

Knud Rasmussen's Significance to Greenland and Greenlanders.

From Thule to Cape Farewell, from Angmagssalik to Scoresby Sound, the news of the death of Knud Rasmussen has come as a heavy blow. All our countrymen without exception truly have the feeling as though one of the most indispensable, the greatest, hunters of the settlement has suddenly met his death in a kayak — an irreparable loss of a personality, a helper and a friend.

He won the admiration of all by his modest and unassuming manner, although he had the proud bearing of a great hunter and was a typical pioneer — a chieftain. He was our superior in arctic sports and athletics, our superior in the use of our language. Because he was a poet he was able to express himself in a manner unusually beautiful, in words poured straight from the heart. His descriptions, for instance in „The Duel of the Musk Oxen“, in „Min Rejsedagbog“ — which also appeared in Greenlandic — cannot be equalled by our own best story-tellers. He has beautified, enriched and renewed our language.

His significance to Greenland cannot be sufficiently expressed in words. An achievement like the Thule Station in itself gives an idea of his great importance. He established the station, planted there the Danish flag — at the spot closest to America he set up a trading organization and a mission. The work of mission and school he furthered by providing a church and a school. Thule, or, as it was generally called, Cape York, was the pride of his heart.

In the more civilized parts of Greenland it was his wish and endeavour to add the Danish language to the school curriculum in order that the horizon of the population might be broadened — in his estimation a necessity — and this, too, has now been accomplished.

In later years he was most interested in dwelling among the

people of Angmagssalik, There he had found a field in which to supplement his studies of Greenland folklore.

Fortunately, before the end Dr. Knud Rasmussen was able to complete his collection of ancient Greenland legends and memories, thus preserving for the people of Greenland a link with the ancient culture of their country.

Because our ancient country has been permitted to belong wholly to Denmark we can also thank Dr. Knud Rasmussen for his contribution both at The Hague and innumerable other spheres.

His memory will live long among us in times to come, and Knud Rasmussen *himself* will in the mind of all of us represent one of our greatest legendary figures.
