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ESKIMO ADMINISTRATION: III. LABRADOR

By

DIAMOND JENNESS



PUBLISHED MAY 1965

THE ARCTIC INSTITUTE OF NORTH AMERICA

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ESKIMO ADMINISTRATION: III. LABRADOR

Diamond Jenness

PREFACE

This is the third study in a series designed to cover the administrations of all branches of the Eskimo race except those on the Siberian side of Bering Strait.

As in the two studies that preceded this one, Eskimo Administration, I, Alaska, and II, Canada (Arctic Institute of North America, *Technical Papers* No. 10, 1962, and No. 14, 1964), the author has been financed by the Northern Co-ordination and Research Centre of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, to which he extends his grateful thanks.

DIAMOND JENNESS



PERIOD I

Moravian rule: 1771-1914

"Happy is the people without a history". Such are, or were, the Eskimos of Labrador's Atlantic coast, who lived and died, unnoticed by the world and unnoticed it, for 150 years after the Moravian missionaries, Jens Haven and Christian Drachart, encountered about 400 of them in Chateau Bay and, on behalf of Sir Hugh Palliser, the Governor of Newfoundland, negotiated a truce between them and the English settlers to the south.¹

Prior to that truce of 1765 their encounters with white men had left unhappy memories with both races. If we may place any faith in the old Norse Sagas, the earliest meeting occurred about A.D. 1000, perhaps near that tiny settlement of L'Anse aux Meadows in the extreme north of Newfoundland where Helge Ingstad in 1962 excavated the only Viking ruin yet discovered in America outside of Greenland. An Icelandic saga describes their encounter thus:

"But early one morning, when they looked about them, they saw nine hide-boats, and wooden poles were being waved on the ships [i.e. the hide-boats], and they made a noise like threshing-flails and went the way of the sun. Karlsevne's men took this to be a token of peace and bore a white shield towards them. Then the strangers rowed towards them, and wondered, and came ashore. They were small [or black?] men, and ugly, and they had ugly hair on their heads; their eyes were big, and they were broad across the cheeks. And they stayed there awhile, and wondered, then rowed away and went south of the headland." (Nansen, 1911, vol. 1, p. 327).

The Norsemen went their way, and for about 600 years the Eskimos lived undisturbed. Their home in the Labrador Peninsula remained unknown because the heavy ice-fields that drifted south down its Atlantic coast effectively confined the stream of European fishermen and immigrants to Newfoundland, the Maritime provinces, and the basin of the St. Lawrence River. In the sixteenth century the fishermen began to frequent the peninsula's southern rim, and about the end of that century a few ventured to winter along the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence west of the Strait of Belle Isle. The traders who followed them and supplied their needs bartered with the Eskimos also, offering them steel axes, steel knives, and many less useful goods such as cotton clothing, tobacco, and even rum. Naturally disputes arose, since neither side understood or trusted the other. The Eskimos strongly resented the alliance between the intruders and the Labrador Indians, their hereditary enemies,² but they hesitated

¹Cf. Crantz, 1820, pp. 288-91.

²As late as 1814 Kohlmeister wrote that "To the south of Hopedale the Indians and Esquimaux sometimes meet, but as the Hopedale Esquimaux seek to cultivate their friendship, quarrels and bloodshed seldom occur. In Ungava, however, though they often exchange tokens of friendship, they are apt to give way to their national jealousies; and provocations being aggravated, their meetings now and then terminate in murder. The Esquimaux are much afraid of the Indians, who are a more nimble and active race." (Kohlmeister and Kmoch, 1814, p. 57).

to break off all relations because they needed the white man's tools and weapons. Both sides therefore conducted the trading with extreme caution, and frequently interrupted it with bitter warfare; but firearms inevitably prevailed against primitive bows and arrows, and the Eskimos, incapable of offering effective resistance to their better-armed adversaries, gradually retreated north.

"The Indians and the whites shot and plundered any small group of Eskimoes they caught sight of. On the other hand the Eskimoes used to creep up to the whites in the thick fog and terrify them with their horrible yelling so that they fled, leaving their things behind them. . . . The crews of the trading ships were lured into ambush and killed; the Eskimoes used the weapons of the weak: cunning and terror." (Tanner, 1947, p. 480).

Such were the conditions that prevailed throughout the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth. As late as 1752 the Eskimos of the Hope-dale district murdered a Moravian named Jan Erhardt and five companions who had sailed from England to establish a mission somewhere on the Labrador coast.

The British government quickly recognized the signal service Jens Haven had rendered her island colony in the western Atlantic. From her experience in other parts of the world she knew what benefits might accrue from the establishment of a Christian mission somewhere on the coast, and in 1769, at the request of the Moravians,

"His [British] Majesty in Council gave, and authorised the Brethren's Unity, and the Society for the furtherance of the gospel among the heathen, to take one hundred thousand acres of land (*belonging to the Esquimaux,*) on the coast of Labrador, where, and in whatever place of the same was most convenient for their purpose.' And the Governor of Newfoundland was directed to afford the brethren in their settlement every protection, and to furnish them from the royal stores with fifty muskets and the necessary ammunition." (Anon, 1835, pp. 70-1).¹

The Moravian synod in Germany acted without delay. Following a meeting at Marienborn, on the Wetterau River, it instructed Jens Haven to renew his acquaintance with the Labrador Eskimos, and, with a party of ten Brethren—two of them, as well as Jens Haven himself, accompanied by their wives—to select a suitable site for a mission. One Brother, Christian Drachart, 72 years old, had spent much of his life in Greenland, spoke the Eskimo language fluently, and had accompanied Jens Haven six years earlier to negotiate the truce in Chateau Bay. Another Brother, Christopher Brassen, was a trained physician and surgeon.

The missionaries located a site at Nain. It was unoccupied when they arrived, for the Eskimos of that day did not live in permanent settlements, but moved at intervals from one hunting and fishing place to another, sheltering in perishable snow houses or more enduring huts of stone and sod during the months of winter, in draughty tents of sealskin during the summer. Past experience had taught the missionaries to walk warily. Knowing that their charter from the British government carried no meaning whatever to uncivilized natives who could neither speak nor read a word of English, they negotiated a separate agreement with the local Eskimos, paying to each family fishing tackle,

¹"The main impulse for the missionary venture came from the Brethren in Germany and in England. The former provided most of the personnel of the mission; the latter, through their missionary agency, the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, provided most of the financing and supply. It was also the Brethren in England who secured from the British Crown the necessary land grants for the mission settlements." (Whiteley, 1961, p. 425).

tools, and other goods in return for the 100,000 acres over which Britain had promised their society exclusive ownership. Not until they had reached this agreement and recorded it on paper did they set about building a permanent base.

The nucleus of that base, and of all the missions they subsequently founded in Labrador, was a dwelling for themselves and a small church. After these came a store and a work-shop, for they intended to make their enterprise as nearly self-supporting as possible by trading for sealskins, furs, ivory, and other local products. Last of all they built a small wharf at which the vessel that brought their supplies could load and unload in safety.

Meanwhile the British government, deeply interested in protecting the fisheries in the waters around Newfoundland, closely followed the fortunes of the Moravians, and, in 1772, just one year after the founding of their mission in Nain, the island's governor, Molineux Shuldham, issued the following proclamation:

"Whereas I am informed that the Esquimaux savages inhabiting that part of the coast of Labrador where the Unitas Fratrum and its Society have formed a settlement for the furtherance of the Gospel among the heathen, have lately strolled from the said settlement to the southward, and with a view of trading with the shipping which touch upon that coast. And whereas many barbarous murders have been committed on both sides by the English upon the savages and the savages upon the English, occasioned by disputes and misunderstandings in bartering their traffick; for the putting a stop thereto for the future I do hereby desire and require the said Unitas Fratrum to use every fair and gentle means in their power to prevent the said Esquimaux savages from going to the southward, without first obtaining their permission in writing for so doing, and till such times as other settlements shall be formed and extended down along the coast." (M. Shuldham *in* MacGregor, 1907, pp. 381-2).

Shuldham apparently regarded the Moravians as agents of his government and an arm of British rule. His proclamation would have amply justified, had justification been necessary, their combining trading operations with missionary work, because only by supplying the Eskimos with metal tools and other goods could they check them from "strolling" south to seek those goods elsewhere: but not until half a century later did the traders in the south complain of Moravian commercialism. The year after Shuldham's proclamation, indeed, England transferred jurisdiction over the whole Labrador coast from its governor in Newfoundland to Quebec; and the officials in Quebec paid no attention to what was happening north of Hamilton Inlet, but permitted the Moravians in that remote region to conduct their mission undisturbed.

Extinction of the Eskimos in southern Labrador

From Hamilton Inlet south the Eskimos declined rapidly after the truce in Chateau Bay encouraged white fishermen and trappers to colonize the bays and absorb the aboriginal population into their communities.¹ The Eskimo

¹"In 1868-9 the [salmon] fishery in the straits and on the southern Labrador coast was a complete failure, and very great destitution prevailed in consequence, many deaths from starvation taking place among the resident population of the coast. These people rejoice in the title of 'liveyeres', a West of England word supposed to be a corruption of 'live here'. At this period they numbered 2479 between Blanc Sablon and Cape Harrison, including about three hundred Eskimos and Montagnais Indians. They are generally the descendants of the pioneer furriers and salmon catchers who married Eskimo and Indian women, but also a good proportion of them are Newfoundlanders who stayed on the coast to take care of the fishing rooms and property left there, and remained from lack of initiative, or ability to get away." (Gosling, 1910, p. 420).

part of that population, numerous enough at one time to range as far west as Mingan, probably declined even before the signing of the treaty; but we have been left no clue concerning its approximate number in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The estimated 400 whom Jens Haven met in Chateau Bay in 1765 may well have been the sole survivors, for eight years later Lieutenant Curtis calculated at no more than 270 the total Eskimo population between the Strait of Belle Isle and the district of Nain (Barrington, 1774, p. 387).¹ During the 1770's a friend of Governor Palliser, Sir George Cartwright, established such friendly relations with the Eskimos who visited his fishing station at Cape Charles that five of them agreed to accompany him to England. There they contracted smallpox, and four of them died. The lone survivor, a woman named Caubvick ("Wolverine") recovered, but after her return home she infected a number of her people, some of whom perished also (Cartwright, 1792, vol. 1, pp. 262, 270 *et seq.*, vol. 2, p. 424).²

In spite of this setback, the relations between the whites and the Eskimos remained cordial, and many Eskimo women married "planters" or employees of the fishing and trading stations that dotted the coast on both sides of the Strait of Belle Isle. Close contact with whites, and intermarriage, then broke down their old native customs. As early as 1798 Captain A. Crofton reported:

"During my continuance in Temple Bay, a large shallop arrived from the northward, with and belonging to a tribe of Esquimeaux Indians, consisting of six men, five women, and seven children; they were on their passage to the harbour of Bradore, where it was their intention to remain the winter with the English fishermen, and to be employed in the seal fishery. They had been so provident as to bring with them some oil and whalebone to barter for English provisions and necessities, which they are now very partial to, preferring European clothing to the seal skin dresses they formerly appeared in; and are now so much civilized as to abhor raw meat, and always dress their victuals in a very decent manner, having several cooking utensils with them. They have likewise laid aside the bow and arrow for musquets, and are excellent marksmen. . . . A merchant from Quebec, who has a small settlement seventy leagues north of Temple Bay, has hitherto been the principal supplier . . .' Captain Crofton made inquiries at Chateau about the Moravians, but could get no information concerning them, thus indicating what little communication there was at that time between Northern and Southern Labrador." (Gosling, 1910, pp. 211-2).

During the nineteenth century the remnants of the southern Eskimos concentrated in Hamilton Inlet, which sheltered in 1824 the following inhabitants:

Population in Hamilton Inlet, 1824

Eskimos, adults	100
children	60
Eskimo half-breeds	60
White settlers, European	90
Canadian	16
<i>Total</i>	<i>326</i>

¹Jens Haven had estimated the Eskimo population of the whole Labrador coast from the Strait of Belle Isle to Cape Chidley at about 3,000 (Davey, 1905, p. 24); but surely he exaggerated, for Curtis, who travelled along the entire coast as far as "Keedwedloke" (Okak?), estimated only about 1,620, a figure that seems much more reasonable for the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

²" . . . on an island at the mouth of the Inlet [Hamilton Inlet], there were a number of skeletons of Eskimos strewn about the surface showing that they had fallen victims at one time to a virulent contagious disease. These were no doubt the remains of that unhappy band of Eskimos who died of smallpox, caught from Kaubvick". (Gosling, 1910, p. 416).

The fewness of the Eskimo children indicates a very high mortality rate, and indeed Arminius Young, from whose book I have quoted these figures, remarks in a later passage that:

"It was at this period [1829 and 1848] that the Eskimos practically died out in southern Labrador." (Young, 1931, p. 45).

In 1857 the Moravian Brother Elsner discovered only 10 families of Eskimos among the 31 families that were inhabiting Hamilton Inlet when he sledged down from Hopedale to inspect the region, at the invitation of Donald Smith (later Lord Strathcona), at that time the Hudson's Bay Company factor in North West River (Young, 1931, p. 50). Thirty-five years later, in 1892, an unordained Methodist preacher named Moore, who was residing near the entrance to the inlet, asked the Moravian missionaries in Hopedale to minister to about 70 Eskimos in his Rigolet district because they knew too little English to understand his sermons, although some could read the Eskimo bibles and hymn-books passed on to them from Hopedale. Thereupon two Moravians, Hansen and Fry, visited Rigolet, where Hansen preached to the Eskimos in their own tongue. Another Hopedale missionary, Jannasch, revisited them in 1899, and was warmly welcomed by the local Methodist minister and the factor of the Hudson's Bay Company; however, his enquiries merely fortified the Moravians in their earlier decision not to establish a permanent mission south of Cape Harrison, because the Eskimos south of that cape were rapidly learning English and merging with the white population (Davey, 1905, pp. 243 *et seq.*). So fast were they merging, indeed, that MacGregor, after his inspection of the region in 1905, flatly declared that the natives had ceased to exist on the several hundred miles of the Labrador coast south of the Moravian establishments (MacGregor, 1907, p. 346). True, he slightly modified this statement three years later, after a second inspection tour. On that occasion he wrote:

"In the Rigoulette district there are some fifteen Esquimaux families, and a number of others of mixed blood, living partly in permanent homes, and partly in temporary abodes for the salmon fishery, situated at considerable distances from each other here and there on both sides of the inlet. Unfortunately, these settlers [sic] are not at present prosperous. Last winter was most unfavorable so far as fur, their principal source of livelihood, is concerned, so that the spring found them in debt for the winter's supplies. This failure has been followed by a disastrous salmon fishery, to which they look for support during the summer season. . . . The Esquimaux of the Rigoulette district speak their own language, but most of them, it appears, know English also. A young Esquimaux was engaged to accompany me to the Hamilton and proved to be very useful and trustworthy. The adults can all read and the fathers teach their children in the evenings. They have given up the kayak and use ordinary boats. They had a Moravian teacher among them till about four years ago." (MacGregor, 1909, p. 314).

Hawkes, in 1914, found no natives at Karawalla, near Rigolet, whom he considered pure-blood Eskimos, only 35 half-breeds and quarter-breeds; and he heard of five others farther south (Hawkes, 1916, pp. 18 *et seq.*). In 1937 Tanner (1947, pp. 509-1) listed the eleven families in the Rigolet district descended from them, calling them "the most southerly [Eskimos] in the world". They were fairly well off, deriving a considerable income from salmon-fishing; and they continued to adhere to the Church of England. He omits to mention, unfortunately, whether they still understood the Eskimo language, but it seems quite clear that in his day they could be distinguished from the European

colonists only with difficulty. Evidently 180 years of peaceful association had completed the process of integrating them into the white race:¹ and that process had ended naturally and painlessly, because no yawning chasms save the easily bridgeable one of language had divided the natives from the whites who settled among them, and sought a livelihood from the same pursuits, fishing, hunting, and trapping.

Establishment of Moravian missions in northern Labrador

It was not from the southern part of Labrador, but from the northern, that the Moravians had heard the call to service. No whites had yet ventured to settle in that region, or even to fish in its bays and off its shores. The whole coast north of Cape Harrison awaited the first adventurers who could allay Eskimo hostility.

Fortunately for the Eskimos, the Moravians arrived first and selected an admirable site for their mission half-way up the coast. Nain, more than 200 miles north of Hamilton Inlet, possessed an excellent harbour backed by an adequate area of flat land, and enough timber from the spruces in its vicinity to erect houses, church, and dock.² The Moravians made it their operations' centre, and it remained their Labrador headquarters until the 1950's, when changed conditions and a shift in the population dictated a transfer to Hamilton Inlet.

It was in 1771 that they founded their Nain base.³ Five years later, in 1776, they established a second mission 80 miles north at Okak, and six years after that

¹In August 1963 a resident of Rigolet shared my cabin during the steamer's night run to that settlement from Goose Bay. His features unmistakably betokened Eskimo blood, but when I addressed two or three words to him in Eskimo he replied, vehemently, "I don't understand that talk".

²"Although timber disappeared from the outer coast before reaching Nain, yet groves of trees may be seen in the valleys and on the more favourable slopes at the heads of the inlets, and we were informed that after going ten to twenty miles inland from Nain, or from the coast for a considerable distance north of it, the whole country may be said to be wooded as far as the condition of the surface will permit of the growth of trees, and that in favourable situations the spruce and tamarac attain a sufficient size to be sawn into lumber. At Nain, the trees consist of spruce, tamarac, and small willows, but at no great distance inland, balsam fir, poplar, white birch and rowan begin to make their appearance." (Bell, 1884, p. 13).

³Our authorities do not entirely agree on certain dates. Anon (1835, pp. 316-24) gives a circumstantial account of the building of the Hebron Mission between 1828 and 1831. J. E. Hutton states that Hebron was founded in 1830, and Makkovik in 1895, the latter at the request of a Hudson's Bay Company factor (Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 311, 522). MacGregor, on the other hand, says that Hebron was founded in 1834, Makkovik in 1899 (MacGregor, 1907, p. 344); also that Ramah was abandoned in 1908 because "They could get no codfish at Ramah, only a few seals and some trout, so that the people often suffered greatly from hunger there." (MacGregor, 1909, p. 332). Davey writes that Hebron was founded in 1832, the church and school at Makkovik finished in 1898, and the buildings at Zoar completed in 1866 but abandoned in 1895 because there also the Eskimos could not support themselves on the local resources (Davey, 1947, pp. 224, 238, 239, 249). In 1909 the Moravians dismantled Zoar's abandoned church and transported its timber to Nain, where their original church had been destroyed by fire. In the winter of 1918-19 the epidemic of influenza that ravaged the entire world invaded Okak and carried off most of its inhabitants. The survivors, 94 out of a population of 310, built new homes at Nutak on the south side of Okak Island, but deserted that settlement too in 1956 when they migrated south in search of wage-employment.

a third, 120 miles south, at Hopedale. Then in the nineteenth century they added four more stations, at Hebron, Zoar, Ramah, and Makkovik respectively; and at the beginning of the twentieth century they built an end-of-the-line mission near Cape Chidley at Killinek (Port Burwell), thus completing a chain that extended from northwest to southeast for nearly 400 miles. Today there survive of these eight missions only three, Nain, Hopedale, and Makkovik; but two new ones have arisen quite recently, at Happy Valley, adjacent to the Goose Bay airport in Hamilton Inlet, and at North West River about 25 miles to the northward.

Moravian missions in Labrador

<i>Mission</i>	<i>Founded</i>	<i>Abandoned</i>
Nain	1771	—
Okak	1776	1919
Hopedale	1782	—
Hebron	1830	1959
Zoar	1865	1895
Ramah	1871	1908
Makkovik	1895	—
Killinek	1904	1924
Happy Valley	1954	—
North West River	1960	—

The first three missions, Nain, Okak, and Hopedale, stood solitary in their bays during their earliest years, for the Eskimos were still migrants, without fixed homes to hold them down to definite localities: but just as the harried peasants of Europe, when the Dark Ages passed, crept out of their hiding places and concentrated in hamlets under the shadow of the Benedictine abbeys, so in northern Labrador the scattered Eskimos, realizing with the passing years the advantages of friendly trading posts in their midst and the benefits of medical care, slowly drew together out of their isolated fiords, built wooden houses or stone-and-sod huts alongside the new churches,¹ and made the missions their permanent centres. Unlike the peasants of Europe, however, they did not demand protection; for they no longer feared their ancient enemies, the Indians and the white fishermen, now that their friends the Moravians were residing on their coast. These friends had come to live with them, not for two or three years only, but for a lifetime, or at least until old age forced them to return to Europe. Their interests and those of the Eskimos coincided; and since their wives either came with them, or joined them soon afterwards, they became as much natives of the country as the Eskimos themselves,² whose language most of them spoke fluently and to whom they became bound by ties of mutual affection. The mission's trading post, therefore, bore little resemblance to the post of the early fur-trader in Indian Canada. The latter was a real fort, in

¹A Moravian station has "A wooden church with a pointed spire; a long dwelling house, two stories high, mostly white-faced and red roofed, for the Brethren, their wives and children: and gathered about this nucleus a scattering of Eskimo huts." (Prichard, 1911, p. 134).

²The Okak Eskimos used to speak of Dr. Samuel Hutton, who operated a hospital among them from 1902 to 1908, as "our Samuel". Cf. Prichard, 1911, p. 145, "Like the race for whom they care, they [the Moravian missionaries] have no other home [except Labrador]".

structure as in name, strongly built and surrounded by a stout palisade to resist any armed attack by hostile Indians. The Moravian mission, on the contrary, lay wide open, its trading store and all its contents protected less by its humble lock than by the goodwill and simple honesty of the Eskimos toward members of their own community.

Naturally, the Moravians did not win acceptance in a day or a month. Eskimos are by nature very friendly, but they do not carry their trust on platters to offer every stranger who approaches their shores. The missionaries, for their part, judged faith by its works, not by the eloquence of its words, and they sternly refused to sprinkle the water of baptism on every individual who had learned to recite the Lord's prayer. Several years passed, therefore, before they harvested their first converts, or drew many Eskimo families to build homes around their churches.¹ In 1801, thirty years after Jens Haven and his two companions first went ashore, 26 missionaries were "labouring in the vineyards" of Nain, Okak, and Hopedale; but of the 162 Eskimos who had settled beside them they had converted only 85 (Gosling, 1910, p. 275). Then at last they won their struggle, and the gospel seed took firm root. Between 1799 and 1804 an intense religious movement gripped the aborigines.² By 1810 the population of the three missions had grown from 162 to 457 through an influx of ex-heathen natives from the surrounding districts (Davey, 1905, p. 210), and by 1848 the Christian Eskimos between Cape Harrison and Cape Chidley numbered 1,185 out of a total population less than 1,500 (Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 520-4).

The Moravians could hardly have achieved this success had they not displayed unusual prudence and far-sightedness. Their leaders in Europe chose the missionaries with great care, trained some of them in occupations such as gardening,³ carpentry, and boat-building that could help to make them self-supporting in their new homes, and hardened their resolution and their faith by denying them any easy retreat from their chosen battlefield. Candidates enlisted for life, not as conscripts, but as voluntary soldiers of the church who engaged to serve in the mission field at a minimum of expense, and for no material reward, until death or old age rendered them incapable of further toil.

"In most cases the Brethren spend the whole active portion of their lives on the coast. They go out there as young men, wives are sent out to them when they wish to marry, and strangely enough these unions seem to have been invariably happy. Their children, when they survive the rigorous climate, are sent home to school, and often never see their parents again. Their pay begins at £11 a year for an unmarried Missionary, and increases, if they marry, to £25, out of which they have to find their clothes, breakfasts, and small necessities; they collect no fees. Truly it cannot be for any reward on this earth that they have laboured, and still labour, in one of the most rigorous climates of the world, cut off from all that seems to make life worth living, without public recognition and the consequent feeling that their good actions are known and appreciated." (Gosling, 1910, p. 290).

¹They baptized their first convert, Kingminguse, in 1776, but thirteen years later pronounced him a backslider because he took to himself two extra wives.

²Cf. Crantz, 1820, pp. 312-15.

³Wherever possible the missionaries cultivated vegetables for their own support. The geologist Bell thus describes the vegetable garden at the Nain mission in 1884: "In the gardens at Nain I observed the following vegetables: potatoes . . . turnips, carrots, beets, cabbage, scotch kail, a very rank variety of spinach, lettuce, peas, beans and onions. There was also a great variety of flowers. The peas and beans were arranged so that they could be protected by glass if requisite, and the potatoes were planted in narrow beds, arched over with bent rods, so that long sheets of coarse canvas could be thrown over them on frosty nights." (Bell, 1884, pp. 13-14).

Other authors pay similar tribute to their self-abnegation.¹ Naturally their co-religionists in England and Germany did not forget them, or fail to give them full support. Every year, when summer came round, they despatched to their Labrador mission a heavily laden vessel to which even nations at war with one another granted safe conduct.² Their successive ships, from the first sailing brig *Amity* to their last vessel, the steamer *Harmony V*, hold honoured places in the history of transatlantic navigation; for not once in approximately 150 years did they fail to deliver their cargoes of supplies and mail, despite storms, drifting icebergs, and a rugged, ill-charted coast fretted with numberless bays and narrow channels and guarded by dangerous tides.³

The London Brethren had steadfastly refused to authorize the establishment of any mission in Labrador until the British government granted it special privileges. They knew that the coastline north of Hamilton Inlet was virgin territory; that no other sect had yet made contact with its Eskimos, and no trader obtained a foothold on its shore. In Greenland their missions had encountered both obstacles, and they were anxious to avoid any recurrence in the new mission field. No rival sect, if they could so arrange it, would ever impinge upon their territory and contest the allegiance of their converts; no outside whites would ever invade their domain to compete for the trade which they counted upon to support the new mission; would debauch the Eskimos with liquor, as they had in southern Labrador, then gleefully sail away with the natives' sealskins, oil, and other products to seek more victims elsewhere. With this purpose in mind, therefore, the Brethren had demanded for their Nain mission, and later for the missions at Okak and Hopedale, concessions "in trust" of 100,000 acres each, an area that would include all the land at the heads of those bays on which it was practicable to build. The resident missionaries welcomed the Eskimos on their property as free tenants, but no outsider could settle there, or live in the community, without their consent.

"The Mission is a large landed proprietor on the coast, at least nominally. In 1769 the King in Council granted in trust to the *Unitas Fratrum* (the Moravian Mission) 100,000 acres in Esquimaux Bay, at such places as the society might select, to occupy and possess during His Majesty's pleasure. In 1774 the Mission was permitted, by Order of the King in Council, to extend their settlements to the southward and to the northward of Nain, their first establishment, and to select 100,000 acres at Hopedale, and apparently a similar area at Okak. In 1903 a grant was issued to the Mission for 1,000 acres of land in fee-simple at Founder's Bight, Makkovik Bay. An application has been made recently for a

¹Cf. "The missionaries are to a great extent self-supporting; they catch and salt or preserve sea-trout and cod, can bear-meat and deer-meat which they buy from the Eskimo or the settlers, besides shooting birds for the same purpose. . . . this life of devotion and exile has but few breaks, the missionaries returning to visit their homes in England or in Germany on an average only once in about ten years—unless, of course, in the rare cases of sick leave." (Prichard, 1911, p. 139).

²During the war of the American Revolution both the King of France, and Benjamin Franklin on behalf of the Thirteen Colonies, issued proclamations granting the mission vessel safe conduct between London and the Labrador Coast. Gosling (1910, pp. 275-6), has published the text of Franklin's "passport".

³"For four years—1896-1900—the Moravians, having no ship of their own, simply chartered a vessel; the next ship, *Harmony V*., was the first to possess steam auxiliary power; and the chief advantage of the steam is that, not being quite so much at the mercy of the weather, *Harmony V*. can visit the Labrador coast twice a year. Each year she leaves London early in the summer, visits the stations from July to September, and returns to St. John's; and then, sailing for the second time she lands codfish at St. John's, Newfoundland, and returns to London about Christmas." (Hutton, J. E., 1922, p. 302).

grant at Ramah. It does not thus appear that the Mission has at present any grant at Hebron, Ramah, or Killinek, although they have purchased rights at the last-named place, as mentioned above. The object of the Mission in obtaining these grants has been attained, to settle the natives there, and to be in a position to keep at a distance undesirables of any class or colour." (MacGregor, 1907, pp. 334-5).

Evidently not all the missions, as is sometimes stated, received the generous allotment of 100,000 acres each, but only the three that were founded in the eighteenth century before any whites had attempted to settle north of Cape Harrison. At the end of that century a few trappers and fur-traders, operating independently of the Hudson's Bay Company and all other commercial organizations, infiltrated the southern district of the Moravian territory, married native women, and settled down at or near Makkovik and Hopedale to earn their livelihoods by hunting and trapping as did their Eskimo neighbours. They proved to be as law-abiding as their neighbours, too, and as faithful Christians, with the result that the missionaries, so far from resenting their intrusions, gladly accepted them into their communities, where their offspring became the nucleus of the white and mixed-breed population that inhabits the region today (Davey, 1905, pp. 248 *et seq.*; Gosling, 1910, pp. 276, 283-4, 291-3). This may explain why the Moravians asked the government for only 1,000 acres of land at Makkovik,¹ and the same amount, probably, at Ramah; but why they failed to seek any grant whatsoever at Zoar is not clear. It is worth noting, however, that no white trapper or trader attempted to settle as far north as Zoar until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century, and by that time the missionaries were less troubled about white settlers on the land than about the off-shore activities of the Newfoundland fishing fleet and the unfriendly competition of the Hudson's Bay Company.

The British government had gladly sought the help of the Moravians in bringing peace to southern Labrador, and had counted on them to preserve law and order along the northern coast; but not until the twentieth century did it confer on them (or on their bishop-elect) the legal authority to arrest any law-breaker, or expel any undesirable intruder from their property—except on one occasion, in the year 1880, when it requested Bishop Bourquin to detain a Nain Eskimo who had murdered his son-in-law in cold blood.² The Moravian elders in London must have discussed this subject with the British government before they sanctioned the founding of Nain, for on 3 May 1759, the King in Council ordered that:

"In case it shall appear to him (the Governor of Newfoundland) to be necessary for their welfare and security that one or more of the principal missionaries (Moravian) should be vested with the authority of Justice of the Peace, that he should in that case issue the proper commission for that purpose, conformable to the powers delegated to him by Your Majesty's commission under the Great Seal." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 363).

