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Author: T. B. Murray

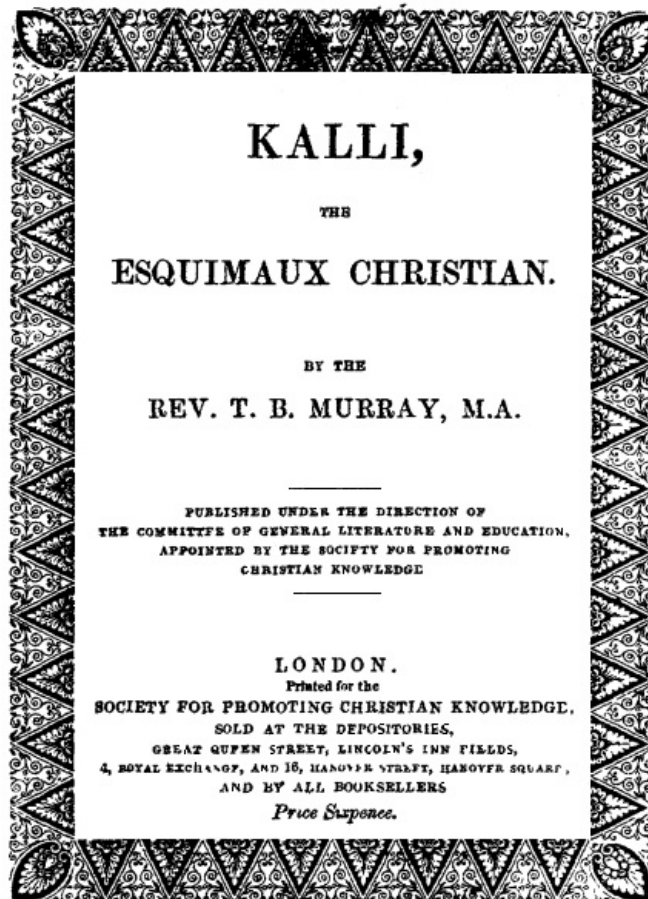
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Kalliherua

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KALLI,
THE
ESQUIMAUX CHRISTIAN.
A MEMOIR

BY THE REV. T. B. MURRAY, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "PITCAIRN, THE ISLAND, THE PEOPLE, AND
THE PASTOR"

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KALLIHIRUA THE ESQUIMAUX.

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KALLIHIRUA, notwithstanding the disadvantages of person (for he was plain, and short of stature, and *looked* what he was,—an Esquimaux), excited a feeling of interest and regard in those who were acquainted with his history, and who knew his docile mind, and the sweetness of his

disposition.

Compliance with the precept in the Old Testament, "Love ye the stranger ^[1]," becomes a delight as well as a duty in such an instance as that about to be recorded, especially when we consider the affecting injunction conveyed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares ^[2]."

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Her Majesty's Ship "Assistance"

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Erasmus Augustine York, whose native name was Kallihirua, was brought to England on board Her Majesty's ship "Assistance," Captain Erasmus Ommanney, in 1851. Captain Ommanney was second in command of the expedition under the orders of Captain Horatio Austin, C.B., which was dispatched in May, 1850, in search of the missing vessels of Sir John Franklin, the "Erebus" and "Terror". Franklin had quitted England on his perilous and fatal enterprise in May, 1845.

Much interest was attached to the young Esquimaux, who was considered to be about sixteen years of age in August, 1850. He was one of a tribe inhabiting the country in the vicinity of Wolstenholme Sound, at the head of Baffin's Bay, in 76° 3' north latitude, the nearest residents to the North Pole of any human beings known to exist on the globe. He was the only person ever brought to this country from so high a northern latitude. His tribe was met with by the late Sir John Ross, during his voyage in 1818, and was by him called the Arctic Highlanders.

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Cape York

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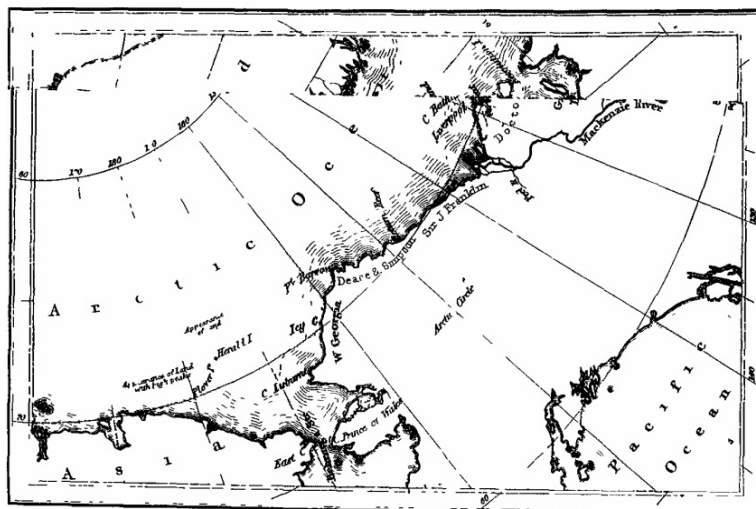
It appears that, when the expedition under Captain Austin's command was passing Cape York, in August, 1850, after its release from the ice in Melville Bay, natives were seen from the "Assistance". Captain Ommanney went with the "Intrepid" (one of the vessels comprising the expedition) to communicate with them, when it was ascertained that H.M.S., "North Star," had passed the winter in the neighbourhood. The fate of this vessel was then a matter of anxiety, as by her instructions she had been cautioned to avoid passing the winter in those regions. The tribe thus discovered consisted of only three families, residing in their summer huts at Cape York. As no steamer had ever before found its way to these seas, it was interesting to watch the impression upon the singular beings now visited, when they descended into the engine-room. The large furnaces and machinery astonished them. The latter, on being put in motion, made them take to their heels with fright, and they ran out of the engine-room on deck as fast as they could.

