

SEAL-FISHERIES IN ALASKA.

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L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

TRANSMITTING,

*In response to resolution of the House of Representatives, information relating to the seal-fisheries in Alaska.*

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JANUARY 20, 1876.—Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*January 17, 1876.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of a resolution, adopted on the 14th ultimo, directing the Secretary of the Treasury "to furnish to the House of Representatives such information as he possesses touching the management of the Alaska seal-fisheries by the Alaska Commercial Company of San Francisco, Cal., from the date of its lease from the United States to the present time."

In response to said resolution I have the honor to transmit herewith—

1. A schedule or list of all documents or papers on file in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury relating to the Territory of Alaska from and including August 3, 1870, the date of the lease mentioned in the resolution, to and including January 17, 1876.

2. Copies of all documents and papers mentioned or referred to in said list containing, or which appear to contain, the information desired. These copies include all reports received by the Department from its agents, relative to Alaska, between the respective dates above mentioned.

The copies thus furnished are numbered in chronological order, and the accompanying list is numbered to correspond, in order that it may readily be perceived what papers are and what are not transmitted. Those which are thus withheld relate to matters of routine, and do not appear to come within the scope of the resolution. The descriptive list will, however, enable the House or its committee to make a further call for such papers, or any of them, should it seem desirable to do so.

Some of the information called for by said resolution has been herebefore printed, and may be found in the following-described Executive Documents, viz:

H. R. Executive Document No. 108, Forty-first Congress, third session;

H. R. Executive Document No. 122, Forty-first Congress, third session;  
H. R. Executive Document No. 20, Forty-second Congress, second session;

Senate Executive Document No. 12, Forty-fourth Congress, first session—

copies of which are herewith also transmitted with references, by number, to such of the reports therein printed as appear upon the schedule or list above mentioned.

It may be proper in this connection to refer to the fact that the report of General O. O. Howard, on affairs in Alaska, is printed at length in said Senate Document No. 12, as a report from the War Department, and a copy thereof having been transmitted by the Secretary of War to this Department for its information, in October last, it appears on said descriptive list as a part of its files. To this report was annexed a pamphlet entitled "A history of the wrongs of Alaska," purporting to have been printed by order of an association styled the "Anti-Monopoly Association of the Pacific Coast," and signed "Chas. Leege, secretary, which, having been printed as aforesaid, is formally transmitted herewith, and is here referred to only for the purpose of stating that this Department has no knowledge or information concerning the said association, its secretary, or officers, if any such exist, which enables it to judge to what extent, if any, the allegations contained in said pamphlet are entitled to consideration or credence, other than is contained in the report of J. S. Moore, a copy of which is transmitted herewith. A printed copy of an elaborate report on the condition of affairs in Alaska, made in November, 1874, by H. W. Elliott, then a special agent of this Department, is herewith submitted. This is understood to embrace all the information contained in a similar report, by the same officer, in 1873, printed in folio, with illustrations, but of which only one copy is on the files of the Department.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

B. H. BRISTOW,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

Hon. M. C. KERR,

*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

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A COMPLETE LIST OF PAPERS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY, IN THE ALASKA BUSINESS, SINCE THE DATE OF THE LEASE TO THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY, AUGUST 3, 1870, TO THE PRESENT DATE.

[Entries marked with numbers are accompanied by copies of the documents.]

1870.

1. Lease from the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company, dated August 3, 1870.

Letter of Assistant United States Treasurer, dated August 3, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, relative to bonds (\$55,000) of the Alaska Commercial Company.

2. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, attorney, dated August 3, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the delivery by the collector of customs, San Francisco, of certain seal-skins to Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Havens & Co.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated August 3, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to disposal of skins.

Telegram of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated August 4, 1870, to the collector of customs, authorizing him to deliver skins to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Havens & Co.

3. Letter of president of the Alaska Commercial Company, dated August 4, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, relative to killing seals for year 1870.

4. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, dated August 6, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, relative to Alaska Commercial Company sending vessel to Alaska.

5. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated August 8, 1870, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, authorized to allow Alaska Commercial Company to send vessels to Alaska.

6. Letter of J. W. McCockle, attorney for L. Goldstone, of San Francisco, dated August 9, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, protesting against awarding lease to Alaska Commercial Company.

7. Letter of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated August 16, 1870, to N. L. Jeffries, attorney, relative to sending fire-arms to Alaska.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated August 17, 1870, to the collector of customs, New York, authorized to receive tax on skins.

8. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, attorney, dated August 17, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, relative to paying tax on seal-skins.

9. Letter of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated August 19, 1870, to N. L. Jeffries, attorney, relative to seizure of fox-skins.

10. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated August 22, 1870, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to importation of distilled spirits into Alaska.

11. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, attorney, dated August 24, 1870, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, requesting permission to land fire-arms in Alaska.

12. Rules of the Alaska Commercial Company, dated August 30, 1870.

13. Telegram of Acting Secretary of the Treasury, dated September 9, 1870, to the collector at San Francisco; permission granted Alaska Commercial Company to take arms, &c., to islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

14. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, attorney, Washington, D. C., dated September 9, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to shipment of arms to islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

15. Executive order, dated September 9, 1870, modifying Executive order of February 4, 1870.

16. Circular of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated September 10, 1870, to officers of the customs, publishing Executive order relative to use of arms in Alaska.

Telegram of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated September 12, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing surrender of skins to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

Telegram of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated September 12, 1870, to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., advising them of above.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated September 12, 1870, to Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., inclosing copy of telegram to collector of customs, San Francisco.

17. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated September 13, 1870, to collectors, San Francisco, Sitka, Port Townsend, and Portland, Ore-

gon, inclosing regulations relative to importation of fire-arms into Alaska.

18. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, attorney, dated September 17, 1870, to Acting Secretary of Treasury, relative to publication of award of lease.

19. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury to collector, San Francisco, dated September 19, 1870, directing publication of award of lease.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated September 19, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing affidavit of Captain Briggs.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated September 20, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, transmitting affidavit of officers and crew of Mauna Loa.

20. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated September 27, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to seal-skins on the Cyane.

21. Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated September 30, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing him to retain possession of 11,500 skins.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 1, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to 226 casks skins shipped to New York.

22. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated September 30, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, inclosing copy of published notice of lease, &c.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 1, 1870, to Coast-Survey Office, requesting information relative to Jones' Island, Alaska.

Telegram of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 1, 1870, to collector of customs, New York, requesting him to retain possession of skins.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 3, 1870, to collector of customs, New York, authorized to retain possession of skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 3, 1870, to collector of customs San Francisco, authorizing detention of "Mauna Loa."

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 3, 1870, to collector of customs San Francisco, authoring detention of Mauna Loa.

Joint telegram of Special Agent McLean and collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 4, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to skins imported by Mauna Loa and John Bright.

Letter of Coast-Survey Office, dated October 4, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, inclosing chart of Jones' Island.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 5, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing statement of Captain John Reed and others, relative to fur-skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 6, 1870, to Coast-Survey Office, requesting further information relative to Jones' Island.

23. Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated October 6, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

Letter of Special Agent McLean, dated October 10, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, concerning the importation of skins.

24. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 12, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, inclosing letter addressed to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to killing seals in Alaska.

25. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 12, 1870, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to killing seals in Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, dated October 13, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to furs received from San Francisco.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 14, 1870, to collector of customs, New York, relative to 226 casks of furs.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 15, 1870, relative to 226 casks of furs; addressed to collector, New York.

Telegram of collector of customs, New York, dated October 15, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 226 casks of skins.

Telegrams of Scholb Brothers, New York, dated October 17, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to exportation of skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 17, 1870, to Scholb Brothers, New York, relative to shipment of skins.

26. Affidavit of S. N. Buynitzky, dated October 19, 1870, relative to seal-skins.

27. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, dated October 19, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, recommending appointment of S. Falconer, &c.

Telegram of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 20, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to skins of C. J. Jansen.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 21, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to skins of C. J. Jansen.

Letter of Secretary of State, dated October 22, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, inclosing letter from Russian minister relative to furs.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated October 25, 1870, to the collector, San Francisco, relative to 6,000 seal-skins.

Letter of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated October 25, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to seal-skins detained at New York.

Telegram of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 26, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 5,070 skins consigned to James Tinker, New York.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 27, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to fur-seal skins imported by Ann Eliza, inclosing statement of R. H. Waterman; affidavits of G. Webster, M. V. Beverage, and C. J. Jansen; letters of Russian consul and J. M. Mass; certificates of C. P. Dudley, and F. H. Craig.

Letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, dated October 28, 1870, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to release of skins claimed by Russian minister.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated October 29, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 5,070 skins, per the Eustace, and inclosing letter of Russian consul.

28. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 1, 1870, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to disposition of skins preserved by natives.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 4, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to delivery of furs.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 4, 1870, to collector of customs, New York, relative to detention of furs of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

Letter of Russian minister, dated November 6, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 226 casks of furs.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated November 7, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to furs imported by the Czareritch.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, dated November 9, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to detention of 30 cases furs.

Letter of Secretary of War, dated November 10, 1870, to the Attorney-General, relative to the introduction of distilled spirits into Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated November 11, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the importation of seal-skins, per the John Bright and Mauna Loa; and inclosing statement of R. H. Waterman, and affidavits of A. Kurtz and L. Gerstte.

Letter of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated November 12, 1870, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to skins by Constantine.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated November 12, 1870, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to skins per J. W. Seaver.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated November 12, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to skins per Constantine.

Letter of Webster & Craig, New York, dated November 15, 1870, to the collector of customs, New York, relative to detention of skins of Scholb Brothers, New York.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, dated November 16, 1870, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to furs from San Francisco, under bond.

29. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 18, 1870, to the Secretary of State, transmitting copy of letter of Russian minister.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, dated November 18, 1870, to N. L. Jeffries, requesting him, or Mr. Hutchinson, to call at the Department.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated November 18, 1870, to the Russian minister; detention of skins at New York.

Telegram of deputy collector of customs, New York, dated November 18, 1870, to H. B. James, Treasury Department, relative to 226 casks of furs.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 21, 1870, to the collector of customs, New York, relative to 226 casks furs.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 23, 1870, to the collector of customs at San Francisco, authorizing delivery of skins per John Bright.

Letter of N. L. Jeffries, dated November 23, 1870, to collector of customs, San Francisco, requesting delivery of skins per John Bright.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 26, 1870, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing delivery of skins per J. W. Seaver.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 28, 1870, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to skins per the J. W. Seaver.

Letter of N. L. Jeffries, dated November 30, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to delivery of skins.

30. Report of S. N. Buynitzky, dated December 30, 1870, relative to the seal-fisheries at islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated December 31, 1870, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the landing of ale and porter on steamer California.

1871.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated January 5, 1871, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing delivery of 5,862 skins to Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated January 3, 1871, to Secretary of Treasury, report of condition of business.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated January 7, 1871, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to shipment of intoxicating liquors to Alaska.

Letter from Hon. George W. Julian, M. C., dated February 4, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, requesting certain papers.

Letters of Secretary of the Treasury, dated February 7 and 8, 1871, to Speaker of House of Representatives, transmitting certain Alaska papers.

31. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 9, 1871, to president of Alaska Commercial Company, requesting copy of list of officers of company, &c.

32. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 10, 1871, to collector of customs, Sitka, instructions as to the dispositions of wines, &c.

33. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, dated February 17, 1871, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing list of officers and stockholders of company.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated February 23, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, referring to his report of October 6, 1870.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, relative to steamer Alexander sailing for Alaska; letter dated March 13, 1871.

Letter of Professor L. Agassiz, dated March 14, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to sending alcohol to Captain Bryant for preservation of animals.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 20, 1871, to the President of the United States, requesting modification of Executive order of February 4, 1870, relative to introduction of spirits into Alaska.

34. Executive order, dated March 21, 1871, modifying Executive order of February 4, 1870.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 25, 1871, to Professor L. Agassiz, authorizing shipment of alcohol to Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 25, 1871, to collectors of customs, San Francisco and Sitka, transmitting copy of Executive order of March 21, 1871.

35. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, dated April 17, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, requesting reduction of rent for islands of Saint Paul and Saint George for 1870.

36. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated May 5, 1871, to the president of Alaska Commercial Company, allowing company to deposit rent with assistant treasurer at San Francisco.

37. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, dated May 6, 1871, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to taxes due the Government from the Alaska Commercial Company.

Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, dated May 13, 1871, relative to shipment of skins by Alaska Commercial Company per steamer Alexander.

38. Report of Special Agent Falconer, dated May 14, 1871, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to condition of business at Saint George Island.

39. Report of Special Agent Bryant, dated May 19, 1871, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to the condition of the seal islands.

40. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, dated June 13, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the reduction of rent of islands of Saint George and Saint Paul for 1871.

41. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated June 28, 1871, to S. N. Buynitzky, instructed to proceed to Alaska.

42. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, dated June 30, 1871, to S. N. Buynitzky, transmitting copy of lease of Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of David Shirsper, dated San Francisco, July 7, 1871, to Secre-

tary, complaining of action of collector of customs, Sitka, relative to delivery of wines, &c.

Letter of Secretary of State, dated July 11, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting letter from Russian minister, relative to appointment of curators on Saint George and Saint Paul Islands.

43. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated July 14, 1871, to president of Alaska Commercial Company, relative to reduction of rent of islands of Saint Paul and Saint George for 1871.

44. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, dated July 15, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, informing Department of the arrival of the *Cyane*.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated July 19, 1871, to Secretary of State, informing him that curators will be allowed on islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated July 19, 1871, to collector of customs, Sitka, authorized to allow two curators to reside on Saint George and Saint Paul Islands.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated July 20, 1871, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to establishment of a brewery at Sitka.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated July 20, 1871, to David Shirsner, San Francisco, relative to the importation of wines, &c., into Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated July 25, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, inclosing letter from Lyon & Co., relative to ale shipped by them to Alaska.

45. Report of Special Agent Falconer, dated August 3, 1871, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to condition of affairs at island of Saint George.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated August 4, 1871, to collector of customs, Sitka, approving his action in refusing landing of ale.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated August 4, 1871, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, inclosing letter to the collector at Sitka.

Letter of E. B. Jerome, (custom-house San Francisco,) dated August 8, 1871, to F. A. Crawford, Dayton, Ohio, relative to skins detained at San Francisco.

46. Letter of S. N. Buynitzky, dated August 10, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, report of seal-killing on island of Saint George.

47. Certificate of Special Agent Falconer, dated August 5, 1871, relative to shipment of skins by the Alaska Commercial Company.

48. Certificates of Special Agent Bryant, dated August 11, 1871, relative to shipment of skins by the Alaska Commercial Company.

49. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, dated August 1, 1871, to Special Agent Falconer, relative to the seal-fishery at Saint George Island.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated September 23, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, returning letter of Messrs. Lyon & Co.

50. Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated September 23, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to landing of liquors and the manufacture of beer at Alaska.

51. Letter [copy] of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., relative to rental of buildings at Port Yukon.

Letter of Theodore Hatterm, dated Sitka, October 23, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the delivery of ale, &c.

52. Report of Special Agent Charles Bryant, dated November 10, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the seal-fisheries.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated November 24, 1871, to Special Agent Bryant, Fair Haven, Mass., requesting him to report at Department.



53. Letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, dated November 29, 1871, to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., declining to give them permit to occupy buildings.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated December 2, 1871, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, relative to 21 seal-skins forwarded from Kodiak to San Francisco, by F. A. Crawford.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, dated December 11, 1871, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to stealing alcohol from warehouse.

54. Letter of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, dated December 12, 1871, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to seal-skins taken on islands of Saint Paul and Saint George in 1870.

55. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, dated December 16, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to seal-skins taken on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in 1870.

1872.

56. Letter of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated January 23, 1871, to the Secretary of the Treasury, offering \$100 rent for buildings at Fort Yukon, Alaska.

57. Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated January 25, 1872, to chairman Committee on Commerce, House of Representatives, transmitting draught of bill, relative to management of seal-fisheries in Alaska.

58. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated January 25, 1872, to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., relative to rental of buildings.

59. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated January 31, 1872, to Solicitor of Treasury, inclosing papers, and requesting opinion as to reduction of rent of buildings.

Letter of Nicholas Korigin, missionary priest of Russian Church, San Francisco, dated January 31, 1872, requesting permission to ship wine to Alaska.

Letter of chairman Senate Committee on Commerce, dated February 8, 1872, petition for enactment of a law for protection of walrus in the Arctic Sea.

60. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 13, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, inclosing above petition for report.

61. Letter of Solicitor of Treasury, dated February 13, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the reduction of rent on islands in Alaska.

Letter of chairman Committee on Commerce, inclosing bill for protection of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, dated February 15, 1872.

62. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 15, 1872, to the President of Alaska Commercial Company, declining to lessen the amount of rent for islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

63. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 20, 1872, to the Senate chairman Committee on Commerce, relative to bill for the protection of fur-bearing animals in Alaska.

64. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, dated February 20, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to law for the protection of the walrus in the Arctic Sea.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated February 21, 1872, to the Solicitor of the Treasury, relative to robbery of warehouse by A. Vasseriss.

65. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 21, 1872, to N. L. Jeffries, transmitting opinion of Solicitor of Treasury, relative to reduction of rent.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 26, 1872, to the Senate chairman Committee on Commerce, transmitting report of Special Agent Bryant, relative to law protecting walrus.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, dated February 27, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, informing him that steamer "Alexandria" sails for Alaska, April 1, 1872.

66. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated February 28, 1872, to the President of the United States, inclosing draught of order modifying Executive order of February 4, 1870, relative to shipment of wines to Alaska.

67. Executive order, dated February 29, 1872, modifying Executive order of February 4, 1870.

68. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, dated February 29, 1872, to the Solicitor of the Treasury, relative to fur-seals to be killed under lease of Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing him to allow Captain Bryant to take alcohol to Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, authorizing him to forward seal-skins to San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, informing him that Captain Bryant will send him skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing him to allow wines to go to Alaska.

69. Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to the collector of customs, Sitka, transmitting copies of Executive order of February 29, 1872.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, dated March 2, 1872, to Nicholas Karrigin, San Francisco, referred to the collector of customs, San Francisco, for information relative to shipment of wines to Alaska.

70. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 13, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, authorizing him to purchase materials not exceeding \$4,000.

71. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 13, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to shipment of materials for Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated March 13, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, authorizing him to import animals into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, dated March 13, 1872, to collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing sale of tea to be forwarded by Special Agent Bryant.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 14, 1872, to collector of customs, Sitka, authorizing him to allow F. Hatterm to reship ale, &c., to San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 15, 1872, to collector, San Francisco, giving Captain Bryant authority to take alcohol to Alaska. See General Howard's report.

Letter of Henry H. Sage, dated Buffalo, N. Y., March 16, 1872, to the President of the United States, inclosing extract from Alaska Herald, (referred from White House.)

72. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated March 25, 1872, relative to seal-fisheries at Saint Paul and Saint George Islands.

Letter of Solicitor of Treasury, March 27, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to proceedings against A. Vasseriss.

Telegram of Special Agent Bryant, March 27, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, requesting permission to ship whisky to Alaska.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, dated March 28, 1872, to collector of customs, San Francisco, authorizing him to allow Special Agent Bryant to ship liquors to Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 30, 1872, to collector, Sitka, authorizing him not to take proceedings against A. Vasseriss.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, April 8, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing certificate of deposit for \$55,000 rent.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, April 9, 1872, to the Secretary of Treasury, reporting shipment of ale to Port Townsend, Wash.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, April 11, 1872, to the Secretary of Treasury, requesting instructions relative to A. Vasseriss.

73. Letter of Solicitor of Treasury, April 15, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to application of the Alaska Commercial Co., for reduction of rent.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 18, 1872, to the president of Alaska Commercial Company, acknowledging receipt of \$55,000.

74. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 18, 1872, to the president of Alaska Commercial Company, relative to reduction of rent for 1871.

75. Letter of president Alaska Commercial Company, April 1, 1872, to the agents of the company, inclosing copy of regulations, &c.

76. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 19, 1872, to collector San Francisco, relative to sending a cutter to Unmak Pass.

77. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, April 26, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to rent for Seal Islands.

78. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, May 4, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, requesting that excess of rental be forwarded to president of Alaska Commercial Company, at San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 6, 1872, to Treasurer of United States, authorizing issuance of draft for \$22,019.25 to president of Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of Special Agent Bryant, May 9, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 3,541 skins shipped per Alexander, and consigned to collector San Francisco.

Letter of Treasurer of United States, May 9, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing transfer-check on assistant treasurer San Francisco for \$22,019.25 for Alaska Commercial Company; also certificate of deposit by said company for \$5,480.75 on account of rental.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 9, 1872, to president Alaska Commercial Company, transmitting draft for \$22,019.25.

79. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, May 9, 1872, relative to shipment of skins.

80. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, May 21, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, acknowledging receipt of draft for \$22,019.25.

Telegram of deputy collector of customs, San Francisco, May 24, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, reporting arrival of seal-skins.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, May 27, 1872, to the collector San Francisco, authorized to send skins to New York.

81. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, May 28, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, submitting certificate of deposit for \$102,837, tax on seal-skins.

Telegram of deputy collector of customs, San Francisco, June 1, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to packing seal-skins.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, June 3, 1872, to the collector of customs San Francisco, authorized to have skins properly packed.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, June 8, 1872, to the Secretary of Treasury, reporting condition of affairs in district.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, June 10, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to sale of tea.

Account-current of collector of customs, San Francisco, June 11, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to expenses of resalting and repacking 3,541 skins.

Letter of collector, San Francisco, June 11, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to skins sent by Captain Bryant.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, June 15, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, requesting remittance of \$6,000 to pay vouchers of Captain Bryant.

82. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, June 17, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to ownership of buildings in Alaska, on application to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

83. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 19, 1872, to Solicitor of Treasury, requesting opinion relative to the ownership of buildings in Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 20, 1872, to collector, San Francisco, approving bills for expenses on skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 26, 1872, to collector of customs, San Francisco, advised of remittance of \$6,000.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, June 28, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to 37 casks of skins arrived from San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 2, 1872, to collector of customs, New York, relative to 37 casks of seal-skins from San Francisco.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, dated July 17, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the value of fur-skins from San Francisco.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, July 18, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to 37 casks of skins from San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 20, 1872, to collector of customs, New York, relative to advertising skins for sale.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 22, 1872, to collector of customs, New York, relative to sale of skins.

Advertisement for sale of skins at New York.

Bid of Messrs. George C. Treadwell & Co., New York, \$7.25 per skin.

Bid of Williams, Haven & Co., New London, \$8.50 per skin.

Bid of E. S. Mawson, Philadelphia, \$7.30 per skin.

Bid of George King, New York, \$7 per skin.

Bid of L. J. Phillips & Co., New York, \$7.12½ per skin.

Letter of Martin Bates, jr., & Co., New York, August 14, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to sale of seal-skins.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, August 14, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to proposals for skins.

84. Report of Samuel Falconer, August 15, 1872, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to affairs at Saint George Island.

Telegram of Acting Secretary of Treasury, August 19, 1872, to Messrs. Williams, Havens & Co., New London, August 19, 1872, informing them of acceptance of bid for skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, August 19, 1872, to collector of customs, New York, informing him of acceptance of bid of Messrs. Williams, Havens & Co. for skins.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, August 19, 1872, to Messrs. E. Goddard, A. L. Sturtevant, and S. I. Kimball, of the Treasury Department, appointing them a committee to open sealed proposals for skins.

Report (August 19, 1872) of board appointed to open sealed proposals for skins. Recommend acceptance of bid of Williams, Havens & Co.

Telegram of collector of customs, New York, August 19, 1872, to the Secretary of Treasury, requesting decision on bid for seal-skins.

Telegram of Geo. C. Treadwell & Co., New York, August 19, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, withdrawing offer for skins.

Letter of Geo. C. Treadwell & Co., New York, August 19, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to withdrawal of bid.

Letter of Samuel Milletich, dated Sitka, August 20, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to receiving liquors for certain purposes.

85. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, August 20, 1872, relative to shipment of 21,000 skins to San Francisco.

Telegram of Williams, Havens & Co., August 20, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to counting and receiving skins.

Letter of E. S. Mawson, Philadelphia, August 20, 1872, to Secretary of the Treasury, requesting to be furnished with bids for skins.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, August 21, 1872, to E. S. Mawson, Philadelphia, giving list of bids for skins.

Telegram of E. S. Mawson, Philadelphia, August 22, 1872; to the Secretary of the Treasury, acknowledging receipt of letter.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, dated Groton, Mass., August 24, 1872, to the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, requesting account-current of seal-skin sale.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, August 26, 1872, to the New York Daily Times, transmitting check for \$25.60 for publishing notice of sale of skins.

86. Certificate of Special Agent Samuel Falconer, August 27, 1872, relative to shipment of 8,877 skins.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, August 28, 1872, to collector of customs, New York, authorizing him to send account of expenses of sale of furs.

87. Report of Special Agent Bryant, September 5, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, on the affairs of the Seal Islands.

88. Certificate (in duplicate) of Captain Bryant, September 9, 1872, relative to shipment of 49,551 skins.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, September 9, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, account of sale and expenses of 37 casks of skins.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, September 12, 1872, to collector of customs, Sitka, denying application of Samuel Milletich, relative to importation of wines into Alaska.

Account of expenses connected with resalting, packing, hauling, storage, &c., of 37 casks of seal-skins.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, October 17, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, reporting his visits to different parts of the district, &c.

89. Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, dated November 4, 1872, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing certificate of Special Agent Bryant as to compliance with their lease; also inclosing certificate of deposit for \$252,181.12.

90. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, December 2, 1872, to collector of customs, San Francisco, verification of number of seal-skins.

91. Letter of Solicitor of Treasury, December 4, 1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to application of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. as to ownership of buildings in Alaska.

92. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, dated December 12,

1872, to the Secretary of the Treasury, reporting as to number of seal-skins brought into port, &c.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, December 23, 1872, to the collector of customs, Sitka, relative to the prevention of smuggling in his district.

1873.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, May 20, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, reporting importation of bitters, and asking for instructions.

93. Report of Samuel Falconer, assistant special agent, May 27, 1873, as regards fur-seals on Saint George Island.

Letter of H. T. Whitford, dated Sitka, May 27, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to seizure of scarlet cloth.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, June 10, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to importation of goods of Indians; inclosing letter of Major J. Stewart, United States Army.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, June 16, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to officers of the United States Army receiving supplies of liquors.

94. Certificate of Captain Bryant, June 2, 1873, as to shipment of 3,906 seal-skins.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, June 30, 1873, to Secretary of the Treasury, relative to six months' interest on bonds.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 2, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to detention of Hostetter's bitters.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 2, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to importation of blankets.

95. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, dated July 14, 1873, as to shipment of 32,076 skins.

96. Letter of N. L. Jeffries, July 21, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to buildings of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 25, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to officers of the Army keeping whisky.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 25, 1873, to the president of Alaska Commercial Company, transmitting draft for \$1,650.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 25, 1873, to United States Treasurer, calling for draft for interest on bonds of Alaska Commercial Company.

97. Report of Samuel Falconer, August 1, 1873, on fur-seals in Saint George Island.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, August 2, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, acknowledging receipt of interest, \$1,650.

Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, August 20, 1873, as to the shipment of 21,000 skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, August 15, 1873, to the Attorney-General, requesting opinion as to ownership of buildings in Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, September 15, 1873, to the Secretary of Treasury, relative to the introduction of alcohol for drug purposes.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, September 19, 1873, to the Secretary of Treasury, relative to instructions in regard to the introduction of liquor into Alaska.

Letter of Attorney-General, September 27, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, giving opinion relative to the title of certain buildings in Alaska, adverse to the claim of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

98. Report of Special Agent Bryant, September 30, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to fur-seals and fur-islands.

99. Special report of Special Agent Henry W. Elliott, dated October 31, 1873, on the Seal Islands.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, October 13, 1873, to the President of the United States, inclosing for approval a communication relative to the introduction of liquor into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 13, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, authorizing the withdrawal of alcohol for medical purposes.

100. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 14, 1873, to Secretary of War, relative to jurisdiction over Territory of Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of War, October 22, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, asking for copies of certain papers, relative to prohibiting the introduction of liquor into Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, October 28, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, recommending the establishment of a bonded warehouse at Victoria.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 29, 1873, to Secretary of War, transmitting certain papers.

Letter of collector of customs, Portland, Oreg., October 30, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to shipment of liquor to Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 13, 1873, to Secretary of War, transmitting letter of collector of customs, Portland, Oreg., relative to importation of liquors into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of War, November 18, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to introduction of liquors into Alaska. States that Alaska is an Indian country.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, November 19, 1873, to Secretary of Treasury, transmitting inspector's return of cargo of seal-skins per Cyane, and certificate of deposit of the Alaska Commercial Company for \$14,366.50.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 20, 1873, to collector of customs, Port Townsend, San Francisco, Astoria, and Empire City, Oreg., relative to the admission of spirituous liquors into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 20, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 20, 1873, to collector of customs, Portland, Oreg., relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 21, 1873, to the Secretary of War, relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska, under control of the War Department.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 22, 1873, to collector of customs, Sitka, refusing application for establishment of a bonded warehouse.

Letter of Adjutant-General U. S. A., November 22, 1873, to the commanding-general of the Military Division of the Pacific, relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

101. Report of Special Agent Charles Bryant, December 4, 1873, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the affairs at the Seal Islands.

1874.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, January 3, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, asking for instructions relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

102. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, for Alaska Commercial Company, to the Secretary of the Treasury, January 15, 1874, relative to seal-oil.

103. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, January 19, 1874, to the Solicitor of Treasury, relative to tax on seal-oil.

Letter of Secretary of War, February 13, 1874, to the Secretary of Treasury, relative to the introduction of liquors into Alaska.

104. Letter of Solicitor of Treasury, February 4, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the tax on seal-oil.

105. Report of Special Agent Charles Bryant, February 15, 1874, to the Secretary of Treasury, relative to seal-oil.

106. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, February 16, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, of Alaska Commercial Company, relative to the taking of seal-oil.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, February 26, 1874, to the Secretary of War, relative to the introduction of distilled spirits into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 5, 1874, to the collector of customs, Sitka, relative to the introduction of spirits into Alaska.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, March 10, 1874, to N. L. Jeffries, transmitting twelve copies of lease of the Seal Islands.

107. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 13, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to tax on seal-oil.

108. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 13, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to the amount collected of the Alaska Commercial Company for seal-oil.

109. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, March 18, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to seal-oil.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 18, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, forwarding two gauging-rods.

110. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 20, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to taking seal-oil.

111. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 20, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to taking seal-oil by the Alaska Commercial Company.

112. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, March 21, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to modification of tax on seal-oil.

Letter of acting chief clerk Treasury Department, May 24, 1874, to private secretary of President of United States, relative to approval of bill relative to the killing of seals in Alaska.

113. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 24, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to tax on seal-oil.

114. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 25, 1874, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, transmitting agreement with the Alaska Commercial Company, relative to killing seals.

115. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, March 26, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to taking seals by the Alaska Commercial Company.

Telegram of Special Agent Bryant, April 11, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to seals taken on the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, April 3, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, relative to instructions forwarded on the 25th of March, 1874.

Telegram of collector of customs, San Francisco, April 15, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, instructions relative to the Seal Islands received.

116. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, April 16, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to killing of seals.

Letter of Commissioner of Customs, April 25, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, calling attention to a balance of \$29,529.17 in the hands of the collector of customs, New York, on account of seal-skins.



Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, April 27, 1874, to collector of customs, New York, for report relative to balance of \$29,529.17.

Letter of collector of customs, New York, April 28, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to balance of \$29,529.17.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 30, 1874, to the Commissioner of Customs, inclosing vouchers, &c., in regard to sale of skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 30, 1874, to the collector of customs, New York, authorizing him to deposit \$29,529.17 to the credit of United States Treasurer.

117. Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, May 4, 1874, to Special Agent H. W. Elliott, relative to visiting Alaska.

118. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 7, 1874, to the Secretary of the Navy, relative to Lieutenant Maynard accompanying Mr. Elliott to Alaska.

119. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 7, 1874, to Special Agent Bryant, authorized to afford facilities to Mr. Elliott and Lieutenant Maynard.

120. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 7, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to examination of books and papers of company by Mr. Elliott.

121. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, May 8, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the examination of the business of the Alaska Commercial Company.

122. Letter of Secretary of Treasury, May 9, 1874, to H. M. Hutchinson, relative to contract between Secretary of Treasury and the Alaska Commercial Company.

123. Letter of Secretary of Navy, May 11, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing copy of instructions to Lieutenant Maynard.

124. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, May 11, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to forwarding notification regarding the killing of seals to the Alaska Commercial Company.

Certificate of Samuel Falconer, July 12, 1874, as to the shipment of 4,380 skins.

Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, May 14, 1874, as to the shipment of 256 skins.

Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, May 14, 1874, as to shipment of 662 skins.

