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A TRIP TO ALASKA.

As Alaska becomes more known and its wonderful scenery and strange inhabitants are better described, it becomes an object of attraction to summer tourists, and crowds of visitors flock to its interesting shores.

We took a trip in the mail steamer, leaving Portland in the month of June, the best time to visit Alaska on account of the long days. Passing down the noble Columbia past Astoria, Chinook, and other places of historical interest, we follow along the coast past the entrances to Shoal Water Bay and Gray's harbor, and sighting Point Grenville, Destruction Island, Quilleute and Flattery rocks, we come to Cape Flattery light; and after steaming on for seven miles arrived at Neah Bay where we discharge a quantity of freight for the trader and look about for objects of interest. Neah bay is the headquarters of the U. S. Indian Agency for the Makah Indians and for the past four years, has been in charge of Capt. Charles Willoughby, who, however, has been removed and his place supplied by Col. Wood, Indian Agent at Quenaiult reservation, the Makah and Quenaiult reservation having been united into one.

The Makah tribe numbering nearly 1,000 persons derive their living almost exclusively from the ocean. Formerly they took a large number of whales, but latterly they have given their attention to the procuring of fur seals which abound in the vicinity of Cape Flattery from February till June of each year; then they fish for halibut which constitute the principal article of food, and tons of it are dried for winter use. Neah bay is the only harbor of refuge at the entrance of Fuca Strait; and its importance is becoming known to the wants of commerce.

From Neah bay we proceed to Port Townsend, the port of entry for Puget Sound. Here, after taking on board the U. S. mail, passengers and freight for Alaska, we leave for Victoria, where more passengers and freight are taken, and after a brief delay we proceed to Nanaimo where a supply of coal for the voyage is received, and then we are fairly started on our journey.

We pass up the Strait of Georgia, through Seymour Narrows, where there is a terrific tide rip, making it a very dangerous place for vessels. We then pass through Johnston and Broughton straits and into Queen Charlotte's Sound, which we cross and enter the wonderful labyrinth of channels and magnificent scenery which continues all the way to Sitka.

We pass by Matlahkatlah mission where the Rev.

Mr. Duncan has done such good work for the natives. Here is a town of well constructed buildings, and a church which is as fine a building as is to be seen on the Northwest coast, and was built entirely by the Indians under the direction of Mr. Duncan, who first commenced a mission at Port Simpson, British Columbia, but afterwards removed to Matlahkatlah near the mouth of the Skeena river. Mr. Duncan has been living with the Tsimpsan Indians since 1857, and done a great deal towards civilizing and Christianizing that tribe. His mission is connected with the Episcopal church of London, England. The mission at Port Simpson is in charge of the Methodist church at Ontario, Canada, who have erected a large and commodious church edifice, which, standing on the summit of a hill in the rear of the old trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company, is a prominent object when approaching the harbor.

The good which the missionaries have done is shown by the natives having not only built a beautiful church, but have removed their old wigwams and erected neat cottages in civilized style, making a neat and pretty town.

Formerly, their houses were decorated with huge columns carved with images of beasts, birds and fishes, representing the totems or heraldic designs of the residents, but these have been removed and the principal places where this style of work can now be seen, are on Queen Charlotte's Island and in the Prince of Wales archipelago.

After leaving Fort Simpson, we pass by the entrance to Portland Inlet into which the Nass river flows, as one of the many tributaries to this vast body of water. Here is the great fishery for the eulachon or torch fish, which is so full of grease that when dried it will burn as readily as a candle. This grease is of the consistency and color of soft lard, and is used as an article of diet by the natives. The eulachon is a small fish resembling the smelt, and is cured by the Hudson's Bay Company at Port Simpson, either with salt or by simple drying and smoking like herring, in which state they are exported in large quantities from Victoria to London and are much prized as an article of food.

We next pass by old Fort Tongass, built by the U. S. Government at the time of our occupation of Alaska, but soon abandoned as a worthless and useless structure. From Tongass, we pass through the Revilla Gidedo channel, up the Duke of Clarence strait and turning to the right through Stachinski strait, we reach Fort Wrangle on Wrangle Island near the mouth of the Stickeen river. Here is the great commerce transacted for the mining region of Cariboo and other rich localities in British Columbia, the boundary line of British Columbia coming very near that point.

Here reside the Stickeen tribe of Indians who closely resemble the Haidas of Queen Charlotte's Island in many of their customs. Here will be seen the peculiar form of canoe which is known on Puget Sound as the Haida or northern canoe, and which differ from the Chinook canoe in having a much larger head and stern; our illustrations will give a good idea of these fine canoes,

some of them seventy feet long and capable of carrying one hundred persons. They are made out of a single log of cedar, dug out with rude instruments made by the Indians from stone or mussel shells, or iron hoops shaped in the form of adzes. In these canoes the fearless natives will make voyages of a thousand miles, traversing the distance from northern Alaska to Puget Sound. We now find the various queer devices carved in wood and stone which so strongly resemble the terra cotta work of the Aztecs and ancient Mexicans and Peruvians. These carvings all have a meaning and significance. They are not idols or objects of worship, as has been wrongly ascribed to them by careless writers, but represent either the family totem or heraldic design, or the dress worn by the doctors when engaged in their shamanistic rites. One of the most common is the peculiar rattle of which we give an illustration. This rattle is used by all the northern tribes and seem to have a general explanation. We obtained from a very intelligent Haida chief the following legend:

The rattle represents the raven, the tail being the handle; on the belly is carved the sparrow hawk; on the back is an Indian with a frog and generally a bird's head. The Indian is a mythological personage called by the Haidas, "Ka-ka-hete;" he was a demon who lived in the mountains and was once traveling in his canoe when he was capsized and nearly drowned. He swam ashore and ran into the woods for shelter and would occasionally descend to the villages and steal children which he took into the woods and ate. The frog is supposed to possess a subtle poison in its head, and when the Medicine men wish to work bad spells they eat a frog's head.

The carving represents Ka-ka-hete sucking the poison from the frog's tongue. The Ka-ka-hete afterwards turned into a land otter. This peculiar form of rattle is used in all the northern tribes, and the explanation given varies with the different localities, but has a general significance.

The spoon, of which we present an illustration, is also a very common household implement. It is made from the horn of the mountain goat—"Aplous Montana"—which is found in the mountainous regions of Alaska and British Columbia. Some of these spoons are elaborately carved and bring high prices from tourists to Victoria, and the same remark will apply to the silver bracelets, finger rings and ear ornaments made by the northern tribes. Even their food dishes are carved to resemble a totem or family coat of arms, and some of this work is beautifully executed.

Some of the combs they use are made of wood, very fanciful, but not adapted either to remove dirt or vermin—they seem to be simply scratchers—but of late years the native-made combs have been superseded by more civilized work, and it is only the old persons in remote villages who continue to use the native manufacture.

The halibut hook used by the northern tribes is a very clumsy looking affair—not near as nice work as the hooks made by the Makah Indians of Cape Flattery; but they are very effective, and immen-