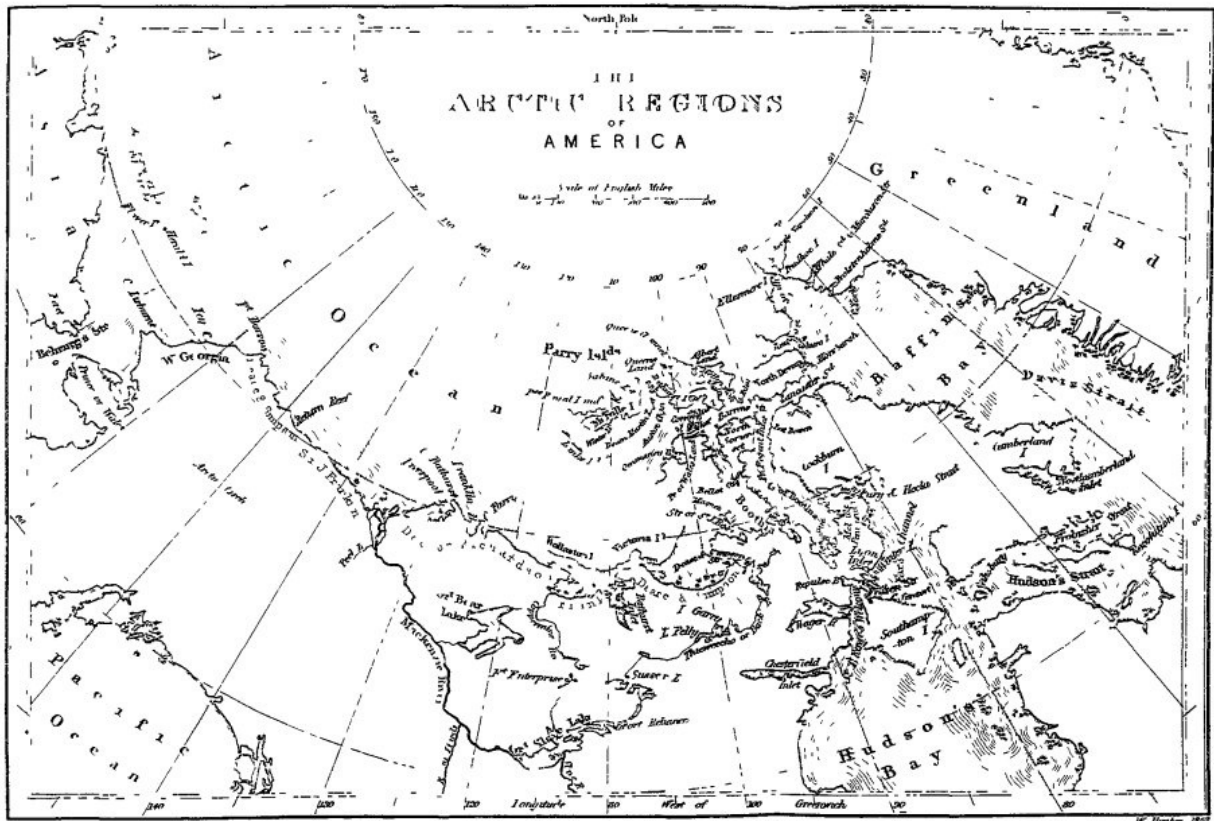
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Kallihirua on board the "Assistance"

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It was after this first interview that the report was raised of the massacre of two ships' crews in 1846. Captain Ommanney, accompanied by Captain Penny, with his interpreter, immediately returned to Cape York, and had a long interview with the natives. They most emphatically denied the whole statement, adding, that no ship had ever been on their coasts except the "North Star," and passing whalers. Then it was, that Kallihirua consented to show Captain Ommanney where the "North Star" had wintered, and to join the ship, for the purpose of being useful as an interpreter, in the event of their meeting with any natives during the search for the missing expedition under Sir John Franklin. Parting (for awhile, as he supposed) with his immediate relatives, and with the only people whom he knew on earth, he threw himself into the hands of strangers in perfect confidence. Having arrived on board the "Assistance," he put off his rough native costume, submitted to the process of a good washing, and, being soon clad in ordinary European clothing, which was cheerfully contributed by the officers, the young Esquimaux with much intelligence performed the duty of pilot to the place where the "North Star" had wintered.





[\[Go to Illustrations\]](#) London. Published by the Society for protecting Christian Knowledge.

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The Esquimaux Graves

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On entering Wolstenholme Sound [3], Kallihirua, or, as he was familiarly called, KALLI, directed Captain Ommanney and the officers to the late winter-station of his tribe, the spot having been abandoned in consequence of some epidemic, probably influenza, which had carried off several persons. On entering the huts, a most distressing sight presented itself. A heap of dead bodies, about seven, in a state of decomposition, lay, one over the other, clad in their skin-clothing, as if suddenly cut off by the hand of death. The survivors, from fear of infection, had left the remains of their relatives unburied. It was an affecting scene in such a remote and desolate region, separated from all communication with the human race. Near the huts was the burial-ground, with several well-formed graves of heaps of stones. On one lay a spear, which one of the officers of the "Assistance" took up, to bring away. Some of the crew were examining the graves to see whether they contained any of our missing countrymen. Seeing this, Kalli ran up to the officer, and, with tears and entreaties, as well as he could make himself understood, begged him and the men to desist from the work of desecration.

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Kallihirua's Family

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Poor Kalli's lamentations were quite heartrending. His feelings were, of course, respected, the graves were at once built up again, and the spear replaced. Captain Ommanney learnt afterwards from Kalli, that it was his father's grave, over which the spear had been placed by friends of the deceased. They have a tradition that in a future state the means of hunting are still required, and, because in this world the search of food is the chief object of life, the hunting-lance is deposited on the grave.

The young stranger subsequently lived on board the "Assistance". He was placed under the care of the serjeant of Marines, who instructed Kalli in the rudiments of reading and writing, and to whom he became much attached. By his amiable disposition he made himself welcome and agreeable to all the expedition, and, as, in consequence of the state of the ice, no opportunity was offered of landing him on his native shores, on the return of the vessel past York Inlet, he was brought to England. The leaders of the expedition conferred the surname of York upon him, from the locality in which he was found. To this the name of Erasmus was prefixed, after that of the gallant Captain Ommanney.

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Lines on "Kallihirua in the Ship"

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Kalli was a twin. His father, whose grave has been mentioned, had been dead for some years, but he had a mother living, of whom he often spoke with duty and affection. His father's name was Kirshung-oak. His mother's Sa-toor-ney. He had two sisters living with their mother. A touching circumstance, connected with his first introduction to our countrymen, has been adverted to, which gave rise to the following lines by the writer of this memoir. They were published in the "Gospel Missionary," in the year of the arrival of Kallihirua, and are supposed to be spoken by a British sailor on board the "Assistance"—

KALLI IN THE SHIP

A frost, like iron, held the air,
A calm was on the sea,
But fields of ice were spreading there,
And closing on our lee.

Our ship half bound, as if aground,
Was scarcely seen to go.
All hands on deck were gather'd round
The little ESQUIMAUX.

For he had come amongst our crew,
A week or so before,
And now we knew not what to do
To put him safe ashore.

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Poor lad, he strain'd his eyes in vain,
Till tears began to come,
And tried if he could see again
His mother and his home.

The Captain then saw through his glass
The Inlet, and the Bay,
But floes of ice, as green as grass,
And icebergs block'd the way.