General Order of War Department, May 16, 1874, relative to the importation of liquor into Alaska.

Letter of chief clerk War Department, June 3, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing 50 copies of General Order 40.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, June 6, 1874, to collectors, San Francisco; Portland, Oreg.; Astoria, Empire City, Port Townsend, and Sitka, inclosing copies of Order of War Department No. 40.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, June 11, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, transmitting inspector's return of seal-skins per Cyane and certificate of deposit.

General Order No. 57 of War Department, June 15, 1874, amending General Order No. 40.

Letter of Secretary of War, June 18, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing 50 copies of General Order No. 57.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 19, 1874, to the Secretary of War, relative to application of C. P. Fish, of the Signal Service, taking 5 gallons of alcohol to Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 20, 1874, to collector San Francisco, relative to two lots of seal-skins.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, June 20, 1874, to collectors, San Francisco; Portland, Oreg.; Port Townsend, Astoria, Empire City, and Sitka, transmitting copies of General Order of War Department No. 57.

Letter of vice-president Alaska Commercial Company, June 20, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, calling for interest on deposited bonds.

125. Letter of H. M. Hutchinson, June 20, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing papers relative to examination of affairs of Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, June 30, 1874, to the United States Treasurer, for interest-draft due the Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 2, 1874, to the vice-president of Alaska Commercial Company, inclosing coin-draft for \$1,650.

Letter of United States Treasurer, July 2, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, inclosing check for \$1,650.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, July 6, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, relative to skins per Cyane.

Letter of chief clerk War Department, July 8, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to landing 5 gallons of alcohol in Alaska by C. P. Fish, United States Signal Service.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, July 9, 1874, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to application of W. K. Lear to establish a warehouse in Alaska.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, July 9, 1874, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, allowing shipment of alcohol to Alaska by C. P. Fish.

Petition of citizens of Alaska, July 10, 1874, addressed to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to port of Wrangel.

126. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, July 10, 1874, relative to 40,000 seal-skins.

Letter of Alaska Commercial Company, July 13, 1874, to the Secretary of Treasury, acknowledging receipt of \$1,650.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, August 12, 1874, to Secretary of State, transmitting petition of citizens of Wrangel.

127. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, relative to shipment of skins to San Francisco.

Letter of Secretary of State, August 17, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to a custom-house at Wrangel.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, August 29, 1874, to the collector of customs, Wrangel, relative to port of entry on the Stikine River.

(See 126.) Affidavit of B. G. McIntyre, agent of Alaska Commercial Company, dated September 10, 1874, relative to the illegal killing of seals in Alaska.

Telegram of Secretary of Treasury, September 12, 1874, to collectors of customs at Sitka, and Portland, Oreg., authorizing them to expend \$250 in visiting Kodiack, Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of State, October 1, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to regulations for collecting customs at Stikine River, Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 6, 1874, to collector of customs, Sitka, relative to commerce on Stikine River.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 26, 1874, to collector of customs, San Francisco, transmitting seal for custom-house at Wrangel, Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 26, 1874, to collector of cus-

toms, Sitka, advising him of transmission of an official seal for Wrangel, Alaska.

128. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, November 16, 1874, to the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting certificate of deposit for \$261,822, tax on skins.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, dated December 29, 1874, to Secretary of Treasury, applying for interest on deposited bonds.

129. (See 110.) Letter of Secretary of Treasury, November 30, 1874, to the First Comptroller of Treasury, transmitting agreement with Alaska Commercial Company, for files of office.

## 1875.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, January 12, 1875, to the Alaska Commercial Company, transmitting draft for \$1,650, interest on deposited bonds.

130. Report of Assistant Special Agent W. J. McIntyre, March 15, 1875, relative to killing seals.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 21, 1875, to George Marston, Sandown, N. Y., authorizing him to report to Captain Bryant, Alaska, for duty.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, April 21, 1875, to Special Agent Charles Bryant, inclosing appointment of George Marston as assistant agent of Treasury Department.

131. Report of Special Agent Bryant, May 12, 1875, on the Seal Islands, with copies of two certificates of seal-skins shipped to San Francisco.

132. Report of William J. McIntyre, May 20, 1875, on the Seal Islands.

133. Letter of Special Agent Bryant, May 26, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to killing seals.

134. Report of Special Agent Bryant, May 28, 1875, on the Seal Islands.

Letter of Alaska Commercial Company, June 18, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, applying for interest on bonds.

135. Letter of Secretary of War, June 23, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to selling of rifles, &c., in Sitka, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

Circular of Treasury Department, July 3, 1875, to collectors of customs, relative to the importation of fire-arms into Alaska.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, July 3, 1875, to United States Treasurer, calling for coin-draft for \$1,650 for Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 8, 1875, to the secretary of the Alaska Commercial Company, inclosing draft for \$1,650, interest on bonds.

136. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, July 8, 1875, as to the shipment of 39,036 seal-skins.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, July 10, 1875, inclosing to the Secretary of War a circular of the Treasury Department relative to the importation of arms into Alaska.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, July 10, 1875, to collectors, San Francisco, New York, and Sitka, inclosing copy of above circular.

Letter of the Alaska Commercial Company, July 16, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, acknowledging receipt of interest on bonds.

Letter of Acting Secretary of Treasury, July 17, 1875, to Special Agent W. J. McIntyre, inclosing certain papers called for.

137. General Orders, No. 72, of the War Department, July 20, 1875, promulgating circular of the Treasury Department, relative to the importation of arms into Alaska.

138. Certificate of Special Agent Bryant, August 7, 1875, as to shipment of seal-skins.

Letter of collector of customs, Sitka, August 31, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the introduction of breech-loading arms into Alaska.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, September 21, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting inspector's return of cargo of furs.

Letter of Special Agent Bryant, October 9, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to delay in making his report.

139. Letter of Secretary of War, October 16, 1875, to the Secretary of Treasury, inclosing report of General O. O. Howard on Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 22, 1875, to the Secretary of War, acknowledging receipt of report of General O. O. Howard.

140. Report of Special Agent Chas. Bryant, October 11, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the condition of the Seal Islands. Inclosing report of Samuel Falconer.

Letter of Secretary of Treasury, October 13, 1875, to Secretary of War, inclosing copy of letter from collector, Sitka.

Letter of Secretary of War, October 18, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the importation of arms into Alaska.

Letter of Secretary of the Treasury, October 29, 1875, to the collector of customs, San Francisco, inclosing letter from military officer at Sitka for report.

Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, November 10, 1875, to Secretary of Treasury, transmitting inspector's return of cargo of Cyane.

141. Letter of collector of customs, San Francisco, December 8, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, relative to the alleged unlawful shipment of arms and liquors into Alaska by the Alaska Commercial Company.

Letter of president of Alaska Commercial Company, dated December 14, 1875, to the Secretary of the Treasury, calling for interest on bonds.

Letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, December 30, 1875, to the United States Treasurer, calling for draft for \$1,650, interest on bonds of Alaska Commercial Company.

#### 1876.

Letter of Assistant Secretary of Treasury, January 3, 1876, to the president of the Alaska Commercial Company, inclosing draft for \$1,650, interest on bonds.

142. Report (printed) of Special Agent H. W. Elliott, dated November 16, 1874, made to the Secretary of the Treasury, upon the condition of affairs in the Territory of Alaska.

143. Report of Spécial Agent J. S. Moore, of New York, on Alaska. Accompanying the report of Mr. J. C. Moore, are numerous statements of account and other papers, marked respectively, "A," "B," "C," "D," and "E," which are not transmitted herewith.

Report marked "A" is a lease of the Behring Copper Islands from Russia to Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., dated February 18, 1871.

Paper marked "B" contains sundry returns of number and weight of skins.

Paper marked "C" is a copy of an agreement, dated March 25, 1874, corresponding to No. 110½ on this list.

Paper marked "D" is a protest on the part of certain merchants in San Francisco, dated July 9, 1875.

Paper marked "E," statements of accounts due to natives.

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No. 1.

*Copy of lease from the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company of the right to take fur-seals in Alaska. Delivered August 31, 1870.*

This indenture, in duplicate, made this third day of August, A. D. eighteen hundred and seventy, by and between William A. Richardson, Acting Secretary of the Treasury, in pursuance of an act of Congress approved July 1, 1870, entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," and the Alaska Commercial Company, a corporation duly established under the laws of the State of California, acting by John F. Miller, its president and agent, in accordance with a resolution of said corporation, duly adopted at a meeting of its board of trustees held January 31, 1870, witnesseth :

That the said Secretary hereby leases to the said Alaska Commercial Company, without power of transfer, for the term of twenty years from the first day of May, 1870, the right to engage in the business of taking fur-seals on the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, within the Territory of Alaska, and to send a vessel or vessels to said islands for the skins of such seals.

And the said Alaska Commercial Company, in consideration of their right under this lease, hereby covenant and agree to pay for each year during said term, and in proportion during any part thereof, the sum of fifty-five thousand dollars into the Treasury of the United States, in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary to be made for this purpose under said act, which payment shall be secured by deposit of United States bonds to that amount; and also covenant and agree to pay annually into the Treasury of the United States, under said rules and regulations, a revenue tax or duty of two dollars upon each fur-seal skin taken and shipped by them, in accordance with the provisions of the act aforesaid; and also the sum of sixty-two and one-half cents for each fur-seal skin taken and shipped, and fifty-five cents per gallon for each gallon of oil obtained from said seals for sale on said islands or elsewhere, and sold by said company. And also covenant and agree, in accordance with said rules and regulations, to furnish, free of charge, the inhabitants of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, annually, during said term, twenty-five thousand dried salmon, sixty cords fire-wood, a sufficient quantity of salt, and a sufficient number of barrels for preserving the necessary supply of meat.

And the said lessees also hereby covenant and agree, during the term aforesaid, to maintain a school on each island in accordance with said rules and regulations, and suitable for the education of the natives of said islands, for a period of not less than eight months in each year.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree not to kill upon said island of Saint Paul more than seventy-five thousand fur-seals, and upon

the island of Saint George not more than twenty-five thousand fur-seals per annum; not to kill any fur-seal upon the islands aforesaid in any other month except the months of June, July, September, and October of each year; not to kill such seals at any time by the use of fire-arms or other means tending to drive the seals from said islands; not to kill any female seal or any seal less than one year old; not to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree to abide by any restriction or limitation upon the right to kill seals under this lease that the act prescribes or that the Secretary of the Treasury shall judge necessary for the preservation of such seals.

And the said lessees hereby agree that they will not in any way sell, transfer, or assign this lease, and that any transfer, sale, or assignment of the same shall be void and of no effect.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree to furnish to the several masters of the vessels employed by them certified copies of this lease, to be presented to the Government revenue officers for the time being in charge of said islands, as the authority of said lessees for the landing and taking said skins.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree that they, or their agents, shall not keep, sell, furnish, give, or dispose of any distilled spirits or spirituous liquors on either of said islands, to any of the natives thereof, such person not being a physician and furnishing the same for use as medicine.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree that this lease is accepted subject to all needful rules and regulations which shall at any time or times hereafter be made by the Secretary of the Treasury for the collection and payment of the rentals herein agreed to be paid by said lessees; for the comfort, maintenance, education, and protection of the natives of said islands, and for carrying into effect all the provisions of the act aforesaid, and will abide by and conform to said rules and regulations.