Actually the Moravians never needed any legal commission before the twentieth century, and never formally requested it. So peaceable were the Eskimos, so amenable to missionary suasion, that neither the government nor the Moravians ever contemplated the stationing of a policeman among them, and

¹In 1765, before they had established any mission on the Labrador coast, the Moravians had petitioned the Board of Trade in London for four separate tracts of land covering in all 400,000 acres (Whiteley, 1964, p. 33).

²Murder was not uncommon during the earliest years of the mission, but exceedingly rare later.

both would have scornfully opposed such an act as unnecessary. Sir William MacGregor, Governor from 1904 to 1909, stated this quite frankly:

"It is true that on the Innuist coast there is no prison, no police, no magistrate. But it would not appear that these adjuncts of civilization, necessary elsewhere, are required there so far as the maintenance of order is concerned. The moral control of the Mission, which has been so effective in the past, would appear to be sufficient at the present time." (MacGregor, 1907, pp. 342-3).

In an earlier passage MacGregor had drawn attention to another unusual feature of the mission's role:

"The Moravian Mission of Labrador has had the singular good fortune not to be disturbed in its work there by any other church or mission, to which must in no small measure be ascribed its success. The Salvation Army, however, it seems, made some effort in that direction, but finding that they were not needed there it appears they wisely did not push matters." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 334).

Labrador was indeed exceedingly fortunate to escape the mission rivalry and strife that marred Denmark's civilizing efforts in Greenland until the late nineteenth century, and darkened the histories of the Canadian Arctic and other lands. Doubtless the harsh climate of the coast north of Hamilton Inlet, the meagreness of its resources, the sparseness of its inhabitants, and the lack of any transport in early days except the yearly ship from London which supplied the needs of the Moravians, discouraged the intrusion of rival churches, particularly after the field had been pre-empted by a Christian faith whose missionaries had occupied the most strategic localities, learned the local language, and so entrenched themselves in the hearts of the Eskimos that they were accepted as an integral part of the population. Even with these impediments, however, it may be questioned whether every other missionary faith would have left the Moravians undisturbed had not the latter displayed great goodwill toward the missions on their borders, and a readiness to cooperate with them.¹ Thus during the second half of the nineteenth century they firmly refused to set up a mission in Hamilton Inlet on the ground that the Anglican and Methodist churches in that region were satisfactorily meeting the inhabitants' needs; at the end of that century they amicably arranged with the Ungava Anglicans that neither mission would transgress the boundary between Canada and Newfoundland-Labrador near Cape Chidley, although it was a Moravian, Kohlmeister, who first explored the coast east of Fort Chimo;² they scrupulously refrained

¹Published records seem to show that the early Moravians in Labrador were rather tolerant and broadminded men, far less bigoted and authoritarian in their relations with the Eskimos than Crantz, himself a Moravian missionary, depicts their colleagues in Greenland (see Crantz, 1820).

²About the end of the eighteenth century many Ungava Eskimos from the Koksoak and George River basins began to frequent the mission stations at Okak and Nain, both to trade their furs and to visit their fellow-countrymen, and at their invitation a Moravian missionary named Kohlmeister returned their visit in a voyage of exploration that carried him around the coast from Okak to the mouth of the Koksoak (see Kohlmeister and Knoch, 1814). In 1840 another Moravian missionary, Warmow, spent a winter at a whaling station in Cumberland Sound, in the south of Baffin Island. About 1900 an Anglican named Stewart operated a mission for two or three years at Killinek (Port Burwell), but closed it and retired to Fort Chimo in conformity with the agreement mentioned above. From that time onward the Moravians controlled the entire Eskimo population of Newfoundland-Labrador, since the natives from Hamilton Inlet south had already merged with whites and could no longer be distinguished as a separate people.

from attempting to proselytize the Naskapi Indians in the interior of the Labrador Peninsula, who adhered to the Roman Catholic faith, but welcomed them whenever they visited Nain and tried to satisfy their trade needs; and at all times they freely provided other missions with their Eskimo translations of the New Testament and their grammar and dictionary of the Labrador dialect.

In their trading operations, too, the Moravians showed equal circumspection. Their parent body, the *Unitas Fratrum*, was a small and far from wealthy organization which maintained its foreign missions by voluntary contributions. It knew full well the danger of combining trade and missionary work, and in 1752, when it sent to Labrador the missionary Erhardt whom the Eskimos murdered near Hopedale, its founder, Count Zinzendorf, laid down the general principle that no man should be at the same time missionary and trader: "if he traded he should not preach the gospel, and if he preached the gospel he should not engage in trade". To the missionaries in the field, however, this principle caused great embarrassment. They could not avoid setting up a trading post at every mission, partly because they needed its profits for their own support, and partly because without one the Eskimos would probably not settle near them, but would travel south each summer to obtain the goods they wanted from the regular traders in and below Hamilton Inlet. The latter would debauch them with rum and sell them useless trifles; and if the Eskimos should then remain in the south they would share the fate that was befalling their kinsmen in that area, swift extinction; and the missions would be preaching the gospel in a wilderness. On the other hand, the Moravians' meagre resources made it very difficult for them to support a non-preacher at each station merely to conduct the trade. So they vacillated. In the beginning they allowed the missionaries to carry on the trade; later they employed special traders. J. E. Hutton, the historian of the Labrador missions, well describes their dilemma:

"For two simple reasons, however, this trade with the Eskimos caused the S.F.G.¹ much anxiety. . . . If a layman took charge, the trade was mismanaged; and if a missionary took charge, the Eskimos ceased to love him. Each system had its defects; and, therefore, the Brethren changed from one to the other. First (1771-1861) the missionaries had full control; then (1861-1876) the trade was placed under a General Manager, with a layman at the head of each store; then (1876-1898) the missionaries resumed control; then (1898-1906) a layman was appointed as General Manager, while a missionary managed each store; and finally, 1906, the law was laid down that trade and mission should be kept strictly apart. For the former the S.F.G. was responsible; for the latter the Mission Board; and that is the system still [in 1922] in force.

"The other cause of trouble was the Brethren's kindness. For some years there existed in the minds of the natives a remarkable delusion, spread first by certain schooner-men, that while the S.F.G. claimed to be a trading concern, it was, in reality, a charity; each article on the *Harmony*², therefore, belonged by right to the natives; no missionary had any right to charge any price whatsoever; and all those who sold goods at the stores were mere robbers and swindlers. At last the danger became so serious that the Mission Secretary (1888) was sent on a visitation; and yet, though he explained the facts of the case, there was still so much suspicion left that, next year, at Hebron, the people even blockaded the school-house and held the missionaries prisoners. By slow degrees the truth prevailed; the missionaries regained the people's confidence; and the people excused their evil conduct by saying that if they had been more efficiently taught they would not have sinned so deeply." (Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 30-9. Cf. MacGregor, 1907, p. 339).

¹The Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, in London, which handled the supplies and most of the financing of the Labrador mission. See footnote, p. 8.

²The ship which at that time brought the mission its supplies.

Time the healer eventually brought a solution to the Moravians' dilemma: in 1925 they transferred all their trading rights and stores for twenty-one years to the Hudson's Bay Company, washed their hands of any further commercial operations, and restricted their activities to missionary work, which included, as before, education and health. Conditions had indeed greatly changed during the century and a half they had laboured in Labrador. The white men who had settled along its northern coast and married Eskimo women were increasing in numbers until they now formed an important segment of the population; Newfoundland fishermen and traders were operating off-shore during the summer months as far north as Cape Chidley, and Sir Wilfred Grenfell's Mission was ministering to both the "floaters" and the shore fishermen. In the mid-nineteenth century, too, the Hudson's Bay Company had invaded Moravian territory and established two posts inside its limits; and by the end of that century trade had become a very complicated business which could be successfully handled only by professionals.

Communication with the outside world, too, had become more frequent since the early nineteenth century, when the only vessel that ever visited the Moravian settlements was its annual supply ship from England. Before 1850 another vessel from England was serving the Hudson's Bay Company posts in northern Labrador, although I have seen no record of its putting in at any Moravian port. In 1880, however, the Newfoundland government began to send a mail vessel to Hopedale each summer, and by 1905 had improved this service by subsidizing a steamer, the *Virginia Lake*, to run every fortnight from St. John's to Nain (MacGregor, 1907, p. 353);¹ and from the last decade of the nineteenth century the Moravians eagerly awaited a visit each summer from Grenfell's vessel, which generally carried a package of letters. There was even a winter mail service, conveyed by sled overland from Montreal to Rigolet, at the mouth of Hamilton Inlet, thence up the coast by one means or another until it reached the Moravians' headquarters at Nain about Christmas, and their northernmost stations at Okak and Killinek about March. The medical missionary, S. K. Hutton, tells us how it was conveyed to him at Okak:

"During the winter we had a little Labrador post of our own. On the 20th of January big Josef started south with his sledge and dogs, to meet the messenger from the southern stations at Nain. After a stay of two or three days to give the Nain missionaries time to read and answer their letters . . . he travelled back again. . . . Next day Jerry would take the mail sledge northward, while Josef rested on his laurels." (Hutton, S. K., 1912, p. 322).

Small motor-boats made their appearance in the first decade of the twentieth century, and since then have greatly increased the facilities for travelling from place to place along the coast. Now aircraft have brought every settlement and every bay within a few hours flight of Montreal. Only with an effort can the modern tourist appreciate the hazards of travel in northern Labrador during the days of sailing vessels, or the isolation and loneliness of the Moravians from 1771 until the outbreak of the First World War.

¹Owned by the Reid Company of St. John's, Newfoundland (MacGregor, 1909, p. 324). Prichard wrote in 1911, "The Reid Company—it seems impossible to write of either Newfoundland or Labrador without mention of them—have put on a steamer called the *Invermore*, which every eight or ten days goes up the Labrador coast from St. John's as far as 55° north lat. This boat, before she was acquired by the Company, was a crack passenger steamer running to Ireland" (Prichard, 1911, p. 244).

For the century and a half preceding that war northern Labrador had been a benevolent theocracy, a North American Tibet in miniature. After a hasty glance in 1773 at the Moravian settlement in Nain, then only two years old, the Newfoundland government had made no further inspection of the region until 1821, when the governor, in response to complaints from traders in southern Labrador that the Moravians were monopolizing all trade by checking the northern Eskimos from travelling south to barter their products, ordered Captain William Martin of H.M.S. *Clinker* to proceed to Nain and investigate the situation.¹ The Captain submitted so favourable a report that the governor immediately forwarded to the Brethren an Order-in-Council, passed several years earlier but for some reason withheld, granting them a tract of land for a fourth mission, which they established soon afterwards at Hebron. In 1826 the government created a surrogate court to serve both southern and northern Labrador, and in 1830 the judge of that court, a Captain Patterson, visited Hopedale on circuit; there, however, he found conditions so peaceful that he had nothing to do (Gosling, 1910, pp. 290-4; MacGregor, 1907, p. 329). His court was discontinued three years later, re-established in 1862, suspended again, and re-established for the third time toward the end of the century, when one of its main duties, apparently, was the collection of customs dues; and those duties seem not to have taken it north of Hamilton Inlet. Hence it was not until Sir William MacGregor inspected the whole coastline in 1905, and again in 1908, that the authorities in St. John's and London obtained reasonably adequate information concerning their Labrador dependency from Forteau to Cape Chidley.

For roughly 150 years, therefore, other religious faiths, and the Newfoundland government itself, allowed the Moravians a completely free hand to induct the northern Labrador Eskimos into the ways of civilization. Even the Newfoundland fishermen and the Hudson's Bay Company did not seriously interfere with their trading operations until the nineteenth century had run more than half its course. For all practical purposes, they were undisputed rulers over the whole coastline north of Hamilton Inlet: in their hands lay the education, the health, and the welfare of its Eskimo inhabitants. Accordingly, we must now review in greater detail their activities from 1771 to 1914, and study how well they carried out their civilizing mission among the primitive savages whose welfare they had made their prime responsibility.

Economic changes

Through many hundreds of years before the coming of the white man the north Labrador Eskimos, ignorant of agriculture—which indeed was virtually impossible in their land—remained stone-age wanderers who regulated their movements by the wildlife in the sea and on the land around them, and relied on the animals and the fish to supply their daily food. By the time the Moravians landed on their coast metal goods bartered or plundered from Europeans in southern Labrador had replaced many of their tools, weapons, and

¹Cf. Anon. 1835, pp. 297-307. So little known was the northern coast at this period that Captain Martin could find no pilot to take him beyond Cape Harrison (Gosling, 1910, p. 315).

household utensils made from stone, a few articles of European clothing were circulating among them, and even one or two firearms, the last destined to increase in number very quickly and to supersede antiquated throwing-harpoons and bows and arrows. These changes, however, were minor disturbances that scarcely rippled the surface of their everyday life, which continued to follow its immemorial progression through the varying seasons of the year.

Basic to their existence was the seal, which they hunted in both summer and winter. From November or December to April or May, depending on the solidity of the sea ice, they harpooned the mammals at their breathing-holes or, more often, in lanes of water kept open by the currents and the tides; then from June to late September they pursued the seals again over the sea in kayaks. Walrus too they attacked and killed, even whales, not the smaller species only but the mighty bowhead itself. In the nineteenth century the whale fishery was important enough for the Moravians to send out on their mission vessel a skilled harpooner from Denmark (Davey, 1905, p. 43).¹

The never-ending quest for food led to other activities that accompanied or interrupted the sealing for shorter or longer intervals, particularly during those in-between seasons of spring and fall when neither dog-sled nor boat could venture on the sea. There were winters when ptarmigan seemed innumerable, and snaring them provided welcome relaxation from the seal-hunt, especially for women and boys. In April, when the days were long and the ground still covered with snow, a few men may have trekked inland for several days to hunt caribou; but down to the nineteenth century, when the herds of caribou, from causes still unknown, began rapidly to decrease and summer cod-fishing became a commercial enterprise, most or all Eskimo hunters postponed this land excursion until August, the month that brings the fur of the caribou to its prime.² In June they abandoned their sled-dogs on islands to fend for themselves until the fall, after which some families went to the nesting places of the sea-fowl to harvest both birds and eggs, while others, especially those from Nain northward, trapped and speared the char that migrate up the streams at that season to spawn in headwater lakes.³ Cod abound in north Labrador waters during

¹Cf. "For a number of years the capture of from three to five whales, and the findings of several more dead, upon the coast is reported each season, but after 1830 there is very seldom any mention of their having been taken or found. It would be interesting to know what species of whale the Eskimos could have killed from their kayaks,—presumably some of the smaller varieties. The dead whales were no doubt drowned by being caught on the shore side of immense fields of ice, which gave them no opportunities for blowing." (Gosling, 1910, p. 285). In the eighteenth century the Eskimos south of Hamilton Inlet sold small quantities of baleen to Cartwright and other traders.

²MacGregor wrote in 1905 (1907, p. 336) "There seems to be no doubt that the Labrador caribou are fast diminishing in numbers. . . . One result of it would seem to be that, under the guidance and influence of the Mission, the Inuit are becoming less dependent on caribou meat, and are giving more attention to the fisheries than formerly. This may eventually have considerable effect in retarding the extinction of the race, although at first sight the diminution of the deer seems very regrettable." Since his day the caribou have disappeared from most of northern Labrador. See also footnote 1, p. 28.

³In most years char were fairly abundant, and more than supplied the needs of the Eskimos, who split them, dried them in the sun, and stored large quantities to tide them over the early weeks of winter when the sea ice was too unsafe for sealing. However, early missionaries report occasions when the fish either failed to appear, or numbered so few that whole families of Eskimos perished from starvation at their fishing-camps (Cf. Gosling, 1910, p. 285).

August and September, but for some reason or other the early Eskimos did not relish their flesh: they preferred the meat of seals and polar bears, and therefore fished for cod only to escape immediate want. Vegetable foods they lacked entirely, save for the fruits of the bearberry and one or two other shrubs, which the missionaries of later years taught them to conserve with sugar.

The Moravians tried to preserve this general pattern of living, or at least to disturb it no more than was necessary. They carefully built their missions in localities where seals were plentiful and would therefore keep the Eskimos in their vicinity; and they counted on satisfying most of their own dietary needs from the meat and fish they obtained through their own exertions or purchased from the natives. On several occasions during the eighteenth century, however, the Eskimos failed to capture enough seals to supply their own wants, and both they and the missionaries suffered severe privations, the latter less than the natives, naturally, because they could fall back on the stores that came to them from Europe. In 1806 they introduced sealing-nets, and about the same time also fish-nets, both unknown to the Labrador Eskimos of earlier days. The fish-nets supplemented and partly superseded the stone weirs in which they had trapped the char as they migrated up the rivers to their spawning-grounds, and downstream to the sea; while the sealing-nets enabled them to capture seals more regularly, and in that way sensibly lessen the danger of outright starvation.

With the passage of time other changes followed. We noted on a previous page how the Eskimos gradually drew together from their scattered camps, and built permanent homes beside the missions, where they could enjoy the social life that centred around the churches and obtain help in periods of distress. There, however, they acquired new desires and new needs. They wanted timber and tools to build wooden homes, guns to hunt seals, walrus, and polar bears, clothing similar to that worn by the missionaries, and tea, biscuits, sugar, and other foods of the white man. The new needs, the new desires, started a chain reaction. To satisfy them the Eskimos could offer in lieu of money, which hardly existed before the twentieth century, very little except dried char, sealskins, and seal-oil, all of which they needed themselves, the skins for clothing, tents and boat-coverings, the oil for fuel and light; and these articles were often in short supply. Fortunately, white men would take in barter two other products which the Eskimos had previously scorned, namely dried cod, and the furs of various small animals, principally the fox (of which there are several varieties), the marten, the mink, and the otter. The last three animals, being denizens of the forests, ranged no farther north than the district around Hopedale.

Almost imperceptibly, then, the Eskimos began to re-set their economic sails and tack in a new direction. The Moravians discouraged idleness around their settlements, and firmly refused to provide steady wage-employment to any except the aged and the needy. Instead, they insisted that all able-bodied Eskimos should fish and hunt more vigorously than before to satisfy their increasing wants, and not look to the charity or generosity of the missions except in emergencies. Their firmness compelled the natives to take up two new activities, commercial cod-fishing during the late summer, and trapping the small fur-bearers during the winter, both of them occupations that seriously disrupted their traditional routine during those two seasons. By the middle of the nineteenth century, therefore, we find them striving to build up a new life-pattern which the historian Gosling briefly outlined in these words, on the

strength of a report by Reichel, a Brother whom the Moravian synod in Germany despatched to Labrador in 1861 to investigate the state of the mission:

"At New Year they [the Eskimos] assemble at the Mission stations and occupy themselves in the capture of partridges and foxes. In February they go to the edge of the ice to take seals, but always make a point of returning for the services of Passion Week. After Easter they go inland to hunt caribou. In June they collect eggs from the islands, after which the cod fishing soon begins, and lasts until September. From October to the end of the year they give their attention principally to the taking of seals in nets, which forms their chief supply of food during the winter. But very few Eskimo families were then content with the food which had satisfied their ancestors. Molasses, sugar, biscuits, and other European food had become almost a necessity, and were obtained principally from the Newfoundland fishing schooners or traders. They had given up the practice of harpooning seals or taking sea birds by means of darts, at which they had been so marvellously expert, and used firearms instead, which was more expensive and considered by the Brethren to be rather retrograde." (Gosling, 1910, pp. 303-4).

In that mid-nineteenth century when Reichel submitted his report the outside world was rudely shattering the isolation of northern Labrador and undermining the Moravians' gentle rule. During the last years of the eighteenth century some white trappers and traders had already followed their trail, for in 1797 the Hopedale missionaries informed their European Brethren that two Englishmen had settled near them, and that seven others, two of whom had married Eskimo women, were living in their vicinity (Gosling, 1910, p. 276).¹ Something checked the further expansion of these settlers during the next half century, since mission letters written in 1856 state that practically no whites had yet settled north of Hamilton Inlet. Then the intrusion of cod-fishing vessels revived the slow drift northward, and by 1874, 115 settlers were living among the 1,176 Eskimos of northern Labrador, by 1904 280 amid an Eskimo population which had dropped to 1,050. T. D. Stewart, quoting MacGregor, records the the numbers and distributions of Eskimos and settlers on 31 December 1905 as follows (Stewart, 1939, p. 74):

Population of northern Labrador, 1905

<i>Mission district</i>	<i>Eskimos</i>	<i>Settlers</i>
Makkovik	total population 138	nearly all settlers
Hopedale	123	110
Nain	233	54
Okak	329	0
Hebron	166	8
Ramah	75	4
Killinek	78	3

Only in the Makkovik and Hopedale districts did many settlers dwell alongside the missions. Elsewhere the incomers converted their summer fishing-places on neighbouring bays into winter homes, and sailed or sledged into the missions for Sunday services and church festivals. They earned their livelihood in exactly the same way as the Eskimos, with whom they intermingled so freely that the distinction between the two groups gradually resolved into a

¹About 1780 a Frenchman named Makko set up a trading post in Kaipokok Bay which "was particularly successful in enticing the Esquimaux by the most tempting offers." It seems to have lasted about twenty years (Crantz, 1820, pp. 307, 312).

question of language rather than of race or status. The pure-blood Eskimo population was fast diminishing, and the number of settlers slowly rising.

The cod-fishers disturbed the tranquillity of the region much more rudely than the settlers. They appeared first in 1857, when an American vessel called at Hopedale and traded rum to the local Eskimos, precipitating some debauchery. Two years later Hopedale, Nain, Hebron, and Okak all reported Newfoundland fishing vessels in their vicinity, and in July 1861 the diary kept by the missionaries at Nain recorded that Newfoundland vessels cruised around in the open sea until the ice moved off the coast, when they put in to land and usurped some of the Eskimos' fishing-places. Six Newfoundland vessels fished off Hopedale in 1863, 25 touched at that settlement in 1866, 108 in 1868; and in 1870 more than 500 vessels passed the place on their way north, 145 of them in a single day¹ (Gosling, 1910, p. 304).

Both American and Canadian vessels participated in the northern Labrador fishery during its first years, but the Americans soon retired to work the Labrador banks, which were near their home ports, and the Canadians followed them, although as late as 1880 100 Canadian vessels were still operating in northern Labrador waters (Packard, 1891, pp. 240-1). By 1900 very few even of the Newfoundland boats went farther north than Nain or Port Manvers, but one firm—Job Brothers of St. John's—was maintaining an all-year fishing station at Port Burwell, which its steamer visited every summer (Delabarre, 1902, p. 152).

In 1900 the Newfoundland fishing fleet, despite a slight retraction in its range, counted between 1,500 and 1,800 vessels, operated by crews that numbered from 15,000 to 20,000 men, women, and children. Many of the skippers bartered with the Eskimos for the furs, the fish, and the seal-oil which otherwise would have flowed to the missions; and at the beginning of the season some of them landed white fishermen on promising headlands (or at Eskimo fishing-camps temporarily unoccupied because their owners, perhaps, were still hunting seals), returning to take both the fishermen and their catch on board again when the season closed. The majority were honest, hard-working, God-fearing men who caused the missionaries no trouble, but occasionally some less scrupulous individual would lure the Eskimos' trade by broaching a cask of rum, thereby creating some disorder in their camps. At times, too, lawless members of the fleet (and what fishing-fleet lacks such members) plundered unoccupied Eskimo camps of their boats, nets, ropes, and anchors, without a thought for the distress they were inflicting on the unoffending owners.

The missionaries possessed no legal power to check such misdeeds, or even to protect their own property. True, the Newfoundland government, at their urging, had inserted two clauses in its Consolidated Statutes warning that:

"section 51, reads: No intoxicating liquors shall be sold, given, or delivered to any Esquimaux Indian, under a penalty of two hundred dollars. And

section 52:—Any Stipendiary Magistrate anywhere, or any Justice of the Peace upon the coast of Labrador, shall have cognizance of any offence under this chapter." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 331).

¹Gosling adds (1910, p. 413) "The important northern Labrador fishery therefore sprang into being in 1863, and was actively prosecuted by 1870. The schooners going to the far north are termed 'floaters,' meaning that they are not generally attached to fishing establishments on the Labrador, but catch their fish wherever they can get it, and take it direct to Newfoundland ports, where it is cured." We may note, perhaps, that in another passage (p. 291) Gosling states that the first American fishing vessel arrived at Hopedale in 1822, but that the name of that pioneer was not recorded.

The government, however, did not station any policemen in the region or on the fishing-fleet to enforce the regulation, and it appointed no Justice of the Peace to take cognizance of any offence until the 1890's, when it conferred that authority on Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, Superintendent of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen who from 1892 onward cruised the coast every summer in his vessel the *Albert*.¹ Grenfell was a staunch friend of both the Eskimos and the Moravians; and he exercised tremendous influence in the fishing-fleet; but his many activities kept him in Newfoundland and southern Labrador during most of the fishing season, allowing time for only a fleeting tour of the northern coast.

It is not surprising that the nationality of the missionaries embarrassed them in their relations with the fishing-fleet, for most of them were Germans who spoke the English language very imperfectly. In 1879 the Brethren in London had provided some security for their persons and property by securing the appointment of their leader, Bishop Bourquin, to the office of "Consul of the German Empire for Labrador" (Gosling, 1910, p. 308); but this gave him no judicial authority. Actually both mission and Eskimos derived their chief protection from the high moral calibre and simple piety of the fishermen themselves. At no time did the Newfoundlanders ever deliver themselves over to the debauchery, or indulge in the crimes, which besmirched the crews of contemporary whaling vessels in the Western American Arctic, where they brought destruction to more than half the Eskimo population along the 1,500 miles of coastline from Bering Strait to the delta of the Mackenzie River.

White settlers and Newfoundland fishermen were not the only disturbers of Moravian tranquillity. The peacefulness of northern Labrador, the drift of whites into the lower part of the region and the prospects of favourable trade, set in motion the powerful Hudson's Bay Company, which invaded the region from both the south and the north. In the south, about 1831, it set up a post in Davis Inlet to trade with Naskapi Indians from the interior who were coming down to the coast each summer to sell their furs; and some time before 1866 it erected a second one at a place called Aillik, near Makkovik. In the north, also about 1831, it established a post in Nachvak Fiord to intercept the trade of a body of pagan Eskimos who had moved from Ungava Bay to the Atlantic coast. The missionaries found its rivalry very disturbing, even though they maintained cordial relations with its field staff; and they practically squeezed the Nachvak post out of business by setting up a mission and competitive post on each side of it, one at Ramah and the other at Killinek (Hawkes, 1916, p. 15; Gosling, 1910, pp. 304, 407).²

Although the Moravians lacked the authority to prevent such invasions of their territory, they succeeded in retaining the bulk of the trade because their stores stood open every day of the year except Sundays and church holidays, and they themselves lived on the most intimate terms with the Eskimos, who regarded them as belonging to the "people".³ They taught the natives to

¹The *Albert* served him three years, from 1892 to 1894; in 1895 the *Sir Donald* superseded it, and was itself superseded in 1897 by the *Julia Sheridan*. A new steamer launched in 1899, the famous *Strathcona*, took over from the *Sheridan* and worked the coast from 1900 to 1923, when it sank and was replaced by the *Strathcona II*.

²Gosling points out that the Hudson's Bay Company, unlike the Moravians, did not receive grants of land for their posts from either the Newfoundland or the Imperial government, but occupied the sites by "squatters rights".

³The word "*innuit*", which was the Eskimos' name for themselves, means "people".

remove the backbones of their fish with two cuts, Scandinavian fashion, an improvement which brought "mission-dried" fish slightly higher prices than the fish caught and marketed by the Newfoundlanders themselves. Aware, too, that the Eskimos, like most primitive peoples, were inclined to be improvident, and would sell their char and cod at the first opportunity without retaining enough to tide them over the lean days of fall before the opening of the sealing season, they commonly purchased a quantity of the fish themselves and sold it back to the sellers at cost price when hunger threatened. Furthermore, they tried to increase the Eskimos' purchasing power by teaching them to weave attractive baskets, and by encouraging them to carve small figurines in ivory for which there was a ready market in England.¹ In their stores the missions paid very fair prices for all native products, and offered liberal credit. For a period, indeed, this credit was too liberal, because it permitted a growing accumulation of bad debts which in 1874 forced them to impose sharp restrictions lest their stores lapse into bankruptcy.

It was the very unfavourable season of 1871, apparently, which precipitated the financial crisis. In that year ice blocked the coast until the end of July, ruining the cod-fishery for Eskimos and Newfoundlanders alike. Then the sealing in the fall proved equally unrewarding, and only an unusual abundance of willow ptarmigan near the settlements during the winter, and the very high credits provided by the missions, preserved the natives from grave hardships. Fortunately, during the next half-century fate spared the region another season as difficult as that of 1871, and the cod-fishery, supported by the char-fishery and the trapping of the small fur-bearers, supplied a firm, or seemingly firm, foundation on which the Eskimos strove steadfastly to build prosperity for themselves, and for their children after them.

The imposition of credit restrictions in 1874, nevertheless, excited considerable unrest among the natives, even though they themselves acknowledged that many families had made little or no effort to reduce their indebtedness. The Moravian synod, therefore, sent Reichel back to Labrador to investigate the region anew. He reported that both the material and the spiritual condition of the Eskimos had greatly changed during the fifteen years since his previous survey. Competition from the Newfoundland fishing-fleet had spurred the natives to greater activity, and trade with both the missions and the fishermen had added to their worldly possessions and increased their imitation and emulation of the white man. Over most of the coast they had replaced their winter snow houses and summer tents of sealskin with wooden dwellings and canvas tents; had relegated their traditional seal- and caribou-skin garments to Sundays and special occasions and on week-days wore only European dress; and in their daily diet were incorporating more and more European foods. Between 1861 and 1876 their dogs had increased in number from 222 to 716,² and their wooden boats, all or nearly all bartered from the Newfoundlanders, from 117 to 237,

¹About the turn of the century the Moravians enlisted the help of Newfoundland's governor, Sir William MacGregor, in an abortive scheme to manufacture jewelry from labradorite, an attractive mineral found on a cliff near Nain (MacGregor, 1907, pp. 339-40). During this period, too, they introduced a few sheep and goats, but that experiment failed owing to the shortage of fodder.

²In pre-European times the average Eskimo family could feed no more than two or perhaps three dogs. The spread of firearms, and the introduction of the fur trade, seems to have brought about an increase in the dog population in all parts of the Arctic, and with it, of course, an increased strain on the food supply.

while their home-built umiaks or skin-covered travelling boats had decreased from 14 to 4, and their kayaks or hunting-boats from 214 to 154 (Gosling, 1910, p. 307). Their living standard had risen slightly, and they were riding the crest of a mild inflation.