"Up with the sail!—the wind's awake!"
Hark to the Captain's call,
"I see, my boys, we shall not make
York Inlet, after all."

We look'd upon the swarthy lad,
Then look'd upon each other,
And all were sure that he was sad
With thinking of his mother.

We cheer'd him up, and soon he grew
So useful and so kind,
The crew were glad, and Kalli too,
He was not left behind.

He learn'd to make the best of it,
And now, by time and care,
They tell us he can read a bit,
And say an easy prayer.

O Kalli, fail not, day by day,
To kneel to God above;
Then He will hear you when you pray,
And guard you with his love.

Go on, my friend, in years and grace,
Your precious time employ,
And you will pass, in wisdom's race,
The idle English boy.

Nay, if you learn and practise too
The lessons of your youth,
Some heathen tribes may gain from you
The light of Gospel truth.

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Description of the Esquimaux

It may here be interesting to say a few words respecting the people who inhabit the gloomy abodes whence Kallihirua came, and where he had passed the greater part of his life.



ENTRANCE TO A SNOW-HUT

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Admiral Beechey's Account

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"The characteristic features of the Esquimaux," says Admiral Beechey, "are large fat round faces, high cheek-bones, small hazel eyes, eyebrows slanting like the Chinese, and wide mouths." They are generally under five feet high, and have brown complexions. Beechey, in his Narrative of a Voyage to Behring's Strait, &c., in H.M.S. "Blossom," gave a curious and particular description of the habits and customs of the Esquimaux, their wretched hovels, or "yourts," snow-dwellings, and underground huts, and the general want of cleanliness in their persons and dwellings.

Speaking of a tribe which he visited, he says, "We found them very honest, extremely good-natured and friendly. Their tents were constructed of skins, loosely stretched over a few spars of drift-wood, and were neither wind nor water tight. The tents were, as usual, filthy, but suitable to the taste of their inhabitants, who no doubt saw nothing in them that was revolting. The natives testified much pleasure at our visit, and placed before us several dishes, amongst which were two of their choicest,—the entrails of a fine seal, and a bowl of coagulated blood. But desirous as we were to oblige them, there was not one of our party that could be induced to partake of their hospitality. Seeing our reluctance, they tried us with another dish, consisting of the raw flesh of the narwhal, nicely cut into lumps, with an equal distribution of black and white fat, but they were not more successful here than at first."

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The Seal

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The seal's flesh supplies the natives with their most palatable and substantial food, which however has a fishy flavour, as the creatures feed chiefly on fish. Seals are sometimes taken on land, when surprised basking in the sun, with their young. As soon as they are alarmed by the sight of their enemies, they scuttle away, and make for the sea ^[4]. It is on the great deep that the Esquimaux, driven by hunger, chiefly seeks his precarious food. In his light canoe, which is made of seal-skins stretched over a slight framework of wood, he hunts, in all weathers, for his prey, especially for the much-prized Narwhal.

There, tumbling in their seal-skin boat,
Fearless, the hungry fishers float,
And from the teeming seas supply
The food their niggard plains deny.

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The Narwhal

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ESQUIMAUX STRIKING A NARWHAL

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[Pg 19] The same intrepid boldness is shown in their chase of the reindeer, the bear, and the fox. Over the boundless deserts of snow they are borne rapidly along by their faithful dogs, which are harnessed to a sledge, six or seven to the team, and which scamper away, often in seeming confusion, but with a precision of aim and object which is perfectly surprising. No country presents a finer specimen of that honest, affectionate, much-enduring creature, the dog. Kindness to animals is always praiseworthy, and to the honour of the Esquimaux women it must be said, that they are remarked for their humane treatment of these dogs. They take care of them when they are ill, and use them better than the men do. Still under blows and hard usage the dogs are faithful, and willing to labour.

Sir W. Edward Parry's Account

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[Pg 20] The Esquimaux sometimes use slabs of ice for the walls of their huts, cementing them together with snow and water. Kennels for their dogs are also made of the same material. The late Admiral Sir W. Edward Parry, in the course of a voyage commenced in May, 1821, the chief object of which was the discovery of the North-West passage, availed himself of a winter's imprisonment in the ice, to observe and record the ways and manners of the Esquimaux, whose guest he was. His account is on the whole satisfactory. "I can safely affirm," said he, "that, whilst thus lodged beneath their roof, I know no people whom I would more confidently trust, as respects either my person or my property, than the Esquimaux."

He also described their domestic character. The affection of the parents towards their children showed itself in a thousand ways, and the children on their part have so much gentleness and docility as to render any kind of chastisement unnecessary. Even from their earliest infancy, they are said to possess that quietness of disposition, gentleness of demeanour, and uncommon evenness of temper, for which in more mature age they are for the most part distinguished. Disobedience is scarcely ever known; a word or even a look from a parent is enough.

These traits, added to industry and endurance of various kinds of difficulty, form the fair side of the picture, such as that amiable and distinguished officer was fond of presenting. The exhibition of these features of character was probably called forth, in a great degree, by his own kindness and good management, whilst living among them.

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Need of Christian Instruction

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But doubtless there are other and less favourable points of view in which these people must be sometimes considered. At all events, it is sad to learn, from the silence of some travellers, and the actual statements of others, that the Esquimaux do not appear to have any idea of the existence of a Supreme Being, or to hold any notion of religion. Separated from the whole civilized world, and frequently finding it a struggle to live, even with the help of their faithful dogs, they are objects of pity and concern, rather than of sanguine hope and expectation to the Christian mind. But were an opportunity to occur of carrying the Gospel to their snow-clad land, there is little doubt that the remark of Parry, applied to an individual of one of their tribes, might be used of all: "On dispositions thus naturally charitable, what might not Christian education, and Christian principles effect?"

Kallihirua's Tribe

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Certainly, the instance now before the reader affords a good illustration of this view of the Esquimaux character. It is Captain Ommanney's opinion that Kallihirua's tribe may be regarded as a remnant of the pure race which, no doubt, in ages past migrated from Asia along the coasts of the Parry Group of Islands and Barrow's Straits. The features, and formation of skull, bespeak Tartar extraction. "Their isolated position," he adds, "being far north of the Danish settlements in Greenland, and far removed from the American continent, has kept them uncontaminated with any of the various mixed breeds of which the Esquimaux in those regions must be composed."

Kallihirua in England

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Captain Ommanney, soon after his arrival in England, brought young Kallihirua to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. At that time he could only speak a few words, such as "Ship," "Sea," "Very sick;" "England, things very nice," "Captain very good". From his language and gesture it was gathered, that he had suffered much from sea-sickness on the voyage; that he had been treated with the utmost care and kindness on board, and that he was highly pleased with English fare, and with the reception which he had met with in this country.

