

Knud Rasmussen.

May a Canadian ethnologist, who has himself studied and lived among the Eskimos of Canada, offer his tribute to the late Dr. Knud Rasmussen, whose friendship he has cherished for many years. Dr. Rasmussen understood and interpreted, as no one else was able to do, the inner spirit of the Eskimos, the reasons that underlay their customs, their conceptions of life and death and the world that lies beyond. Many of us had sensed this inner philosophy of life that he makes clear, but we could not fathom it, because we lacked his full command of the Eskimo language, and lacked also, perhaps, his deep and sympathetic insight. He succeeded where we failed, yet he was extremely modest of his own achievements and knowledge, and generous in his praise of other workers in the same field. In Canada, as in Denmark, he was held in the highest honour, both for his brilliant explorations within the Dominion and for his own personal qualities. He had a wonderful gift for friendship both with whites and Eskimos, and when he visited Ottawa, by special invitation, to advise our government in its administration of the Eskimos, everyone who sat around the council table with him carried away a warm feeling of affection and esteem. As for the Eskimos, it may truly be said that he gave his life to their cause, and, as the Great Teacher said of old, „Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends“.

Diamond Jenness.
