

their frosty tops overhanging your head, in appearance threatening you with an involuntary shower bath.

The Quinault reservation contains nearly 300,000 acres of land, and, notwithstanding there are carried upon the rolls of the agency about 300 names, there are not to exceed one-half that number of Indians living upon the reservation. The lands comprised within its limits are some of the best and most productive in the new state, and it seems hardly fair that so large an area of tillable soil should be set aside for grazing lands for the cayuse of the noble siwash.

The sea otter, referred to as being shot from towers on the beach, must not be confounded with the land otter, of which there are several species, none of which possess the rich and valuable fur of their marine cousin. The common otter of Europe is the *Lutra Vulgaris*, while the American variety, found in the northern regions of the continent, is the *Lutra Canadensis* or *Mallis*. The genuine sea otter is the *Enhydra Marina*, and differs somewhat in appearance from the others, both in form and fur. The common otters are aquatic in their habits, and have webbed toes and a slightly flattened tail, a large, blunt head and short ears. The sea otter lives in the water, and differs from the other chiefly in the more pointed shape of the head and the finer texture of its fur. A singular peculiarity of this animal is the looseness of its skin. The skin can be gathered in folds on any portion of the body in the same way as on the neck of a puppy, and an otter only three feet long, from snout to the

base of the tail, will often have a skin that will measure five feet in length when removed.

Skins of this rare animal are valued at from \$50 to \$125, and extra fine ones of the silver-tipped variety are worth \$150. When properly prepared and worked up into garments, this value is enhanced to \$700, quite eclipsing the seal skin in this respect as well as in beauty of appearance. In both color and texture the fur is exquisitely rich and fine. Shining jet black is the color of the best skins, though the majority are of a dark, rich brown, the inferior ones being of a lighter shade of brown—generally the skins of young animals. A peculiar marking of one variety of sea otter is the little silver-colored tips of hairs flecking the fur, much enhancing its beauty and richness.

The habitat of the sea otter is the North Pacific ocean, on the coast of America and Asia. They were formerly abundant as far south as Lower California, but are now seldom seen south of the Columbia river. An animal of such great value, and occupying so comparatively a limited area, can not hope to escape extermination to such an extent as to render it extremely rare; and this is the fate that has overtaken the otter. In former years they swarmed about the Alaskan islands, and the early Russian traders reaped a rich harvest. The first year after the discovery of the Prybalov islands, two men took 5,000 skins, valued at \$250,000. Cook's inlet yielded 3,000 and Gahkulat gulf 2,000 the first season. It took but a short time to reduce their numbers materially, and in a few years they abandoned St. Paul island, the member of the Prybalov group where the two sailors made such a remarkable catch, and have never returned, though fur seals still swarm upon its barren rocks. In like manner they have disappeared from all points along the coast, and now but a few are captured annually by the sealing and whaling fleets, by hunters who watch for them along the shore, and by the natives of the Aleutian islands.

In former years otters were hunted in boats, the same as seals are at the present time, but they are now so rare that this style of hunting has ceased to be profitable. Occasionally the sealing boats come across an otter and secure him, but the majority of these animals are shot by hunters, from the beach. Otters are hunted along the coast of



THE SEA OTTER AT HOME.