His manners were so gentle, and even polite, without any seeming effort, as to excite astonishment in those who knew how short a time he had enjoyed the advantages of education. It was clear that great pains had been taken with him on board the "Assistance," where his great study had been to adapt himself to the habits and manners of those among whom his lot was so singularly cast. "In this," says Captain Ommanney, "he succeeded; for people were surprised at his good address, when he reached England."

His Fondness for Prints and Drawings

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He was always much pleased with the company of young people, and appeared quite at home with them. Some books and prints were placed in the hands of the youth, and he expressed the greatest delight in seeing views of ships in the ice, and the figure of an Esquimaux watching for a seal. After gazing for a few moments at the latter, he uttered a cry of pleasure, and said, "This one of my people!" It seemed as if, for the time, he had been carried back to his own land, which, however homely, was once his home. Had any proof been wanting of the faithfulness of the representation, his hearty and joyous approval of it would have afforded sufficient evidence of its accuracy.

The reader shall see the engraving of the lonely seal-hunter which so much pleased poor Kalli.

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Seal Hunter

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In this situation, we are told, a man will sit quietly for ten or twelve hours together, at a temperature of thirty or forty degrees below zero, watching for the opportunity of killing and taking the seal, which is supposed to be at work making its hole beneath in the ice. The Esquimaux, partly sheltered from the "winter's wind," and fast-falling snow, by a snow-wall, has got his spear and lines ready, and he has tied his knees together, to prevent his disturbing the seal by making the slightest noise.

Sights in England

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Kalli, whilst in London, on a visit to the author, was taken to the British Museum. With some of the objects there he was much gratified. The antiquities, sculpture, and specimens of art and science, had not such charms in his sight as had the life-like forms of stuffed animals in that great national collection. With the seals, reindeer, and a gigantic walrus, with bright glass eyes, he was especially struck and amused, lingering for some time in the attractive apartment which contained them.

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He had now and then much to bear from rudeness and incivility on the part of some thoughtless persons, who derided his personal appearance, though they were not successful in putting him out of temper. The author recollects an instance of this in a street in London. He was walking with Kalli, when two young men, who ought to have known better, stared at the youth in passing, and laughed in his face: then presently turning round, they said, as they pointed at him, "There goes a Chinese!" He merely looked up, smiling, as if at their ignorance, and want of proper feeling.

It has been observed of the people of his nation, that they evince little or no surprise or excitement at such things as occasion admiration in others. When Kalli first came up the river Thames with Captain Ommanney, and travelled from Woolwich by the railway, thence proceeding through the wonderful thoroughfare from London Bridge to the West End of the town, passing St. Paul's Cathedral, and Charing Cross, he merely said, *It was all very good.*

"I took him with me," said the Captain, "to the Great Exhibition, the Crystal Palace, in Hyde Park. He beheld all the treasures around him with great coolness, and only expressed his wonder at the vast multitude of people."

Great Exhibition of 1851

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This is natural enough. Many of our readers may recall the feelings of astonishment with which they viewed that large assemblage. On one of the shilling days, in October, 1851, ninety-two thousand human beings were collected together in the Crystal Palace at one time ^[5]. The force of contrast could perhaps go no further than in this instance. A young stranger who, in his own country, in a space of hundreds of miles around him, had only three families (probably twelve persons) to count, makes one of a multitude of more than ninety thousand of his fellow-creatures, in a building of glass, covering only eighteen acres of ground!

He was taken to see the Horse Guards' Stables. On seeing a trooper mount his charger, (both being fully accoutred,) Kalli was puzzled. He could not account for the perfect order and discipline of the animal, and the mutual fitness of the man and his horse, the one for the other.

St. Augustine's College

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In November, 1851, Kallihirua was placed, by direction of the Lords of the Admiralty, at the suggestion of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in the Missionary College of St. Augustine's, at Canterbury. This college, built on the site of the ancient monastery of St. Augustine, was established in 1848, for the reception of students intended for the work of the sacred Ministry in the colonies and dependencies of the British Empire, as well as among the heathen. The College, to which the Queen gave a charter of incorporation, owes its origin chiefly to the munificence of A. J. B. Beresford Hope, Esq., who purchased the ground, and gave the site. The College Chapel was consecrated on the morning of St. Peter's Day, June 29th, 1848, when seven prelates, with the Archbishop of Canterbury at their head, were present.

College Studies

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Kallihirua remained a student of the College, attending to the instruction given him, and conducting himself well and properly in all respects. Under the kind auspices of the Rev. H. Bailey, the learned and judicious Warden of the College, who took the greatest interest in him, he availed himself, as far as his powers admitted, of the advantages of the institution. He appeared rightly to understand and value the blessings of education in a civilized community, and received with reverence the simple and saving truths of the Gospel. It was hoped, that, should he willingly and intelligently embrace the Christian faith, he might at no distant period convey the "glad tidings of good things" as a missionary or catechist to his own benighted friends and countrymen.

In September, 1852, the Warden, in a letter, informed the author, that Kallihirua had been in good health all the summer. "We consider him," said he, "a youth of intelligence, and quick observation. His progress in reading is necessarily slow, though he can manage words of four or five letters, he is fond of writing, and succeeds very well. He is very devout at prayers, and attentive to the religious instruction given him. I think he will one day be of essential use to a

missionary in some northern region. He is grateful to you for your kind offer of books, and will write a letter of acknowledgment."

His Reverence for Sacred Places

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It was but a short time after his settling at St. Augustine's College, that one of the students took him to see Canterbury Cathedral. The reverent regard with which he had been taught to look upon a church, as a place where prayer was made to God, manifested itself in his inquiry, when entering the nave, "Whether he might cough there?" This tendency to cough, arising from an ailment, the seeds of which had probably been sown long before, was often observable; and he was very susceptible of cold.

Illness from Changes in the Weather

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In the spring of 1853 he suffered much from the variableness of the season. The mode in which he described his state to a friend is very simple and affecting. The original letter, which was entirely his own, both in composition and handwriting, is here copied verbatim. It commences with his signature:—

"E. YORK, St. Augustine's College. April, 1853.

"My dear Sir,

"I am very glad to tell, How do you do, Sir?
I been England, long time none very well. Long time none very well. Very bad weather. I know very well, very bad cough. I very sorry, very bad weather, dreadful. Country very difference. Another day cold. Another day wet, I miserable.

"Another summer come. Very glad. Great many trees. Many wood. Summer beautiful, country Canterbury."

Should any reader be disposed to look with the smile of a critic on this humble but genuine effort, let him bear in mind the difficulties which poor *English* adults have to encounter in learning to read and write; and then let him judge of the obstacles in the way of one whose existence had been spent with his native tribe, on fields of ice, and in dark snow-huts.

