmost Tribe*…. New York: Century Co., 1910.

Whitney traveled with Peary to Greenland in 1908 and spent the year only with Eskimos north of Etah at Annootok, while Peary was making his north pole attempt. Whitney is the complete hunter, rich and well-provided, and demonstrates some intellectual curiosity about the natives and about the natural resources, and does try to master their language, but he evidently reads little except under the duress of prolonged inactivity.

Introduction by DILLON WALLACE: Hardly a chapter but contains an unusual adventure. Mr. Whitney is a very modest man, however, and in his record he has so undervalued the hazard and peril of many of the positions in which he was placed, that one must read between the lines to fully appreciate them.

I lay down the manuscript with reluctance. I am sorry to say farewell to old Kulutinguah, to Ilabrado, to the excitable Tukshu and Sipsu, and the other notable ones of the tribe whom one cannot fail to like and respect.

Mr. Whitney has given us a book that is worth while, and one that should take and hold a prominent place in the literature of travel and adventure.

p. 244: Before going, Ilabrado gave me a valuable and highly prized relic—a little china gravy bowl picked up at Fort Conger a few years before by one of his sons and supposed to have belonged to the Greely Expedition. He also had some law books that had belonged to Greely.
p. 257-58: In periods of inactivity during the long night I had read a great deal. Fred Norton gave me a box of books when the *Erik* left for the south, and Mr. Peary and Captain Bartlett gave me several more. All of these I had read—some of them more than once—and now when the storms held me indoors I longed for more. The old ones had become stale. This was a reason why confinement indoors seemed harder to bear than at any previous time during the winter.
p. 268ff, recounts a meeting with Frederick A. Cook at end of his north pole excursion.
p. 270: During the previous autumn Captain Bernier of the Canadian steamship *Arctic* had left some supplies near Etah for Dr. Cook. The contents of the boxes were wrapped in New York and Washington newspapers, and although the news was several months old I seized upon the papers and read them eagerly.

[What made the deprivations worthwhile for Whitney was the killing of musk-ox (see p. 291ff). The book is a modest one but pretends to be no more than that.]

**Widder, Keith R.** *Battle for the Soul: Métis Children Encounter Evangelical Protestants at Mackinaw Mission, 1823-1837.* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999.

This deals mainly with a US phenomenon of attempted religious colonialism with relevance to Métis in Canada. It seems a good example of indoctrination requiring a degree of literacy devoid of independent thinking. An Anglo-Métis at Lake Leech in 1833 describes the house he built: Now comes the Door; next to which and hanging up is a frock coat. Then comes other articles in regular rotation, an old straw Hat, a violin with all its appendages; a small shelf upon which are the few books we possess; one or two cossets, an ax, a spade, Tobacco pouch etc.etc. (p. 12).

p. 13: The furnishings, mostly items of European-American manufacture. Which could also be found in many Canadian and New England homes, included beds, coffee mills, candles, candle molds, violins, and books. Unlike their Chippewa cousins, Métis children at times slept on beds off the ground, listened to their fathers read from books illuminated by candlelight, and danced to fiddle music. Under the same roof, they observed their fathers transaction business with their Chippewa relatives and neighbors, who did not utilize amenities such as books and coffee mills.

p. 13-14…Boys watched their fathers, some of whom were illiterate, keep records in ledgers of each transaction, often using symbols or pictures to identify each Chippewa customer's account. Fathers recognized the advantage of written language as a tool to improve the operation of their businesses…. Métis boys learned to speak French and/or English from their fathers and Chippewa from their mothers. Métis males could thus communicate with all members of the fur-trade society. Métis boys possessed skills that Chippewa youth did not.