By the first decade of the twentieth century the new pattern of life had imposed itself quite firmly. Here roughly was its time-table:

Christmas to Easter	— trapping
April	— caribou hunting
May to June or July	— spearing or shooting seals
July	— char-fishing (mainly north of Nain)
August and September	— cod-fishing
October to Christmas	— netting seals

At this period August and September were the months that crowned the year, for cod, not seals, had now become the Eskimos' mainstay and the migrating shoals did not reach Nain until about the end of July. One good season could pay off a family's winter debts and fit it out with a new sofa, a new harmonium, new tools, a new gun, or a new canvas tent to replace one that had rotted or been torn during the previous summer. Before the cod actually arrived the families scattered to their individual camping-places inside the headlands or along the shores of the bays, where day and night throughout the short season the man hauled in the fish and his wife cleaned and dried them, both toiling at the same high pressure as white farmers in the south when they harvest and store away their hay and their grain. Then at September's end, when the main body of the cod had passed to the south again, each family bundled up its catch and returned to the home village in time to intercept the mission vessel that would carry its fish to market. Eskimo life was still hard and dangerous; but it seemed more secure than ever before; and to all outward appearance the native lived no differently, and certainly fared no worse, than the white settler who had built a cabin a few miles from him.

"The casual visitor in the summer time sees them [Eskimos] salting fish for market, and drinking tea and eating biscuits; he finds them wearing European clothes, and great clod-hopping hob-nailed boots, that they have bought from schooner folk in exchange for skin clothes and home-made sealskin boots: he might think that the Eskimos of the picture-books were gone". (Hutton, S. K., 1912, p. 211).

So wrote the medical missionary Hutton in 1912, but he added:

"Though times have changed since the old days, and a man can sell his fish and blubber and furs at the store and buy flour and ship's biscuits and other plain things, the nature of the Eskimos has not changed. They still like to depend on the hunt for their daily food; they still go out hungry in the morning, and gorge themselves on the raw flesh of the seals they bring home. This is their custom, part of their nature, born in them; they are a nation of hunters, and whatever changes in morals and housing and education passing years have seen among them, in this one thing they do not change. And well it is that the Mission has been able to keep them true to their traditions in this matter". (p. 215).

And again:

"In all their patient preaching and teaching the missionaries have never forgotten that the Eskimo must remain an Eskimo if he is to win his livelihood as a hunter in the frozen climate of his land; and while they have instilled habits of morality and clean living, and

have weeded out habits that are bad and harmful, they have urged the people to keep closely to their native foods and habits of life, and clothing; in a word, their policy has been to make the Eskimo a better Eskimo. The natural isolation of Labrador has helped them in this, and has helped them, too, to stand between the people and the vices that civilisation might bring if it were not grafted on their nature by careful minds." (p. 337).

The Eskimo was still a hunter in Hutton's day, he still maintained himself by fishing and the chase; but his needs had changed, and also the value of the products he derived from his hunting. Instead of harpooning seals with his home-made weapon as in earlier times he killed them now with a gun loaded with No. 1 shot that he bought at the trading store; and he lost almost more seals than he landed because they sank before he could retrieve them with a grappling hook and line. He needed a rifle, traps, fish-nets, and other European goods for his hunting and trapping, but the sealskins and seal-oil so indispensable to his earlier way of life brought him less credit at the store than salted cod and salted char, while furs, which at this time commanded good and steadily mounting prices, could bring him more than sealskins and fish combined, especially if he had the good fortune to trap one of the more prized varieties of fox, a black, perhaps, or a silver. The traffic in furs and decline in sealing not only intensified the demand for European garments and footwear, but it hastened the disappearance of the two aboriginal boats, the family umiak and the hunter's kayak, each of which required many skins for its cover. The former, rare already in 1860, vanished completely about 1904. The kayak lingered on for another half century, when it in turn succumbed to the motor boat, a more serviceable vessel for both travelling and fishing.

It was not only the Eskimos who had changed, but the wildlife also. Through the whole of the Labrador Peninsula the herds of caribou were waning,¹ posing a serious problem to the Eskimos on the coast, who needed their warm hides for winter clothing, and a much greater problem to their erstwhile enemies inland, the Naskapi Indians, who needed both the hides and the meat; for the latter always had been, and still remained, their staff of life. Hutton thought that the seals too were becoming less numerous along the Atlantic seaboard, or at least were avoiding the shoreline, frightened by the noise of the Eskimos' guns; but more probable seems his other explanation of their scarcity in certain years, namely, that whenever the ice lay closely packed near the coast the seals travelled outside it beyond the range of the hunters.² It was doubtless the firearms, however, and the destruction they wrought, that drove away the walrus and the polar bear which had once frequented the coast as far south as the Strait of Belle Isle. By Hutton's day both animals had retreated to the north beyond Cape Chidley, and only rarely did a bear drift on the ice floes far enough south to approach an Eskimo settlement, where its appearance aroused

¹"At one time the number of barren ground caribou in Northern Labrador and Ungava was estimated at 350,000 while the estimate based on a recent survey places the number in Northern Labrador, including the George River drainage, at 5,000 animals" (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, p. 4). A careful aerial survey in 1960 raised this estimate to 10,000.

²Starvation due to scarcity of seals occurred in 1837, 1846, 1851, 1856, and 1871 (Cf. p. 29 and Gosling, 1910, pp. 295, 297, and 300). Cf. "Immense masses of ice remained on the coast until late in the summer of 1855, and very small quantities of cod could be taken. The following autumn and spring the seal hunt was a failure, so that both the Brethren and their flock were at the end of their resources." (Gosling, 1910, p. 300).

excited cries of *nannook* ("bear"), and a swift outpouring of hunters in wild pursuit. Even the red salmon that are so abundant in southern Labrador, and that at one time extended in fair numbers as far north as Davis Inlet, supplying the Eskimos of the Hopedale district with an additional food resource, even they had vanished, or virtually vanished, no one knew where (Tanner, 1947, p. 735).¹

The disappearance of the walrus deprived the Eskimos of their one home industry—if indeed we may call it an industry—the carving of ivory into attractive figurines of men and animals, boats and dog-sleds, cribbage boards and other objects, which in early days sold without difficulty on the curio market. The missionaries advised the artists to substitute soapstone and even wood, but their counsel fell on deaf ears; for the curio market had weakened, and the few articles of ivory the natives still sold to the missionaries, and the missionaries sent on to London, brought very low prices. The younger Eskimos, indeed, were no longer interested in working ivory or any other material, for their time had become too precious. So the art of carving vanished from the coast with the passing of the nineteenth century (Hutton, S. K., 1912, p. 105).

The changes we have just noted were irreversible: neither the Eskimos nor the wildlife could turn the clock back and restore the old conditions. In pre-European times, when the Eskimos' needs were few and their world ended at their own coastline, their well-being depended on one factor only, the amount of available fish and game. Whenever these were plentiful the families prospered and were happy; but when both fish and game failed them they silently lay down and died. Long after the coming of Europeans among them an unfavourable season could still bring them starvation and death. In 1836-7 many ate their sealskin boots and sealskin tents and then died, despite the efforts of the missionaries; and

"In 1851 the mission distributed at Okak alone 70,000 dried fish, and yet many people died of starvation at a distance from the station. One heathen man killed his wife and five children and fed upon their bodies. In such famines as these natives lost all or nearly all dogs. At Okak in 1837 only 20 dogs survived out of 360. Great dearth may arise any season from failure in the sealfishery, or from other causes. It is to meet such cases that the Mission retains part of its exports on hand." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 333).

Their thousands of years in the Arctic had taught the Eskimos that life is never predictable, and they had schooled themselves to accept the whips and stings of fate with resignation.

By 1900 their life was nearly as unpredictable as before, and also more complicated. The white man had imposed on them a new technology—firearms to replace their self-made bows and arrows, and nets to take the place of their harpoons and spears. He had dangled before their eyes a new kind of clothing, taught them to build wooden houses of sawn lumber, and with his sugar, his tea, and his tobacco aroused new appetites that their forefathers had never experienced. The new generation of Eskimos had been broken in to these changes, just as we broke ourselves in to an age of electricity and internal combustion engines; and because they lacked the nature-lore and the skills of their ancestors, they could no longer win their daily bread without the weapons and

¹The Moravians' exports of red salmon to London in 1883 sold for \$407, in 1893 \$84, and in 1903 \$50 (MacGregor, 1907, p. 350).

tools that came from the white man. These weapons simplified the hunting and the fishing, even though they diminished the supply of game; and the new houses and the new foods increased the native's security and comfort. But they harnessed him inescapably to the white man's chariot, chained him to a strange world of which he knew practically nothing, and deprived him forever of his old self-sufficiency and independence. The white invaders would supply his every need provided, and only provided, he paid their price—a price they were exacting not in money, because that commodity was still unknown in this part of the world, but in fish and furs.

The Eskimo himself could not fix the amount of the price. That was determined by forces outside his knowledge and control, by the so-called laws of supply and demand in the distant world of civilization where price structures move up and down as ceaselessly as the waves of the sea. His helplessness in this respect strengthened his servitude. It bound him more securely to the chariot to which he had been harnessed, and he had no choice but to submit. Luckily for him, the civilized world had entrusted the reins, for a time at least, to the Moravian missionaries, and the latter had dedicated their lives to the task of easing the chariot's passage over the rough parts of the road.

The civilized world too had greatly expanded since the Labrador mission had come into existence, and its scattered parts had been knit more tightly together. Trade now extended to its outermost shores, and dealers in raw products that entered world trade—fish and furs, for example—had to keep very close watch on the day-to-day happenings in international markets. For obvious reasons, the Labrador missionaries could not do this. Nor could their small parent organization in London, the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, which handled all their business transactions, for it lacked the requisite capital, staff, and international connections. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, therefore, the exports of primary products on which the Moravians had counted to support their mission began to encounter rough water. Markets for the earlier exports, seal-oil and sealskins, had already slumped, and those for the main product, cod, which the society was now receiving from the Eskimos, were changing so swiftly that only with difficulty could it sell the small shipload that reached it from Labrador each autumn. In 1872, indeed, it gave up the struggle and advised the missionaries to market their fish through regular dealers in St. John's, Newfoundland. Happily, the fur market continued to hold firm and even to grow stronger, while the prices of store goods had not yet begun that steep climb which followed the First World War.

The economic situation in northern Labrador, then, was disquieting. The trading operations of the mission were running more and more deeply into the red, and its parent organizations in England and Germany possessed no reserves of capital to back it up. The missionaries themselves, or most of them, were probably poor business men, since they lacked both training and experience in the world of commerce. Yet it was not lack of experience which prevented them from balancing their account books, but their broad policy. They had never considered trading their major concern, but merely a tool that could aid them in their principal task, the promotion of the spiritual and material welfare of the Eskimo people; and that task always took precedence over the principles and practices of sound business. Thus the missionaries supported the aged and the needy out of their limited funds, frequently paid the Eskimos higher prices

for their products than was strictly prudent, allowed undue credit to improvident hunters, and in 1901 even cancelled all unpaid debts so that their clients might start afresh with clean slates.¹

Such practices, of course, greatly increased the expense of the mission, just when it was being called upon to extend its health, educational, and religious services to the English-speaking "settlers", and at the same time meet the growing competition of the Hudson's Bay Company and private traders. Already financial stringency was reducing its staff of Europeans, and compelling it to enlist more of its converts for educational and other tasks. After his second inspection of northern Labrador in 1908 MacGregor reported:

"Their [Moravian] field cannot be extended. It already covers the Esquimaux coast and the means of this excellent mission are very scanty. The number of European workers is, therefore, being diminished. Each station is to have one missionary, in addition to which there will be the superintending bishop and a doctor. This will make eight European missionaries for Labrador with perhaps a ninth in reserve for reliefs. In order to meet this contraction of the staff, a step rendered obligatory by financial necessity, much more of the teaching and ministration of the mission will have to be entrusted to native Esquimaux." (MacGregor, 1909, p. 338).

Yet in this emergency the Moravians could call on succour of their own planting. The seed they had sown nearly a century and a half before was ripening. In the eighteenth century they had planned to share with the primitive savages the comforts of the Christian faith, to civilize them, and to help them stand on their own feet alongside Europeans in a rapidly shrinking world. For one and a half centuries they had been the *de facto* rulers of northern Labrador, even though Britain had never granted them either the authority or the resources of a legally constituted government. Now, by the first decade of the twentieth century, they had advanced the Eskimos to a stage where, in Grenfell's judgement, they were the most literate people along the Labrador coast and were teaching their own children in the mission schools while the white missionaries taught the children of the settlers. In September 1913, there were 46 Eskimo "helpers", 21 male and 25 female, at the six settlements in northern Labrador, some of them teachers, others lay assistants in the general work of the mission (Hawkes, 1916, p. 21).

August 1914 unleashed the First World War, which convulsed most of the globe until November 1918. No Labrador Eskimos, as far as I know, actively participated in the conflict, although a few settlers probably entered the British navy along with men from the fishing-fleets that had operated in summer along

¹Cf. "In 1902 the Moravian Mission very generously and considerably carried out a general cancellation of the indebtedness of the natives to the several station stores of the Mission. They thus started each man on a clean sheet, and on a new system of business, under which comparatively more moderate advances are made to natives. The result has been entirely satisfactory. It has encouraged the native towards dependence on himself, and has made him more industrious and self-reliant, and this is reflected in the exports of the Mission. The retention of exports and selling them back to the natives, as mentioned above, is, of course, a departure from strict business principles, but it serves to illustrate the way in which the Moravian missionaries combine their trading with the patriarchal care they extend to the natives. The natives are at perfect liberty, at all the Stations, to sell to others than the Mission if they choose to do so. They do actually dispose of a certain quantity of things, especially of boots and fur, to fishing schooners and traders; but the great bulk of their produce they dispose of to the Mission." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 339).

the north Labrador coast. The disruption of trade in Britain, and Germany's submarine campaign in the North Atlantic, completely severed the long established supply and marketing connections of the Moravian mission, which could no longer count on England as its logistic base. Its strongest commercial rival, the Hudson's Bay Company, escaped this set-back because it possessed bases of its own in Canada, and also controlled its own transport. Hence when the war ended, leaving world commerce disorganized and all staple goods in short supply, the company was able to press its advantage and force its rival to accept its terms. Actually these were not ungenerous, with the result that in 1925 the Moravians cheerfully agreed to them and leased to the company all their stores and trading facilities for a 21-year period due to expire in 1947. Thereafter, with their hands permanently freed of every commercial responsibility, they gave their undivided attention to the activities that lay nearest their hearts, the religious welfare and the education of the Eskimos and settlers along the north Labrador coast.

Moravian trade

The young Moravian missionary who approached for the first time the rocky coast of Labrador had condemned himself to perpetual exile and poverty. Conspicuous above the shoreline stood his future home, from afar a princely palace surrounded by humbler abodes; and his tiny white church resembled a cathedral in the wilderness; but the palace contained only the simplest furniture, much of it homemade, and the cathedral carried a rough plank flooring half concealed by crude benches. Not for him the mahogany tables and Persian rugs, the tapestried chairs and the Dresden china he had left behind in Germany; everything in his new home was plain and utilitarian. Thenceforward he would live a life of servitude and toil in a harsh, forbidding land, cut off for ever, or at least until old age, from the friends and companions of his youth, deprived of the pleasures of cultivated society and good music, unrefreshed by gay feast-days and holidays or by travel in pleasant lands. His organization had rejected uncompromisingly the materialistic philosophy of the poet Lucretius, but it had accepted whole-heartedly that writer's ethical dictum:

*"vita mancipio nulli datur, omnibus usu;"*¹

and in obedience to that dictum its new recruit was now dedicating his active life to the service of his heathen brethren beyond the fringe of civilization. He could expect none of the ephemeral rewards that life can offer—neither fame nor riches. Of his own free will he had elected to spend his days in obscurity, to accept hardly enough salary to pay for the clothes on his back, to refrain from accumulating wealth for himself by trade or other means, and to employ his whole being, mind as well as body, in promoting the welfare of his little "flock in the snow".

Material possessions, and trading, the Moravians believed, were necessary evils, or at least the causes of much evil. In Labrador, therefore, they should be controlled and regulated for the public good. The historian J. E. Hutton sets

¹"To no man is life given in fee simple, but to every man in usufruct."

forth the three main reasons why for so many years the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel maintained regular trade with the Eskimos:

"1. *For the sake of the Missionaries.* No missionary could live on blubber, oil, and fish. At each station there was a so-called 'store'; on that store he relied for his daily food; and that food was brought each year from England by the ship. Instead of receiving an annual salary in cash, each missionary, until quite recently, received £90 credit at the store; and all the actual cash he saw was the £10 pocket money. For the sake, therefore, of the missionaries and their families, the Moravian ship took out each year:—

- (a) Coal.
- (b) Tinned meat, tinned fruit, tea, coffee, sugar, bacon, potatoes, and vegetables.
- (c) A few household medicines.
- (d) Books and magazines.
- (e) Letters from home.

For over a century the annual visit of the ship was the missionaries' only connexion with the homeland; but recently, in the summer months, a mail has run from St. John's.

"2. *For Financial Reasons.* By trading with the Eskimos, the S.F.G., for many years, covered nearly all the expenses of the Mission; the chief articles bought from the Eskimos, and then sold in London, were seal-oil, cod-liver oil, seal-skin, fox-skin, and carved ivory; and these articles realized such an excellent price that the Labrador Mission, for over a century, needed no support from general Mission Funds. Meanwhile, however, the S.F.G. pursued a rather singular policy. Instead of acting like Joseph in Egypt during the seven fat years—instead, i.e., of creating a Reserve Fund—they generously made annual grants to other Moravian causes; no proper provision for the future was made; and, therefore, when prices fell, owing to altered conditions, the S.F.G. found themselves in financial straits. The fall in prices was remarkable. In 1854 seal-oil was £54 a ton; in 1904 it was only £14; and in 1908 the S.F.G. confessed that their trade with Labrador no longer paid. Nor was this the end of the S.F.G.'s troubles. At the very time when their receipts were diminishing, their expenses were increasing. In 1905 a new station was built at Killinek; in 1903-4 a hospital was built at Okak; and in 1906 a new law was passed that henceforth each missionary should receive his full salary in cash. Each of these steps increased the expense of the Mission. In 1900 the cost was £3,774; in 1904 it was £5,465; and, therefore, a new arrangement had to be made that, while the S.F.G. supplied the ships and still traded with the natives, all the other expenses of the Mission fell on the Mission Board. Thus did an unforeseen alteration in trade conditions affect the finances, not only of the Labrador Mission, but of Moravian Missions as a whole.

"3. *For the Sake of the Eskimos.* By means of the trade the Eskimos received immense advantages; and, therefore, whether it paid or not, it had still to be maintained.

- (a) In return for his skins, oils, and ivory articles, the Eskimo received English-made forks, knives, guns, powder, and other shooting and fishing requisites.
- (b) By trading with the S.F.G. the Eskimo was saved the necessity of dealing with other traders. Some of these would probably have cheated him, and others would have paid him in rum.
- (c) In Labrador there are sometimes bad fishing seasons. In 1836-7, e.g., the Eskimos had to eat their tent-skins; in 1855-6 many perished of hunger; and at such times, the Moravian 'Store' is the people's last resort. On one occasion the missionaries at Okak distributed 70,000 dried fish.
- (d) By dealing at the 'Store' the Eskimo learned to be thrifty; his debts were entered, not only in the store ledger, but also in his own pocket-book;¹ and the business understanding was that, sooner or later, he must pay in full. But this demand was

¹MacGregor says that at Okak in 1905 each Eskimo's pass-book, named and numbered, hung on the wall inside the store close to the door, so that he could see at a glance his sales, his purchases, and his current balance (MacGregor, 1907, p. 328).

not always strictly enforced; a bad season was always a good excuse; and one year the S.F.G. wrote off £2500.

- (e) Further, by means of the 'Store' the Eskimos provided for Christmas. As soon as the autumn hunting season was over all the Eskimos returned to the stations; during the next few weeks the Store was crowded; and every day the store-keeper dealt with keen and eager hagglers. There they stood with their seal-skins, their fox-skins, their seal-oil, their cod-liver oil, their ivory dolls and canoes; in return they demanded petroleum, meal, peas, soap, aprons, nails, rice, tea, treacle, biscuits, salt-meat, guns, powder, shot, accordions, sewing machines, tobacco, spoons, forks, ribbons, carpets, lanterns, wax candles; and the store-keeper had now to enter on a profound mathematical calculation. For every article in his shop, and also for every article sold by the Eskimos, there was a definite money value, fixed by the S.F.G.; no actual cash, however, changed hands; and the store-keeper, after consulting his list, had to offer so much petroleum for a fox-skin, and so much rice or treacle for a gallon of oil. His worst customers were the women. No woman ever knew at first what she wanted. First, she handled nearly everything in the shop; then she criticised the bargains made by the men; then she returned home to consult a friend; and then, back in the shop once more, she repeated the performance.
- (f) Above all, by means of the ship, the Eskimo children were made happy; the *Harmony* always contained hundreds of presents; and these presents were packed in four different boxes. In box one there was baby clothing, to be given to the mother on the day her baby was baptized; in box two, school prizes, *i.e.*, books, toys and mittens; in box three, Christmas presents, *i.e.*, scrap-books, dolls, beads, etc.; and in box four, some gifts for the native helpers. For all the widows and orphans, too, some special provision was made. Thus did the *Harmony* supply the needs—physical, intellectual and moral—of all classes in Labrador." (Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 304-7).

Hutton's description of a typical scene in a mission store early in the winter, at the close of the hunting season, will remind travellers in northern Canada of similar scenes at certain posts of the Hudson's Bay Company in or near Indian settlements prior to the Second World War. There too one saw the white trader standing behind his counter, patiently watching some Indian and his wife pick up an article, examine it, discuss it, ask its price, and lay it down with an ejaculation of protest. Often, after examining other articles, they returned to the first, haggled together for a while, went home, and reappeared at the store later in the day to begin the process over again. If the traveller were observant, however, he might have noticed one significant difference. In Eskimo territory the woman generally stood in front of her husband and monopolized most of the conversation with her unsubdued voice; in Indian territory she preferred to stand beside or a little behind him, directing to him rather than to the trader her low-toned comments and advice. Despite this difference, both races settled the issue in the same way: it was the woman, whether she was quiet or vociferous, who made the final decision, and the man philosophically concurred.

The reader will have noticed that all the store goods mentioned by Hutton were strictly utilitarian. It would have violated the ethical principles of the Moravians to flood their market with useless baubles, which could only impoverish the Eskimos even if they caused no actual harm. The Moravians strictly forbade the introduction of any alcoholic beverage into any of their stations, apart from the tiny quantity they themselves brought in for medicinal purposes, and also, perhaps, for religious sacraments. They did sell tobacco, however, charging in 1905 what seems to have been a rather high price, 60 cents

a pound,¹ the value of a first-quality sealskin or caribou-skin, and slightly higher than the wages, 40 to 50 cents, they paid an Eskimo for a day's work.² In general, however, their store goods were very reasonable, according to MacGregor and other observers, as were also the prices the mission paid the Eskimos for their products:

"The prices paid by the Mission are fair and liberal, and in the case of valuable pelts such as silver and black fox, the Mission storekeeper pays a deposit at once, and when the skin has been disposed of in the London market, he passes over the whole amount of the sum obtained, after the deduction of a small percentage, to the hunter. But the possession of a round sum of money is of no permanent use to the Eskimo. He knows nothing of a bank account, and as long as he has a cent he spends it—not by any means at the Mission store, but probably in making many useless and worse than useless purchases from the schooner-men who come in summer to trade along the coast. Thus, a man who has perhaps drawn 300 to 600 dollars³ in one haul, often applies to the Mission funds as a starving pauper two or three months later. . . . Theoretically, there should be no bad debts, and the store should pay its way . . ." (Prichard, 1911, pp. 136-7).

I should again remind the reader, perhaps, that no money ever changed hands in these transactions. As late as 1939 Tanner reported that cash was an almost unknown commodity on the coast, and that the Eskimos received only trade equivalents for their products (Tanner, 1947, p. 538). Forty years before his time, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the mission printing-press at Nain issued credit notes in denominations of from one cent to five dollars, which the local store, doubtless also other mission stores along the coast, accepted as a valid currency (MacGregor, 1907, p. 335); but the issue was apparently very small and quickly disappeared. For the full story of this financial experiment, however, we must await a study of the Nain records.

These hand-written records, along with those of the other mission stations in Labrador, were collected in 1959 and deposited in the Moravian archives at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Their transcription and study will throw a great deal of light upon the general history of the coast and the vicissitudes of its trade, for they set forth, amid a mass of other information, the exports and imports of each year, with prices and other details. Pending their study, we have to content ourselves with the few figures published by the two authors, MacGregor and Davey. The latter tells us (Davey, 1905, p. 210) that in 1811 the 457 Eskimos in Nain, Okak, and Hopedale—the only missions established up to that time—traded in 100 tons of [seal] blubber, 2,000 sealskins, and 2,750 fox-skins; but he recorded no prices. Sixteen years later, in 1827, the 185 Eskimos at Hopedale turned over to the mission store 8 tons of seal-oil, 64 fox-skins and 4 marten-skins; but again we are given no prices (MacGregor, 1907, p. 351).

¹MacGregor, 1907, p. 328. The Eskimos of northern Alaska, who obtained tobacco from neighbouring Siberia before any white explorers reached their shores, made long pipes with stems of split and bound willow, and bowls and mouth-pieces of ivory. The Labrador Eskimos fashioned pipes from soapstone if European pipes were unavailable. Whenever their tobacco became exhausted the natives of both regions substituted the dried leaves of bearberry bushes, and in Alaska they occasionally cut up and smoked the nicotine-impregnated willow stems of old pipes.

²Women were paid 25 to 35 cents a day, according to Prichard, who adds that passing ships paid still lower rates (Prichard, 1911, p. 137).

³Surely a fantastic sum for this period, except in the case of the trapper who, once in his lifetime perhaps, captured a silver or a black fox.

*Exports of the Moravian Church and Missionary Agency
from Labrador, for the years 1883, 1893, and 1903
(from MacGregor, 1907, p. 350).*

<i>Articles</i>	<i>1883</i>		<i>1893</i>		<i>1903</i>	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i>
codfish	2689 qtls	7140	2994 qtls	8185	4035 qtls	21,149
trout	579 brls	2870	787 brls	3720	798 brls	4,788
skin boots	632 prs	490	230 prs	437	3224 prs	5,849
seal oil	313 cks	11,185	194 cks	6120	353 pns	7,200
cod oil	3 cks	35	3 cks	118	41 pns	910
cod liver oil	7 cks	640	6 cks	375	3 pns	96
furs	16 cks	2925	6 cks	1720	11 pgs	7,000
dry seal skins	13 cks	200	—	—	5 pgs	100
salted seal skins	14 cks	425	8 pgs	190	7 pgs	200
reindeer skins	36 pgs	1625	72 pgs	1000	5 pgs	800
straw work and curios	—	200	2 pgs	60	15 pgs	150
feathers	—	—	4 pgs	15	12 pgs	150
salmon	37 tcs	407	5 tcs	84	6 tcs	50
<i>Totals</i>	—	<i>\$28,142</i>	—	<i>\$22,024</i>	—	<i>\$48,442</i>

The table above lists Moravian exports, and the prices they brought, for three single years, without indicating whether those years were normal or abnormal in respect to production and market conditions. It is difficult, therefore, to draw any far-reaching conclusions. All or nearly all the trout (char) came from the two northern missions at Okak and Hebron, and most of the seal-oil, sealskins, and sealskin boots from Hebron and Port Burwell, where seals were more numerous close to shore than at Okak and farther south; at Okak, indeed, the missionaries estimated that the average hunter killed only about 50 seals a year, as against an average kill of 150 at Hebron and 250 to 300 at Port Burwell (MacGregor, 1907, p. 328). The returns from furs were beginning to rival those from cod and seal products, but the exports of salmon and handicrafts (straw-work, i.e. baskets, and curios) were negligible. In two of the three years listed the returns from all exports barely covered the freight charges to and from London, which MacGregor reckoned at about \$20,000. Even in the third and most favourable year, 1903, exports yielded an excess of less than \$30,000 over freight charges, and that amount had to cover not only the costs of the European goods that were traded, but of the household supplies and "pocket money" of the missionaries and their families, who numbered at that period 38 persons. We cannot wonder, then, that the S.F.G. in London admitted that its Labrador trade was no longer paying the expenses of the mission, and requested the help of the Mission Board in Germany.

MacGregor omitted to record the prices of the store goods that the Eskimos were purchasing at the beginning of the twentieth century; he merely noted that they paid 8 to 10 cents a pound for shot and from 20 cents upward for gunpowder, two articles they needed for reloading their shotgun shells and also the brass cartridges of the .44 Winchester rifles many of them were using at

that period. Fortunately, he has listed the prices they were receiving for their seal products, their fish, and their furs, and has given us also some indication of the average income.

Prices of seal-blubber, fish, and furs about 1905

(from MacGregor, 1907, pp. 325, 329, 350).

Seal-blubber:	\$2.40 a cwt.	Fox, red or white:	\$4
Seal-skins:	20-60 cents each	" , blue	: \$6
Caribou skins:	Do.	" , cross	: \$16
Dog-skins	20-5 cents each	" , silver, up to	\$180
Trout (char):	\$4-6 a barrel	Marten and Otter	\$15
Cod:	\$5 a quintal	Mink	\$2
		Muskrat	15 cents
		Weasel	5 cents

The best trapping area was the Hopedale-Makkovik district, where a good trapper could earn as much as \$240 annually, though the average was nearer \$150. In addition, he might obtain \$25 a year from seal-blubber, and perhaps a slightly greater amount from sealskins and the boots his wife made from that material. From the hunters' "pass-books" inside the mission store at Okak, which was a good district for fish but a poor one for seals and fur, MacGregor calculated that the local Eskimo was earning, on the average, only \$50 to \$60 a year; at Nain, his calculations gave a range of from \$20 to \$120. Generalizing for the whole coastline, therefore, we shall not be very far wrong, perhaps, if we estimate that in the period around 1900 the yearly "cash" income of a Labrador Eskimo averaged less than \$150.