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In all attacks of illness he was attended with assiduous kindness by Mr. Hallowes, of Canterbury, the skilful surgeon employed by the College, who showed much hospitality to Kalli. One of Mr. Hallowes' family circle on Christmas-day was always the good-humoured broad-faced Esquimaux. At their juvenile parties, the youth joined cheerfully in the sports of the children, and he sometimes sung them some of the wild and plaintive airs peculiar to his tribe.

It is believed that Kalli never omitted his morning and evening prayers by his bed-side, and his utterance was full of devout earnestness. Mr. Bailey remembers once travelling with him to Deal, and while in the railway carriage, the youth quietly took out of his pocket a little book, which was afterwards found to be a collection of texts for each day in the year. For some time he was reading thoughtfully the text for the day. No notice was taken of this to him; and as for himself, never perhaps was any one more free from the least approach to ostentation.

Greenland-Esquimaux Vocabulary

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In the year 1853, Kalli rendered essential Service in the preparation of a Greenland Esquimaux Vocabulary, for the use of the Arctic Expedition of that year. The work was printed by direction of the Lords of the Admiralty, with a short Preface acknowledging the advantage of his assistance. Captain Washington, R.N., Hydrographer of the Admiralty, says in the Preface, "Every word has now been revised from the lips of a native. In the Midsummer vacation in 1852 Kallihirua passed some days with me, and we went partly over the Vocabulary. I found him intelligent, speaking English very fairly, docile and imitative, his great pleasure appearing to be a pencil and paper, with which he drew animals and ships. At the Christmas holidays, we revised more of the Vocabulary, &c."

A member of the Expedition afterwards visited St. Augustine's College and stated that the Vocabulary had been found to be of much service.

Visit to Kalli at College

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The writer of this Memoir well recollects the circumstances of a visit which he paid with his

family to St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, on a bright day, in August, 1853, when (it being the vacation) only three students remained in residence. These were 1. Kallihirua, 2. a young Hindoo by name Mark Pitamber Paul, and 3. Lambert McKenzie, a youth of colour, a native of Africa, sent to the College by the Bishop of Guiana. Kalli, who was the only one of these personally known to the author, did not at first appear. He had strolled out to witness a cricket-match in a field near Canterbury, but Blunsom, the College porter, said that he had promised to return by two o'clock, and that he was very punctual.

It is here due both to Blunsom and his wife, to say that they were most kind friends to Kalli, watching over him with the most thoughtful attention, and the tenderest care throughout.

As the Cathedral clock struck two, Kalli entered the College-gates. With hair black as the raven's wing, and eyes sparkling with good-humour, he made his appearance; and soon showed a desire to do the honours of the College. His dress was neat, like that of a young English gentleman, and he had a gaiety of look and manner, but far removed from foppery of apparel or demeanour. With true politeness—that of the heart—he accompanied the visitors over the Library, the Chapel, the Common Hall and the Dormitories of the College; each student having a small bed-room and study to himself.

His Amusements and Occupations

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Kalli took great pleasure in exhibiting the carpenter's shop, a spacious crypt below the Library. Attention was there called to the wooden frame of a small house, in the construction of which, it appeared, he had borne a part. He said, when asked, that he should most probably find the knowledge of carpentering valuable some day, and that he should like to teach his countrymen the many good and useful things which he had learned in his College. He spoke little, and was evidently conscious of his imperfect pronunciation, but in answer to a question on the subject, he said he hoped to tell his people about religion, and the truths of the Gospel which he had been taught in England.

His amusements were of a quiet and innocent kind. He made small models of his country sledges, one of which, a very creditable performance, is in the Museum in the College Library, and a rough rustic chair, now in the College garden, is of his manufacture. He was fond of drawing ships, and figures of the Seal, the Walrus, the Reindeer, the Esquimaux Dog, and other objects familiar to him in the Arctic regions.



WALRUS AND SEAL

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His sketches of animals and ships were very correct, and he used sometimes to draw them for the amusement of children.

When on board the "Assistance," he made a good sketch of the coast line of the region which his tribe frequented, from Cape York to Smith's Sound.

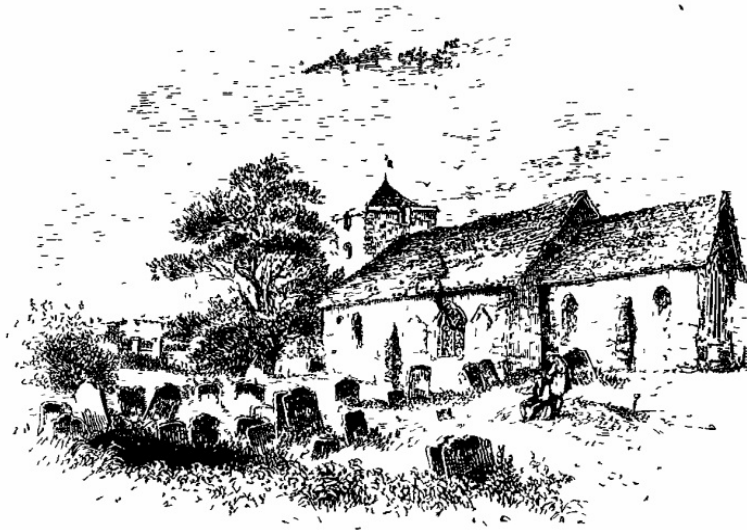
The use which he made of the needle must not be forgotten. For a year and a half, whilst at Canterbury, he went regularly for five hours a day to a tailor to learn the trade, and was found very handy with his needle. He proved to be of much use in the ordinary work of the trade.

Baptism of Kallihirua

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We now come to an important event in the history of Kallihirua; his Baptism, which took place on Advent Sunday, Nov. 27th, 1853, in St. Martin's Church, near Canterbury. "The visitors present on the occasion," said an eye-witness [6], "were, the Rev. John Philip Gell (late Warden of Christ's College, Tasmania), accompanied by Mrs. Gell, daughter of the late Sir John Franklin; Captain Erasmus Ommanney, R.N. (who brought Kallihirua to England), and Mrs. Ommanney, Captain Washington, R.N., of the Admiralty, and the Rev. W. T. Bullock. The Rev. T. B. Murray, Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, who had been invited, was, in consequence of engagements in London, unfortunately unable to be present".

[Transcriber's Note: there is a jump here in page numbers from 36 to 39]



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[Pg 39] "Towards three o'clock in the afternoon, small parties began to issue from the College gateway in the direction of St. Martin's,—that picturesque little church, looking from its calm hill-side over the broad Stour valley, and over the cathedral and the steeples of the town half emerging from the smoke. In the interior of this oldest of the English churches there is an ancient font, which stands upon the spot (if it be not the very font itself), where King Ethelbert, the firstfruits of the Anglo-Saxon race, was baptized more than twelve hundred and fifty years ago by Augustine.