And the said lessees, accepting this lease with a full knowledge of the provisions of the aforesaid act of Congress, further covenant and agree that they will fulfill all the provisions, requirements, and limitations of said act, whether herein specifically set out or not.

In witness whereof the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year above written.

WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON, [SEAL.]  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*  
 ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY, [SEAL.]  
 By JNO. F. MILLER, *President.*

Executed in presence of—  
 J. H. SAVILLE.

I certify that the foregoing printed copy of the lease of the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company, of the right to take fur-seals in the Territory of Alaska, has been compared with the original on file in this Department, and is a true copy thereof.

J. H. SAVILLE,  
*Chief Clerk Treasury Department.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., September 3, 1870.

No. 2.

AUGUST 3, 1870.

SIR: On behalf of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Haven & Co., I have the honor to request that the collector of the port of San Francisco be instructed to deliver to said Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Haven & Co., the fur-seal skins now in the custody of said collector.

Said seal-skins were shipped recently from Alaska by said Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Haven & Co., per steamer Alexander. I respectfully request that the collector be instructed by telegraph to deliver said skins to said Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Haven & Co., by said collector, on the payment of the tax of one dollar per skin by said owners.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney for Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.,  
and Williams, Haven & Co.*

Hon. WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 3.

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 4, 1870.

SIR: As there remain but two months of the present season during which fur-seals may be lawfully killed for their skins in Alaska, viz, September and October, and as it requires all the intervening time for the Alaska Commercial Company to reach the seal-islands and be prepared to commence business by the first proximo, and more than two weeks will be required to transmit the company's bond to San Francisco and return it here, with the signatures of the sureties who reside there, I have the honor to request—

First. That a special permit be issued to the Alaska Commercial Company to proceed to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska, with a vessel or vessels, and supplies, and authority to engage in and proceed with its business on said islands.

Second. As two months, June and July, have already expired, and as it would endanger the preservation of the seal-fisheries to kill 100,000 seals in September and October, I have the honor to request that the Secretary of the Treasury fix the number of seal-skins to be taken this season, at, say, 50,000, or not to exceed that number, and adjust the rental for this year in accordance therewith.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 4.

WASHINGTON, D. C., August 6, 1870.

SIR: On behalf of the Alaska Commercial Company, I have the honor to request that permission be given it to send a vessel or vessels at once to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska, with

such supplies, stores, and other necessaries as are requisite, with authority to land the same, and proceed with its business of taking fur-seals at said islands, in conformity with law and the terms of the lease of said privilege.

I make this application for the reason that unless this authority be given immediately the company will not be able to reach said islands in time to commence business by the 1st proximo, and the law permits no fur-seals to be taken this season \*except during September and October.

Very respectfully,

THE ALASKA COM. CO.,  
By N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Its Attorney.*

Hon. WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 5.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., August 8, 1870.*

SIR: Application has been made to me by N. L. Jeffries, esq., attorney for the Alaska Commercial Company, for permission to send a vessel or vessels to the seal-islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, with supplies, stores, &c., and to bring back such seal-skins as may be caught on the islands, under the act of Congress approved July 1, 1870, and the lease executed by and with said company.

I inclose herewith three copies of the act referred to, one of which you will forward to the United States agent stationed at Saint George's Island, and another to the agent at the island of Saint Paul, retaining the other for the use of your office.

Authority to said company is hereby given for a vessel or vessels to proceed from your port to the islands before mentioned, with such supplies as may be proper, to engage in the business of bringing away fur-seal skins, and in advance of the delivery of copies of the lease required by the 4th section of said act.

Before the return of said vessel or vessels to your port, further instructions will be given you in the premises.

You will furnish said company with a copy of this letter, to be exhibited to the Treasury agents at the islands, as their authority for taking the vessels up there.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

T. G. PHELPS, Esq., *Collector,*  
*San Francisco, Cal.*

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No. 6.

WASHINGTON, *August 9, 1870.*

*To the honorable the Secretary of the Treasury:*

The undersigned, as the attorney of Louis Goldstone, of San Francisco, California, and on his behalf, respectfully protests against the action of the Secretary of the Treasury in awarding the lease of the right



to take fur-seals on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, under the act of Congress approved July 1, 1870, to the Alaska Commercial Company, on the bid of the said Goldstone; he, the said Goldstone, being lawfully and properly entitled to said lease on his said bid. And for divers other good and sufficient causes.

JOS. W. McCORKLE,  
*Attorney for Goldstone.*

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No. 7.

OFFICE OF HUTCHINSON, KOHL & Co.,  
No. 425 SACRAMENTO STREET,  
*San Francisco, August 16, 1870.*

SIR: Under the act approved July 27, 1868, and President's proclamation of the 4th of February, 1870, together with accompanying instructions of the Treasury Department, dated February 7, 1870, we are prohibited from landing arms and ammunition on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

As under the recent orders from the War Department all military forces are to be withdrawn from the islands, and as we are expected under the lease to provide for our own defense, it is highly important to us, and only justice at the hands of the proper authorities, that the regulations should be so modified as to allow the landing, subject to the direction of the officers in charge of the island, of a small consignment of arms and ammunition. Not only are these arms necessary for protection against marauders who may, at any time, descend upon the islands if left without means of defense, but at certain seasons of the year, and chiefly early in the spring, before the arrival of the seals, small quantities of game, such as ducks and snipe, may be killed with fire-arms. But it should be understood that the guns are not intended in any manner to be used in killing seals, and are at all times to be under control of the officers of the Government.

We desire you, therefore, to lay the matter before the Treasury Department, and endeavor to have the restriction in question so modified as to allow us to make the shipment in question. If successful, you will please induce the Department to telegraph to collector of customs, at this port, at our expense, as our steamer, "Alexander," is expected to sail for the islands on the 28th instant.

Very truly, yours,

THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL CO.,

H. H. McINTYRE, *Agt.*

N. L. JEFFRIES, Esq., *Attorney at Law,*  
*Washington, D. C.*

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No. 8.

AUGUST 17, 1870.

SIR: On behalf of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams, Havens & Co., of San Francisco, I have the honor to request permission to pay the tax due the United States on the fur-seal skins now in the custody of the collector of the port of San Francisco, in the city of New York,

to such officer or depositary as you may designate, instead of making such payment in California.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Attorney for Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams & Haven.*

Hon. WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON,

*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 9.

OFFICE OF HUTCHINSON, KOHL & Co.,  
NO. 425 SACRAMENTO STREET,  
*San Francisco, August 19, 1870.*

DEAR SIR: We were surprised on receipt of your telegram of the 18th instant, asking us to furnish you the facts relative to the fox-skins from the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, as we had no reason to suppose that any question could be raised concerning our unrestricted right to ship fox-skins from the islands at any time; but, on the contrary, were led to believe by the action of the Department that we were justified in purchasing and shipping from Alaska, under the same conditions as any other goods are purchased and shipped, any furs except seal-skins.

The facts appear as follows: On the 3d of March, 1869, the joint resolution was approved making the islands a Government reservation, and soon after the late Secretary of the Treasury, and subsequently, in July, 1869, the present Secretary, permitted us to take supplies to the islands for the sustenance of the natives pending the action of Congress for their relief; but the Department could not have entertained the idea that we were to support the inhabitants of the islands unpaid for an indefinite length of time, and must have understood that we were to receive such skins as might be taken, under the law and the instructions of the Treasury Department, by the natives.

There being no restriction on the unlimited killing of foxes, we took care to obtain as many of these animals as possible, and, at the time permission was obtained to bring away our seal-skins, said nothing about shipping them, for the reason already stated, that these furs were, as we had every reason to believe, included under the same commercial regulations as any other goods of ordinary production.

On the arrival of the skins at this port, in order to avoid any suspicion that might arise on the part of the customs authorities that we were discharging seal-skins, we opened the cases and called their attention expressly to the fact that we were removing only fox-skins from the vessel, and never for a moment thinking that any question could arise concerning them. But the seemingly over-cautious customs-officers, seizing upon the technicalities of the law as an excuse for their action, seized also upon our skins, and now hold them subject to the decision of the Department.

Concerning the course the Department may pursue, we have no fear that its decision will be unfavorable to our interests; but we must protest against this apparently unnecessary annoyance and delay which prevents our skins from reaching London in time for the September sales, entailing upon us the additional expense of storage, attorney's fees, &c., as well as subjecting us to loss on account of the detention.

We desire you to represent the matter to the Department, calling attention to this statement of facts, and requesting early action in the premises.

Very truly, yours,

HUTCHINSON, KOHL & CO.,  
Per McINTYRE.

N. L. JEFFRIES, Esq., *Attorney at Law,*  
*Washington, D. C.*

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No. 10.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., August 22, 1870.*

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th ultimo, in which you inquire whether wines are included in the prohibition levied upon the importation of spirituous liquors into the Territory of Alaska.

While the regulations of the Department, issued in pursuance of law, apply in terms to "distilled spirits," it was, and is, the intention to have them apply to intoxicating drinks of all kinds, and to discourage, so far as it has the authority, their importation or transportation to that Territory.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

WILLIAM KAPUS, Esq.,  
*Collector of Customs, Sitka, Alaska.*

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No. 11.

OFFICE OF NOAH L. JEFFRIES,  
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW,  
CORNER FIFTEENTH AND F STREETS,  
*Washington, August 24, 1870.*

SIR: On behalf of the Alaska Commercial Company, for the reasons stated in the inclosed letter of the company of the 14th instant, I have the honor to request that the collector of the port of San Francisco, Cal., be instructed by telegraph, at the expense of the company, to permit the Alaska Commercial Company to ship to and land on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska, a few fire-arms and a small amount of ammunition.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 12.

OFFICE OF THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, August 30, 1870.*

The lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, having been awarded to the Alaska Commercial Company for a term of

twenty years, the following rules and regulations are issued for the guidance of the company's agents on said islands:

1. Seals may be killed during the months of June, July, September, and October, only. But the natives may kill a limited number of young seals, for food, during other months.

2. Female seals will under no circumstances be killed, nor will any seals be killed on or about the rookeries.

3. No person will be allowed to kill any seals on the islands, except as authorized by the company.

4. No vessel, other than those of the company or Government, will be permitted to touch at the islands except as authorized by the company.

5. The company will pay the natives, as heretofore, forty cents per skin for such number of skins delivered by the side of the vessel, for shipment, as they may from time to time authorize to be killed, furnishing all material necessary to preserving the same. But no skin less than two nor more than four years old will be received, nor will any cut or damaged skin be taken.

6. All provisions and merchandise required by the natives will be furnished them from the company's warehouses, at 25 per cent. advance on invoice-prices in San Francisco.

7. Such supplies of fuel, oil, and salmon, as the natives may require, as well as casks and salt to be used in preserving seal-meats, will be furnished gratis.

8. Spirituous liquors will under no circumstances be permitted on the islands, and the preparation of fermented liquors by the natives will be discouraged as far as possible.

9. Fire-arms will be used on the islands at such time and place only as the officer of the Government in charge may designate, but never in killing seal.