It was this paltry income of less than \$150 that stood between the Eskimos and dire privation, perhaps even extinction. They still retained the courage and stamina of their forefathers, but they had lost some of the special skills which had enabled their race to survive in isolation, century after century, on this barren, rock-bound coast—the skill to make serviceable bows and arrows, to chip quartzite and chert into sharp points and blades for arrow- and spear-heads, scrapers and knives, and the skill to harpoon seals and walrus from narrow, unstable kayaks. To be sure, they had learned other skills: they were good trappers of the small fur-bearers, good net-fishermen, tolerable marksmen with the rifle, and some of them fair carpenters who could build wooden houses and wooden boats. For all these accomplishments, however, they needed steel tools and steel weapons, which they could procure only from the white man. Their isolation had ended: they had now been incorporated into the white man's world. At the moment they were as independent and self-supporting within that world as most white men, since they were able to pay for their steel tools and weapons, and for all the other products of civilization that reached them, with products from their own hunting and fishing. But for how long they could continue to do so, for how long the prices they received for their raw materials would defray the costs of the imported articles, no one could foresee. They could not significantly cut down their purchases and thereby reduce their expenses, because the slightest reduction in their already marginal standard of living would jeopardize their very existence. Fate was holding them on her scales evenly balanced between survival and extinction.

Education

Like Prometheus, the true missionary must hold his mind steadily fixed upon the future. He knows that adults soon become settled in their ways and only with difficulty adjust to new modes of action and new ideas. As soon as possible, therefore, he tries to train the malleable children, whose minds are as yet unencumbered with traditional notions but perceptive to new impressions and new thoughts. This is what the Moravians did in Labrador. As soon as enough converts settled around their missions during the winter months they organized schools, which opened their doors four days a week, and accepted adults as well as children from the age of 6, although as time went on the adults gradually dropped out. Two principles governed the education offered in these schools: first, the need to impart a sound knowledge of the Christian religion, and second, the undesirability of disturbing the native way of life except where it was absolutely imperative.

Before establishing themselves in Labrador, the Moravians had operated a mission in Greenland, and so were well acquainted with the problem of teaching Eskimos who had no conception that unexpressed thoughts and audible words could both be represented in visible characters. The Greenland missionaries had studied the Eskimo language, worked out its grammatical structure and, using the Latin script, translated parts of the New Testament into the West Greenland dialect, which differed very little from the Eskimo dialect spoken in Labrador. Their colleagues in the latter region, therefore, possessed a well-tested base on which to found their schooling, and did not begin *ab ovo*. Of the three men who had established the Nain Mission which gave the Moravians their first foothold in Labrador, two, Jens Haven and Christian Drachart, had trained in Greenland, and learned from that country's inhabitants the Eskimo way of life and the Eskimo language.

Greenland has been under Danish suzerainty ever since its rediscovery by Europeans at the beginning of the sixteenth century; but the early missionaries there, both the Danes and the Moravians, employed the natives' own language in their churches and schools, so that until quite recently only Greenlanders who had passed into high school learned to speak and write the Danish tongue of their rulers. In Labrador the Moravians adopted the same policy. Most of them spoke German in their homes, but preached in the Eskimo tongue, and used no other in the classrooms until whites who had settled in the Makkovik and Hopedale districts requested instruction in English for themselves and their children. The curriculum included only such subjects as appeared to have practical value—reading, writing, simple arithmetic, elementary geography, elementary bookkeeping, and, of course, the study of the Bible. In the teaching of arithmetic a slight improvisation became essential, because the aboriginal Eskimo counted on his fingers, and lacked words for any numbers above five except one that meant "many". To meet this problem the Moravians introduced the Arabic numerals under their German names, evoking the comment from Bernhard Hantzsch, a German naturalist who visited Killinek in 1906, that it sounded very strange, after listening to a sermon delivered entirely in Eskimo, to hear the missionary announce the hymn for the occasion as *nummer sieben-und-zwanzig* (Hantzsch, 1932, p. 154). In the second half of the nineteenth century increasing contact with Newfoundland fishermen and settlers taught

the Eskimos the English names of the numerals, and the German words gradually dropped out of use.

The curriculum allowed time for instruction in a few minor accomplishments, sewing, group-singing, and the playing of musical instruments, especially the violin, harmonium, accordion, and trombone. Toward the end of the nineteenth century the gramophone became very popular, but at the same time a heavy drain on the Eskimo's slender pocket-book. In earlier years the Nain mission had outfitted a workshop with tools and taught the Eskimos carpentry, but by 1900 it had dropped the course from its curriculum because the natives were fully capable of teaching one another (MacGregor, 1907, p. 334).

In 1904 the opening of a mission at Killinek (Port Burwell), at the entrance to Hudson Strait, posed the Moravians with a new problem. The inhabitants of that remote settlement had but recently migrated there from Ungava Bay, where they had learned to read and write their language in syllabic characters introduced by the Anglican missionary, E. J. Peck, a decade or two previously.¹ The syllabic script was easier to learn than the Roman alphabet, but by this time the latter had firmly established itself along the Atlantic coast of Labrador and in Greenland, and had served for the publication of an appreciable literature in the Eskimo tongue. The Moravians therefore rejected the syllabics and taught the Roman characters to the Killinek natives, so that all the Eskimos throughout their territory would employ the same system of writing, and be able to read the same printed books.

The Brethren in Europe strongly supported these educational efforts of their missionaries in the field, and about 1810 sent to Labrador copies of an improved edition of an Eskimo hymn-book which had been prepared by their colleagues in Greenland. In 1821 the Bible Society of London, which had previously shipped to the Labrador Eskimos printed copies of parts of the New Testament translated by the missionaries into the Eskimo tongue, supplied them with a translation of the whole book. From that time the Eskimos

"read therein daily, in their houses and tents, with the greatest earnestness, delight and edification. . . . The schools which are held, with both children and adults, also eminently forward their improvement, being attended with great diligence. The severest punishment that can be inflicted on a pupil, is to keep him for a time from this tuition." (Carne, 1848, p. 196).

By 1884 all Eskimos along the Atlantic coast of Labrador could read and write their own language, and some of them, especially in the Hopedale district, could speak a little English. Twenty years later Grenfell adjudged them the best educated people along the entire coast, and MacGregor believed that they could exercise the franchise as intelligently as any whites, although he doubted whether the franchise would benefit them, since they were probably happier and more settled as they were, left to the mission (MacGregor, 1907, p. 362). Inconsistencies of spelling made much of their correspondence difficult to decipher (Hantzsch, 1932, p. 153); but poor spellers are numerous in every country, and in Labrador the Eskimos' only guide was the spelling they had learned in school, which was easily forgotten and not entirely phonetic, since the Eskimo language contains a number of sounds unknown or uncommon in western Europe, e.g. the voiceless *l* sound which in Llewelyn and other Welsh names, English represents by double-*l*, and the uvular *k* sound commonly

¹See Jenness, 1964, pp. 16, 121.

written *q* on maps of the Arab world. The education imparted by the Moravians was not profound, if we judge it by European standards; but it transformed the ignorant savages gathered around the first missions into a truly literate people, who possessed in their own tongue a number of school text-books, translations of a few English works, and a newspaper of general information issued once a year by the small press in the Nain mission.

"The Mission is educating the children: at every station school is held on four days a week during the winter months, and the children begin to attend after their sixth birthday. Usually the smallest are taught by an Eskimo . . . later, the missionary takes them in hand and leads them from the stage of strokes and pot-hooks and the spelling of queer syllables to real writing and the reading of books, and even among the mysteries of simple arithmetic. . . . by the time the boy and girl leave school they can reckon dollars and cents, and find their numbers in the hymn-book; and as for reading and writing, every Eskimo on the coast, over the age of twelve or thirteen, can manage so much, and their knowledge of the Bible would put many a more civilised person to shame.

There is not a very extensive literature at the disposal of the Eskimo with a taste for reading; the Bible is the chief book, but besides it there are translations of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Christy's Old Organ*, *Jessica's First Prayer*, a book of short readings in natural history and general knowledge, the various school books, the hymn-books used in the church—and the newspaper! The Eskimo newspaper [Aglait Illunainortut: "The Paper for Everybody"] is by no means a daily; rather it takes the form of an annual budget, printed by the missionaries at Nain during the winter; but it tells the people something of the doings of other lands, and it helps to stir their loyalty as British subjects." (Hutton, S. K., 1912, pp. 338-9).¹

There could be no formal grades or examinations in the Moravians' schools. The missionaries were not professional teachers, and they were not attempting to train their pupils for any environment except the one around them. In that environment, they anticipated, the Eskimos would remain, supporting themselves as before on its resources, but more prosperous than in earlier years and, being better informed about the outside world, more able to hold their own whenever it intruded into their homes. Since no grave intrusion seemed imminent, however, they considered it unnecessary to teach the natives English, except at Makkovik, or to send selected pupils to Newfoundland or elsewhere to gain more education and training than was possible on the mission stations. Actually they lacked the funds to do so, although they would have rejoiced to see in their midst a fully trained Eskimo nurse or a certificated teacher. Throughout the nineteenth century the most they could offer their brightest pupils were minor jobs as teachers and helpers at the missions. Eskimos and whites alike had to await the unfolding of the future.

Makkovik differed from other places. Until the 1950's it was the southernmost link in the mission chain and, next to Killinek, the latest, being founded only in 1895, after numerous "settlers" (most of them Newfoundlanders, the rest Canadians and Europeans) had worked their way up the coast to beyond Nain and increased in numbers until they made up about 20 per cent of the entire population. Many of the southern settlers joined the congregation of the Hopedale mission, which registered in 1895, 175 Eskimos and 177 settlers; and it was at the request of this mixed congregation that the Moravians established the mission at Makkovik (Davey, 1905, pp. 248-9).

By that time the Makkovik Eskimos had become much more Europeanized than those farther north: they were more familiar with the English language

¹The "Paper for Everybody" was published every year from 1902 to 1922.

and ate more European foods; and, like the settlers, they relied on cod-fishing more than upon hunting and trapping. The new mission, therefore, recognized no distinction between white and Eskimo, but taught children of both races in the same classroom, using English as their medium of instruction; and they boarded twenty children in the mission house during the winter months when their parents were trapping in the woods (MacGregor, 1907, p. 342). At all other missions, however, the Moravians welcomed both races alike at church services, but taught the children in separate classes, the settlers' children in English and the Eskimos' in their own tongue.

"About the Moravian stations the settlers share in all the benefits of the Missions. During winter-time the boys and girls from distant bays and islands are sent to Nain or to Hopedale, where they are boarded out with responsible families and attend evening school under the superintendence of the missionaries and their wives. The good results of this teaching are not far to seek, and it is a pleasure to meet the kindly well-spoken men and women who come to the stations from time to time from outlying fjords. In fact, most of the families have nice, neatly built 'town-houses', their quarter being one side of the Mission house and church, while the Eskimo dwellings stand, as usual, a good deal too close together upon the other." (Prichard, 1911, p. 153).

A close study of the records in the Moravian archives in Pennsylvania could give us many intimate details of the Missions' educational activities before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Until they become available, however, we are limited to what we can glean from the following table provided by the Society's historian, J. E. Hutton:¹

<i>Year</i>	<i>Missions</i>	<i>Missionaries</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Pupils</i>
1792	3	25	?	?	?
1848	4	?	1185	?	?
1899	6	35 (18 men 17 women)	1284 (baptized)	5	199
1914	6	26 (13 men 13 women)	1235 (baptized)	8	193

After his tour of inspection along the Labrador coast in 1905 MacGregor summed up his estimate of the educational situation in these words:

"It does not seem to one that very much more can be done in the way of tuition for the Innuite race than is now being carried out by the Moravians. The proportion of persons that can read would certainly compare very favourably with that of several white communities known to me." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 342).

Health

For at least two thousand years before the Christian era the ancestors of the Labrador Eskimos wandered along the shores of Hudson Strait and Bay, and through the eastern portion of the American Arctic, spearing the fish, the seals,

¹Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 520-4, also p. 311. The author thus explains how there could be eight schools at only six stations in 1914: There was a boarding school for settlers' children at Hopedale and what is called a "preaching place", as distinct from a "station" or mission, which perhaps contained a school. Financial stringencies brought about the staff reduction that appears in the 1914 figures.

and the walrus as they still did in the days of Jens Haven. Why their numbers failed to increase, outgrow the means of subsistence, and force them to roam southward into a less rigorous zone, we do not know. There were periods when a few bands did increase, apparently, and drift into the forested lands that fringe the tundra; but they either retreated again, or they perished, perhaps by merging with Indian tribes and losing their identity. Something of this nature may have happened in Newfoundland, where Eskimos, entering the island from Labrador, presumably, occupied the long, north-pointing finger of land that touches the Strait of Belle Isle, and from a soapstone cliff at Fleur de Lys carved oval lamps and rectangular pots with which to cook their meat and fish. These adventurous migrants vanished from Newfoundland, however, before French and English fishermen arrived to colonize its coast; and today's Eskimos have no tradition of dwelling in areas farther south than those they now occupy in the Arctic and Subarctic, where their numbers became relatively stationary, with only those balancing swings upward and downward that occur also among other animals in that largely barren waste.

Man, however, is not an ordinary animal. He possesses more intelligence than other creatures; and although this intelligence governs only some—a very few, alas—of his actions, it still enables him to look farther into the future than the dog or the hare, and to provide against many of life's hazards that otherwise would crush him without warning. Our Eskimos are not less intelligent, as a race, than the Mongols who poured out of the Asiatic steppes and overran half the continent of Europe, or the Arabs who multiplied in the desert and swept out to conquer the Middle East and North Africa. What then was it that checked them from multiplying as did those other races, and spreading far and wide over Canada, instead of stagnating, or appearing to stagnate, in their arctic and subarctic homes?

We know very little about the mechanics of population increases and decreases in either animals or man. All living creatures must of necessity adjust to the available food supply, and on the Arctic and Labrador coasts fate has exiled the Eskimos to regions where edible plants can scarcely be said to exist, agriculture is impossible or virtually so, and wildlife is limited to a very few species.

Low fertility could not have checked the Eskimos from multiplying. They are as fertile as other races, being unaffected in this regard by the severe cold and the long dark nights of winter. Today, from Alaska to Greenland, they are increasing in number: their birth-rate in Canada, 6 per cent or over,¹ is by far the highest in the Dominion. Nor could the check have come from contraceptive practices, which were unheard of; or widespread chastity, which was equally unknown; or from marriages late in life, because all Eskimo girls married in their teens.

The hazards to life in the far north doubtless exceeded those in most countries—hazards from the very severe climate and oft-recurring famines. Infanticide, especially of baby girls, was a common practice in all parts of the Arctic; I myself recorded five cases during a single winter in the western part of Coronation Gulf, where the population did not exceed 500. Not infrequent, too, were drownings, murders, suicides, and deaths from food-poisoning. These combined must have taken a very heavy toll.

¹ 161 per 1000 in 1961, according to the Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare, 1963, p. 2.

Then there were diseases. Exactly what they were before the Eskimos came into contact, directly or indirectly, with Europeans we do not know. Every race suffers functional disorders and other ailments, but our many infectious diseases, smallpox, measles, virus influenza, and others, had not yet scourged the Eskimos, or produced in them any of the resistance or immunity that comes to the aid of other races. Samuel K. Hutton, the medical missionary, thought that influenza had become endemic in Labrador, and recurred in pandemic form every year in February and August, the bronchial type being the most common, the gastric type the most fatal, and the meningitic type the most frequent in children (Hutton, S. K., 1926, p. 44); but he wrote before our scientists had isolated any of the influenza viruses. A mild bronchial cold that slightly resembled influenza prevailed in 1914 among the primitive Copper Eskimos of Arctic Canada, who claimed that it struck them in the fall of every year when they moved from their draughty summer tents to the still atmosphere of snow huts, but the malady lasted only a few days, produced no fever, and seemingly left no after-effects. Virus influenza was not known in that region at the time, and did not appear there until some ten years later.

To return, however, to the Eskimos of Labrador. It seems certain that only their high birth-rate, and such aid as the missionaries could provide, saved them from being exterminated by the numerous epidemics that assailed them during the nineteenth century, epidemics not of influenza alone, but of smallpox and other diseases. Here is a chronicle of them, as far as they are recorded by the different writers:

Epidemics prior to 1914.

Before 1771: no record.

1774: Smallpox, brought to southern Labrador from England by Caubvick, the sole survivor of the five Eskimos taken to Europe by Sir George Cartwright. The number of fatalities is not known (Gosling, 1910, p. 416).

1796, 1797: "During the winters 1796 and 1797, an infectious disease visited all the settlements, a violent cough, accompanied with fever and pleurisy; it attacked both Europeans and Eskimaux, but proved fatal chiefly to the latter" (Anon. 1835, p. 160).

1811: a "nervous and paralytic disorder" suddenly attacked the Hopedale Eskimos: of about 30 cases 13 died (Crantz, 1820, p. 316; Cf. Anon. 1835, pp. 251-5).

1825: "a peculiar disorder, the symptoms being violent vomiting and profuse sweats. The Brethren were quite unable to diagnose it or treat it successfully, and a large proportion of deaths resulted." (Gosling, 1910, p. 292).

1828: Measles caused 21 deaths at Nain, 11 at Hopedale. Its toll elsewhere is unknown (MacGregor, 1907, p. 337; Gosling, 1910, p. 293).¹

1830: Malignant cough raged at Okak; 18 died (Anon. 1835, p. 316).

1842: Malignant influenza caused many deaths (Gosling, 1910, p. 296).

1855-6: An unstated disease carried off 59 persons at Hebron (Gosling, 1910, p. 300). It may have been measles, for MacGregor says "Upwards of 50 years ago an epidemic of measles again proved very fatal to the race." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 337).

1862-3: An "epidemic supposed at first to be influenza, then to be typhoid fever, carried off 50 persons at Hebron, thus in five months destroying one-sixth of the population. In the first 18 days 26 persons died and were buried in the same grave." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 337; Cf. Gosling, 1910, p. 304).

1876: Whooping-cough. "Over 100 died out of a population of 1200" (Gosling, 1910, p. 306).

¹Cf. "In the autumn of 1828 . . . a pestilence, which threatened to destroy their whole congregation: many perished; a hundred and fifty lay ill at one time." (Carne, 1848, pp. 210-17).

- 1880-2: Whooping-cough and measles caused the death of large numbers. "So many were ill at one time during the summer of 1882 that it was impossible for them to make their usual provision for the winter, and great distress prevailed in consequence." (Gosling, 1910, p. 314).
- 1880: Eight Eskimos taken to Germany in this year died of smallpox in Paris some months later.¹
- 1885: Measles. Many succumbed (MacGregor, 1907, p. 337).
- 1894: Typhoid, brought back by Eskimos whom a promoter had recruited and exhibited at the Chicago Exposition, carried off 80 Eskimos at Nain, 20 at Okak. Concerning this epidemic MacGregor wrote: "Half a score of years ago the population of Nain was 350. Of these 80 persons died of typhoid fever brought from Chicago, that is, in round numbers, the appalling mortality from such a cause, of 23 per cent. The disease was carried to Okak, and 20 persons succumbed to it there. How many more died at other stations I am not able to state, but there remains the lamentable fact that thus 100 persons died at two stations of a disease brought from Chicago, to which place some of their number had been carried as an exhibition speculation." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 336).²
- 1895: Whooping-cough. This epidemic caused little mortality (MacGregor, 1907, p. 337).
- 1904: The midsummer epidemic of influenza brought by the fishing-fleet carried off 65 persons at Okak, 19 of them children; and at Nachvak two persons (MacGregor, 1907, pp. 328-9).³
- 1906: German measles (rubella): no deaths (Hutton, S. K., 1926, p. 17).
- About 1906(?): "Enteric fever was brought to one of the stations some twenty years ago, and eighty died in a village of about three hundred inhabitants." (Hutton, S. K., 1926, p. 17).
- 1908: "typhus fever had broken out in two of the huts [at Hebron], and four of the victims were already dead" (Hutton, S. K., 1912, p. 138).
- 1911: "At Okkak and Nain, again in 1911, some five hundred [sic] Eskimo died of influenza." (Grenfell, 1934, p. 160).

MacGregor believed that this long succession of epidemics, together with the high infant death-rate, brought about a decrease in the Eskimo population during the nineteenth century. A medical man himself, he had witnessed in the Fiji Archipelago the horrors of a measles epidemic which in one year, 1875,

¹In 1880 Hagenbeck of Hamburg "sent to Labrador and induced eight Eskimo men, women, and children to go to Europe for exhibition purposes. The Brethren . . . used all their persuasive powers to prevent them from going . . . After appearing at the Zoological Gardens in Berlin for a few months, they toured through Germany and finally reached Paris. Here they contracted small-pox, and all died." (Gosling, 1910, pp. 309-10).

²Gosling (1910, pp 311-12) supplies further details: "In 1893 a colony of Eskimos, consisting of fifty-seven men, women, and children, were taken to the Chicago Exposition. They were recruited principally from southern Labrador, but some few went from the Moravians' stations. . . the survivors were returned to Newfoundland, in an absolutely destitute condition, at the expense of the colony. The money due to them was never paid. A schooner had gone to Labrador and taken them from their homes, but they were left to get back as best they could. They brought with them the infection of typhoid fever, to which a very large number of Eskimos, from Hopedale to Hebron, fell victims. At Nain, out of a population of three hundred and fifty Eskimos, ninety died during one winter, their dead and frozen bodies awaiting burial at one time the following spring." The story of one member of the party, the little lame boy Pomiuk who attracted so much attention in Chicago, was written up in a book entitled 'Pomiuk', by W. B. Forbush, Boston, 1903.

³S. K. Hutton, who at that time was in charge of a small hospital at Okak, records different figures. He writes: "The most severe pandemic [of influenza] . . . was in August, 1904. At that time 324 cases came under my notice . . . Death occurred in 47 of the 324 cases . . . All . . . were Eskimos." (1926, p. 45).

carried off 40,000 of the archipelago's 150,000 inhabitants; and he saw no reason why the government should not impose a strict quarantine on the north Labrador coast, and also induce the Moravians to vaccinate the whole population. He recommended further, that the Newfoundland legislature enact legislation to prohibit the recruiting and exporting of Eskimos for exhibition purposes, or indeed for any reason, without special permit: "As likely as not", he wrote in his official report of 1905 (1907, p. 338), "the next lot of natives carried to the United States may bring back small-pox or some other disease deadly to the natives". The Newfoundland legislature accepted his recommendation and prohibited the exportation of Eskimos for exhibition purposes; but its act came too late, for what MacGregor had feared had already come to pass. On 28 September 1903, two years before he wrote the sentence I have just quoted, there landed at Ramah, destitute and suffering from syphilis, six Eskimos, the sole survivors of 33 who had been taken to Europe in 1898 by the promoter who had recruited the party for the Chicago Exposition five years earlier. Syphilis had been totally unknown on the Labrador coast prior to this time, but by 1907 it had spread from Ramah to Nain, where the situation appeared so serious that MacGregor contemplated sending there a warship with a medical officer and supplies. One year later, when he personally inspected the region for the second time, the disease had reached the three remaining Eskimo settlements, Hopedale, Okak, and Killinek.¹

The Moravians did what they could to lessen the ravages of the various diseases that invaded the coast. Each of their stations stocked a small quantity of medicines, but during the nineteenth century none of the missionaries in Labrador had received a full medical training, and no doctor or hospital stood within reach until 1892, when Dr. Grenfell extended the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen to Labrador and began to call each summer at one or more settlements along its east coast, primarily to serve the fishing fleet. Grenfell whole-heartedly supported the efforts of the Moravians, but his hasty visits once or twice during the busy season, however encouraging, could aid them very little.

"The Mission staff and their congregations along the Labrador Coast, and through them the Moravian Church, owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Grenfell and his colleagues of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen for the kindly and valuable aid ever freely rendered in case of need. . . . Much as such occasional visits were appreciated, it gradually became more and more evident that some systematic medical and surgical provision in direct connection with the Brethren's Church was becoming indispensable, under the isolated circumstances amidst which much of the work was carried on." (Davey, 1905, p. 252).

Acting upon this resolution, the Moravians in 1897 enrolled one of their number, Rev. Paul Hettasch, in Livingstone College, London, to study for one year the elements of surgery; and as soon as he had completed his course they placed at his disposal a building in Hopedale which could serve as a "shelter" or hospital. This measure, however, was a stop-gap only. In 1902 they sent to Labrador a fully-qualified practitioner, Dr. Samuel K. Hutton, with instructions to erect and operate a real hospital at Okak, whose population of 350 made it at that date the largest settlement on the coast. There, with one fully-trained nurse—his wife—and an assistant nurse, Hutton worked and overworked among the Eskimos until 1908, when his health broke down and compelled him to return to England.

¹Cf. Gosling, 1910, p. 312.

Hutton's hospital was a two-storey building of wood, with seven beds for adults and two cots for children on its upper floor, an operating room, a dispensary, and an out-patients' room on the lower. Finished in 1903, it held its doors open to sufferers of every race and religion who needed its care, and by 1905 had received patients from as far north as Ramah and as far south as Hopedale. In that year the Grenfell Mission opened a larger and better-equipped hospital at St. Anthony in northern Newfoundland, sufficiently near Labrador to take over the care of the inhabitants in the Hopedale and Makkovik districts; and the Okak hospital served thereafter only the Eskimos from Nain northward.¹

As the only medical man permanently resident on the coast, Hutton had to wear, figuratively speaking, two uniforms. He was the coast's physician and surgeon, always on hand in case of emergency, always willing to travel long distances to patients too ill to be transported to his hospital. In winter he travelled by dog-sled, sometimes at the risk of his life; in summer in a boat dependent on oars and sail until 1908, when he was given a small motor-boat, the *Northern Star*. In his first seven months he treated 137 Eskimos at his hospital and paid over 1,000 visits to their homes: and during his six years of service he came to know every man and woman along the coast from Killinek to Makkovik (Hutton, J. E., 1922, pp. 309-11).

His second uniform marked him as the region's public health officer. He insisted on the Eskimos' keeping their houses scrupulously clean, encouraged them to live in groups of two or three families rather than in tightly packed communities that would promote the spread of infections, and urged them to build their permanent homes on the water's edge where refuse, frozen and harmless during the winter months, would be washed away by the tide after the ice broke loose in the spring. Sanitation and hygiene are very serious problems in regions where the ground is frozen permanently, or during the greater part of the year, and they are aggravated in the woodless Arctic by the absence of running water in primitive settlements, and the difficulty of heating even a small one-roomed hut with a blubber-burning or kerosene-burning stove when the temperature out of doors falls below zero Fahrenheit. The homes and churches of the Moravian missionaries, and their hospital at Okak, used more efficient stoves that burned coal, which bulked large in the cargo of the ship from England that brought them their yearly supplies.

Hutton's experience confirmed the low resistance of the Eskimos to the new virus diseases brought to their land by Europeans. Ailments which are generally mild among whites, such as German measles and mumps, struck them very hard, and true measles commonly ended in death. No cases of diphtheria had been reported down to his day, and tuberculosis was less widely spread than it became later, although he noted its frequency in certain families: it was generally of the "galloping type" that affected both lungs and carried off its victims very quickly. He believed that the Eskimo race was slowly but steadily dying out from two main causes, diseases and high infant mortality. The latter was not a new phenomenon, for the old burial places along the coast were filled with children's graves; but mission statistics seemed to show that the death-rate was increasing. Fully half the Eskimos' offspring were dying in childhood, the

¹Davey, 1905, p. 253; MacGregor, 1907, p. 327; and Hutton's own book, 'Among the Eskimos of Labrador' (1912). Prichard, writing in 1911 (p. 140) states that "The depth of winter brings [to Labrador] another Deep Sea doctor by dog-sledge"; but this doctor did not travel north of Hamilton Inlet.

majority in their first year from what he called "inanition" or "constitutional debility": they were born "too weak to live", a condition that he attributed to a plurality of causes—their low resistance to diseases, their unhygienic surroundings, the close blood-relationship of parents that is inevitable in small communities, the inadequate dietary, and the usually irregular lives of expectant mothers. Of the children who survived the first year many died between the ages of three and five from non-tubercular marasmus. In the whole picture he could see but one encouraging feature: while the high death-rate was increasing, so also was the birth-rate, and that too was very high (Hutton, S K., 1926, pp. 65 *et seq.*; 1928, pp. 373-6). His figures seem to show that in his day, the beginning of the twentieth century, the infant mortality rate in northern Labrador coincided very closely with its rate among Canada's Eskimos fifty years later, as revealed by the reports of Canada's Department of National Health and Welfare. In both regions, presumably, the causes were largely the same, for Dr. J. S. Willis, of the federal government's Northern Health Service, has identified the main killer as respiratory diseases resulting from the harsh environment, miserable and unsanitary housing, and inadequate care (Willis, 1962).

Hutton laid great emphasis on the deterioration in the diet of the Eskimos. He believed that with the changing conditions of life, the increasing difficulty in obtaining fresh meat, and the growing reliance on flour, biscuits, salt fish, salt pork, tea, and other European foods, the Eskimos were losing much of their ancient strength and vigour. He noticed their decline particularly at Makkovik, where the outnumbered Eskimos were rapidly adopting the manner of life of their white neighbours:

"The Eskimos living among these settlers have to a large extent adopted the 'settler' dietary instead of the normal flesh diet of the true Eskimos; and not only does scurvy occur among them in its typical form, but their physique is less robust than is that of their northern brethren. They have lost the thick coating of fat which gives the sleek outlines to the Eskimo face and figure; the nose is more prominent and the jaw less square. They endure fatigue less easily, and their children are puny and feeble." (Hutton, S. K., 1926, p. 22).

They were healthier, he believed, when they ate plenty of fresh (or sun-dried) meat and fish, their aboriginal diet; and he feared that their race would not long survive if it continued to replace this diet with imported, particularly farinaceous, foods.

His contemporary, MacGregor, was more sanguine. This writer noted that the Eskimos in the Hopedale and Makkovik districts were intermarrying quite freely with the whites, that the mortality among half-breed children was much lower than among the pure-blood, and that the half-breeds were reputedly more skilful trappers and fishermen. He believed that whites and half-whites possessed constitutions more resistant to the epidemics than the pure-blood Eskimos, and that their lower mortality was changing the composition of the north Labrador population: in 1850 that population had been practically 100 per cent pure Eskimo, whereas at the end of the century, though its total number remained about the same, 21 per cent were half-breeds. He concluded, therefore, that the future of north Labrador lay with neither the pure Eskimos nor the pure whites, but with the mixed-bloods and their descendants (MacGregor, 1907, p. 330). Today we can hardly doubt the correctness of his reasoning, for we know that races do differ in their resistance to certain diseases,

and in northern Labrador, as in other parts of the world, we may observe how quickly such differences have helped to modify a population once composed of two separate races.

