

Kayaking in Greenland.

From an illustrated sketch of some personal experiences by General A. W. Greely in the August Century we quote the following: This dangerous craft is gradually dying out in Greenland, and only the brighter and more ambitious boys acquire it. Practice must commence at a tender age, and must be continued assiduously. Jens had a pride and delight in the art, such as was unusual in his settlement. For those who have never seen a kayak I will imperfectly describe it as a shuttle-shaped boat, consisting of a wooden frame-work, which is fastened together generally by seal-skin thongs, and over which is stretched a covering of tanned seal-skin as neatly and tightly as in the sheep-skin of a drum-head. The skin covering is so well tanned, and it is so deftly sewn together with sinew threaded by the Eskimo women, that no drop of water finds its way through skin or seam. The use of seal thong in uniting the stanchions gives great strength and equal elasticity, allowing with impunity great shocks which otherwise would destroy so frail a structure. The boat is usually some fifteen feet long, and from its central point gently curves upward—from a width of twenty and a depth of ten inches—to pointed ends. Both prow and stern are carefully armed with a thin molding of walrus ivory, which is a protection to the skin covering when the hunter, spinning through the water, strikes small ice, or in landing, so throws forward and upward his kayak that boat and man slide easily and safely up the edge on to the level surface of a floe. The only opening is a circular hole with a bone or wooden ring, its size being strictly limited to the circumference of the hips of the largest hunter who is to use it.

A waterproof combination jacket and mitten of oiltanned seal-skin is worn by the hunter, who tightly laces the bottom to the ring, so that no water can enter the kayak. Thus equipped, the Inuit hunter faces seas which would swamp any other craft, and plunges safely through the heaviest surf. A single oar, with a blade at each end, in skillful and trained hands propels this unballasted, unsteady craft with great rapidity, and it moves through the water at a rate varying from five to ten miles an hour, according to the character of the sea and the exigency of the occasion. The oar properly handled enables an expert to rise to the surface, if, as happens at times, the boat is overturned.

The kayak of the Eskimo is probably unsurpassed in ingenuity by the bosting devices of any other savage people of the globe. Its essential points of lightness, buoyancy, and structural strength are marvelously well adapted to the varying and dangerous conditions under which an Eskimo provider seeks his sea game. This tiny craft with all hunting weighs scarcely 50 pounds, and will carry a load of some 200 pounds besides its occupant.

She Had a Temper.

She was the wife of a laboring man, a good woman who struggled hard to keep house neat and her children well dressed, but she had a temper. It was a Saturday, and the two little children Ben and Alice, were ready for an excursion. Ben wore a white suit, which his mamma had made for him and of which she was very proud. Just as Ben was leaving home the mother discovered a black spot on the dazzling white suit.

"What that?" she asked sharply. "Only a dease spot, mamma, only a little dease spot."

"I'll make a greese spot out of you," she exclaimed, angrily, trying to strike him.

Little Ben dodged, but ran his head against the sharp edge of the bureau. When she picked him up he was unconscious.

The physician found the child delirious and pronounced the case brain fever, it was quick in its work, and Ben was soon still and cold.

In a darkened room set the mother by the side of the little coffin. Alice stole in quickly and tugged at her dress.

"Mamma, darling, is Bonnie a dease spot now?"

Sobs choking, sobs, answered her.—Epoch.

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