"In the enclosure round this font sat Kallihirua, and his 'chosen witnesses' Captain Ommanney, and the Subwarden, Mrs. Bailey, and Mrs. Gell. The remainder of the church was quite filled with an attentive and apparently deeply-interested congregation, many of them of the poorer class to whom Kalli is well known either by face (as indeed he could not well fail to be), or as the comrade of their children in the spelling-class at school.

[Pg 40] "After the Second Lesson, the Warden proceeded to the font, and the Baptismal Service commenced. Kallihirua, as an adult, made the responses for himself, and in a clear firm tone, which seemed to intimate that he had made his choice for once and for ever, that he had cast in his lot with us, and taken our people for his people, and our God for his God, and felt with an intelligent appreciation the privilege of that new brotherhood into which he was admitted.

"May his admission within the pale of Christ's holy Church be, (as was the prayer of many, beyond the walls of St. Martin's, on that day,) both to himself and to many of his race, an event pregnant of eternal issues! 'May the fulness of God's blessing,' to use the words of one of our most valued friends, 'rest upon it, and make it the first streak of a clear and steady light, shining from St. Augustine's into the far North.' The Christian names added to his original Esquimaux name, were 'Erasmus,' after Captain Ommanney, and 'Augustine,' in remembrance of the College.

[Pg 41] "The service being concluded, an excellent sermon was preached by the Rev. J. P. Gell, on the text, Isaiah lxxv. 1: 'I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.' Afterwards the same kind friend attended our Sunday evening meeting in the Warden's house, and gave us some interesting details of the missionary work (in which he had himself borne a part) in Van Diemen's Land. The drift of his remarks was to give encouragement to the principle of steady faithful persevering energy, undamped by early difficulties, and not impatient of the day of small things; and to show by convincing examples (especially that of Mr. Davis, a devoted missionary in that country) how such conduct is sure in the end to meet with a success of the soundest and most permanent kind, because founded on the spontaneous sympathy of the people, and on the blessings of the poor, 'not loud but deep.'

"Kallihirua had received a very handsome present in the shape of a beautifully bound Bible and Prayer Book, as a baptismal gift from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge."

It may be interesting to add, that the water used in the baptism was from the river Jordan, and that it had been brought from thence by Captain Ommanney himself.

[Pg 42] In the *Gospel Missionary* for February, 1854, was a pleasing description of the Baptism of Kallihirua: and this was the sound and practical conclusion:—

"Before we conclude, we may, perhaps, express the hope that our young friends will sometimes think kindly of their new Christian brother, ERASMUS AUGUSTINE KALLIHIRUA, and that they will pray that God will bless him, and make him to advance more and more in the knowledge and the love of His dear Son JESUS CHRIST. When they thus think of him who is now made their own brother by baptism, and is thus brought into the family of CHRIST's people, let them learn to value the good things which GOD has given *them* in such rich abundance. Let them be thankful that they were born in a Christian country, in which they have been taught from children to know the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS."

Stanzas by the Warden

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The following stanzas, written by the Warden on the occasion of the baptism, will be read with pleasure, especially by those who are aware how faithfully the amiable writer of them fulfilled his part in preparing Kallihirua, not only for the right performance of such duties as seemed to await him in life, but (what was far more important) for an early death.

THE BAPTISM OF KALLIHIRUA

"I WILL TAKE YOU ONE OF A CITY, AND TWO OF A FAMILY, AND I WILL BRING YOU TO ZION."—Jer. iii. 14.

Far through the icy bounds
Of Greenland's barren shore,
At duty's call, on mercy sent,
The brave are gone before.

Beyond the haunts of men
They urge their tedious way,
When lo! a wandering tribe appears
By yonder northern bay.

But who so wild, so lost
In ignorance and sin!
No God they know, no Saviour own,
Is there a soul to win?

Yes, in that heathen race
One heart at least is found
That yearns for better things, by grace
In unseen fetters bound.

Warm is the Christian's heart,
Outstretch'd the Christian's hand,
"Assistance" lends her friendly aid
To reach a Christian land.

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In this our calm retreat
He finds a peaceful home,
Is taught such learning as is meet,
In store for years to come.

He learns to know and love
His Saviour and his God,
And now he is a brother dear,
By faith in Jesu's blood.

O gracious Spirit! hear
Our prayer with one accord;
And train this new-born Christian heart
In thy most holy Word.

Have pity on his race!
And bring them still to see
Their wretched state, and teach them all
The Father, Son, and Thee!

To God the Father, Son,
And Spirit, glory be,
Who call'd, and saved, and sanctifies,
The co-eternal Three!

Some of these verses were sung in the College Chapel on the evening of Advent Sunday, 1853.

Kalli at St. John's Newfoundland

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The time having now arrived at which, according to the opinion of the Bishop of Newfoundland, and the Warden of St. Augustine's, the qualifications of Kallihirua might be turned to some account, as an aid to missionaries in their efforts among the Esquimaux of Labrador, he left England, in the autumn of the year 1855, for further training at St. John's, Newfoundland. This step was taken at the expense of the Admiralty, who agreed to allow him £25 a year for three years.

The following notice of his character appeared in the 'Occasional Paper,' published in St. Augustine's College at the time of his removal to Newfoundland. At every step of his short but remarkable course, such willing testimony always awaited him.

"Kallihirua, whose name is known as widely as that of his College, has arrived at another crisis in his eventful history. Having resided more than three years in College, he has been transferred to the experienced care of the Bishop of Newfoundland, with the view to his probable usefulness among the Esquimaux of Labrador. If integrity of moral principle, gentleness of spirit, docility of manners, willingness to be useful, and true Christian politeness, are essential requisites in a Missionary, then is Kallihirua certain to fill his place well, if only the right place is found for him."

Kalli arrived in St John's, Newfoundland, on the 2nd October, 1855, and, on the following day, wrote a letter to Captain Ommanney, telling him that he had suffered on the voyage from the motion of the vessel, which had caused severe headaches. He added, "St John's puts me in mind of my own country. I have already found a great number of kind friends, and feel so happy."

He was immediately admitted into the College of the Theological Institution for further training, and it was the Bishop's intention to have taken him in the summer of 1856 in the Church-ship to the coast of Labrador, with the view particularly of comparing his language with that of the Esquimaux on the American continent, who are included under the government, and consequently in the diocese, of Newfoundland.