MacGregor's administration strongly supported improvements in the medical services along the Labrador coast: it contributed financially to the medical work of the Moravian Mission, and of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, and it placed a government doctor on the subsidized vessel, the *Virginia Lake*, that shuttled fortnightly during the summer months between St. John's and Nain, touching at numerous settlements en route. MacGregor knew that the latter arrangement was not entirely satisfactory, because the steamer, being primarily a mail and passenger vessel, could not be fitted out as a hospital ship, and could therefore provide only dispensary services and transportation of serious cases to the hospital at St. Anthony. Nevertheless, it usefully supplemented the medical work of the two missions, and with improved telegraphic communications and steamer connections, MacGregor thought, might one day offer far greater service (MacGregor, 1907, p. 352; 1909, pp. 336-7).

Social changes

One evening long ago I stood on the reedy shore of a wide lagoon on Mexico's Pacific coast, gazing at the reflection of a mountain that faced me across the two-mile stretch of water. While I watched pelicans came gliding in by twos and threes, one behind the other, from different points of the compass, and settled ponderously but gracefully on the lagoon's still surface. The clusters of twos and threes swam toward each other and united into larger groups, and these in turn drew steadily together and arrayed themselves in three parallel lines, thirty birds or more to a line. Thus drawn up, like white-coated soldiers on a parade ground, they swam in silence toward the mountain for perhaps half a mile, wheeled a perfect right angle, then a second, and swam slowly back in my direction. No commanding officer led their formation, no sergeant barked a word of command, no corporal closed the end of any file. Whatever signals passed between them were telepathic, and they obeyed instinctively, without uttering a sound that reached my ears. From time to time one or two birds lagged behind and even broke away for a while, but the squad merely closed its ranks and carried on. So they manoeuvred back and forth over the lagoon, until the sun sank below the rim of the ocean and darkness concealed them from my sight.

How long their manoeuvres lasted after I went home I do not know; but when I returned to the lagoon the following morning the sun stood high in the sky and the pelicans had scattered to seek their morning meal. Three I had already observed from the balcony of my apartment, flying very solemnly in their usual formation, one behind the other, back and forth along the sea front, ceaselessly scanning the water until some incautious fish gleamed white just below the surface. Then one of the birds would "break" by slanting its wings, point vertically downward its stupendous beak and plummet like a stone, to emerge a second later and sit on the surface motionless, high-riding like a swan.

After two minutes, if it had been lucky, it flipped its beak skyward to speed the fish down its dark gullet; if unlucky, it rose from the water in heavy resignation and flew away to seek a less elusive prey. At the lagoon I observed half a dozen other pelicans similarly engaged in fishing, but the majority of the squad had wandered farther afield.

These pelicans in tropical Mexico, I thought to myself, how like they are to our Eskimos in the Arctic. The latter too knew their times of gathering together and of dispersing. When the days were short and long cold nights closed in on them, they drew together and built their snow huts side by side on or near the shore, where they could support one another through the darkness of winter; again, in the spring of the year, when the days grew long, the families, singly or in little groups of twos and threes, wandered away to secure their food in familiar fishing and hunting grounds. Like the pelicans, they selected no commander to order their comings and their goings, appointed no sergeants or corporals to arrange their places and police their conduct in the winter village. They acted by instinct, sensing the common will without requiring any governing framework to keep the separate units working together in harmony.

Yet there was an important difference. The instinct that guided the Eskimos was not the unreasoning instinct of the pelicans. They were human beings as rational as we are, well aware that their communities were small: in Labrador very few could count more than a hundred members, all more or less closely related by blood, all bound to one another by ties that ran horizontally, not vertically. There was no money or real estate to bedevil the relations of one individual or family with another. The land and sea for as far as they could walk or paddle in one, two, or three days—that is to say, until they impinged on a neighbouring community—belonged to all members of the community equally; and the snow hut which every able-bodied hunter could build in an hour, and which sheltered himself and his family during the months of winter, melted away and vanished under the spring sun. The family could call their own only the tent in which they slept in summer, the clothes they wore on their backs, the weapons, tools, and cooking utensils they fashioned with their own hands, and the skin-covered boats that carried them from one fishing and hunting locality to another. Even a man's wife was not his property, as she was in ancient Rome and still is in many countries of the world today. She was free to leave him, and he to leave her, whenever she or he wished; but if they separated who would cook his food and make his clothes, and who would provide her with shelter, food, and skins? The Labrador Eskimos lacked everything that we call property, for even their food they shared in common. What need had they then of embryonic kings and parliaments, generals and armies, judges and police, and all the other trappings of our "advanced" civilization? Leaders they did possess, men who influenced and guided their fellows through their force of character, their wisdom, or their prowess in hunting; but these individuals enjoyed no formal status in their amorphous communities, which demanded complete social equality between one man and another.

Lack of any definite organization, however, and the hard struggle for a bare subsistence, did not deprive the Eskimos of a social and religious life as satisfying perhaps as our own. It centred on the dance-house, which in Hudson Bay, and probably also in Labrador, was no more than an enlarged snow hut that provided a home for two or three families, and possessed a fore-court into which other families could squeeze for conversation, dances, and religious ceremonies.

It functioned, therefore, as a combined church and community hall; in Greenland and Alaska, where it was a permanent and considerably larger structure built of wood and sod, as a workshop also, or rather, a club-house in which the male members of the community frequently spent their leisure hours. The Moravian missionaries were well acquainted with the Greenland dance-house, and appreciated its value as a sturdy pillar supporting Eskimo society and religion.¹ In Labrador, therefore, they did not condemn it offhand for being a stronghold of heathenism, as did the early missionaries in Canada, but wisely persuaded their converts to replace the short-lived structure of snow with a Christian church of wood, which would be a house of prayer and thanksgiving on Sunday and of social gatherings and entertainments during the week; a permanent community centre, therefore, more suited to a modern age, but belonging to the Eskimos themselves, not directly controlled and forced upon them by the white man. Under this interpretation the little white churches dotting the coast never suggested symbols of conquest—the ascendancy of the Cross over some primitive Crescent—but a peaceful evolution that linked an old order to a new, and preserved many good things in the primitive world by absorbing them into the world of western civilization. In the new order Christian hymns could arouse the same fervour as the old dance songs, and the remote echoes of the native drum awaken an equally satisfying response from the church harmonium and the village band.

Among the good features of the older world had been the Eskimos' habitual kindness to the aged and to little children; also their tolerance of one another and their readiness to be guided by the wiser and more experienced hunters. In many isolated tribes, as I myself observed in the island of New Guinea early in this century, the stranger who does not speak the language of the natives often fails to recognize their leaders on first acquaintance, because a natural dignity and sense of responsibility tends to keep them in the background. Our Canadian history has preserved the names of many "important Indian chiefs" who in their own bands and tribes were inconspicuous nobodies, but who were shrewd enough—like certain foreign "counts" and "countesses" today—to impress and deceive unsuspecting strangers and through them climb to high often undeserved positions. In Labrador the early missionaries possessed against false pretenders an invaluable armour which other Europeans lacked, for they could already speak the Eskimo language and were familiar with Eskimo customs and ways of thought. This knowledge preserved them from many mistakes that might have been disastrous, since more than one native leader proved to be a shaman or medicine-man who bitterly resented their disapproval of his traditional religion, his faith in magic, witchcraft, and taboos, and his confidence in the supernatural power he himself claimed to have acquired from protecting

¹A recent writer states (on the authority of an English translation, lodged in the Bristol, England, archives of the Moravian church, of the unpublished 1771 diary of Jens Haven) that the early Moravians deliberately discouraged the old Eskimo dances because they were "usually the prelude to licentious orgies and excesses." (Peacock, 1947, p. 199). Such licentiousness certainly did not occur in the Central and Western Arctic regions; and in the Eastern Arctic I can recall no association of the dance-house and dancing with licentiousness except during the annual festival known as "The Extinguishing of the Lamps", which prevailed on Baffin Island and in Greenland, but has not been recorded, as far as I know, from Newfoundland-Labrador. Before the Copper Eskimos of the Coronation Gulf region became 'civilized' I participated in scores of their dances. Some preluded shamanistic performances, some celebrated the arrival of visitors from far away, and some—the majority indeed—served only to relieve the monotony of the long dark evenings of winter.

spirits; and he strove hard to turn his people against the newcomers. In the face of such opposition, it is hardly surprising that a whole generation should have passed before the Moravians consolidated their foothold and became generally accepted as the new leaders of the various communities scattered along the coast.¹

In pre-European times the Eskimos had settled most important matters in their dance-houses, where every man and woman could take part in the informal discussion. The Moravians knew this well, and as soon as they held the reins of authority in their hands they proceeded to formalize this traditional method of regulating community life, and at the same time strengthen their own control, by organizing two small councils, one to assist them in church affairs, and provide a base for a native ministry,² the other to maintain law and order in the village and advise them on all matters affecting the general welfare. They themselves appointed the church council, selecting men and women of tested faith and proven characters; but the second council, which comprised only men, the villagers elected by ballot every three years.

"The practical control of the Eskimos has been left in the hands of the Mission; and the Mission, in turn, has taken the wise course of appointing a number of the people, generally three or four men and the same number of women, to act as helpers in the maintenance of law and order in the villages. These helpers are called 'Kivgat' (literally 'servants'), and their first duty is the care of the church; but they are the virtual leaders of the village life. Though they are 'chapel-servants', their post is one of honour: they are chosen because of trusty and sterling character, and their service is for life. The least lapse from moral uprightness would mean deposal, but I have only once known such a thing to happen. . . .

"If there is a vacancy in their ranks, the remaining Kivgat meet the missionary and talk over the question of a suitable man or woman for the office. . . .

"In addition to the chapel-servants, each village has a committee of three or four men, elected by the people themselves.

"These men have more strictly temporal duties; they look after the outward welfare of the village, and convey the wishes of the people to the missionaries. Elections are by ballot, and take place every three years". (Hutton, S. K., 1912, pp. 334-5; 1919, chap. 16).

So wrote the sympathetic Hutton, long after the murders so frequent in aboriginal times had become vague memories, and harsh nature alone imperilled the missionaries' lives. His predecessors of a century earlier had walked in grave danger. They knew that there were as yet no other whites in northern Labrador on whom they could call for help, that the government in Newfoundland was far away and out of reach, and that they themselves possessed no legal authority. They were living alone among natives who a few years before had been stone-age savages accustomed to perpetuate their quarrels with blood-feuds; and for their own protection, as well as for the peace and happiness of the people with whom they had elected to spend their lives, those first missionaries took on their own shoulders the task of governing the region.

How well they accomplished that task is attested by numerous writers, among them Sir William MacGregor, the very able governor of Newfoundland at the beginning of the twentieth century, whom I have quoted so frequently; but perhaps the most convincing proof comes from the manner in which their

¹Cf. Gosling, 1910, pp. 270-3, 280-3.

²Peacock remarks ". . . these kivgat were chosen to form the foundation for a Native Ministry. But it was not until 1945, that an Eskimo was 'called' to enter training for Mission Service. This same Native is now under my tutelage." (Peacock, 1947, p. 68).

Eskimo disciples, on their own initiative, and to the satisfaction of all except one or two of their non-conforming kinsmen, solved a difficult "moonshine" problem that erupted at Okak in 1907 and threatened to spread along the whole coast. For this story we turn again to the missionary-doctor Hutton, who observed the whole episode from his window at the Okak hospital:

"These chapel-servants and elders are wonderfully successful in maintaining the tone of native life; they are not only trustworthy people, but they have high ideals too. Witness their action when the drink evil began to get a grip upon the Eskimos. That was in 1907, after some evil genius had taught the people to brew a vile and powerful concoction from treacle and mouldy biscuits. Several of the men began to get drunk, and prowled about with all their evil passions loosed. The chapel-servants and elders called a meeting of the men in one of the biggest of the huts. . . . Grave-faced men, with care upon their shoulders, travelled from Okak to the stations north and south; men from the other stations came to Okak; all were bent on the same errand, the discussion of the drink question. . . . They called the men together, and got a promise from every one that the kegs of liquor should be smashed and the drink poured on the snow, and that there should be no more brewing; and when one young man refused to smash his keg, two of the chapel-servants went along to his hut and did it for him. The drink evil was abolished; and so, by their own wish, the Eskimos became what they had always been, a teetotal nation."

And the humane doctor concluded:

"I suppose that it is a remarkable thing to find a people amongst whom there are no prisons and no police and practically no serious crime, but so it is among the Eskimos of Labrador.

"They are a peaceable, law-abiding folk . . . flagrant breach of order or discipline is very rare, so much so that a thief is almost an unheard-of being among these kindly, open-handed folk." (Hutton, S. K., 1912, pp. 336-7; 1919, chap. 16).

An historian may reflect with sadness that it was at the beginning of this twentieth century, about the time Hutton watched his Eskimo "chapel-servants" and "elders" in Okak grasp and peacefully solve a nettlesome problem that has baffled our ablest lawmakers, the government of neighbouring Canada suddenly remembered that it too possessed a northern realm inhabited by Eskimos, and hastily inaugurated a policy, inherited from imperial Rome, of spreading the blessings of civilization into its Arctic by setting up a chain of police posts, most of which are still operating today. Ironically, it proposed—but at the last moment changed its mind—to establish its first post at Port Burwell or Killinek, the settlement whose Eskimo inhabitants had said farewell to their Anglican missionary a year or two earlier and were then eagerly awaiting his Moravian successor. Was it not the cynical Byron who quipped:

"The world is a bundle of hay,
Mankind are the asses who pull,
Each tugs it a different way . . .

The Moravians had come to Labrador with but one purpose, to convert its heathen Eskimos to Christianity and teach them to live according to its principles. How the natives dressed, what kind of dwellings they built, and in what manner they obtained their daily bread, these and other details seemed of only superficial concern; for they had discovered, what our gadget-filled world of today too often conceals, that *tout est dans la flamme et non dans le flambeau*.¹ Mortal man can never escape pain and sorrow in this earthly

¹Emile Henriot: 'Fumées'.

existence, and the missionaries had no assurance that their converts would be happier, or more prepared for the life hereafter, if they adopted the manners and customs of the white man. Such a revolution might impair their vigour and their health—as in fact it did, Hutton believed, in the Hopedale and Makkovik districts, where the Eskimos ate more of the farinaceous foods of the white man than their northern kinsmen, and less of their native seal-meat. All things considered, the Moravians had judged it the part of wisdom to work first and foremost for the spiritual welfare of their converts, and to disturb their day-to-day life only in so far as appeared necessary to lighten some of its hardships.

An ancient culture like the Eskimos', however, is a balanced structure so delicately adjusted to its environment that the modification of one feature inevitably provokes changes in many others. Just as the Moravians' introduction of nets had quickly altered the Eskimos' methods of fishing and sealing, so their building of immovable churches for divine worship, of schools for the instruction of the children, and of clinics where the sick could find help, checked the endless wanderings of the natives and led them to build permanent homes alongside their new leaders from which they could still sally out for longer or shorter visits to their fishing and hunting grounds. With homes in the settlements, too, they could safely leave behind the old and the infirm—when it seemed advisable, too, the women and the children—entrusting them to the care of the Moravians just as, through uncounted years, the shepherds of Corsica have entrusted their families to their village priests whenever the onset of summer drives them to the mountain-tops to seek green pastures for their flocks.

And the Moravians did not betray the Eskimos' trust. Both they and the natives could recall the years, even after the establishment of the missions, when old men and old women, unable to endure any longer the hardships of the climate and the misery of struggling through summer storms and winter blizzards from one camping-ground to another, would voluntarily commit suicide, or else beg their children to abandon them and let them find rest in death; and the missionaries resolved that no member of their flock—or any one else—should perish from exposure and starvation as long as help could reach them and surplus food remained in their stores. Their funds were small, and they could expect little help from the Newfoundland government far away: but they tried to provide paid jobs for every needy person who could work, and they issued relief to those who were unfit. MacGregor tells us that at Hopedale,

"For the able-bodied that cannot otherwise find work, and for the feeble, the Mission regularly provides employment. The natives at Hopedale never apply to the mission for relief or assistance unless they are in real want; and when relief is given by the Mission to a man fit to work, the latter almost invariably repays the Mission next summer. It appears, therefore, quite clear, that the charity of the Mission is not abused by the natives of Hopedale." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 331).

At Hebron,

"The Mission has, at this station, a Poor Fund, from which regular allowances are given to the helpless, widows, old and feeble people, or young orphans. To a number of those on the border land between ability and inability to work, light employment is given by the Mission. To the able-bodied assistance is given only in cases of accident and real distress, but given with such discrimination as not to encourage either laziness or improvidence. At the same time no native is ever suffered to die of hunger, from whatever cause it may arise. No repayment to the Poor Fund is ever demanded; but credit is often given to the able-bodied for advances that are to be repaid without interest." (MacGregor, 1907, p. 325).

And at Nain, the big-game hunter Prichard informs us,

"The widows are well cared for by the Moravians, who made arrangements by which the older ones can earn a living. The younger women marry without exception. The widows who are widows indeed, become blubber women—that is, they are employed to cut up the seal blubber for the caldrons. Boiling out the oil takes place principally at Nain, where the seals bought by the Mission from the people for this purpose are gathered from the northerly stations. . . .

"For the widows also is reserved the task of cleaning the eiderdown, which comes chiefly from Killinek, near Cape Chidley. It is necessary that the room in which this is done should be very hot, and the women sit to the cleaning frames in the lightest clothing. The frames themselves are oblong, and at each two workers face one another and rub the down back and forth across the slats of the frame until the refuse falls through and the down becomes clean and pure. The old women make sufficient at this work to keep them all the year round." (Prichard, 1911, pp. 161-2).

The Moravians also took under their wing the children, particularly the school-children. In 1865 they opened in Okak an orphans' home in which they placed ten children under the supervision of an Eskimo "helper" and his wife; but five years later they closed it, for reasons that are not entirely clear. Davey says,

"Some of the natives were disposed to regard the system with disfavour, as being an infringement on their rights, since they were thereby deprived of the services of those whom they were not in the habit of remunerating. However, the plan answered its desired end, for, while it provided for the needs of such as were neglected, it taught the community their responsibility in regard to all such claims upon their sympathy." (Davey, 1905, p. 235).

I suspect that in this passage Davey was moralizing on what folk-tales had told him about Greenland, and also Alaska, two regions in which the Eskimos spent their winters in permanent homes of sod-covered wood or stone, and men with larger homes and greater resources were constrained by custom to shelter orphan boys until they reached an age when they could take care of themselves. In both these regions the boys were considered servants, and frequently given that name; and both have bequeathed us many tales in which their guardians grievously ill-treated them, and met with punishment later. Such tales were rare in Canada or Labrador, regions where the Eskimos were more nomadic and spent the winters in snow huts;¹ in Arctic Canada, indeed, the orphan children whom I encountered early in this century appeared to be treated as kindly as other children.² MacGregor tells us what appears to have been the true reason for the closing of the Okak orphanage, namely, that the boys were not receiving the training in fishing and hunting they would have received had they been living in the homes of their own people (MacGregor, 1907, p. 328).

If we now view in retrospect the history of the north Labrador coast from 1771 to 1914, from Jens Haven's landing at Nain to the outbreak of the First World War, we cannot escape the conclusion that fate dealt unusually gently with its Eskimo inhabitants. During most of that period she guarded their barque, skilfully piloted by the Moravian missionaries, in a peaceful backwater

¹A pre-European population also used small stone huts.

²I still carry on my conscience a rebuke I received half a century ago from an 11-year-old Eskimo girl after I had brusquely pushed aside, in a moment of confusion, a little boy of about eight who had been standing beside her. Looking straight into my face she said, "Please let him stay. You know, he is just a poor orphan."

only faintly ruffled by the swift world tides that surged beyond its horizon. From time to time these tides spilled new ocean water over the bars that blocked its entrance, or they cut through them narrow channels that sent eddies of movement through the anchorage; but down to the middle of the nineteenth century no major disturbance destroyed its habitual calm. Then fleets of white fishermen began to appear each summer off the backwater, and excite a flurry in the Eskimos' camps; and year by year a trickle of settlers worked its way farther and farther north along the coast. The outsiders brought new objects and new ideas from their distant world; some of the strangers married Eskimo girls and taught them new ways of living and new crafts, and all of them spoke a new language, English, of which the Eskimos gradually imbibed a smattering. The wind was changing. And it was not the Eskimos alone who felt the change. Their pilots, the missionaries, felt it also, for now not only Eskimos, but white men were knocking on the doors of every mission from Nain southward, trading furs and other raw products in its store, seeking the consolation of religion in its little church, medical care in its clinic, and instruction in English for their children. Two races, two languages, two traditions of life were mingling and dissolving into one another, and the immobility of the old days was vanishing. The open sea had broken into the Eskimos' backwater, and their barque was swaying to the movement of restless waves.

Yet the skies did not presage a tempest. The barque was moving gently, and the wind seemed to be carrying it in a favourable direction. Not toward the destination the Moravians had anticipated and worked for during earlier years, but toward a very different one that now seemed more attainable. When they first set foot on the remote Labrador coast they had expected its Eskimos to remain isolated and undisturbed in their backwater for more generations than any one could then foresee, and they had set a goal for their mission that would correspond with such a prospect. They would Christianize the natives, would teach them to read and write so that they might instruct each other in the Christian faith, would lighten their hardships and relieve their sufferings, add to their joys and increase their happiness. But they would not radically change their way of life, so well adapted to its physical environment; they would not attempt to transform them into poor white men. The mission's schools would teach the children to read and write in their own tongue, not inflict on them some foreign language which neither they nor their grandchildren might ever need; and of all the lore which the white man tries to hand on to his children they would impart only that minimum which would make the Christian faith more intelligible, or could serve some practical end. The missions, that is to say, would keep the people Eskimos, would prepare the children to play their part on a purely Eskimo stage, not to participate in the ruthless struggles of western civilization.

This goal seemed reasonable and realizable down to the middle of the nineteenth century, by which time northern Labrador had become, under Moravian rule, not an earthly paradise—for that exists only in dreams—but a stern hard land where men still wrestled desperately against a hostile nature to win a bare subsistence, but from the struggle gained more peace and happiness than perhaps any people in the western world. Like Gray's villagers:

"Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

But the future, alas, was unfolding more rapidly than the Moravians had anticipated when they drew up their program in the last years of the eighteenth century. The brooklet of European immigrants that trickled into the New World at that early age swelled during the following century into a flood, which inundated the continent in every direction and was now sending a tiny stream into northern Labrador; and by the opening of the twentieth century steamers and motor vessels were enlarging this stream by making the region more accessible than in the days of sailing vessels. Neither the Moravians nor the government in St. John's could dam its flow, or divert it. White settlers already comprised more than half the population of the Makkovik and Hopedale districts, and they were establishing themselves around Nain. As fast as they increased the Eskimos decreased, not through destruction by whites (though diseases continued to take a heavy toll), but through absorption by them. In 1911, according to an official census, the coast north of Hamilton Inlet carried 1,263 inhabitants,¹ roughly the same as 140 years earlier when the Moravians opened their first mission; but in 1771 every individual had been a pure-blood Eskimo, whereas in 1911 25 per cent or more were whites and half-breeds.

Nature does not allow two peoples to live indefinitely side by side without merging, for the impulses of sex among the younger age groups are far stronger than racial or social prejudices. Nevertheless, the Moravians could hardly have anticipated that the absorption of their protégés would proceed so swiftly. If they had foreseen it, they might have tried to prepare the Eskimos by teaching them English in every mission school, not in the Makkovik school alone. Yet perhaps even that would have been beyond their power; for English, as I mentioned earlier, was a foreign tongue to most of them, and they lacked the financial resources to hire English-speaking teachers after their trade, which had defrayed (or nearly defrayed) the expenses of their mission in earlier times, began to run consistently in the red, and the two countries which alone supported them, England and Germany, drifted into the shadow of an impending war. When whites did begin to crowd in upon them, the missionaries merely carried on as before, freely offering their services to both races without discrimination. We must remember that they too, there in remote Labrador, were living under a shadow, the shadow of an impending integration of Eskimos and whites, when their faithful disciples would cease to be a separate people or require a separate mission in their land. And even if they realized in their hearts that peaceful integration was the kindest fate time could deal the Eskimos, how could they stand up in their small white churches every Sunday, and survey the serious but happy faces of their congregations, without reflecting that before many years some or all of their mission stations might be forced to close down, or without recalling Faust's lingering glance over the handiwork of his maturer years, and his longing cry to the Angel of Death that hovered near him:

"Ah, still delay. All is so fair."

I may fittingly end this account of Moravian rule by quoting a concluding passage from Sir William MacGregor's report to the Newfoundland House of

¹Another estimate gave 1,312.

Assembly shortly after his return from a second inspection tour of Northern Labrador. He wrote:

"The work of this [Moravian] mission is a real labour of love. Its members cannot but feel that they are assisting at the obsequies of a race—an ancient race—that in the struggle for existence has never had a fair chance. There is not a little that is loveable in the Esquimaux, but were it otherwise that would only increase the devotion, the unselfishness, the long-continued self-abnegation and sacrifice of their faithful missionaries. It may safely be predicted of the Moravian Mission that it will not abandon its charge on the lonely, desolate, inhospitable coast of Labrador so long as it can do good. Of the future of the Labrador fragment of the Esquimaux race it is more difficult to speak. It cannot be in better hands than those of the Moravian Mission, to which it undoubtedly owes its survival to the present day. The more completely the Esquimaux are left to these teachers and benefactors, so much the better it will be for the race. But now and then it should be shown that the mission has authority behind it that can be employed whenever occasion for it arises. It is deplorable that so little assistance is given by the public to this most deserving mission that it has become necessary to reduce their staff below what is really required to maintain it in full vigour and efficiency. One reason for that is to be found in the unobtrusive, retiring and quiet manner in which they carry on their work, which thus remains unknown and unappreciated in such a little frequented country as the Labrador coast. In one way perhaps this isolation is an advantage, for it leaves the natives more under the control and influence of the mission than will be the case when Labrador becomes a great summer resort, which it certainly will do sooner or later." (MacGregor, 1909, pp. 338-9).

PERIOD II

An experimental triumvirate: 1914-49

The First World War broke out in 1914 and ran its four-year course without ruffling the waters that wash the shores of northern Labrador. But U-boats infesting the seas around the British Isles made transatlantic shipments so hazardous that the Moravian missionaries had to seek new outlets, and new sources of supply, in the western hemisphere, and few Newfoundland fishermen, escaping the strife, ventured to follow the inexhaustible shoals of cod beyond Hamilton Inlet. Day and night as before, however, the Eskimos and their settler neighbours continued to haul the fish into their dories and rush them to shore that their wives might bone and salt them for the market; and after the cod returned to the south they netted seals, then from the New Year until mid-April "worked" their trap-lines in the hope of increasing their pitiful incomes with valuable furs. The missionaries and other white traders were encountering grave difficulties in marketing Labrador's products and obtaining badly needed supplies from the outside world; but the Eskimos escaped those troubles. They understood very little of the turmoil and strife that was convulsing two hemispheres; and while they may have wondered why many store goods differed from those they had known previously, and the prices the traders were charging had mounted considerably, they did not complain, because they themselves were receiving higher than usual values for their fish, their sealskins, their oil, and their furs—values that fully compensated for their higher expenses. "More than ever", remarks the Finnish geographer Tanner, "Labrador became a little world of its own." (Tanner, 1947, p. 503).

This author's statement, however, is misleading. Time had swept away the barriers of remoteness and ignorance which a century before had shielded the little world of northern Labrador. Its coastline had been surveyed, its main navigation channels carefully charted, and the new aircraft and motor-vessels had made it easily and swiftly accessible to any outsider who desired to visit it. The world was shrinking, currents of nationalism were upwelling everywhere, and Newfoundland itself was being harassed with problems of sovereignty and territorial boundaries. Never again could north Labrador become a world of its own; never could it slip back into its former anonymity, even if all its white and part-white inhabitants should pull up their stakes and abandon the region to its original population. For good or ill it had become an integral part of Newfoundland, an undeveloped part, it is true, but still inseparable.

The time had passed, also, when a tiny religious sect could successfully continue to carry on its shoulders, as the Moravians had done throughout the nineteenth century, the administrative, economic, and social destinies of a coastline that extended for 500 miles. At the beginning of the twentieth century Sir William MacGregor and his government in Newfoundland, impressed by the selfless labours of the missionaries and the order and tranquillity they were

maintaining along their sector of the Labrador coast, had subsidized their activities in the fields of education and health, and upheld their special status and influence to a degree that made them an extra-legal arm of the constitutional authority. At no time, however, had the government explicitly abdicated its authority, or granted the Moravians any jurisdiction over the region's white and part-white settlers who had now become a numerous and important element in the population. Furthermore, although the summer fishing fleet had declined, and the petty traders it had drawn in its wake were disappearing also, the powerful Hudson's Bay Company had consolidated its foothold in the area and was making serious inroads into the mission's trade. Conditions had changed, and both the authority and the trade monopoly of the Moravians were under challenge. The ferment that was seething in other parts of the world was seeping even into northern Labrador and brewing a slow revolution.

We have already observed how the Moravians' struggle to keep their trade solvent, so far from easing with the conclusion of peace in 1919, grew steadily more hopeless until by 1925 they faced the choice of either accepting an offer from the Hudson's Bay Company to lease their trading rights, their stores, and their wharfing facilities for a term of 21 years, or of sinking into the mire of bankruptcy beyond hope of recovery. It was with no small relief that they chose the former alternative, and allowed an independent trading concern to hoist its flag beside their churches. Thenceforward missionary work and commerce parted company and went their separate ways.

About this time the Newfoundland government itself began to flounder in the quagmire of finance, and the progressive worsening of its condition reached a climax in 1934, when the island renounced its Dominion status and accepted a Commission of Government to guide it out of its morass. The Commission proceeded to economize in every direction in order to stave off outright bankruptcy; and it reduced government expenditures and staffs so drastically that it almost pushed northern Labrador beyond official view. However, at the outset of its rule, it had created a rural police force to maintain order and uphold the laws of Newfoundland in every part of the territory, and at various outposts on the Labrador coast it had stationed "Rangers" from that force, three in the northern region and five in the southern.