10. No dogs will be permitted on the islands.

11. The social relations of the natives will not be interfered with.

12. Schools will be maintained eight months in the year, four hours per day, Sundays and holidays excepted, and agents and teachers will endeavor to secure the attendance of all who are capable of learning.

13. Agents will at all times treat the natives kindly and endeavor to preserve the most amicable relations between them and the company; and will instruct them as far as practicable in household economy and the principles of a higher condition of civilization.

14. Agents in charge of the islands will transmit to this office detailed monthly reports of the condition of affairs at their respective stations.

A strict compliance with the foregoing, and such rules as may be hereafter from time to time issued from this office, is enjoined upon agents, in charge of the islands, and any willful violation of the same will be deemed sufficient cause for removal.

JOHN F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

H. H. MCINTYRE,  
*General Agent.*

No. 13.

[Telegram.]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., September 9, 1870.

T. G. PHELPS, *Collector of Customs,*  
*San Francisco, Cal.*

Permission has been granted to the Alaska Commercial Company to take a limited supply of arms and ammunition to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska. Take schedule of quantities; direct company to furnish copy thereof to officers of the islands, and instruct said officers to see that the same are not used for improper purposes.

W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

No. 14.

SEPTEMBER 9, 1870.

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON:

You were kind enough to suggest that you would procure a modification of the inclosed executive order, so as to permit the Alaska Commercial Company to take a small supply of arms and ammunition to Saint Paul and Saint George Islands.

I inclose a dispatch received this moment. As the steamer leaves tomorrow, and the President will return this evening, I hope you will excuse my troubling you during the session of the Cabinet.

But as the company will not, perhaps, be able to send another vessel this fall, I am very anxious to have a telegram sent to the collector at San Francisco this afternoon, authorizing the shipment of the arms and ammunition.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney, &c., Alaska Commercial Company.*

No. 15.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., September 9, 1870.

So much of executive order of February 4, 1870, as prohibits the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the Islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, is hereby modified so as to permit the Alaska Commercial Company to take a limited quantity of fire-arms and ammunition to said islands, subject to the directions of the revenue officers there and such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

U. S. GRANT,  
*President.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
September 10, 1870.

The following executive order, relating to the importation of arms into the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, within the district of Alaska, is published for the information of officers of the customs:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
Washington, D. C., September 9, 1870.

So much of executive order of February 4, 1870, as prohibits the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, is hereby modified so as to permit the Alaska Commercial Company to take a limited quantity of fire-arms and ammunition to said islands, subject to the direction of the revenue-officers there and such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

U. S. GRANT,  
President.

The instructions issued by this Department in its circular of February 8, 1870, are accordingly modified so as to adjust them to the above order.

Revenue-officers will, however, see that the privilege granted to the said company is not abused; that no fire-arms of any kind are ever used by said company in the killing of seals or other fur-bearing animals, on or near said islands or near the haunts of seals or sea-otters in the district, nor for any purpose whatever, during the months of June, July, August, September, and October of each year, nor after the arrival of seals in the spring or before their departure in the fall, excepting for necessary protection and defense against marauders or public enemies who may unlawfully attempt to land upon the islands. In all other respects, the instructions of February 8, 1870, will remain in force.

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
Acting Secretary.

No. 17.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., September 13, 1870.

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of Treasury regulations of September 10, 1870, under executive order of September 9, 1870, relative to the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
Acting Secretary.

ALANSON HINMAN, Esq.,  
Collector, Astoria, Oreg.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., September 13, 1870.

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of Treasury regulations of September 10, 1870, under executive order of Septem-

ber 9, 1870, relative to the importation and use of fire arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

HARVEY W. SCOTT, Esq.,  
*Collector, Portland, Oreg.*

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., September 13, 1870.*

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of Treasury regulations of September 10, 1870, under executive order of September 9, 1870, relative to the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

M. S. DREW, Esq.,  
*Collector, Port Townsend, Wash.*

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., September 13, 1870.*

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of Treasury regulations of September 10, 1870, under executive order of September 9, 1870, relative to the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

WILLIAM KAPUS, Esq.,  
*Collector, Sitka, Alaska.*

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., September 13, 1870.*

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, a copy of Treasury regulations of September 10, 1870, under executive order of September 9, 1870, relative to the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

T. G. PHELPS, Esq.,  
*Collector, San Francisco, Cal.*

## No. 18.

OFFICE OF NOAH L. JEFFRIES,  
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW,  
CORNER OF FIFTEENTH AND F STREETS,  
*Washington, September 17, 1870.*

SIR: The *Alta California*, a newspaper published in San Francisco, in its issue of the 8th instant, contains an advertisement stating that the schooner *Mary Zephyr* will sail for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, on the 15th instant.

Up to this time there has been no official notification of the award of lease to the Alaska Commercial Company, and I have the honor to request that the collector of the port of San Francisco be directed to publish, in one or more of the San Francisco journals, an official announcement of the fact that said lease has been awarded to said company, and that no vessels except those of the Government and of the Alaska Commercial Company will be allowed, under any circumstances, to touch or land at either of said islands.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney for Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

Mr. JAMES:

You may send a copy of the letter to collector of San Francisco, and direct him to give the notice asked for, at the expense of the Alaska Commercial Company, first obtaining their consent to pay such expense.

W. A. RICHARDSON.

## No. 19.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., September 19, 1870.*

SIR: I inclose herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 17th instant, from N. L. Jeffries, attorney for the Alaska Commercial Company, reciting that a notice recently appeared in the *Alta California* newspaper, published in your city, of the intended sailing of the schooner *Mary Zephyr* for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

By the 4th section of the act of July 1, 1870, entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," it is provided that the Secretary of the Treasury, immediately after the passage of said act, shall lease to proper and responsible parties, &c., &c., the right to engage in the business of taking fur-seals on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, and to send a vessel or vessels to said islands for the skins of such seals, &c.

This lease has been awarded to the company above named for the term of twenty years, a copy of which is herewith inclosed; and the request of General Jeffries that an official announcement be made of the award of said lease, and that no vessels except those of the Government and of said company will be allowed to touch or land at either of



said islands, may be complied with, and you will please cause such notice to be published in one or more of the San Francisco newspapers, at the expense of said company.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

T. G. PHELPS, Esq.,  
*Collector of Customs, San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 20.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
*Collector's Office, September 27, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to report that the bark *Cyane* has arrived at this port from Alaska, having on board 47 fur-seal skins. The owners of these skins, Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., inform me that they were procured at Kodiak from the natives, who capture the seals as they go to and from the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul. The killing of fur-seal within the Territory of Alaska is made an offense, punishable by fine or imprisonment, by the 6th section of the act of July 27, 1868, unless it should be held that the act of July 1, 1870, modifies the section referred to. The killing of the fur-seal at any place within the Territory of Alaska, except the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, is still prohibited under the section above quoted. It should be prohibited, because at all other places than the islands they are killed without regard to age or sex; besides, the tax of two dollars per skin levied by the 6th section of the act of July 1, 1870, only applies to skins taken at the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, and the Government will therefore lose its revenue from this source to the extent to which the killing outside of these islands is allowed.

I respectfully request that instructions be issued with reference to the course to be pursued in case of the arrival of more skins. I gave permission for this small lot to be landed, deeming that to be the prudent course in the absence of any specific instructions. The fur-seal skins are taken while the seals are migrating as far south as Puget Sound, and I am assured the entire number taken south of the islands of Saint George and Paul will aggregate from ten to twenty thousand per annum.

The skins thus illegally taken should be confiscated. This may possibly be done here, but the probable effect of making the attempt will be to cause the small traders to take their cargo of skins to Victoria for sale. The most effective way of preventing this illegal catch would seem to be to instruct the Government officers at Sitka, Kodiak, and Ounalaska to seize all fur-seal skins, and cause those engaged in taking them to be properly punished.

I am, very respectfully,

T. G. PHELPS, *Collector.*

No. 21.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., September 30, 1870.

TIMOTHY G. PHELPS,  
*Collector of Customs, San Francisco, Cal.:*

Retain possession of the eleven thousand five hundred fur-seal skins brought from Jones's Island per bark Mauna Loa, and similar lot expected to arrive, until otherwise instructed.

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 22.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, September 30, 1870.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, relative to the published notice of the sailing of the schooner *Mary Zephyr* for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska. On seeing the advertisement in the *Alta*, written notice was immediately sent to the parties interested, that no vessel would be permitted to land at said islands. I have caused a notice, as suggested by the honorable Secretary, to be published. Please find a copy of the notice inclosed.

I am, very respectfully,

T. G. PHELPS,  
*Collector.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
COLLECTOR'S OFFICE, September 28, 1870.

NOTICE.—In compliance with an order of the honorable Secretary of the Treasury, notice is hereby given that a lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in the Territory of Alaska, has been executed by the Secretary of the Treasury to the Alaska Commercial Company for the period of twenty years from the 1st day of May, 1870, in accordance with the provisions of an act of Congress entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, and that, by the terms of said lease and the above-mentioned act, the said company have the exclusive right to engage in the business of taking fur-seals on said islands and the islands adjacent thereto. No vessels, other than those belonging to said Alaska Commercial Company or to the United States, will be permitted to touch or land at either of said islands or the islands adjacent thereto, nor will any person be allowed thereon except the authorized agents of the United States and of said company.

T. G. PHELPS,  
*Collector of Customs.*

[Bulletin copy.]

## No. 23.

DISTRICT OF ALASKA CUSTOM-HOUSE,  
*Port of Sitka, October 6, 1870.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Hon. W. A. Richardson's letter of the 2d of August, 1870, in reference to the prohibition placed upon the importation of spirituous liquors into the Territory of Alaska, and stating that "while the regulations of the Department issued in pursuance of law apply in terms to 'distilled spirits,' it was and is the intention to have them apply to intoxicating drinks of all kinds, and to discourage, so far as it has the authority, their importation or transportation to that Territory."

This subject presents many, and, with the limited means at my command to overcome them, almost insurmountable difficulties.

When I first took charge of this district, liquors were allowed to be brought here on condition that bonds were executed at the port of shipment, that upon their arrival at Sitka they be turned over to the chief officer of the customs, and by him held until the written permit of the general commanding the department for their withdrawal was procured. This plan worked very well, at least as well as any plan intended to curtail the importation of spirituous liquors into a new country like Alaska can work.

The general commanding and the collector, by working together, could and did regulate the amount allowed to go out; permission to withdraw liquor was only given to such persons as would not abuse the privilege, and but very little, if any, of the liquor found its way into the hands of the Indians.

At that time the steam-cutter Lincoln was on duty in this district, and by reference to my reports it will be found that several seizures of liquors found in the hands of unauthorized persons, or brought here in violation of law, were made by her.

The Executive Order of February 4th prohibits the importation or transportation of all spirituous liquors into this district, without making any provision or allowance for even a small amount for the use of the white inhabitants. As soon as this order was received I set to work to carry it out to its very letter, and how well I succeeded is shown by the fact that a small amount, some seven or eight gallons, which had been seized some time previous, was sold at public auction for \$13.50 coin per gallon.