That he was not unfitted for this task, appears from a passage in the preface to the Greenland-Esquimaux Vocabulary. Captain Washington observes: "On comparing the Labrador with the Greenland dialect of the Esquimaux, it was found that nearly one-half the words given by Mr. Platon were similar to the former. On going over the vocabulary with Kallihirua, generally speaking he recognized the Greenland word. When he did not do so, the Labrador was mentioned, which, in most cases, he caught at directly. These words have been added. There would thus appear to be even a greater degree of similarity between the Labrador and Greenland dialects than might have been expected, and it is evident that the Greenland dialect, as Mr. Platon states, is spoken by all the Esquimaux to the head of Baffin's Bay."

Kalli had some conversation with a Moravian Missionary from Labrador. The language was in most respects similar, though there was evidently a difficulty in understanding each other.

Death of Archdeacon Bridge

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It may be mentioned, as a circumstance of melancholy interest, that, besides Kallihirua, the late Venerable T. F. H. Bridge, Archdeacon of Newfoundland, was to have accompanied and assisted the Bishop in this voyage, which it was proposed should have extended to the Moravian settlement. Moravian Missions have been established in Greenland for more than a century. But the expedition contemplated by the Bishop was more particularly designed to open Sandwich and Esquimaux Bays to the much-needed Missionary.

These projects it was determined, in the good providence of God, were not to be realized. Archdeacon Bridge was prematurely carried off, in the midst of his zealous and successful labours, at the end of February, 1856. "He worked himself to death!" said the Bishop. "His death was felt in the colony as a public loss."

Intelligence from Newfoundland

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The author of this memoir had written to Kallihirua, whilst he was at St. Augustine's, and had received from him a letter shortly, and plainly expressed, which the Warden stated to have been composed and written by the youth himself, and which proved how anxious he was to do well that which was given him to do. The author afterwards often thought of the amiable Kalli, and was in hopes of soon hearing from him in his new abode in Newfoundland. But man proposeth, and God disposeth. A St. John's paper, *The Newfoundland Express*, taken up casually in July, 1856, conveyed the intelligence that Kallihirua had passed away from this busy anxious world to another, and, we humbly and reasonably hope, a better and happier.

A melancholy interest generally attaches to the history of individuals dying in a foreign and strange land, far from friends and home. The separation from all they have known and loved is, in their case, so entire, the change of their circumstances, habits, and associations, so great, that such a dispensation specially appeals to the sympathy of all Christian hearts.

Allusion to Prince Le Boo

Feelings of this kind are excited by the narrative of the early death of Prince Le Boo, a youthful native of the Pelew Islands, who was brought over to this country in July, 1784, and who, in the spring-time of life, after little more than five months' stay in England, fell a victim, to the small pox. In the memoir of that young prince, who died at Rotherhithe, and was buried in the churchyard there, in December, 1784, there are some points of resemblance to the case under our notice. The natural and unforced politeness of the youth, his aptness at conforming, in all proper things, to the habits and customs of those to whose hospitality he was intrusted; his warm and single-hearted affection for such persons, in whatever station, as showed him kind offices, his desire for mental improvement; his resignation and submission in his last illness to the will of God, these are features which remind us of the subject of our present memoir. Many are the tears which have fallen over the story of the young and amiable Prince Le Boo.

Accounts from St. John's

But to resume the thread of the narrative respecting Kalli. During the winter of 1855 and 1856 he had suffered frequently from cough, and shown other signs of constitutional weakness. His cheerfulness, however, had seldom failed him; his readiness to please, and be pleased, to oblige, and be obliged, never. In letters which he sent to friends in England, he always spoke with gratitude of the kindness shown him, and of being very happy.

Letter from Kalli

The following letter to Mr. Blunsom, who, as it will have been seen, had treated him with constant kindness, and done him much good service, will be read with interest.

"St John's College, Newfoundland,
January 7, 1856.

"I received your kind letter by the December mail, and am very sorry to hear of your illness. The weather here is very cold, I feel it more than at Cape York. I have begun to skate, and find it a pleasant amusement. There is a lake a little distance from the College, called, 'Quidi Vidi,' on which we practise. The Bishop is very kind and good to me. College here is not so large and fine a place as St. Augustine's: nor are there so many students. I hope that all my kind friends at Canterbury are quite well. Please remember me kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Gipps, and all at St. Augustine's. With kind love to yourself,

"I remain, yours affectionately,

"KALLI

."

Kalli's Illness and Death

With respect to the fatal attack under which he soon sunk, it has to be mentioned, that he had gone out to bathe with one of his fellow-students at St. John's, on Saturday, the 7th June. From continuing too long in the water, which was very cold, he caught a chill, and showed many symptoms of inflammation for some days. On Wednesday, good medical assistance was called in, but his constitution had received too violent a shock. The Surgeon had fears from the first that his patient would not recover. It has been observed by medical men, that Esquimaux have but little stamina, and generally fail under the first attack of serious illness. Kalli was kindly watched and assisted by the Rev. J. G. Mountain, and Mrs. Mountain, and his fellow-students. He got rapidly worse. On the Thursday he seemed utterly powerless, and could not lift up his arms, nor put them out of his bed. He was very restless during the greater part of Friday night.

"Soon after ten o'clock on Saturday morning, June 14th," said the Bishop of Newfoundland, "his gentle soul departed. I saw him frequently during his illness (three times the last day), and he always assented most readily, when I reminded him of God's gracious goodness in visiting him; and that it would be better for him to depart, and be with Christ. It was remarkable that his English was more clear and distinct in his illness than I had ever known it; and though he said but very little, he seemed to understand better than ever before. The last seizure was so sudden and violent, that he did not articulate at all. He expired, whilst I was commending his soul to his faithful Creator and most merciful Saviour."

He is stated to have died of "melanosis of the lungs," a disease in which the whole substance of

the lungs turns completely black. It is very slow in its first advances, but fearfully rapid in its latter stages. The Bishop had the chest examined after death, and sent a copy of the Surgeon's report to the Warden of St. Augustine's.

In a full communication, made to the Warden, the Bishop said, "The almost suddenness of our good gentle Kalli's removal makes it difficult to realize the fact that 'he is gone.' I still look for his familiar strange face among the students, wondering at his unwonted absence. He seemed quite identified with our little company. We all miss him greatly, but he has now entered on that perfect rest which he seemed made for, and is delivered from a troublesome, naughty world for which he was certainly not made."

The Bishop also spoke of Kalli's *submission to those set over him; his kindness to all around him, and his attention to all his religious duties.*

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Many young persons, born and bred in our own country, and brought up from the cradle in the very midst of Christian instruction, may glean a valuable lesson from the character of this lamented Esquimaux Christian. They may ask themselves, with some feeling of self-reproof, whether they should have merited such praise from one so revered, and so well qualified to judge. "Perhaps," added Bishop Feild, "I was a little proud at being able to exhibit a far-off Esquimaux brought near, and among my own scholars."