The reader will remember that in 1880, during a special emergency, the government had conferred the powers of a Justice of the Peace on the Moravian Bishop Bourquin (see p. 16), and that later it had invested with the same authority, first Sir Wilfred Grenfell, then his field successor, Dr. Harry L. Paddon. From the early years of the twentieth century too, a magistrate and a police officer had been travelling each summer, as far north as Nain, and the magistrate had selected game wardens from among the local whites or part-whites. Nevertheless, prior to the creation of the Ranger police force, neither the Eskimos nor the whites of Labrador had seen a policeman except on rare occasions, and their reaction to the stationing of Rangers in their midst was not at all favourable:

"It was not until Newfoundland fell into financial difficulties and was obliged to give up its Dominion rights that the administration customary in the British Crown colonies was introduced; in 1935 some ten Rangers were appointed in Newfoundland-Labrador also. It is indicative of the people's view of these things that the new officials were received rather coldly; from many quarters they were reminded that formerly the people had managed quite well without police authorities and, in consultation with their Justice

of the Peace, had arranged all their difficulties to the general satisfaction. . . . In these remarks I therefore like to see a spontaneous expression of the sound social spirit which we meet in these small communities of the wilds. As far as I heard neither the Rangers nor the Magistrate nor the Justice of the Peace had any important business to do after the new arrangement was introduced and up to the time of writing (1940)." (Tanner, 1947, p. 765).

There would seem to be no reason, theoretically, why the replacement of missionary traders by Hudson's Bay Company clerks, or the presence of police in Eskimo settlements to enforce the game regulations and guarantee law and order, should seriously modify the daily life and outlook of the native population; but that is precisely what happened. The "Honourable Company", being a strictly commercial organization, strove for profits to divide among its shareholders; and in northern Labrador its costs, and consequently the prices it charged the Eskimos and settlers who depended on its stores, tended to be higher than those of its predecessor because the government forced it to pay the regular import duties from which Moravians had been exempted since the opening year of their mission (MacGregor, 1907, p. 321). Because it was a commercial organization, too, it was unable to grant as liberal credit, or offer as extensive relief in times of distress, as a missionary society which justified its existence by the spiritual benefits it was conferring on humanity, not by the material riches it amassed for its parishioners or for itself. The Hudson's Bay Company did not ruthlessly exploit its customers, for it knew that its own prosperity rested in the long run on the prosperity of the hundreds of sturdy trappers, hunters, and fishermen who traded at its stores; but it could not allow its post-managers to deviate from strict business procedures for humanitarian reasons, and then expect that the government or the public would come to its rescue if its operations ceased to pay dividends. It conscientiously dispensed such relief as the Newfoundland government provided for the needy until the new Ranger force took over that task; it distributed, that is to say, the monthly ration, mainly biscuits and tea, which might serve to prevent outright starvation, and kindly post-managers would occasionally supplement the ration by stretching a needy man's credit rather more than strict business could justify. Yet there were still many occasions when the help they gave remained inadequate, and the Eskimos turned away to knock as before on the doors of the missions.

The "Honourable Company" no sooner settled into the Moravian's trading stores than it introduced one very important change, a change which it expected would increase its profits and at the same time augment the Eskimos' incomes. For ten or fifteen years the world's demand for fox and other long-haired furs had been steadily climbing, and their prices as steadily rising, without any sign of nearing a peak. Eager to cash in on this bull market the company urged the Eskimos to trap more assiduously than before, and over wider areas, even though it would divert them from their sealing and force them to purchase more steel traps and more store foods. The natives yielded to the pressure and virtually abandoned their customary sealing during the autumn and winter—often to the detriment of their health, since a vitamin-deficient diet of bread, beans, and tea is not a satisfactory substitute for fresh meat. All went well, nevertheless, for several years, and the change seemed justified; the prices of furs continued to rise, both the Eskimos and the Hudson's Bay Company prospered, and only a few old and handicapped persons needed continuous relief. Then, in the 1930's, the Great Depression swept the civilized world, and fur prices slumped catastrophically, dragging with them the Labrador trappers'

incomes. Even the Hudson's Bay Company staggered under the impact, and gropingly eased its Labrador policy by suggesting to the Eskimos that they diversify their economy again, that they spend less time on trapping fur-bearing animals useless for food and now of little cash value, and resume the netting of seals; for though seals would not restore their lost incomes, the fresh meat could preserve them from dire starvation.

When the company thus attempted to restore the *status quo ante*, however, it failed to take into account that conditions had changed. Life never stands still, and tomorrow is never exactly the same as today or yesterday. During the years of intensive trapping the Eskimos had neglected the heavy and expensive raw-hide sealing-nets, some as much as 50 fathoms long and $2\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms deep, which they had owned individually or cooperatively, or in certain cases rented from the missions. Many of these nets had rotted and become unserviceable; and their owners, impoverished by the slump in fur prices, now lacked the money or the credit to buy new ones. The missionaries tried to help them by collecting funds in England, but with each net costing a hundred dollars or more, they failed to raise enough money to purchase more than about half a dozen. Guns had long since displaced the harpoons of early days, and Eskimos without nets could still shoot seals in the open water and recover the carcasses with grappling hooks. In the spring of the year, too, they could stalk and shoot the animals that basked in the sun on the surface of the ice. The numbers obtainable by those methods, however, amounted to but a fraction of the two and even three hundred seals which a single net might capture in very favourable years. So distress reigned all along the coast. The economic slump that was creating vast unemployment and suffering in civilized countries had struck a glancing blow at Labrador also and destroyed the prosperity of its hard-working inhabitants.

Heaviest hit were the Eskimos and settlers south of Nain, where seals are less numerous than farther north. Tanner, who visited the region in 1937 and again in 1939, described the situation thus:

"Seal-hunting is also in principle the main earnings of the disparaged Hopedale Eskimo, and their continued existence as Eskimoes stands or falls with the exercise of this form of livelihood. But in this respect it is said that their position has become critical since the Moravian Mission handed over the trade to the Hudson's Bay Company. The Mission used to be responsible for the seal nets and at the same time saw to it that the seal products were sold at a reasonable price. The trade of the post of to-day is said not to be interested in seal products, and it attaches importance to the fur trade only. Very few of the Hopedale Eskimo own seal-nets and trout-nets, so the catch is decreasing and the people are becoming poorer; of the population on 1st January, 1939: 106 Eskimoes and 184 settlers, there were only one family of Eskimoes and one settler family not living on poor relief. The Hopedale Eskimo therefore views the future with anxiety; all his equipment is wearing out, the houses decayed, his clothes are ragged, and when baking is to be done his wife must make her way over to a more fortunate neighbour who owns an oven. Nothing can be repaired, it was said, because they do not earn enough for their needs; cash was paid only for fur-skins. Things were especially bad in the winter of 1938-1939 when the catch of both seal and fur-bearing animals was very poor. The people were exhausted and suffered great privations, and the resulting diseases began to rage, e.g. scurvy, beri-beri, carbuncles and tuberculosis gained ground. In the spring of 1939 many of them had no bread from March to July, only some few could procure flour from Davis Inlet and that at the unusual price of \$11.50 per barrel.

"If I am rightly informed, what has been said above about the Eskimo way of living is true also of the settlers in the district of Hopedale. It is clear that nature herself has compelled also them to adopt this way; the changes for good or evil in the economic conditions affect them both alike." (Tanner, 1947, pp. 506-7).

Another passage from this author discloses the income that the Eskimos of Nain were earning in 1939:

"In 1939, the value of the fur, skin, footwear, etc. which an industrious Eskimo family in Nain could produce was valued at 300 to 700 dollars in the year. To this must be added the occasional income from precious skins, but this is extremely uncertain, sometimes it will give a family only 100 dollars more in the year, in another year perhaps thousands." (p. 536).

He summed up the state of their economy at that period as follows:

"the Eskimoes in Newfoundland-Labrador continue to subsist on the resources of their own districts. And they also have earlier managed quite well with them, as is shown by the fact that they never need to experience any years of real famine such as sometimes ravage their neighbours the Indians of the interior and the whites on the coast. Some of my informers, officials of the Hudson's Bay Company, certainly did not consider that economic conditions among the Eskimo were very prosperous, but the more northerly of them lived in any case free of debt; only exceptionally have the Eskimo there required some assistance in the shape of flour, sugar, tea, etc. from the authorities, it was said.—There are, however, signs that the Eskimoes' earlier wealth is sinking, and in some parts varying numbers of them are becoming a burden on the public assistance authorities, like the settlers, e.g. in Hopedale.

"But whether the relative prosperity which must have prevailed quite generally before 1925 and still prevails in certain districts will continue, depends practically wholly on the organisation of trade. Since money economy with its extensive credit system has superseded an economy based on barter, and the consumption habits of the Eskimo have become so different that they do not even wish to go without the white man's food, it is quite easy for a man having a trade monopoly to create a kind of economic serfdom among his clients by arranging prices. It is said that cash is an almost unknown commodity on the coast, and the price for the Eskimoes' products is given him in trade equivalents only!

"The local population think that the prices for their products can only be justly regulated if free competition is warranted. Here I shall content myself with stating this opinion. On the other hand, it is wise to remember that as production is very limited among the Eskimoes, it is a question of who will take the risks of competition." (pp. 537-8).

The volume of trade was in truth so small that the Moravian missionaries, after struggling for nearly a century against the competition of the Hudson's Bay Company and of transients from the summer fishing fleet, had been driven completely out of the commercial field. And barely fifteen years later, when the clouds of the Second World War were just emerging above the horizon, it had become extremely doubtful whether the powerful Hudson's Bay Company itself, or any other profit-demanding organization, could survive in the region, even with an uncontested monopoly, unless the prices of local raw products sharply increased, or explorers brought to light some new resource or resources to supplement the furs, the seals, and the fish that as economic bases had shown themselves broken reeds.

The Hudson's Bay Company was only the second member of the triumvirate which ruled the destinies of Newfoundland's Eskimos before and during the Second World War; the third member, the Newfoundland Ranger force or rural police, also contributed to the ferment and slow revolution that was taking place in northern Labrador, although less consciously than its two colleagues, the mission and the trading company. The three or four Rangers whom the government posted to the region were inexperienced young men, ignorant of the country and its ways, but anxious to do their duty and earn quick transfer to

less desolate posts, where their work would be more varied and promotion more rapid. In northern Labrador they vegetated; they were left to shift for themselves, in the main, to plan their own occupations and find their own distractions during the monotonous and lonely winter. The government expected them to put down crime, but there was no crime; and they lacked the authority to handle civil disputes. They were instructed to enforce the game laws; but only once a year, when the steamer from St. John's brought a visiting magistrate to Nain, could they obtain a search warrant or a warrant of arrest. Moreover, the Newfoundland game laws had been drawn up with an eye on transient sportsmen rather than on natives or settlers who gained their year-round livelihood by fishing and hunting; and a sensible Ranger would deliberately close his eyes to petty infractions of regulations that carried no significance in a land so sparsely inhabited, and so remote from the world of tourism. Offences such as bootlegging and the manufacture of moonshine might have been troublesome, for even a vigilant council of Eskimo elders was unable to banish altogether from their fellow-natives, let alone from the settlers, a thirst for the spirituous liquors which the crews of the mail boat and other vessels could so easily bring into the region. Officialdom itself, however, hesitated to enforce the laws concerning the furnishing of liquor to Eskimos and Indians (see p. 24), because continuous intermarriage with whites and the growth of a large settler population, had destroyed the practicability of allowing any policeman, however high his rank, to decide who belonged in the native category and who in the white.

There remained then but one task, a scribbling task, the issuance of government relief, which the authorities in St. John's transferred from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Rangers. Thenceforth, the Eskimos and the settlers distinguished three categories of "outside whites" who lived among them and concerned themselves with local welfare problems. First, there were the missionaries, who attended to their spiritual needs, took care of their health and educated their children without charge. Secondly, there were the Hudson's Bay Company traders, who imported rifles, canned foods, and all the other non-local goods that had now become indispensable, and helped the Eskimos and settlers to buy them by offering varying amounts of credit. Finally, there were the Rangers, who provided them with free food, ammunition, and sometimes clothing whenever want was staring in their faces. Knowing the frailty of human beings, whatever the colour of their skin, need we wonder that certain Eskimos tried to play off these agencies against one another in order to obtain help from all three at the same time? Or that a few natives became idlers and outright mendicants, while others, yielding to the improvidence that characterizes many uncivilized peoples, sold for useless baubles the sealskin boots painstakingly made for them by their wives, allowed their rifles to rust and their fishing tackle to deteriorate from lack of care, then cast off every shred of responsibility and worry for their future by equating the *Kabloona* ("White man") with the Deity and declaring, in words paraphrased from an ancient Christian motto, "The White Man will provide".

The oldest member of the triumvirate, the Moravian mission, continued as before to work for the health of the population and to educate the children. In the outposts of Newfoundland itself one or other of the various church denominations had supervised the schools, or, where no church predominated, a local school board; and the government had supported them with subsidies. About 1900 the authorities classified as church institutions the Moravian

schools in Labrador also; but it neither concerned itself with the appointment of teachers there, the curricula, or the methods of instruction; nor did it provide any subsidy until 1939, when it allocated \$2,000 for the boarding school in Nain. At Makkovik (where the settlers predominated in numbers and every Eskimo child understood at least some English) the mission had opened in 1901 a boarding-school that would accommodate about 60 pupils; and there it had accepted without discrimination children of both groups from the age of six upward and taught them in the same classrooms, using the English language and books sent out from England.¹ In 1929, however, when it opened a similar boarding-school in Nain, where the Eskimo population outnumbered the settlers by at least two to one, it separated off the younger Eskimos and taught them in Eskimo, although all children without distinction ate together in the common dining-room and used the same playground. The normal age for leaving school still remained fourteen; and no north Labrador child, whether Eskimo or white, could obtain a high-school education or vocational training without going outside to Newfoundland or some other country, at a cost which far exceeded the means of the ordinary family. Nevertheless, it was apparent, after the First World War, that the Eskimos had become highly conscious of the importance of learning to speak fluent English, because it so greatly facilitated their relations with whites, also that they were incorporating more and more English words into their language, as their cousins in Greenland had incorporated, and were still incorporating, Danish words. It was about this time, indeed, that a number of Eskimos suggested to the mission that it drop from its schools all instruction in the Eskimo tongue and teach even the little children in English only.

The health problems of northern Labrador received very little attention between 1908, when Hutton closed his hospital at Okak and returned to England, and 1926, when Dr. V. Suk, a Czech professor from Brno University, spent a summer on the coast. During that interval the only medical practitioners who visited the region were Dr. Grenfell or some other doctor from his Mission,² and the Newfoundland government doctor who travelled to Nain on the summer mail-boat. Neither practitioner ever spent more than a few hours at any settlement. The mail-boat doctor, indeed, very seldom set foot on shore: his patients went out to the vessel to consult him, and there

"his whole activity is generally confined to the pulling of teeth and the administering of some salicylates." (Suk, 1927, p. 9).

Clearly, summer inspections so cursory could not provide even the skeleton of a health service, but left the whole coast of Labrador north of Hamilton Inlet to struggle along without any real medical care. The missionaries, to be sure, continued to supply the sick with medicines, and in emergencies they even performed difficult surgical operations, but increased contacts with the outside world had aggravated the region's health problems far beyond the competence of mere laymen. Even the annual epidemics of influenza seemed to be assuming greater virulence, for in 1918-19 the epidemic that had raged in Europe and

¹Rev. F. W. Peacock writes me that "There was no organized curriculum, and since the teachers came from varying European backgrounds different methods were used from year to year."

²In 1912 this became the Grenfell Labrador Medical Mission, and was incorporated as the International Grenfell Association in 1914.

slowed down military operations during the First World War swept away no less than 30 per cent of the Eskimo population in northern Labrador, reducing the number at the mission stations from 1,271 to 875.¹ Okak alone registered 216 casualties and Hebron 140. Why the southern stations, Nain and Hopedale, escaped with only 40 deaths is not clear. The Moravian missionary at Hopedale thought that a smallpox epidemic which harassed his village at the same time must have lessened the virulence of the influenza; but if this second epidemic really was smallpox, why did it not spread and create far greater havoc along the coast?

Northern Labrador seems to have battled against two very serious maladies during the first half of the twentieth century, venereal disease and tuberculosis, both of them new arrivals when Hutton operated his hospital in Okak. He encountered venereal disease in its primary stages only, but Suk two decades later observed a number of tertiary cases, and met "not a few women" each of whom had suffered several abortions through the disease:

"The present state of health of this people is not very good and the general outlook not very bright. Syphilis is undoubtedly in progress and the same seems to be with tuberculosis, although the latter one much more so amongst the mixed breeds. Abortions among Eskimo women due to syphilis are not rare and this must tell by and by on the birth rate. Bottle feeding with no sense of cleanliness and without fresh milk means death for the respective bottle baby, the constantly increasing habit of the Natives to resort to European dietary will soon have its effect on them, for what they need in such a country is fresh and unadulterated food" (Suk, 1927, p. 16).

To this change in diet, and the lack of fresh meat, he attributed both the increase in tuberculosis and the prevalence of dental caries:

"Especially those pure Eskimos who in spite of the presence of the White man still maintain their old established dietary are particularly free from it [tuberculosis], but it is quite different with the settlers, who without exception live entirely on European food, often have very little fresh meat and have sometimes to resort to that abominable stuff called tinned meat. . . . The milk is tinned, the margarine tinned, the flour not first class, the main stay of the family is often tea, molasses, hard bread (ship's biscuits). . . . (Out of the 65 teeth extracted on the Coast only 6 were from aged Eskimos, the remainder being from mixed breeds and Settlers). . . . Is it any wonder that once settled there, tuberculosis takes its greatest toll amongst that people, those quiet, brave, law abiding, friendly and hospitable settlers on the Labrador Coast." (Suk, 1927, pp. 14-15).

The Czech professor recommended that the International Grenfell Association take over the medical care of northern as well as of southern Labrador, in cooperation perhaps with the Hudson's Bay Company; the Finnish geographer Tanner, after his visits to the coast in 1937 and 1939, endorsed the recommendation adding:

"Paddon [Dr. Harry L. Paddon, Grenfell's successor in Labrador] stated in 1938 that two sinister pairs of initials, 'T.B.' and 'V.D.' are strong arguments against the recovery of the Eskimo race. There is the menace, a health and social problem of the first magnitude, and it is not overdrawn. It cannot be handled by sporadic visits of a patrol boat operating over five hundred miles of coast. It demands that a trained worker with adequate equipment spend the necessary time in each of the three centres. If anything is to be done, there is no time to lose." (Tanner, 1947, p. 461).

This Finnish writer tried to plot the population statistics kept by the missionaries over the preceding 150 years, but found them too confusing to give

¹Tanner, 1947, p. 472. Another source gives 1,239 and 859.

any reliable curve; many of the earlier figures covered the Christian converts only, not the entire population, and the later figures which did try to include the whole population made no scientifically valid distinction between Eskimos and settlers. While he entertained no doubt that the pure-blood Eskimos had greatly declined in numbers, that in fact white blood had permeated nearly the whole population, he could not determine whether there was "any real intrinsic tendency" for the Eskimo race to decline, or whether increasing admixture was creating the illusion of a decline by encouraging a steady cross-over from the native category to the white. Epidemics such as the influenza of 1918-19, he pointed out, might wipe out 30 per cent of a population within a few weeks; but after most calamities of such magnitude nature herself quickly restores the balance, as she did in Europe after each of the two world wars. He noted that both the birth rate and the death rate among the Eskimos were higher than among the settlers, and that their morale also was very high: these seemed to discountenance any suggestion of "intrinsic population decline". On the other hand, his figures led him to believe that men considerably outnumbered women, that the birth rate of girls was lower than that of boys, and that the resulting disparity in the sexes was preventing many young men from marrying, which would inevitably check any population increase. I myself can recall no evidence of any significant disparity at birth between the numbers of the sexes among any other people in the world, and it would seem very improbable that the Eskimos should differ in this respect from the rest of mankind.¹ I suspect, therefore, that Tanner's conclusion was based on faulty statistics, and indeed he himself candidly admits that his figures are very far from exact.

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 aroused little interest on the north Labrador coast, but as the struggle intensified its effects became more and more perceptible. The prices of fish, oil, furs, and other local products began to climb: white-fox furs, which had sold for an average of only \$11.76 apiece during the four-year period 1937-40, brought an average price of \$25.99 during the four-year term that followed (Cantley, 1950). The incomes of the Eskimo hunters and trappers rose proportionately, but so also did the store prices of the equipment they needed, the clothing, and the food. These had advanced relatively little during the course of the First World War (see p. 58), but now they kept pace with, and in many cases outstripped, the rise in value of Labrador's raw products. The needs of the Eskimos, too, had vastly increased in the interval between the two world wars, as they emulated more and more the ways and outlook of the whites who were encroaching on their homeland. It is not surprising, then, that a number of the younger men, disheartened by the growing disparity between their incomes and their expenses, abandoned their trap-lines and tried to improve their economic positions by working for day-wages at the new air-base which the Canadian and the United States governments jointly constructed in Goose Bay between 1940 and 1942, and in the

¹Cf. "Whether actually more y-chromosome spermatozoa are produced, or whether by some chemical superiority the y-chromosome spermatozoa are more efficient, the fact remains that one hundred twenty male eggs seem to be formed for every hundred female eggs. The male embryo, however, seems to be less rugged than the male egg, for birth statistics indicate that there are only one hundred five to one hundred nine boy babies born for every hundred girl babies. This proportion, as we will see later, seems to be linked to environmental conditions, for a rising curve of excess male births is generally a sign of physical deficiency, if not degeneration, of a population group." (Missenard, 1957, p. 46).

lumber camps which the Newfoundland government then opened up in Hamilton Inlet, and in Kaipokok Bay farther north. Most of these men were not seasoned to routine manual labour, and returned to their fishing and trapping grounds after a few weeks or months; but a handful settled down near the air-base, and became the nucleus of the Eskimo colony which exists today at Happy Valley.

The war added to the problems of the Hudson's Bay Company also. Its expenses in northern Labrador mounted, and its trading deficits became more and more burdensome. Reluctantly it bowed to the inexorable and notified both its Moravian landlords and the Newfoundland government that it would close its establishments in northern Labrador on 1 July 1942, after which date the government itself, or some other agency, would have to assume the task of handling the region's products and shipping in the necessary supplies. Thereupon the Commission of Government, on 20 July 1942, signed an agreement to take over all the company's operations, including its leases from the Moravian mission; and it delegated the task of conducting the trade to the Newfoundland Department of Natural Resources, which it provided with the necessary working capital, and with instructions to aim not at financial profits, but at the rehabilitation of the region's inhabitants and the raising of their distressingly low living standard. In so doing the government deliberately dissolved the triumvirate which had regulated the course of northern Labrador between the two world wars, took into its own hands the direct control of all activities except those relating to education and health, and constituted itself the administrator *de facto* of the whole area, not merely the administrator *de jure*. Problems of education and health it left, as before, to the Moravian and Grenfell missions, lightly subsidizing those two agencies as in former years without interfering in any way with their policies or their operations.

So from 1942 to 1951 the Newfoundland Department of Natural Resources, through its subordinate organization the North Labrador Trading Operations, purchased and shipped into northern Labrador the provisions and supplies that the Eskimos and settlers needed, and bought—or bartered for—their few products, mainly salt fish, animal oils, sealskins, and furs, which it then sold in the outside world. The furs it quickly placed on the auction block in St. John's because it lacked the trade outlets of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the latter's facilities for storing them over long periods in anticipation of favourable price changes in international markets; and it discouraged any further increase in trapping, advocating instead an expansion of sealing and cod-fishing, since fresh meat and fresh fish would provide the people with a cheaper and healthier diet than the store foods consumed by trappers. It knew that only a few markets, and those mainly in the West Indies, would accept north Labrador cod because of its unusual 'cure', and that they paid rather low prices; but it believed also that the demand for both animal fats and fish would continue to rise as long as the war pursued its relentless course, which as yet showed few signs of slackening. The gamble paid off. Higher returns for their fish and oil stimulated the Eskimos to double their efforts until by 1946 they were marketing¹ twice as much cod as in 1942, when the government first began to interest itself in their economic activities. In those four years, too, their earnings approximately trebled, their relief needs diminished almost to nothing, and they themselves appeared to have advanced well along the road to self-sufficiency again.

¹The government marketed both the cod and the char through its Newfoundland Fisheries Development Authority.

As was easily predictable, the rise in their incomes tempted both the Eskimos and the settlers to increase their purchases at the trading stores, but the stores too had undergone a change. The Hudson's Bay Company, following the regular practice of nearly all commercial stores in the western world, had stocked many articles of little use to their customers, although attractive enough to arouse their appetites, increase the company's sales and augment its profits. But when the Newfoundland government took over the stores, and resolved to conduct them as rehabilitation centres rather than profit-making enterprises, it expanded the duties of the managers to make them not only traders but welfare officers: it instructed them, for example, to exert every effort to better living conditions in the settlements, to improve the housing, to aid the sealing and the fishing, and to stimulate small local industries such as saw-mills. In compliance with this policy the managers swept away most of the trivia that had accumulated in the stores and replaced them with serviceable goods, particularly fish-nets, twine, and other articles that could increase the Eskimos' productivity. The measure was well timed. It certainly played a part in reducing the names on the government's relief rolls and in lifting the Eskimos once more on to their own economic feet.

Unfortunately, the economic outlook still remained disturbing, despite the government's careful planning. The war would certainly end within a very few years, and then the high prices it had fostered for the products of northern Labrador might explode, leaving the inhabitants worse off than before because their expenses would probably not dissipate as quickly. The economic base needed to be diversified, or changed entirely, if the biological resources of the region could no longer provide an acceptable living standard. But where would the inhabitants find other resources, another economic base?

The war had, indeed, stimulated a few changes which might create an extensive labour market in the not too distant future. For instance, the military airfield at Goose Bay, whose construction and maintenance had given work to a small number of Eskimos, seemed likely to develop into a valuable base for Labrador's enterprises, and an important staging-point on a transatlantic air-route as soon as hostilities ended.¹ Before long plywood plants and pulp-and-paper companies might exploit the extensive forests of southern Labrador, whose timber potential was becoming better known. Well-founded reports, too, spoke insistently of important mineral discoveries straddling the Newfoundland-Quebec boundary in the heart of the Labrador Peninsula; and this was stirring up rosy visions of giant metallurgical and hydro-electric plants fed by networks of roads and railways. Some rumours claimed, in fact, that these construction and mining developments had already reached the drawing-boards, and might soon transform the Atlantic coast of Labrador, especially the district around Hamilton Inlet, into a busy industrial region capable of employing several times the total labour force at present available within a radius of 500 miles. Many were the dreams, then, that floated in men's minds during the early 1940's: one or two have since been realized, others still attend the revolution of fate's wheel. Meanwhile the Newfoundland government could do little but wait. For the moment the economic wind was carrying northern Labrador through untroubled waters, although a fog shrouded the sky ahead.

In 1927, when the Privy Council in London set forth the legal boundary between Canada and Newfoundland, the tiny settlement of Port Burwell

¹Trans-Canada Airlines inaugurated transatlantic flights by way of Goose Bay in 1946.

(Killiney) at the tip of the Labrador Peninsula, where the Moravians had been operating a mission for two decades, passed into Canadian hands; and when the Hudson's Bay Company eighteen years later withdrew from the northeast coast of the peninsula, Newfoundland's most northern settlement was Hebron. The company transferred to the government, in addition to the Hebron trading post, five others, namely, Nutak (which had replaced the older settlement of Okak after the influenza epidemic of 1918-19), Nain, Davis Inlet (whose customers were Naskapi Indians only, and one or two settler families), Hopedale, and Makkovik. Around these six places grouped the entire Eskimo, Indian, and white population north of Hamilton Inlet; and servicing them were the company's vessels, the *Fort Garry* and the *Nascopie*, the only two ships that regularly visited the Atlantic coast north of Nain, since the main steamer from St. John's never proceeded beyond Nain, sometimes indeed not beyond Hopedale. In effect, therefore, the Hudson's Bay Company ceded to the government a monopoly of all trade along Labrador's northeast coast.¹ Hebron was an Eskimo village with only two or three white inhabitants, but settlers and whites increased in numbers as one journeyed south until at Makkovik they had almost submerged the Eskimo element and established English as the prevailing tongue.

This settlement, Makkovik, possessed one very important advantage over the other five. It was the nearest to Newfoundland, and though more than 250 miles by sea from Goose Bay, less than 150 by land, so that a man could easily sled to that air-base and ask for work to carry him over the months of winter, and work had been plentiful there during the construction period that ended in 1942, and for the three or four years following that date. When the government replaced the Hudson's Bay Company in Makkovik, therefore, that settlement's inhabitants were fairly prosperous, especially after they succeeded in salvaging large quantities of food and other goods from two United States supply ships that ran aground in their vicinity. A private trader seized the opportunity to open a rival store in the settlement and under-cut the government's prices, which he could do without loss, because he charged freight from St. John's to Makkovik only, whereas the government, for psychological reasons, had to charge a higher amount reckoned by averaging the rates to all the ports of call as far north as Hebron. Its higher rate then appeared to give substance to a report, spread by a few unfriendly white fishermen, that it was exploiting the people and making huge profits from the Labrador trade, which, of course, was not true:²

"Many of these fishermen have become hostile to the Department of Natural Resources, because of its attempt to rehabilitate the Eskimos. They feel that the Eskimo fishermen are being pampered, especially as the latter are as successful as they themselves at the cod fishery. The Newfoundlanders have attempted to breed discontent among the Natives by telling them of the Government's 'huge profits' made out of the Labrador trade. Although such stories are palpable lies and demonstrably false, the Eskimos believe them, and it is very difficult to convince them of the falsity of these stories." (Peacock, 1947, p. 112).

¹The company retained, of course its two vessels, the *Fort Garry* and the *Nascopie*, thus obliging the Newfoundland government to set up its own transport system. The government laid this task on the Newfoundland Government Railway, which proceeded to operate a regular supply vessel down the Labrador coast.

²During the financial year which ended on 31 May 1951, there was a trading deficit of approximately \$16,500; and in 1953 the annual operating deficit of the North Labrador Trading Operations amounted to approximately \$55,000.

So much ill-feeling did the accusation excite that the government closed its Makkovik store, after operating it for only twelve months. The Eskimos suffered no immediate harm from its disappearance, since they could purchase all their needs at the store of the private trader; but it was obvious that if ever the trader moved out without leaving a successor, the settlement would immediately petition the government either to re-open its old store or to arrange for some alternative means of supplying the inhabitants' requirements during the months of winter.