But as men, especially those living in a climate as cold and damp as that of Alaska, *will have* liquor, and as they find it impracticable, owing to the close watch kept upon all the vessels arriving here, to import it, they commenced to manufacture it out of molasses, bread, flour, and other materials. On the 25th of April, I discovered a man by the name of Henry E. Cutter in the act of distilling liquor. I at once seized his still and the liquor found on hand, and reported my action on the 26th of April to the Department.

My course in the matter received your approval, (letter of June 21, 1870,) but I was informed that, "in cases of the character reported, you (I) would undoubtedly be justified in making seizures, but as the offenses are not properly infractions of the customs revenue laws, you (I) will exercise your (my) own discretion as to the propriety of seizing in similar cases that may hereafter arise."

I took the broad ground that if liquor was permitted to be manufactured, the Executive Order, and instructions from the Department in reference to preventing the bringing of liquors into the Territory, would

become dead letters; for if liquor could be made here, the necessity for bringing it would be done away with. I therefore seized all the stills that I could find, and reported the men discovered in the act of distilling, there being no court here, to the general commanding for his action. They were generally put into the guard-house for a week or so, and then turned loose. I have now in my warehouse five stills that have thus been taken possession of.

Since this course has been adopted, the making of liquor in this town has been discontinued, but what is a great deal worse, parties now make it at points so far removed from here that I cannot reach them, and deal it out to the Indians in unlimited quantities. I have received reliable information that there is a small schooner in the neighborhood of Hut-she-noo and Far-coo distilling liquor, and trading the same to the natives for furs, &c. These parties are well aware that there is no steam cutter or steam-vessel of any kind belonging to the Government in this district, and that the cutter *Reliance*, being a sailing-vessel, cannot follow them into the narrow channels and shallow bays, selected by them as their field of operations. About the middle of June last, the American bark *George*, Captain Osborne, called at Hamilton's Fishery, a point about one hundred and fifty miles from Port Tougas, and traded to the Indians all the whisky they wanted. As soon as the matter was reported to me, I directed the inspector at Tougas to call upon the commanding officer at Port Tougas for a detail of men, and proceed in an open boat, or if he could not procure that, in a large canoe, to the place named and seize the vessel. Mr. Lessen, the inspector, did everything in his power to carry out my instructions, but found it impossible to reach the fisheries with the means at his command. Had there been a small steam-cutter in this district, the bark would no doubt have been captured.

I would respectfully suggest the following plan, by which, in my opinion, this traffic can be broken up and prevented: Allow small quantities to be shipped from domestic ports on the Pacific to the port of Sitka, and that port only, upon bonds being given at the port of shipment that the same be, upon its arrival, turned over to the chief officer of the customs. That officer should have power, either by himself or in conjunction with the commanding officer, to turn this liquor over, in limited quantities, for the use of the whites, to responsible parties who should give bonds that none of it shall find its way into the hands of the Indians.

The acts of June 30, 1834, and February 13, 1862, ought to be extended over the Territory of Alaska, for though this may be considered Indian territory, and no doubt is, still it has never been declared so by law. Give the collector of customs, or the commanding officer at Sitka (the only military post in Alaska now,) power to carry these laws into effect, and send offenders to the United States district courts of either Washington Territory or Oregon for trial, and very soon nothing more will be heard of this traffic, especially if there is a small steam-cutter stationed in this district, one of light draught but great power, and which can follow those whisky-traders into all their hiding-places.

I have also to report that there are, and have been for over two years, two breweries in active operation at this place. I can find no law authorizing me to interfere with them, especially as it is a doubtful question whether or not lager-beer is an intoxicating drink. But the internal-revenue tax ought to be paid on the beer made. Special Agent Wicker has called the attention of the Department to this matter, but as that

officer left the Territory on the 4th of February last, it is not known what instructions he received in reference thereto.

The officers of the Army and Navy stationed at this place have inquired of me if the recent instructions will prevent them from sending for a limited quantity of wines for their own private use. I have told them that I did not think that it was the intention of the Government to deprive them of their table-wines, and that if they would certify on honor that the wines sent for were for their own personal and private use, that, in my opinion, no objections would be made. Please direct me on this point. I am desirous to carry out your orders to the very letter, and all I ask is to be fully instructed.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM KAPUS,  
*Collector of Customs.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 24.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., October 12, 1870.*

SIR: Your communication of the 27th ultimo is received, in relation to the illegal killing of the fur-seals at places in Alaska other than the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

In reply, I transmit herewith a letter addressed to the collector at Sitka, instructing him to issue strict orders to his subordinates for the prevention of such illegal killing and traffic, and for the bringing of the offenders to punishment; and also for the seizure of all such seal-skins illegally taken as aforesaid, and for their transmittal to your port for forfeiture.

After you have perused the said letter, I will thank you to forward it to the collector at Sitka by the first opportunity.

Any fur-seal skins hereafter arriving at your port from any portion of the Territory of Alaska, other than the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, you will detain in your custody, reporting the fact to the Department, and awaiting its instructions.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

T. G. PHELPS, Esq.,  
*Collector, &c., San Francisco, Cal.*

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No. 25.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., October 12, 1870.*

SIR: The Department is informed by the collector at San Francisco that the bark Cyane has lately arrived at that port with a quantity of fur-seal skins on board, which were obtained at Kodiak; and, also, that the fur-seal skins are annually taken to the number of from ten to twenty thousand in and about the islands of Alaska other than Saint Paul and Saint George.

As the killing of fur-seals in Alaska, at any other place than the said

islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, is strictly prohibited by law, and made punishable by fine and imprisonment, you are instructed to issue strict orders to your subordinates at Kodiak, Ounalaska, and other places in the collection-district of Alaska, for the prevention of such illegal killing and traffic, and for the adoption of such measures as may be necessary to bring offenders under the law to punishment; you will also instruct such officers to seize all fur-seal skins found by them to have been killed as aforesaid, and to duly forward them to your custom-house. Such seal-skins will then be transmitted by you, accompanied with the necessary information, to the collector at San Francisco, in order that proper proceedings may be instituted for their forfeiture.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

WM. KAPUS, Esq.,  
*Collector, &c., Sitka, Alaska.*

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No. 26.

SPECIAL AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, October 19, 1870.*

I hereby certify that on the 1st of July, 1870, there were in store-house on Saint Paul's Island, three thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight, and on Saint George's Island, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine fur-seal skins.

[SEAL.]

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

STATE OF CALIFORNIA,  
*City and County of San Francisco, ss :*

S. N. Buynitzky, being duly sworn, says that the signature to the certificate hereto attached is the genuine signature of Charles Bryant, esq., special agent of the Treasury Department United States, and the same was written by said Bryant in my presence at the island of Saint Paul, Alaska, on the day said certificate bears date, and that the five thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven fur-seal skins now on board the American steamer Constantine, arrived at this port this the 11th day of November, 1870, are the same fur-seal skins mentioned in the said certificate hereto attached.

S. N. BUYNITZKY,  
*Clerk Treasury Department.*

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 11th day of November, 1870.

[SEAL.]

S. V. JOICE,  
*Notary Public.*

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No. 27.

B.

ISLAND OF SAINT PAUL, ALASKA,  
*October 19, 1870.*

SIR: On the 9th instant the steamer Constantine, belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, arrived here, bringing to me a letter of

the collector of customs at San Francisco, covering certified copies of Department's letter of August 8, 1870, to said collector, and of the act of July 1, 1870. At the same time the general agent of the Alaska Company, Mr. H. H. McIntyre, informed me, verbally, that official letters addressed to myself and Mr. S. N. Buynitzky, esq., had been sent from the custom-house at San Francisco, but went, by error, with the mail to Kodiak. Thus it happens that I am left to act on fragmentary information. I found on board the Constantine, as passenger, Mr. Samuel Falconer, late deputy and acting collector at Sitka, who stated to me that he had left the service of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and would offer his services to the Government.

Having in view the desire expressed to me by Mr. Buynitzky, in July, to be relieved this fall from his temporary duties at Saint George, in consideration of urgent family matters requiring his presence at Washington, I thought it advisable to avail myself of Mr. Falconer's offer, and, by letter of 10th instant, I appointed him, subject to the approval of the Department, assistant special agent, at a compensation of \$6 per diem; and after his filing the customary oath of office, I instructed him to proceed, together with myself, to the island of Saint George. On the 12th instant we sailed over to Saint George, where he relieved Mr. Buynitzky, who was thus made free to proceed to Washington.

In the absence of any instructions from the Department, under the new status I intend to adopt such course of action as is most obviously suggested by the import of the act of July 1, 1870; that is, to take such measures as will most efficiently secure the interests of the Government and those of the population at the sealing islands, and have instructed my assistant accordingly. I hope that my action in the premises will meet with the approval of the Department, and the nomination of Mr. Falconer and the terms thereof will be confirmed. As to my action, from the day of my taking charge of the sealing islands up to the present date, I have briefly to state that I have punctually carried out the programme described in my report of July 14, 1870, and have found that the same has been faithfully executed by Mr. Buynitzky on the island of Saint George. Provisions have been distributed, and fur-seals taken, and skins subdivided as set forth in said report, and I may justly say that the result has been satisfactory to all parties concerned. The company doing business at the islands had no motives of complaint, and the natives have expressed their entire satisfaction, and asked me to transmit to the Hon. Secretary of the Treasury their sincere thanks for the timely relief and the easy terms at which provisions have been supplied them.

Notwithstanding the novelty of the incoming state of affairs at these islands, some points of paramount importance claim immediate attention, and I consider it my duty forthwith to make most urgent representations in regard to the necessity of immediate action of the Government to meet imperative exigencies created by the leasing of the islands and the removal therefrom of the United States troops.

The faithful collection of nearly \$200,000 of tax on fur-seal skins (from the nature of the business and the geographical position of these islands) will principally depend upon the supervision of the revenue officers in charge of the sealing islands, and I am convinced it will be necessary to have on each island two officers, of whom one special agent and one assistant. There being no communication between the two islands but by means of the ships coming up to the islands in summer, under the present system, in case of sickness or death of an agent of the Treasury at one of the islands, the interests of the Government

at that island might remain for months exposed to the dangers of anarchy.

The agents of the Treasury have been heretofore lodged in houses claimed by the company, and had to board with the company's officers. This arrangement ought not, for various reasons, to be made permanent. A house should be built on each island for the accommodation of Government officers, and this may be done at an expense of, say, \$2,000 per building, which is but a trifling sum, considering the prospective importance of the revenue to be collected for the twenty years' duration of the lease.

The removal of the United States troops from the islands, and the recall therewith of their contract doctors, leaves both communities exposed to all chances of disease, (so frequent in this severe climate,) without any medical assistance. The terms on which the Alaska Commercial Company has obtained the lease leave no margin for any improvements in the situation of the nations, outside of the obligations actually imposed on the company. On the other hand the rate of taxation upon the seal-skins, (the only industry of the inhabitants of the sealing islands,) and the fact of their being deprived of the benefits of free competition of traders, seem to entitle them to some special compensation on the part of the Government.

I beg leave to suggest that a yearly appropriation of \$5,000 be asked for, to be equally divided between the two islands, for compensation of learned and experienced medical practitioners and contingent expenses, and an appropriation of \$6,000 once, for the purpose of providing suitable buildings for hospitals and the dwellings of the doctors.

