

to 34.8 degrees. In January, 1880, the thermometer indicated 7 degrees below zero, and the native Russians asserted that for fifty years it had never been so cold, as it had been below zero but four times within that period. During many winters cattle have been able to obtain food continually, and roses have been gathered from outdoor gardens at Christmas time. This, of course, only applies to the islands along the coast and the adjacent mainland. In the interior, beyond the wall of mountains that oppose the passage inland of warm ocean winds, Old Boreas holds undisputed sway. Snow seldom falls at Sitka to a depth of six inches, and generally disappears quickly before the melting rains. The atmosphere throughout the year is extremely humid, the rainfall much exceeding that which has won for Oregon the title of "Webfoot." To this is due the luxuriant growth of native grasses and the dense forests that fringe the coast and cover the numberless islands.

To the tourist Alaska, and especially the voyage thither, presents unusual attractions. The mementoes brought away from the "Land of the Midnight Sun"—though few go so far north as to witness that apparent phenomenon—are both curious and unique. Carvings, such as are made on totem sticks, claws of bears and other wild animals, odd shells, and garnets imbedded in masses in large pieces of rock, are the trophies of the curiosity hunter. The trip to that region does not embrace a sea voyage, in the common significance of that term, and the reason for this will be quickly apparent to

one who will take the trouble to glance at a map of North America. From Puget Sound to Sitka the coast is bordered by a continuous succession of islands. By following the channel between them and the mainland the steamer plows constantly through placid waters, sailing often between the high bluff walls of narrow passes, where it seems as though one could almost touch the bank on either side. The reader will find the route fully described in the accompanying article on the "Queen Charlotte Islands." Excursions to Alaska are now becoming numerous, and each summer more and more of our people and visitors from abroad avail themselves of the advantages offered by excursion boats during the season. Arrangements have already been made for several such pleasure trips at stated periods the coming summer.

## QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS.

I.

THE Queen Charlotte Islands, the extreme northwest-ern lands of the Province of British Columbia, are situated in the Pacific Ocean, between 51 deg. 55 min. and 54 deg. 15 min. north latitude, and 131 deg. 2 min. and 133 deg. 5 min. west longitude, about 600 miles northwest of Victoria. They are three in number—Provost, Moresby and Graham—altogether about 156 miles in length, Graham Island, the largest, being fifty-two miles in width. Although in common with the whole Northwest Pacific Coast region dense forests and rugged mountains cover the greater portion of their surface, they are reported to contain considerable tracts of open arable land, well adapted to stock raising and agriculture, also deposits of coal and other minerals, and waters teeming



TOTEM STICKS.

SEYMOUR NARROWS.

with cod, halibut and other excellent fish. Their sole inhabitants down to the present time, with the exception of the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company and recently of the Skidegate Oil Manufacturing Company, are the Hydah tribe of Indians, now numbering about 800 souls. Among all the Indians of the Pacific Coast they are distinguished for their fine physique, intelligence, mechanical skill, enterprise and thrift. Owing to their isolated position—though mariners, traders, prospectors and missionaries have skirted the shores of these islands—they are at the present time practically unexplored and unknown. But the advancing tide of emigration is now setting far up the north coast and will soon invade the home of the Hydahs. The route thence from Victoria is through a wonderland of unique and striking topography, touching at numerous Indian villages, trading and fishing