Labouring alongside various types of whites at the Goose Bay airport, and "bunking" down with a similar medley of workers at the lumber camps, opened wide the eyes of numerous young Eskimos to our kaleidoscopic world, so much more complex than they had dreamed, and awakened within them the same curiosity and thirst for adventure that had spurred their pioneering ancestors. Consequently, when they returned to the quiet settlements in which they had been raised, they rebelled at the narrow outlook of their kinsfolk, felt cabined and confined by the monotonous orderliness of the villages and by the strict if kindly discipline imposed by the Elders' councils, whose power surpassed that of the Rangers. The fledglings had outgrown their nests: they longed to stretch their wings and fly away in search of richer and more novel feeding-grounds. But these richer haunts lay nowhere within view, and their wings were as yet too feeble to carry them on long exploratory flights. So they languished in their settlements, restless and discontented, waiting always for the means to escape into a larger world.

Until 1951 the medical services on Labrador's northern coast underwent little change. In Hamilton Inlet, and along the coast south of the inlet, the International Grenfell Association, at a cost of about \$92,000 yearly (10 per cent of that sum contributed by the Newfoundland government) was maintaining four nursing stations and two 25-bed hospitals, besides operating a small hospital ship which late in the summer cruised up the coast to about Hebron. At least once in the summer, too, a government doctor still travelled on the mail-boat as far as Nain. The Marconi wireless station at Hopedale, and the two-way radios with which the government equipped its trading posts, made it possible in emergencies to seek medical advice from Newfoundland; but as yet there was no resident doctor or nurse on Labrador's northern coast to make full use of that advice.

Services so restricted encouraged little hope of any improvement in the region's health. Tuberculosis remained as prevalent as ever among its Eskimos, and epidemics of influenza never ceased to take their annual toll; one in 1943 carried off some thirty people in Nain alone:

"95% of the Nain people were sick, and the death rate was 9%. There were not enough able-bodied men to bury the dead, and we were obliged to make coffins and keep the bodies in the mortuary." (Peacock, 1947, p. 104).

Moreover, the unbalanced diet based increasingly on biscuits, beans, and other store-foods had brought in its train various deficiency diseases, including dental caries. So common was this last complaint, indeed, that many women could no longer chew the sealskins needed to make and mend their families' boots. As Peacock remarked euphemistically, the health situation was 'not ideal'.

This missionary believed that the half-breeds were healthier and more prolific than the pure-bloods—or those who appeared to be pure-bloods, for, as Tanner had observed twenty years earlier, there could remain very few Eskimos without some percentage of European blood. Peacock wisely did not attempt to estimate the size of the Eskimo population, or to separate the mixed bloods from the unmixed, so deeply had the two races intermingled. He merely recorded that in 1947 there were some 1,250 “Eskimos and Settlers” at the four Moravian mission stations, Makkovik, Hopedale, Nain, and Hebron, and that they were being served by five missionaries and their wives, and five European teachers.¹

¹Black, basing his opinion on field work carried out during the summer of 1950 and the autumn of 1952, conjectured that “Makkovik is 90 per cent white; Hopedale 60 per cent settler, 20 per cent white and 20 per cent Eskimo; Nain 47.2 per cent settler, 1.8 per cent white and 51 per cent Eskimo, and Hebron is almost 85 per cent Eskimo, with the remainder consisting of an equal proportion of settlers and whites.” (Black, 1957, p. 65). Figures as precise as these, however, are purely illusory.

PERIOD III

Across the Rubicon: 1949-62

Nature, someone has said, abhors a vacuum, which is another way of saying that our whole known world of mind and matter is one and indivisible. For his own convenience and comprehension, it is true, man divides it into neat compartments, and commonly treats this or that compartment as if it were a complete and independent entity unrelated to all the others, forgetting that just as the force of gravity binds distant star with distant star, sun with earth, and man with the little crust of land on which he stands, so each man's mind communes unbrokenly with the minds of other men, however remote they may appear to be in time and space. Our politicians and geographers have divided the surface of our earth into countries; ethnographers and common people have segmented its peoples into race, and all of us have set up artificial boundaries to keep countries and races forever separate. But Nature mocks at our "apartheidness"; incessantly she erodes our boundaries, forcing us to erect new and still newer ones and perpetually to re-adjust the transitory ideas that led to their creation. Only four centuries ago Jacques Cartier was condemning the peninsula of Labrador as the "land that God allotted to Caine" (Hakluyt [1904] vol. 8, p. 188); and not many years later Martin Frobisher described the Eskimos as a people who:

"live in Caves of the earth, and hunt for their dinners or praye, even as the beare or other wild beastes do. They eat raw flesh and fish, and refuse no meat howsoever it be stinking. They are desperate in their fight, sullen of nature, and ravenous in their manner of feeding." (Hakluyt [1904] vol. 7, p. 370).

Yet despite these unfavourable judgements from the relatively recent past, the peninsula of Labrador, with its newly found minerals and its vast water-powers, has blossomed now into a land of promise; and when Newfoundland entered the Confederation of Canada in the middle of this twentieth century her government refused to hand over the descendants of the troglodytes to any federal administration because no one could distinguish them with certainty from their white and mixed-blood neighbours. Nature's mysterious wand had transformed them, and they had ceased to be Eskimos, although many still spoke the Eskimo language. As the Rev. F. W. Peacock, Superintendent of the Moravian mission in Labrador, wrote recently:

"[They] have outgrown their primitive culture, and their thought and habit patterns are gradually changing. The only active interest they take in their old arts and culture is a commercial one.

"It becomes more and more obvious that the White Man's influence over the Eskimos has been to change them from an isolated, independent, self-contained race into a semi-dependent labouring class." (Peacock, 1947, pp. 214-15).

The whirligig of time had made them citizens of Newfoundland,¹ equal in status with all other Newfoundlanders after the government, early in 1963, repealed the old law that had forbidden the supplying of intoxicating liquors to Indians and Eskimos (see p. 24). With those other Newfoundlanders they became, from 1 April 1949 onward, full citizens of Canada also. They had crossed the Rubicon. No longer were they Canadian Eskimos, but Eskimo-Canadians, living and working alongside English-Canadians, French-Canadians, and Chinese-Canadians in a common fatherland.²

But let us retrace the steps by which they arrived at this position.

During the negotiations that preceded Newfoundland's entry into Confederation on 1 April 1949, neither the provincial nor the federal authorities gave serious consideration to the legal status of Labrador's Eskimos and Indians. As the Canadian law stood at that date, Indians within the borders of Canada were still wards of the federal government; and the Supreme Court of Canada had ruled in 1939 that the Eskimos of Canada were Indians (Jenness, 1964, p. 40).³

But how did Canadian law interpret this word "Indian"? To the layman it means an "aborigine or native of America", just as a Maori is an "aborigine or native of New Zealand". Anthropologists can discover no pure-blood⁴ Indians in Canada today, and not very many pure-blood Eskimos. Nearly all our so-called "aborigines" carry white blood in their veins, some more, so that they are indistinguishable from Europeans, and some less. How then did the Canadian government distinguish them? Did she use the same criterion as Hitler, who counted every man a Jew, regardless of his physical appearance, his nationality, his language and his religion, if one of his ancestors as far back as his great-grandparents had considered himself a Jew? Was it possible for Canada to apply a similar criterion to the term "Indian" and make it include, not only today's residents on "Indian Reserves", but perhaps 100,000 of her leading politicians, industrialists, and professional men in whom might be traced a faint element of Indian ancestry? Even her constitutional lawyers would hardly consent to that interpretation, especially since they too, or at least some of them, might be classified as Indians and down-graded from first-class citizens to wards of the federal government.

¹Cf. The statement of the Deputy Minister of Public Welfare, Newfoundland, in his annual report for 1954: "The people of Northern Labrador are on exactly the same basis in respect of welfare benefits, as people in other parts of the Province. Statistics for Northern Labrador are combined or incorporated with those for other parts of the Province". Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1954, p. 90).

²Is it not time that we ceased to talk of Canadian Eskimos and Canadian Indians, except in an historical context, and used instead the hyphenated words Eskimo-Canadians and Indian-Canadians? We do not speak of Canadian French, Canadian English or Canadian Chinese; and our neighbours below the line flatly reject such expressions as American Irish, American Scandinavians, and (especially when referring to their Hawaiian fellow-citizens) American Japanese.

³The reader should note that this judgement referred specifically to the Eskimos of Quebec at the time of Confederation, 1867, when it actually contained no Eskimos, since its northern boundary was the "Southern Boundary of the Territory granted to the Merchants Adventurers of England, trading to Hudson's Bay" (Quebec Act, 14 Geo. III, C. 83, p. 405, 1774). It is by extrapolation only, apparently that the judgement has been commonly extended to embrace all Eskimos within the bounds of Canada.

⁴I use here everyday, not scientific, terminology, for of course it is not the blood which directly transmits racial characteristics, but the genes.

Canada rejected Hitler's criterion, therefore, and evolved for herself a less explosive one. In "An Act respecting Indians" ('Revised Statutes of Canada', 1906, vol. 2, p. 1,445) she proclaimed:

"'Indian' means

- (i) any male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band,
- (ii) any child of such person,
- (iii) any woman who is or was lawfully married to such person".

There was a serious flaw in this definition. It totally disregarded the fact that many Indian tribes, unlike Europeans, reckoned descent through the mother's line and paid very little attention to the father's. Their society was not patrilineal, but matrilineal. To them the children of an Indian woman and a white man were Indian, and the children of an Indian man (her brother perhaps) and a white woman were white, irrespective of where they lived, whether in Toronto or on a particular Indian reserve in British Columbia; irrespective, too, of the legality of the parents' marriages, or whatever the statute's word "lawfully" might mean when applied to so different a society. Whether Canada's government realized this flaw I do not know; but when it revised its Indian Statutes in 1951, just after Newfoundland entered Confederation, its new "Act respecting Indians" offered this amended definition of the term Indian:

"'Indian' means a person who pursuant to this Act is registered as an Indian or is entitled to be registered as an Indian". ('Statutes of Canada', 15 George VI, C. 29, 1951, vol. 1, p. 132).¹

Hence today, if you wish to discover what residents of Canada are Indians, you must examine the records of the federal government and discover who have registered there as Indians, and also who are entitled to be so registered. Conceivably you will come upon your own name!

The Newfoundland government, however, has never maintained lists or registers of its Indians and Eskimos similar to those in Canada. After the Moravians established their missions on the north Labrador coast the Eskimos of that region no longer considered themselves as belonging to a particular "band", but to a particular mission settlement which in the course of years came to include persons who were pure white, or of mixed white and Eskimo descent; and the Moravian lists of the inhabitants of these settlements (or of the districts centred on them) were "church" registers, not racial or band registers. Indeed, even by the first decade of the twentieth century both the missionaries and the Newfoundland government frankly admitted their inability to distinguish "bona fide" Indians and Eskimos from the rest of Labrador's population. And if they found it impossible, was it likely that the federal government could be more successful half a century later?

To complicate the question further, Newfoundland's Eskimos had adopted the white man's culture more fully than any Canadian Eskimos, except possibly those in the Mackenzie River delta; and many of them had demonstrated, to the

¹Section 4 of the Act reads "This Act does not apply to the race of aborigines commonly referred to as Eskimos." In spite of this clause, however, the Act's interpretation, perhaps even its legality, remains doubtful, and may require another decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. For instance, what status does it prescribe for the growing number of persons of mixed Eskimo and Indian ancestry?

satisfaction of the government in St. John's, that given the opportunity, they could and would earn a living in competition with white men.¹ When Newfoundland united with Canada, therefore, could she honourably impose on them, or allow the federal government to impose on them, a status inferior to that of other Newfoundlanders, inferior to that of the settlers who lived among them, freely intermarried with them, and nearly equalled them in number?

Governments, like human beings, of whom indeed they are but aggregates, may be spurred by passions or inspired by reason and goodwill; and it was reason and goodwill which opened up a swift and easy path out of the dilemma. At the outset the Canadian and Newfoundland administrations agreed that the latter's Indians and Eskimos were entitled without delay to the same federal Family and Old Age Pensions as other Canadians, and with that issue settled they decided to postpone any further consideration of the problem until some later date. In the interim, however, the Ottawa government, reflecting that even if it could avoid legal responsibility for Newfoundland's aborigines, it could not escape a *moral* obligation to extend to them, in case of need, some measure of the help it had been granting its own Eskimos and Indians, offered to finance whatever relief measures the provincial government might find necessary to take on their behalf before the resolution of their status;² and soon afterwards it expanded the offer to include, from 1 January 1951, responsibility for their health. Newfoundland accepted, and Ottawa immediately authorized its Department of National Health and Welfare to carry out an exhaustive X-ray survey of the entire population in northern Labrador, and to transport to hospital as many tuberculous cases as it was possible to handle. Owing to a shortage of hospital facilities, unfortunately, many serious cases had to be left in the settlements.

A Dominion census taken in that year 1951 recorded the number of "aborigines" in northern Labrador as 1,026, of whom 754 were listed as Eskimos and 272 as Indians; but an independent enumeration based on the Newfoundland government's itemized expenditures on their behalf gave a total of approximately 1,400.³ The discrepancy, of course, meant very little financially; but it

¹Cf. "For good or ill, the Labrador Eskimos have developed beyond the raw meat eating, snow igloo, blubber-lamp stage and are intent on adopting the White Man's culture to the fullest degree possible in the environment. Already, many have demonstrated that they can and will earn a livelihood on the same footing as the White Man if given a chance". (Rockwood, 1955, p. 3).

²From 1951 to 1955 inclusive, the federal government contributed about \$13,000 yearly for Eskimo relief in northern Labrador, and for Indian relief in the same region approximately \$21,000.

³The Newfoundland government in 1955 offered still another estimate of its Eskimo-population.

"There are about 650 Eskimos, 575 Settlers (people of White and White-Eskimo extraction) and 125 Indians, totalling approximately 1,350 residing in seven communities or *districts* (Hebron, Nutak, Nain, Davis Inlet, Hopedale, Postville and Makkovik), in the Coastal section lying between Cape Harrison and Cape Chidley in what is known as Northern Labrador. Add to this number 175 Indians living near North West River and several families of Eskimos living around Rigolet, and these groups could hardly be left out in any programme dealing with the Eskimos and Indians, the total becomes approximately 1,500 souls. In dealing with the places named above the term district is preferred because in reality they are centres serving several, smaller outlying settlements, and not in all cases communities in the true sense of the word. The trend, however, in recent years is for more and more people to move to the centres where some medical, educational, recreational and other services are available, and towards more stable community living." (Rockwood, 1955, p. 1).

strengthened the conviction, held now by the federal government as well as by the authorities in Newfoundland, that it was impossible to distinguish accurately the "aborigines" of the region from the "whites", and that in matters of health and relief, at least, no attempt should be made to separate them.

In 1953 the two governments renewed their discussions concerning the "aborigines" of northern Labrador, and early in 1954 agreed upon what they hoped would be the final solution:

- (a) The federal government would contribute two-thirds of all capital expenditures on Eskimo account in the fields of education and welfare that the two governments might agree upon, and 100 per cent of the capital expenditures on Indian account; but its total contribution was not to exceed \$200,000.
- (b) The federal Department of National Health and Welfare, with the active cooperation of the Provincial Department of Health, the International Grenfell Association, and the Newfoundland Tuberculosis Association, would assume, for a ten-year period beginning 1 April 1954, full financial, and, to whatever extent was required, administrative responsibility for the transportation, hospitalization and treatment of northern Labrador Indians and Eskimos who might need hospital treatment. During the same ten-year period it would also undertake an aggressive anti-tuberculosis programme.
- (c) From 1 April 1954, the Government of Newfoundland would assume all financial and administrative responsibility for the Indian and Eskimo population of Labrador, including relief but excluding matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b) above, and all federal benefits such as Family Allowances, and Old Age Pensions which have a general application throughout Canada.

Ottawa quickly fulfilled its obligations under paragraph (a) by contributing approximately \$200,000 toward the building of a school for Indians at North West River, and another school for Eskimos at Nain. In the summer of 1954, operating through Dr. W. A. Paddon and other doctors of the International Grenfell Association, it successfully launched the anti-tuberculosis campaign to which it had committed itself under paragraph (b) by conducting another X-ray survey of the northern Labrador inhabitants and air-lifting many patients to hospital. The Canadian National Railways took over the Newfoundland Railway, and with it the obligation to maintain a summer mail and passenger steamer service between St. John's and Nain or Hopedale;¹ and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, absorbing the Labrador Ranger Force, posted one policeman in Nain, two in Hopedale (where the Canadian Marconi Company had set up a radio station and the U.S. began in 1951 to construct a radar base), and four in Goose Bay, where the Newfoundland government was maintaining a magistrate. Federal Family Allowances and federal Old Age Pensions had been flowing into the region ever since 1949, and to all appearances the partnership between Ottawa and St. John's was working smoothly.

There were the best of reasons why the partnership should work smoothly. Both governments were facing very much the same problems in their far north. The biological resources, the fish and the game of the Arctic (which includes the greater part of northern Labrador), are not abundant enough to provide its present inhabitants with an acceptable livelihood, not abundant enough even to

¹"From 1936 to 1953 the Government of Newfoundland maintained a special steamship service for Northern Labrador but with the opening of the 1954 shipping season the responsibility for this service was taken over by the Canadian National Railways. The very much improved service being provided by the Canadian National Railways is a most important factor in the administration of welfare services in Northern Labrador." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1955, p. 23).

preserve them from grave privation and hardship, if not outright starvation. In northern Labrador, as in Canada's Northwest Territories:

"goods have been brought to the Eskimos, and demand created which, though on a low level, is greater than the revenue from fish and fur. The difference is being supplied by a small amount of wage employment, family allowances, old age pensions, government relief and missionaries' charity. Present levels of consumption cannot be maintained without external assistance, but in addition we should face the fact that present levels of consumption are too low. Housing, clothing and nutrition are inadequate and are probably responsible for the poor health of the people". (Letter in Labrador files, Canadian Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources).

In both regions, too, the surface of the ground probably conceals great mineral riches, now largely unexplored and wholly unexploited; but when the world will need and develop them no one knows. Meanwhile, the Eskimos cling to their arctic and subarctic homes, and in Canada they are rapidly increasing in number, whereas in Labrador they are merging equally rapidly with the whites and becoming indistinguishable.

Early in 1956 the Newfoundland government held a conference on Labrador affairs and at its close issued the following statement:

"This Conference . . . served to confirm the view that the Eskimos and Indians cannot continue to exist as isolated minorities but must ultimately be integrated into the general body of our Society. A vigorous programme in Welfare and Education, particularly the latter, is required to match the Health programme already underway, and to prepare these minorities for the Society of the future." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1956, p. 73).

Northern Labrador was indeed rapidly changing: no longer was it the isolated region that had slumbered up to the Second World War. A 40-bed hospital erected at North West River in 1954-5, a 10-bed "nursing-station" built at Nain in 1956, a radio-telephone in every settlement store maintaining daily communication with other settlements and with the outside world, and a government ambulance aircraft available on call to the doctors of the International Grenfell Association, who held themselves ready at all times to fly wherever they were needed—these were providing the coast with reasonable medical care. The federal Post Office, discarding most of the dog-teams which in the pre-war period had carried mail to Nain twice, or rarely three times, during the seven months when the coast was blocked by ice, had now linked up with Eastern Provincial Airways to give the settlements a moderately frequent service throughout the whole winter.¹ Industry's scouts were mapping every mountain, lake, and stream, and beginning to explore the territory, foot by foot, in search of valuable minerals. Most significant of all, the economic foundations of the region were once more shifting, and forcing a change of outlook not on its inhabitants alone, but also on Newfoundland's administrators in St. John's.

Let us examine this economic shift more closely, taking as our starting point the year 1942, when the Hudson's Bay Company surrendered its trading monopoly and withdrew from northern Labrador because through a whole decade its

¹An aircraft transported the winter mail to points as far north as Nain, whence it was carried by dog-team to Nutak and Hebron, until those two settlements were evacuated in 1958 and 1959. The aircraft ran at first monthly, later fortnightly, and in the winter of 1962-3 weekly.

yearly returns from the region's furs, fish, sealskins, and oil had failed to cover its yearly operating expenses; and, being a commercial organization, it could no longer sustain the continuous deficits. Thereupon the Newfoundland government had taken over the trade, but not as a commercial venture, for it rejected any financial profits and sought only the welfare of its citizens on this outermost frontier which the war had suddenly thrust on its attention.

"For the benefit of those who may be tempted to eye Government trading in Northern Labrador with suspicion it might be pointed out that in the first place this situation exists only because the peculiar economic circumstances make it difficult or impossible for private enterprise to operate unless heavily subsidized by Government; and taking all the circumstances into consideration it seems preferable to maintain and operate the trading establishments rather than subsidize private enterprises to do the job. Secondly, the profit is low; only about an average of 15% on sales, which barely covers operating expenses not including salaries which are paid by the province. The officers of the Department of Public Welfare, in addition to managing the business, administer all Welfare services, and take a broad interest in matters affecting community welfare." (Rockwood, 1955, p. 9).

So wrote a senior administrator of the Newfoundland government in 1955. By that year he and his staff had been struggling for more than a decade to build up a prosperous population in a region which might one day reveal great mineral wealth; and as a first step in promoting that prosperity he had diverted the Eskimos' energies from land furs to marine products because, temporarily at least, the latter offered them a more favourable market and could provide them with a healthier diet.¹ But the cessation of the war had brought an end to this favourable market. Also, it had suspended or lessened the urgency of the construction projects which the war had stimulated in Hamilton Inlet and at Kaipokok, and in so doing had reduced the amount of wage-employment which had so usefully supplemented northern Labrador's income from fishing, sealing, and trapping. In consequence the region had become by mid-century a depressed area where the local products of fish and fur could no longer provide a decent livelihood, wage-employment was scarce even for those who could readily adjust to its norms (which many settlers and Eskimos, and virtually all the Indians, found difficult), and to an ever increasing extent the government trading stores were becoming welfare centres, dispensing the government allowances and relief which alone kept the economy from collapsing. In 1951 Newfoundland openly acknowledged the deterioration of northern Labrador's economy by transferring its administration from the Department of Natural Resources to the Department of Public Welfare, which created for the task a special organization entitled "Division of Northern Labrador Affairs".

It was in the same year 1951 that the United States began to construct a radar base at Hopedale, an enterprise which temporarily relieved conditions in that district by giving its mixed inhabitants, Eskimos, settlers, and a few pure whites, their first opportunity to obtain employment at reasonable wages near their homes. The local population, and also the settlers (but not the Indians) in Davis Inlet, took full advantage of the opportunity and practically abandoned their fisheries—which in any case were bringing them little except food, so low were the prices the market was then offering for their fish. News of their employment quickly spread northward to Nain, Nutak, and Hebron, and some families from Nain, as well as one or two from Nutak, impulsively loaded

¹In 1952 no one from Hebron, Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, or Cartwright engaged in trapping (Black, 1957, p. 70).

their few household possessions into their fishing-boats and sailed away for the "land of promise". So great, indeed, was the unrest along the coast that the authorities in St. John's, who knew that Hopedale could offer few or no jobs to outsiders, grew alarmed lest scores of Eskimos and settlers from the north should suddenly camp on that village's shore, foodless and homeless, looking for work that did not exist; and they feared that before long the entire area from Davis Inlet to Cape Chidley might abruptly spill out its inhabitants and revert to desolation if fate did not intervene to bring it some stroke of good fortune—an upward surge in the fish and fur markets perhaps, the discovery of exceptional mineral wealth, or the building of additional defence installations which would provide extensive employment.

Fate's interventions, however, generally come unannounced, and the new Division of Northern Labrador Affairs, unable to forecast any stroke of good fortune, steadfastly pursued and expanded the policies of its predecessor. It continued to lend fishing and sealing nets to the Eskimos at very low rentals so that they might increase their catches and their incomes; and from the lumber mill in Kaipokok Bay it ordered for them three motor-boats and ten punts. It liberalized its relief payments, and advocated the extension to Eskimo fishermen of the seasonal benefits of Unemployment Insurance enjoyed by Newfoundland lumbermen and other seasonal workers. It initiated a housing program to replace with decent homes, especially at the sealing-stations, the miserable hovels in which many families were living, and for this purpose it landed at Nain, in the fall of 1952, building material for ten new homes, a number it proposed to double the following summer. In its trading stores it carried heavier stocks of goods, including many new articles which it hoped would create an illusion of prosperity and increase the flow of money and credit. And it laid plans to build a school at Nutak, whose forty to fifty children of school age had lacked all educational facilities since their parents evacuated the older settlement of Okak after the devastating epidemic of influenza in 1918-19.

Notwithstanding these and other measures, the unrest that had gripped the region failed to subside, and in the fall of 1954, when an ice belt closely hugged the shore and completely ruined the sealing by keeping the migrating mammals beyond the range of the Eskimos' nets, the simmering pot threatened to boil over.

The following summer, 1955, Dr. Charles S. Curtis, then Superintendent of the International Grenfell Association, travelled up the coast to inspect a site for a nursing station in Nain which his organization was proposing to set up. From a distance out to sea, he reported in a letter written after his return, Nain presented the appearance of a neat, well-painted settlement; but on nearer approach the visitor observed a sharp line of demarcation between the sector occupied by the white residents—Moravian missionary, government store-keeper, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police—and the slum area where the Eskimos were living. The houses of the Europeans were well-built, clap-boarded, and painted white; those of the Eskimos were wretched hovels, some covered with tar-paper, others not, but all alike surrounded by filth, where the sewerage was thrown out of doors and devoured by mangy dogs. After entering every Eskimo dwelling in the settlement he had discovered only one, owned by a man who was working at Hopedale, which health authorities would not have condemned as unfit for human habitation. At Nutak and Hebron, he was told, conditions were more appalling still. His organization had X-rayed every Eskimo along this north

Labrador coast several times, and was treating the tubercular cases in its hospital at St. Anthony, near the northern tip of Newfoundland; but it was useless to restore their health in hospital and then send them back to live in these unsanitary hovels, on the inadequate diet their extreme poverty dictated. The federal and provincial governments, he felt, lacked any comprehensive plan for dealing with the region; and while his organization stood ready to embark on an extensive health program, administrators were leaving untouched the fundamental causes of the tuberculosis and other diseases that were ravaging the coast. He recommended, accordingly, that some senior government officials sit down with some directors of the International Grenfell Association, and work out a three-point program which would:

1. Bring the Hebron and Nutak Eskimos south where there was wood to heat their homes.
2. Use a percentage of the federal grant of \$200,000 [see p. 76] for a housing project; and
3. Attempt to find some solution for the Eskimos' deplorable economic and living conditions.

Familiarity often produces a peculiar form of blindness which makes urbanites, for example, habitually overlook the architectural monstrosities in their own cities but roundly castigate the eye-sores of their neighbours. It is therefore not surprising that Curtis, a new-comer and a public-health officer deeply conscious of the effects of diet, housing, hygiene, and other environmental factors on physical and mental health, should have viewed with critical eyes these poverty-stricken fishing-communities which had developed unobtrusively and haphazardly over a period of 150 years; and that he should have condemned them in harsher terms than any of his predecessors, harsher perhaps than he would have used had he been better acquainted with their severe climate, especially in winter, and the primitive state from which most of their inhabitants had but recently emerged. Nevertheless, his criticisms were timely, and the Newfoundland government duly tabled them at the four-day conference it convened in February 1956 to discuss the situation in its Labrador dependency.¹ That conference summed up its conclusions as follows:

"Under present conditions the local industries (fisheries, seal hunting and fur-trapping) are incapable of providing the bare necessities of life, much less a reasonable standard of living for the Eskimo and other residents of Northern Labrador—the area from Cape Harrison northwards. To provide even a minimum standard of living the industries will have to be heavily subsidized. The Eskimos, who comprise the largest group in the area, are adaptable and in fact compare favourably with Newfoundland fishermen. They want jobs like other citizens and may be expected to move to employment centres as these develop; in fact a considerable number have already done so. No fishing whatever has been done at Hopedale since employment has been available at defence projects.

¹Concerning the ever-recurring subject of handicrafts and the part they might play in the economy of Northern Labrador the Conference had this to say:

"Handicraft as discussed at the Conference included ivory, soapstone and wood carving, needlework, basketwork (grass weaving) and curios as well as pottery and Labradorite already mentioned. The International Grenfell Association has been active in this field for a number of years and has had the services of a trained industrial worker. Handicrafts development has not been a paying proposition although its value in physio-therapy and employment of the physically handicapped is not to be overlooked. Home industries are likely to diminish or disappear altogether when full scale employment is available in industries such as mining and lumbering." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, p. 8).

With the statement in this last sentence most students will no doubt agree.

"It is to be expected that as industry develops more and more Eskimos as well as settlers (English speaking natives of Northern Labrador) will move to employment centres. The more backward peoples of the Nutak and Hebron districts and some of the Nain group should preferably be given the opportunity of further adjustment before they are absorbed in more heterogeneous surroundings. This can be achieved by replacing those of the Nain group who move elsewhere by the people from the two Northern districts. Assistance for re-housing should be made available for people moving to Nain and other points from Nutak and Hebron." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, pp. 18-19).

Curtis's letter, it would seem, had helped to bring home to the Newfoundland government how critical was the situation on part of Labrador's northern coast. The people of Hopedale and Makkovik might prosper as long as defence operations endured in their vicinity, but north of them, especially in the treeless zone beyond Nain, living conditions were so desperate, and distress so rife, that the inhabitants were under strong pressure to emigrate. The government could not prohibit a mass emigration even if it wished to, which it did not. But where would a large body of migrants find new homes in which they could support themselves, and bring up their families, without being dependent for all necessities on the public purse? Within five or ten years, perhaps, new developments might occur, new industries might arise, which would open up jobs for all Newfoundland's Eskimos; but that time had not yet come. Meanwhile it seemed possible to keep the pressure to emigrate below the boiling-point by providing various "subsidies" or "supports" that would make life a little easier, and by organizing a staging movement whereby residents of Hebron and Nutak would replace residents of Nain as fast as the latter moved away to homes and employment farther south. During the breathing-space thus obtained the authorities might prepare the northern Eskimos for the impending change in their lives; here education appeared to be the master-key, since it was now quite clear that, given the proper training, Labrador's Eskimos and Indians could undertake any occupation, qualify for any profession, that modern society requires. No financial consideration need deter the government from such a "holding" operation; the cost should not prove excessive, because the three northern settlements were all quite small. The 1951 census had recorded a total population of only 665, of whom 285 (169 Eskimos and 116 settlers) were living at that date in the Nain district, 184 (165 Eskimos and 19 settlers) at Nutak, and 196 (182 Eskimos and 14 settlers) at Hebron.