During Kalli's last illness, which, though short, was not without considerable suffering, the same spirit of resignation and thankfulness, which he had always shown, was evinced. "Mr. D— very kind," "K— very kind," "Mrs.— very kind," "Sorry to give so much trouble," were expressions continually on his lips, as he was visited and assisted by his fellow-students, and other friends in succession. His gentle spirit departed in the presence of the Rev. Thomas Wood, the Rev. Principal of the College, and all his fellow-students.

The Rev. J. F. Phelps, Vice-Principal of St. John's College, Newfoundland, who had been a fellow-student of Kalli's, at St. Augustine's, wrote thus, June 25, 1856, respecting him.

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"I have every reason to believe and hope that he has been translated to a better state, and that he now rests in his Saviour: for though he had not much knowledge, yet few indeed act up to their knowledge so well and consistently as he did to his. It must be a comfort to you, Sir, to be assured that in his last moments he was cared for, and attended by all members of the College here, the students constantly being with him, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Mountain and myself. He showed himself very grateful for all that was being done for him, and expressed great sorrow at giving so much trouble. He always spoke of his friends in England with great affection, and was delighted whenever he received letters from them, which he was always eager to answer. Altogether, his was a very amiable character, and we all felt his loss very much."

In another letter from Mr. Phelps is the following passage:—

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"During his last illness, in his conversation with me, it was evident that he quite understood the principle on which we Christians ought to bear our sufferings, patiently, and even thankfully, because of the still greater sufferings which we deserve, and which our Divine Saviour bore for us. I was, I confess, surprised at the readiness with which he realized the truth and the force of this reasoning."

Legacy to a Friend

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The author had often remarked the very grateful manner in which the youth acknowledged any kindness shown towards him. He spoke with the utmost affection of his dear friends, Captain Ommanney, Captain Austin, R.N., the Rev. the Warden of St. Augustine's College, and Mrs. Bailey. Mrs. Bailey, he said, taught him constantly his readings in the New Testament, heard him his hymns, and corrected his writing-exercises. The Rev. A. P. Moor, Sub-Warden of the College, was also very kind to him, and gained his regard.

Of the moderate means placed at his disposal he was always properly careful, expending very little upon himself. He had a few pounds laid up in the Savings' Bank at Canterbury. This amount, together with his humble store of goods and chattels, consisting chiefly of the prints which had adorned his room, he left, by a kind of will, to his untiring and constant friend, Captain Ommanney, in token of gratitude and regard.

Kalli's Funeral

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The remains of Kallihirua were borne to the grave by his fellow-students, and followed by the Vice-Principal of the College, and by the Bishop of Newfoundland, as chief mourner. The Burial Service in the church (St. Thomas's) was conducted by the Rev. Mr. Wood, and in the cemetery by the Rev. Mr. Mountain, the Principal of the College. The quiet solemnity of the service was in keeping with the life and death of the gentle Kalli.

Mrs. Mountain, of St. John's, Newfoundland, in whose house he lived, and who had kindly assisted in instructing him, wrote as follows:—

"It is in sincere sorrow and mourning that I write to inform you that we yesterday followed to the grave our poor Erasmus Kallihirua. He died after only a few days' illness, brought on by incautiously going out to bathe with one of our other students. On the following day, when he came to me to read, as usual, he complained of great pain in the chest and side, and so rapid was the inflammation, that the usual remedies were unavailing.

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"Poor fellow, he was as patient and gentle during his illness, as he always was when he was well and strong, and expressed perfect resignation to God's will, and much thankfulness to those who ministered to him. We all loved him for his unvarying kindness and gentleness, his submission to those set over him, and his willingness to serve all. I miss him so very much, not only in his daily lessons, but in his constant knock at our door, to know whether I had any thing for him to do in the garden, or a message in the town when he was going out for a walk.

"He looked very nice, lying in his silver-white coffin, covered with flowers, and a bunch of lilies and wild pear-blossoms on his bosom. We trust that he was one of the blessed meek who shall inherit the earth. We were all with him when he breathed his last, the Bishop, and the Principal of St. John's College, commending his soul to his faithful Creator."

Intended Memorial

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It is proposed to inscribe a record of Kalli, and of other deceased students of St. Augustine's College, on a tablet in the crypt under the College Chapel. A memorial stone will be erected over Kalli's grave in St. John's, Newfoundland.

With reference to the recent decease of some hopeful students of St. Augustine's, who, after giving promise of much usefulness in the cause of missions, had been removed from this earthly scene, Mr. Phelps observed in a letter lately printed at the St. Augustine's College Press:—

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"The whole College is again reminded, that 'all flesh is grass,' and that our life 'is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.' Poor Kalli is no longer with us. He has been made fit for the Master's use, and has been taken back by Him who lent him to us."

Practical Reflections

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The writer in the "Newfoundland Express" made the following practical reflections on Kalli's early death, which suggest serious though cheering thoughts:—

"It may seem to some persons but folly, and to others but mere boasting, to point to this young man, as any fruit of, or recompense for, the costly and calamitous Arctic expeditions. But others may not think it all in vain, if thereby one soul has been saved, and an example left to a few young men, of thankfulness and kindness to men, duty and devotion towards God. Such was Erasmus Augustine Kallihirua, once a poor benighted Esquimaux, but brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel, to be a pattern to some, who, with much greater advantages, are far inferior in the best graces of the Christian."

Conclusion

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All that has been written will tend to show that Kallihirua was held in much esteem and affection by those who knew him, and that some tribute, (such as even this little memoir,) is due to the memory of one who was well called "Erasmus," or "beloved."

This, however, is not the chief end which the author had in view in presenting an account of Kalli's short career among his adopted countrymen. He would fain convey, amidst other wholesome lessons, that of the uncertainty of life, and the necessity of working while it is day. When we reflect on the departure of one, whose face and figure still dwell in the minds of many of us, it would be wise to remember, that we ourselves are making for the same point of our journey, the concluding scene of this short existence, the end of our probation. How trifling and insignificant do all other events appear, compared with the close of the race, and the arrival at the looked-for goal! May God grant us grace to act constantly on this conviction, as to all our plans and prospects!

THE END

[1] Deut. x 18.

[2] Heb. xiii 2.

[3] For Wolstenholme Sound and Cape York see the annexed map.

[4] See ZOOLOGICAL SKETCHES, *Common Seal*. Published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

[5] This was the case on Tuesday, Oct. 7, 1851. The total number of visitors on that day alone was 109,915.

[6] St. Augustine's Occasional Paper.

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