But in that spring of 1956, while administrators were thus calmly deliberating in far away St. John's, in the settlement of Nutak the people had already cleared their decks for positive action. The failure of the sealing in 1954, and a disappointing fishery in 1955, had aroused them to open revolt, and they had determined to migrate in a body and seek wage-employment somewhere in the south.¹ In the early summer they arrived at Nain, where the government, forewarned, was preparing to construct a new store, a well-equipped nursing station or small hospital, a new school to take the place of the school it had planned for Nutak, the foundations of a new wharf to accommodate vessels

¹"Nutak was abandoned because there were no services or facilities except those operated by the Department of Public Welfare, and the advantages to be gained in moving to communities where churches, schools, medical services and other facilities already existed outweighed those to be gained by remaining there." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1960, p. 114).

drawing up to 18 feet, and, in compliance with Curtis's recommendation, a number of new homes. Six of the migrant families did not linger, but pushed on south, two to Makkovik and four to North West River, where the government supplied them with homes. The majority, however, remained in Nain, finding there abundant work for a time, and satisfactory accommodation in some of the government's new houses, and in the empty homes of Nain residents who had themselves obtained employment farther south.¹ So by 1957 the sorely-tried children and grandchildren of Hutton's beloved "Okagmiut" (see pp. 46 *et al.*) were luxuriating in comfortable dwellings heated by wood-burning stoves;² and their boys and girls, some for the first time in their lives, were able to attend a regular school.

The abandonment of Nutak and the scattering of its nearly 200 inhabitants marked the climax in that continuous reshuffling of northern Labrador's population which had been triggered fourteen years earlier by the construction of the air-base at Goose Bay. From 1942 onward the Eskimos and their settler neighbours had been drifting southward to the places where defence and defence-inspired activities provided an escape, through wage-employment, from the misery of an existence based on fishing and trapping during a period of high costs and very low returns. In the south the two villages of Happy Valley and North West River had arrested the drift: by 1959 roughly 450 of their inhabitants were immigrants, or the children of immigrants, from Labrador's northern coast. Nutak's abandonment now left Hebron, the coast's northernmost settlement, more solitary and unsupported than ever, and no one could longer doubt that very soon its inhabitants also would follow Nutak's example, would pack up their belongings and move to Nain or beyond at the first favourable opportunity.

The Newfoundland government, observing the handwriting on the wall, carefully planned for this second migration, in no way dismayed when an employment slump in 1957, and the extension of unemployment benefits to the cod and char fishermen of northern Labrador in the same year, induced many Eskimos to return to their fishing. The authorities knew that under the conditions then existing fishing was not an economic enterprise, and that most of the Eskimos would never continue its pursuit if they could find steady wage-employment. The 1957 catch, indeed, proved to be very small, only 6,379 quintals, and the prices the fishermen received for their cod, \$8 a quintal for ordinary cure and \$5 a quintal for salt bulk, quite unrewarding, even though the government paid for barrels, salt, labour in collecting and packing, and freight. The labour market at Goose Bay seemed stagnant, at least temporarily, the radar station at Hopedale was completed, and the defence project opening up at Makkovik was too small to take on more than a handful of Hopedale's discharged workers. Many of the officials in St. John's were pinning their hopes on the

¹On 13 October 1956, the Newfoundland government wrote to the federal government in Ottawa:

"As far as the re-housing programme is concerned, we have designed our own units which contain a living room, two small bed rooms and a porch on the first floor, with additional sleeping space upstairs. Materials averaging about \$1,000 per unit have been supplied by the Government through the Department of Public Welfare. Labour is being provided wholly by the owner occupants. The re-settlement of the Nutak people will involve the construction of 35 housing units. Practically all of those have been started and the majority will be completed before the winter."

²Since 1957 government buildings and many private dwellings in Nain, Hopedale, and Makkovik have been supplied with electric light.

operations of the British-Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco), which in 1957 began to develop a promising uranium deposit in Kaipokok Bay:

"Everyone interested in the welfare of the Indians and Eskimos in Northern Labrador hopes that these operations will result in industrial development which will end forever the conditions which make inhabitants of the area dependent on the fishery for a livelihood." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1958, p. 35).

But their hopes vanished when the corporation closed down the works a year later because the world market for uranium was too depressed to cover the costs of exploitation; and this fleeting vision of a new and stable economic base for Labrador's needy population faded away.

Meanwhile the restlessness of the Hebron Eskimos had increased, and in 1958 five families travelled south to seek their fortunes. Three settled in Makkovik, two in Happy Valley; and in both places the Newfoundland government helped them to find homes. It decided then to request the federal government for a second contribution, this time \$215,000, to be used for the construction of roads, houses, a school, and a community centre in northern Labrador; and early in 1959 it wrote a letter to Ottawa in support of its request, outlining its policy and its plans:

"The policy of the Government of Newfoundland in relation to Indians and Eskimos has been based on the assumption that ultimately the Eskimos and Indians must take their full place as independent self-supporting Canadian citizens, with all the rights and responsibilities that this involves. In the province of Newfoundland they are citizens in the legal sense in that they have the right to vote and to travel without restrictions. There are no Indian reservations in Newfoundland, and until the resources of Labrador are more fully developed, the opportunities for obtaining useful employment are limited. Many Eskimos have found employment at Goose Airport, but so far as I am aware, no Indians have been employed for any length of time in this area. In our opinion a much more vigorous program of education, both academic and vocational, is necessary if the Eskimos and Indians are to take their rightful place in our society. The ten-year health programme initiated by the Government of Canada in 1954, with the active co-operation of the Newfoundland Department of Health, the Grenfell Mission and the Newfoundland Tuberculosis Association, has been most successful, and we feel that we have been able to maintain reasonably adequate welfare services. Both the Eskimos and the Indians have been encouraged and assisted in hunting and fishing (the total production of codfishery this year was 11,650 quintals); but we regard these activities as 'holding operations' until the economy in the area becomes more diversified. However, with the development of the mineral resources of Labrador, there is reason to hope that some progress in this direction will be possible within the next five or ten years. With the expansion of our vocational training facilities it is hoped that both the Indians and Eskimos who have the necessary economic background will be able to take advantage of the opportunities which will then be available to them. In the meantime we feel they must be assisted with housing and given the essentials of an academic education." (Letter from Minister of Public Welfare, Newfoundland, to Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, 26 March 1959).

The federal government pondered the request, but down to April, 1963, had reached no decision. It could reasonably claim that on the expiration of its anti-tuberculosis campaign in 1964 it would have discharged all legal and moral obligations towards Newfoundland's "aborigines", and that further aid should be based, not on their status as "aborigines", real or presumed, but on their needs as Canadian citizens living in the province of Newfoundland. And those needs the federal government would have to weigh against the needs of its citizens in other provinces.

But there was also another reason for its hesitation. Three years before Newfoundland requested this second contribution voices in Ottawa had raised the question of the province's over-all policy in northern Labrador, of its ultimate purpose in undertaking large capital expenditures in a sub-marginal region whose known resources appeared inadequate to support its inhabitants without continual buttressing from the outside. Unless these capital expenditures would increase the region's production and make it self-sustaining again the government would be pouring its funds into a bottomless cask. Might it not be wiser to bring most of the inhabitants into the south where, even if the older people had to be subsidized, the younger could be educated and trained for new types of employment which would give them a satisfactory livelihood?

So Ottawa, not realizing as did Newfoundland the restiveness of the Hebron natives, pigeon-holed the request for funds until it could make up its mind. The province, however, dared not wait. Already, several months before it forwarded the request, it had decided to build 20 new houses at Makkovik in 1959, turn them over to twenty families from Hebron, and bring south that settlement's remaining thirty families in 1960. However, so eager to move were the first twenty families, that they jumped the gun: they demolished their Hebron homes in the early spring of 1959, burned the wood for fuel, and impatiently awaited in summer tents the arrival of the vessel that would carry them to their new homes, whose construction the government had not even started. This unexpected dénouement evoked a prodigious burst of activity up and down the coast, with the result that by the fall of 1959 the authorities had evacuated from Hebron not twenty families only, but all fifty, and settled them in Nain, Hopedale, and Makkovik.¹ Thus the entire 300 miles of coast from Nain to Cape Chidley now lies stripped of all permanent inhabitants, abandoned to the bears, the wolves, and the weather.

Will this evacuation process halt at Nain? Or will it continue to empty the coastline as far south as Makkovik, or even to the mouth of Hamilton Inlet? Only the future can supply the answer. For the moment a sudden demand from skiers for sealskin parkas and boots has pushed the values of all classes of sealskins to phenomenal levels, and this, combined with the current high prices for cod,² family allowances paid by the federal government and the fishermen's unemployment insurance paid by the Newfoundland government, is keeping most of the Eskimos and settlers off the relief rolls.³ But these conditions may

¹It is pleasant to record here the generous help in housing many of these families given by the chief engineer of the U.S. air-base at Goose Bay.

²In 1961 northern Labrador cod yielded its highest gross revenue to date, \$120,543. The following year char gave its highest revenue, \$43,458.

³In the summer of 1963 the Eskimo and settler families at Nain, where only four persons were drawing relief, were earning a cash income estimated at about \$800. In Happy Valley twelve of the eighteen heads of Eskimo families were working for wages on the air-base, but the remaining six were unemployed and largely dependent on relief. I have no corresponding statistics from either Hopedale or Makkovik, but the cost of relief in 1962 in the five settlements north of Cape Harrison was as follows:

<i>Settlement</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Racial origin</i>	<i>Relief expenditure</i>
Nain	530	Eskimo-white	\$ 4,083.29
Davis Inlet	106	Indian	7,008.44
Hopedale	340	Eskimo-white	12,891.00
Postville	104	White	280.00
Makkovik	340	Eskimo-white	10,061.07
<i>Total</i>			<u>\$34,323.80</u>

change within a few months. They cannot provide a stable economic base and until such a base is forthcoming, the population is bound to be unsettled, with many families poised for flight to any district or region where they can make an acceptable living.

The Eskimo and mixed Eskimo population of northern Labrador¹ today is distributed among five villages only, Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, North West River, and Happy Valley, whose respective populations, undifferentiated into Eskimos, Indians, Settlers, and Whites, numbered in 1961 465, 218, 168, 753, and 2,861 respectively. The economic troubles of the "Eskimos" among them are by no means solved, but they can no longer be separated from those of other Canadian citizens who have elected to make their homes on the Labrador coast.² Racial prejudice, always strongest in frontier regions, still survives, but it is swiftly declining as English becomes the universal tongue in every district, and would soon disappear if the region became more prosperous. What the government stated ten years ago seems more than ever true today:

"It cannot be denied that in northern Labrador there are problems of difference in race and language, but these should not be overemphasized. The main underlying problem is an economic one, and only a solution on this plane can bring a reasonable degree of happiness and contentment to the people of that area." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Dept. Public Welfare, Ann. Rept. March 1954, p. 91).

Health

The agreement between Ottawa and St. John's in 1954 committed the health of northern Labrador's population for ten years to the International Grenfell Association, which was to operate under the authority of the Newfoundland government but charge all its expenses to the federal government. The exhaustive X-ray survey which that Association had carried out along the coast in 1951 had uncovered the appalling tuberculosis rates of 12.5 per cent among Eskimos and 9.6 per cent among Indians, rates approximately a hundred times greater than the one per thousand average among whites in Canada's other nine provinces. Clearly, tuberculosis was northern Labrador's major health problem. In the summer of 1954, accordingly, the Grenfell Association carried out a second X-ray survey, and during the succeeding twelve months transported to hospital and placed under medical care every active case of the disease which that survey brought into the open. Cases that demanded major surgery it conveyed to its well-equipped hospital in St. Anthony, because its hospital at North West River, even after the old 25-bed building burned down in 1954 and was replaced by a 45-bed institution, carried only one doctor and two nurses, a staff obviously too small to cope with any emergency.

Two years after the signing of the agreement with Ottawa, the conference called by the Newfoundland government to review the situation along the

¹The term "northern Labrador" has been generally taken to mean the area from Cape Harrison to Cape Chidley in which the Moravians established their missions. Today there is also an electoral district known as Labrador North, which covers a much wider area. It includes the Goose Bay-Happy Valley and North West River settlements which have small Eskimo populations, but, curiously enough, not Rigolet at the mouth of Hamilton Inlet, about a third of whose approximately 70 inhabitants carry Eskimo blood in their veins.

²The Moravian Labrador mission, keeping pace with this social evolution, plans to change its status from foreign mission to regional church.

northern Labrador coast suggested a few changes. Being informed that the Grenfell Association planned to immunize all the inhabitants against tuberculosis with B.C.G. vaccine, and hoped to eliminate the disease before 1964, the date when the anti-T.B. campaign was due to terminate, it recommended that patients undergo rehabilitation from the day they entered hospital so that they would be ready for advanced training as soon as they were released from ward treatment; also that during their advanced training they be lodged in cottages near the hospitals until they recovered sufficiently to return to their homes. It then praised the work of the public health nurse whom the Grenfell Association had stationed in Nain two years before, especially the part she had played in the lowering of the infant mortality rate at that settlement from 40 per cent to 6 per cent. This mortality rate, it stressed, hinged very largely on the nutritional state of the mothers and their new-born offspring, which in turn reflected the family income and other environmental factors; and it commended the federal government for providing the families of pregnant Eskimo and Indian women elsewhere in Canada with special rations during the six pre-delivery months, declaring that the same policy, if extended to northern Labrador, would beneficially supplement the ration of powdered milk which Newfoundland had been issuing to all children in that region since 1948. It considered that with tuberculosis now coming under control the authorities should give more attention to preventive medicine and health education, tasks that could best be performed in two ways, namely, increasing the number of public health nurses, and by strengthening the liaison between the nursing and the medical services through improvements in radio and aircraft communications. These and other health recommendations it finally summed up as follows:

1. An aircraft to be based at North West River to supplement the service already provided by a similar aircraft based at St. Anthony.
2. New radio telephones to be provided for all hospitals and nursing stations, and in certain cases to missionaries, to facilitate the discussions of medical problems with qualified medical personnel and to summon assistance in emergencies. Since an efficient radio-telephone service would also increase efficiency in the transportation of patients, it should be coordinated with the radio communications of the air line involved.
3. The completion of a cottage hospital at Nain.
4. The construction of a cottage hospital at Happy Valley as soon as the needs of that community could be assessed.
5. The stationing of another doctor at North West River.
6. More emphasis on preventive medicine (immunizing, dental work, etc.) and health education. The latter required more public health nurses at strategic locations for district work.

There could be no doubt that the harmonious collaboration of federal, provincial, and International Grenfell Association officials was proving highly successful. Indeed, one authority at the conference expressed the opinion that,

"the Eskimos and Indians are getting better Health Services than the average across Northern Canada, and that the doctors and nurses of the International Grenfell Association are doing an admirable job." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, p. 9).

Since 1956 the International Grenfell Association has added nursing stations at Hopedale, Makkovik, and Happy Valley to the 10-bed "cottage hospital" at Nain, and in the fast-growing town of Happy Valley the Newfoundland

government has laid the foundations of a provincial hospital. The total elimination of tuberculosis must await a rise in living standards, which demands in turn an improvement in family incomes, but the disease has been brought under control. The incidence of gonorrhoea is a little disquieting, not because cases are numerous, but because they seem to be increasing. On the other hand syphilis, which was considered a major plague in the 1930's (see p. 65) is now so rare as to be almost non-existent, which would mean either that the disease has burned itself out, or that it was never as prevalent as was reported earlier. Pneumonia occurs frequently, but at its first onset people are learning to seek treatment from the local nurse, even though, like many half-educated and even educated individuals, they may neglect to follow instructions and cease to take their medicines the moment they feel relief. There has been a notable drop in infantile, especially neo-natal, mortality, but it still remains distressingly high, owing principally to the imperfect care given by many mothers. Family allowances, and the milk ration provided by the Newfoundland government, are preventing serious malnutrition, but respiratory diseases continue to ravage adults and children alike. Everywhere along the coast the Grenfell Association and its staff inspires the greatest confidence: no section of the population, Eskimo, settler or white, fears hospitalization, or hides at the approach of the aircraft that brings a doctor from North West River or St. Anthony. The hospitals and medical staffs of those two places, and the nursing stations at Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, and Happy Valley, seem adequately to cover the present needs of northern Labrador; but because the situation is changing from year to year, the population slowly increasing and kept in a state of flux by the unstable economy, the government should review the region's medical requirements at frequent intervals.¹

Education

We have seen how the fresh winds that swept away the last dark storm-clouds of the Second World War brought a notable change in the political status of the Labrador Eskimos, expanded their economic horizon and greatly improved their health. To conclude this study of their fortunes under white rule we may appropriately add a few remarks about their education today.

At the date of confederation, 1 April 1949, Labrador north of Cape Harrison was being serviced by the four Moravian schools at Makkovik (boarding and day), Hopedale (day), Nain (boarding and day), and Hebron (day), all of which had operated for many years in those Eskimo or part-Eskimo communities, and by a fifth day school which a Pentecostal mission had opened early in the 1940's at the all-white settlement of Postville, near the mouth of the Kaipokok River. The Moravian schools, which accepted Eskimo, settler, and white children without discrimination, never used fixed textbooks or followed definite curricula because they had no intention of training the children for life outside of northern Labrador; they taught, instead, the main tenets of the Christian

¹Detailed statistics of northern Labrador's birth and death rates, infant and neo-natal mortality, the incidence of tuberculosis and other diseases, are not yet available, although the raw data from which they could be compiled is being preserved in the Grenfell hospital at North West River. At this time, therefore, it is not possible to compare them with corresponding rates among the Eskimos in the rest of Canada.

religion and only such further subjects as might help their pupils to cope with their home environment. This meant, in pedagogical terms, that they educated the children up to approximately grade 3 level, or, very rarely, to grade 4.

The Second World War and its aftermath, however, gravely disturbed the conditions in the old environment. It swept away the principal barriers that had kept northern Labrador isolated from the outer world and, slowly yet irresistibly, began to absorb its potential work force into a growing labour market. That market, the Moravians soon realized, ruthlessly turned away the ill-educated and the unskilled, or employed them for short periods only. Many settlers and Eskimos realized this also, and they desired for their children who were just entering the mission schools a better educational deal than fate had tossed on their own gaming-table. The Newfoundland government sympathized with them. As it reported at its Labrador Conference in 1956:

"The philosophy of education in respect to the Eskimo has undergone a complete change in recent years. As recently as 1948 the purpose was to educate these children to live as far as possible in the traditional manner of Eskimos but today the aim is to equip them to take their places as citizens, and to absorb them into our society without violence to the native culture. The Eskimo is undergoing transition from a hunting and fishing economy to a more industrialized one, and education must of necessity keep pace with these developments." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, p. 15).

In 1952, only four years before this conference, the Department of Education in St. John's had reclassified the schools in northern Labrador as "community" schools, to be administered by a district school-board under the chairmanship of the head of the Moravian mission. Thenceforward their pupils were obliged to use the same textbooks, and undergo the same examinations set by the Department of Education, as the pupils of "community" schools in other parts of the province. Attendance was compulsory for all children, irrespective of race or religion, between the ages of 7 and 14 (after 1959 until age 15); but of course many children entered school as before, at 5 years of age and remained beyond the age of 14 or 15. The North Labrador school board appointed all the teachers, who were expected to possess provincial teaching certificates, university degrees, or corresponding qualifications. They received the regular civil service salaries assigned to their grades and, in addition, a \$200 a year bonus to meet the higher cost of living in their district.

Under this new set-up the construction and maintenance of school buildings in Eskimo settlements passed from the Moravian mission to the Newfoundland government, which had already built a new school at Hopedale, where the Moravians had been teaching in their mission house. In 1956 it added some new rooms to the boarding-school at Nain; in 1959 it closed the school at Hebron when the inhabitants of that settlement migrated south; and in 1961 it built a new school at Makkovik. In all these schools English was now the sole language of instruction, even though about half the pupils came from homes that habitually used the Eskimo tongue. Only in Nain was it necessary to teach some of the beginners in their native tongue, so widely had the knowledge of English spread, and so quickly do little children learn to speak the language of their playmates.

Education in northern Labrador has leaped far ahead since this reorganization in the middle of the century. We can best follow its progress, perhaps, by comparing the situation in 1952 with that of the present year, 1963.

In 1952 it was difficult to find qualified teachers willing to accept positions in northern Labrador. The Hebron school was teaching up to grade 3 only, the Nain, Hopedale, and Makkovik schools to grade 5. The Newfoundland teacher of the 24 white children, ranging in ages from 7 to 15, who were attending the Pentecostal school in Kaipokok Bay claimed that she was carrying her pupils up to grade 7, while in Davis Inlet a Roman Catholic missionary was vainly trying to found a school for that locality's small Indian population. To the south, at North West River, an "amalgamated" (i.e. non-denominational) school on the grounds of the Grenfell hospital was accepting a few pupils from the outer coast of northern Labrador and offering them instruction up to grade 11, which qualified them to sit for the Junior Matriculation examination and enter Memorial University in St. John's: two years later, in 1955, 16 of its 47 pupils were Eskimos from the outer coast. Finally, at Happy Valley, the residential suburb of Goose Bay, a new, nearly all-white community school had integrated the children of a handful of Eskimos who were working on the nearby air-base. A suggestion that one or two Eskimo boys be sent to St. Anthony or St. John's for vocational training courses had been rejected on the ground that their knowledge of English was as yet inadequate; in any case no funds were then available to cover their expenses.

Today, eleven years later, qualified teachers are no longer in short supply. Eleven are stationed on the outer coast of northern Labrador, of whom one-half will probably serve for at least two years. The school at Nain, under a principal who graduated in modern languages from the University of Cambridge, England, offers its 128 pupils instruction from grade 1 to university entrance; its register lists the names of twelve children in grades 8 to 11. The schools at Hopedale and Makkovik carry their pupils to grade 9, very rarely to grade 10; but in both those settlements, and in Nain, the average pupil succeeds in reaching grade 8 before dropping out. The children of the eighteen Eskimo families who live in Happy Valley today can advance in their local school to grade 9, after which the Grenfell school at North West River will carry them on to grade 11 and junior matriculation provided it can find room for them in its dormitories and the government will contribute to the cost. Thus both North West River and Nain are valiantly struggling to supply the high-school needs of northern Labrador, very few of whose inhabitants either wish, or can afford, to send their young children to secondary schools outside the region.

There are no vocational schools in northern Labrador, and of course no university; most students from this region must take their advanced training in St. John's, the seat of a large vocational school and of the province's only university, Memorial. Neither institution provides tuition free, but the government offers liberal financial assistance to students at both places. At least eleven persons of largely Eskimo descent have undergone advanced training: three are now teachers, three nurses; one attended Memorial University during the winter of 1962-3, and one planned to enter the same university during the winter of 1963-4. Teachers in northern Labrador report that many more pupils would gladly continue their academic studies, or train for definite careers, after they pass out of the local schools, but their ambitions are thwarted because they must immediately contribute to the support of their families. No one in that region believes that pure or half-breed Eskimos are less intelligent than whites, although such a notion has long been current in Arctic Canada, even among some government administrators.

It may not be out of place, in concluding this brief account of present-day education in northern Labrador, to draw attention to an important change which may be looming dimly ahead.

Dr. W. A. Paddon, of the International Grenfell Association, is cherishing a rosy vision for his native community of North West River, and for the small school that nestles on his hospital grounds. He believes that the dry, healthy climate of the settlement, and its splendid location at the head of Hamilton Inlet, where it is easily accessible by sea for nearly six months of the year and by air at all seasons, eminently qualify it to become the site of a regional high school and vocational training centre that would serve both Hamilton Inlet and northern Labrador. Its present amalgamated school, stripped of its lower grades and organized as are other high schools in Newfoundland, would provide a dominantly white environment which teen-aged children from Eskimo and Indian homes in northern Labrador now lack, and would thus enable them to acquire the fluency in English and the invaluable background of general knowledge, as opposed to textbook learning, which they find so difficult to obtain in their present communities. Boys and girls who graduated from such a remodelled high school, or from a vocational training school associated with it, could then move directly into any part of Canada, and either continue their studies in some university or technical college, or else enter without further preparation into the nation's industrial and commercial life.

Economic forecasts for this part of Labrador seem to add colour to Dr. Paddon's vision, in so far at least as they encourage the hope that before many years roll by the Hamilton Inlet region may attract a much larger population than it supports today, and require in consequence a correspondingly large high school. The Mud Lake district at the head of the inlet, and the basins of the Hamilton and Naskaupi rivers that flow into it, carry heavy stands of spruce which, given favourable market conditions, could support a large timber industry or maintain a giant pulp-and-paper mill.¹ Fish and game exist in sufficient numbers to attract sportsmen: there are salmon at the entrance to Hamilton Inlet, and a fair-sized herd of caribou in the Mealy Mountains along its southern shore. North and west the country is highly mineralized: during the summer of 1963 geologists working for the British-Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco) in the district between Hopedale and Makkovik, a district already known for its uranium deposits, reported the presence of molybdenum and other sulphides. The Muskrat Falls on the lower Hamilton River, and the Grand Falls far up towards its source, are capable of yielding electricity to the magnitude of four million and half a million H.P. respectively as soon as eastern Canada can find ways of using such prodigious energy;² and it is only about 150 miles from the Grand Falls to tidewater at North West River or Goose Bay, along a watershed that should present no grave difficulties to the road-builders,

¹Cf. "Resources in the Lake Melville area are vast (100 million cords being a modest estimate) and constitute one of the largest untapped timber resources in all Canada. On the Kenamu and Kennemich Rivers timber reserves exceed the combined holdings of the two large paper companies operating in Newfoundland. It has been found that the weight of pulp per cord is much higher for Labrador spruce than for similar wood produced in Newfoundland and New Brunswick, and this factor ought to assist materially in off-setting higher costs of production, if any, by reason of the remoteness of the area." (Govt. of Newfoundland, Labrador Conference, 1956, p. 3).

²See Ross, 1963, pp. 75-87.

if I read correctly the air photos and the topographical maps. Such a road, indeed, might provide at some future date an Atlantic anchor for a northern transcontinental highway that would traverse the iron-ore region of central Labrador and the rich gold belts of northern Quebec and northern Ontario, following the divide that separates the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay from those that drain into the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence basin. Should the years ever bring about the completion of only the eastern part of that highway, the two tidewater settlements at the head of Hamilton Inlet, Goose Bay with its magnificent airport unaffected by frost and seldom obscured by fog, and scenic North West River only 25 miles away by road, could in their small way supplement and support one another as do Liverpool and Manchester; vacationists from the eastern United States, who today contentedly travel on the Canadian National Railways ferry boat from Lewisporte, on the east coast of Newfoundland, through the fiords of Labrador as far north as Nain, might be induced to take a circular tour which would carry them by air to the iron-ore city of Wabush in the heart of the Labrador Peninsula, thence by bus eastward through virgin country to the spectacular Grand Falls, and on to the ferry steamer awaiting them at the head of Hamilton Inlet.

It is tempting to let one's imagination soar, to envision a day, perhaps only half a century away, when Canada's population will have doubled its present number and men of affairs will be grasping at every natural resource that still remains unused. When and if that day does come the Hamilton Inlet region will probably play an important role as a second outlet for the wealth that lies still hidden in the "land that God allotted to Caine". And it might arrive very soon, if payable quantities of gold or other minerals suddenly come to light in Newfoundland-Labrador, and our financial tycoons engage in a race for their extraction.

Dr. Paddon's vision, therefore, holds a promise for the future, and educational authorities should keep it in the forefront of their minds.

"... We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. . . ."

Many Newfoundland ("Eskimo", "settler", and "white") parents in northern Labrador, and even perhaps some of us, might enter more contentedly upon that final sleep if in one way or another his vision were translated into reality.

The social and economic forces that operate in human society work elusively; if they conform to definite, unchanging laws man lacks the wit to comprehend them. Today the Newfoundland government, in blind submission to those forces, is administering northern Labrador through three departments, the Department of Health, the Department of Public Welfare, and the Department of Education. The International Grenfell Association, which has stationed Dr. W. A. Paddon at North West River to supervise all health activities along the northern Labrador coast, acts as the agent of the Department of Health. A senior officer of the Department of Public Welfare, W. G. Rockwood, serves as its Director of Northern Labrador Affairs: his staff at

Nain, Hopedale, and Makkovik handle most of the trade north of Cape Harrison, promote new activities wherever possible, and distribute the fishermen's unemployment insurance, government allowances, and relief. Chairman of the district school board is the head of the Moravian mission, Rev. F. W. Peacock; under authority from the Department of Education, he supervises the work of the school teachers. These three men collaborate closely with one another, keeping in touch by telephone: they co-drive the government chariot. All three have long experience in northern Labrador; and all three would unhesitatingly append their signatures to the policy statement outlined very simply by one of them more than ten years ago:

"I was impressed with the desire of the Eskimos to take on more and more of our civilization. Perhaps this may be aptly expressed by comparing him to a younger brother holding out his hand to us and saying 'May I come with you?' If we try to drive him back he will go on his own way, and perhaps be lost in the storm, and perish. On the other hand we may take him by the hand as an older brother ought to do, if he stumbles, as he is likely to do, we must patiently help him to his feet so that we may go forward into the future together." (Rockwood, 1951, p. 12).

In August, 1963, I travelled a night and a day from Goose Bay to Postville, at the mouth of the Kaipokok River, whose basin many Newfoundlanders consider the richest trapping area on Labrador's Atlantic coast; and en route I struck up a friendship with a leather-faced, weather-beaten passenger of perhaps 50. He was a short man, slight of build, but remarkably alert and quick-moving; his veins, I fancied, carried a trickle of native blood, for his restless blue-grey eyes seemed to mirror the flickering sunlight and shadow of the local forests. A professional trapper, he had not been "outside" for twenty-five years, but winter after winter had "worked" the valley of the Kaipokok, sometimes alone, more often with a partner, for "you never knew what is going to happen". His wife was dead, his only child, a girl of sixteen, was about to enter a nursing school; he had just said goodbye to her in Goose Bay. Now he was returning to Postville to put his boat in order and to settle in, before freeze-up, at his winter trapping-ground 30 or 40 miles upstream.

"What luck do you hope to have this winter?" I asked him.

"Oh, I don't know. I may trap forty or fifty foxes, and some otter, marten and lynx."

"What income will you make if the season proves good?"

"Oh, if the season is really good I may make as much as \$800. That is, if I get six or seven marten, and about the same number of otter and lynx. You never expect a big income; but you enjoy the life, and you're free. I have no boss but myself."

He shook my hand warmly before descending the gang-plank and cheerfully waved his arm when he reached the shore. As he turned away I thought to myself:

"Truly, there is hope for northern Labrador—and for humanity—as long as such men endure".

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