In conclusion, I take pleasure in bringing to the notice of the Department a fact witnessed by me in my last visit to the island of Saint George, a fact gratifying to all those who, like myself, feel interested in the future moral development of the Aleutian population. On the 14th instant I was present at the examination of a school of twelve boys and six girls in English reading; they distinctly read any page of Wilson's primer, counted up to one thousand, named the days of the week, the months and seasons of the year, various articles of dress, household implements, &c., &c. This was the result of about three months' work. Rendering justice to the zeal and ability of the founder of the school, Mr. S. N. Buynitzky, I cannot refuse a due share of praise to the natural gifts of the Aleutian race, and I beg leave to express here my earnest belief that the Aleutes might become as good American citizens as any admitted under the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution.

I am, sir, with great respect,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 28.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., November 1, 1870.

SIR: Your letter of July 14, in reply to the Department's letter of May 24 last, is received.

In view of the fact of the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul having been leased by the Government to the Alaska Commercial Com-



pany, and permission having been granted them, under date of August 8, to send a vessel or vessels to said islands with supplies, &c., no action is deemed necessary by the Department on the suggestions contained in your letter on the subject of furnishing supplies for the natives of said islands. Should the necessity still exist, however, for the transfer of Mr. Buynitzky from the island of Saint George to Saint Paul, as requested in your letter, you are hereby authorized to instruct him to report to you accordingly and inclose him a copy of this letter.

In regard to any seal-skins which may have been salted and preserved by the natives and held at the disposition of the Government to cover actual cost of provisions and salt issued to them, I have to state that the same should be forwarded at the first available opportunity to the collector at San Francisco, to be held subject to the order of this Department, you taking accurate count thereof and notifying said collector of the number shipped and of the tenor of these instructions.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

CHARLES BRYANT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent, Saint Paul, Alaska,*  
*Care Collector of Customs, San Francisco, Cal.*

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No. 29.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., November 18, 1870.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to your communication of the 22d ultimo, inclosing a translation of a note from the Russian minister in relation to a claim of the Russian government to the ownership of certain seal-skins detained at the custom-house, New York, I have the honor to inform you that, by reason of a demand having been made by the consignees of said merchandise for its delivery to them on or before the 21st instant, I deemed it advisable, so as to avoid any unnecessary delay in the matter, to address a letter, of which the inclosed is a copy, direct to the Russian minister.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. HAMILTON FISH,  
*Secretary of State.*

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30.

C.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December 30, 1870.*

SIR: By letter of instructions of May 25, 1870, I have been detailed to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska Territory, there to act under the orders of Captain Charles Bryant, special agent of the Treasury Department, and also to obtain and report to the Department such information as might be acquired relative to the seal-fishery and the commercial interests of the islands and of the country generally. Concerning my action at the islands, under the instructions of Captain Charles Bryant, I beg leave respectfully to refer to Mr. Bryant's official

reports. As to the information which I have been able to acquire relative to the seal-fishery and the commercial interests of the islands and of the country, I have the honor to submit the following :

The islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, owing to their isolated position, their climate, and the configuration of their shores, seem to have been particularly designed by nature for the propagation of the species of seals commonly known under the name of fur-seal, and scientifically classified under the appellation of "*phoca ursina*." The numbers of fur-seals congregating every summer at the islands are literally beyond computation. At the commencement of spring they begin to appear in the Behring's Sea, coming from the Pacific through the straits of the Aleutian islands, chiefly through Dunimac Pass. Full-grown males (called bulls) are the earliest visitors at the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul; they approach the islands in the last days of April, and after a careful survey of their habitual resting-grounds, settle thereon to await the arrival of the females, which takes place considerably later. The seals invariably select for their resting-grounds (rookeries) such beaches as are strewn over with large bowlders, affording a safe hold against the sweep of the surf; flat sandy beaches are carefully avoided by them, probably on account of the danger to which the new-born seals would be exposed of being carried off by the sea before they have learned to live in that element. From the day of their settling on the rookeries to the epoch of the appearance of the females, the bulls sleep almost without interruption. Toward the end of May they begin to look out for the coming of their families. The females (cows) generally recognize their former mates, and land at their respective rookeries. There being a considerable difference between the male and the female in regard to age of puberty, (six years for the male and two for the female,) this species is necessarily polygamous, and an average family numbers about ten cows to one bull. The rookeries nearest to the water are occupied by the propagators, while the minor individuals of the tribe have to camp on the slopes, where they are more exposed to the danger of being cut off from the sea, and to become the prey of the hunter. The hunting begins as soon as the resting-grounds are fully occupied, which generally happens about the end of June. It is carried on until the middle of November, when the seals leave the islands, to disappear for five months in the vast expanse of the Pacific. The surrounding, driving, killing, and flensing of the fur-seals has been reduced to a science by the natives of the islands. A day is waited for when the direction of the wind allows of a rookery being approached so that the game cannot scent the hunters; a party of from twenty to thirty men, armed with clubs, cautiously advance along the shore until the retreat of the animals toward the sea is cut by the line of hunters; then, at a signal from the chief of the expedition, the men rush up the cliffs and drive toward the interior of the island as many seals as have been surrounded. When the herd has been driven a certain distance from the shore a halt is made, and a sorting of the game as to age, sex, and condition of the fur, is effected. This operation requires the exercise of a lifelong experience, and is of the utmost importance, as the killing of females, which are easily mistaken for young males, even by the natives, would endanger the propagation of the species, and the slaughtering of males under two or over four years old would be a useless extermination, their furs having little value for trade. The sorting once accomplished, all the animals not destined for killing are allowed to escape toward the rookery, and the balance of the herd is driven to the slaughtering grounds, situated near the salt-houses. Great care is taken, when driving, that the ani-

mals do not become overheated, for, should this happen, the skins would become worthless, the fur falling off. On reaching the slaughtering grounds, the drove is allowed a rest of two or three hours, after which, at a signal given by one of the chiefs, the killing is effected with wonderful rapidity. I have seen a drove of sixteen hundred seals dispatched by thirty men in little more than an hour of time. As soon as the animals are killed, all available hands, men, women, and children, rush to the work of flensing, which has to be finished as soon as possible to prevent the carcasses from stiffening. Every part of the animal is turned to account; skin, flesh, blubber, and intestines. The skins are immediately taken to the salt-house and placed in large vats, the fur-side down, and the flesh-side plentifully sprinkled with salt. When the skins have been thoroughly saturated with salt, which process requires about forty days, they are taken up and shaken; then another lighter coating of salt is applied, and they are booked up in folds, ready for shipment.

The commercial value of fur-seal skins depends upon their size, and particularly upon the quality of the fur. The greatest proportion of first-class skins are obtained from seals three years old.

London is the most important and almost the only market for fur-seal skins; there they are manufactured into elegant furs by a series of technical operations, the secret whereof is jealously kept by a single firm. The prices obtained in London by American traders for seal-skins shipped in 1867 and 1868 ranged from 16s. to 30s. per skin, according to quality. The cost of each skin rendered at London, including compensation of natives, expenses for salt, shipment from the islands to San Francisco, transshipment for Europe, freight, and commissions, amounted to \$1.50 in gold. This was the figure of costs when the price paid by the traders to the natives for each skin was nominally from 20 to 40 cents, but actually less, as the same traders realized on some articles furnished to the natives a profit of nearly a hundred per centum. At present, when the Alaska Commercial Company has fixed the price to be paid to the natives at 40 cents per skin, and the advance on San Francisco prices of commodities brought to the islands at only 25 per cent., the above figure of costs will be considerably increased. Some increase of costs will be occasioned by the obligations assumed on the part of the company as to the establishment and keeping of gratuitous schools for the natives, and also by certain additional advantages vouchsafed to the natives, as appears from the instructions of the company to its agents, a copy whereof is herewith submitted. So that in future the actual cost of each seal-skin rendered at London will amount to no less than \$2, exclusive of the pro rata of the rental, and the tax imposed by the conditions of the lease.

The fat or blubber of all the seals killed for their skins is not more than sufficient to supply the want of fuel at the islands. Although every chip of driftwood is carefully collected by the natives, and brought with great pains to the village from the remotest points, almost all of it is used up in the repairs continually required by the rapidly decaying wood-work of their miserable dwellings, and only a small quantity may be reserved for the purpose of kindling the seal-blubber fires. The summer temperature at the islands being 45° and the mean temperature of the year out 38°, the dwellings, which are nothing better than cellars covered with turf, have to be heated all the year round. Notwithstanding the enormous quantity of seal-blubber consumed at the islands, a considerable amount of it might be converted into seal-oil for exportation; thousands of old bulls, which have become useless for the purposes of

propagation and are an incumbrance to the rookeries, might be killed for their blubber, and thus a new and profitable article of trade added to the resources of the islands. Unfortunately the market-price of seal-oil is lower than the tax offered on this article by the competitors for the lease of the islands, and consequently this branch of industry has no chance of being developed.

The population of the islands, numbering 240 on Saint Paul and 125 on Saint George, are mostly Aleutes, some half-breeds, and a few descendants of Kamtchadales, brought over Kamtschatka by the vessels of the Russian-American Company. Their mother-tongue is the Aleutian, a language spoken with slight variations all over the Aleutian Islands and the southeast coast of Alaska peninsula. The Russian language is understood by all and intelligently spoken by many. They all belong to the Greco-Russian Catholic Church, and are sincerely attached to their religion.

According to the statement of the natives of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George a notable improvement in their material welfare has taken place since the transfer of the Territory to the United States. Still, their prosperity is far from being in harmony with the importance of their share in the production of wealth. Their dwellings, damp, insalubrious hovels, constructed of drift-wood and sods, are particularly in painful contrast with all other conditions of their life. There being no building-materials at the islands, the natives are unable to accomplish any considerable improvement in their system of building without assistance on the part of the Government.

The prevalence of inflammatory diseases of the lungs, mostly due to the miserable condition of dwellings, requires the presence of a medical practitioner at each island. The recall this summer of the United States troops, and therewith of the contract-doctors who were attached to the military posts at the islands, leaves the population without medical assistance. Some provision toward supplying this want is absolutely necessary. The only place in the Territory besides the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, which I had the opportunity to visit, was Ounalashka, the most important of the Aleutian Islands. Situated near the Ounimak Pass, which is the best entrance to the Behring's Sea, and possessing a good harbor, Ounalashka is visited by vessels engaged in the fur-trade more than any other port, not excepting Sitka. The principal settlement of the island is Illulook Harbor, with three hundred inhabitants. It is the religious metropolis of the Aleutian tribe. From this point the light of Christianity spread all over the Aleutian archipelago. Here lived the apostle of the Aleutes, Father John Veniaminoo, whose name and teachings are reverently transmitted from father to son in every Aleutian family.

Fishing and sea-otter hunting are the principal occupation of the inhabitants of Ounalashka. Fresh and dried fish are the staple article of food. The sea-otter skins, of which the Ounalashkans secure from three to four hundred a year, are traded at the rate of from \$15 to \$35 for clothing, hardware, crockery, sugar, tea, and tobacco.

The Aleutian tribe, numbering about three thousand, represents nine-tenths of the trade of the Territory, and is unquestionably far in advance of all other tribes with respect to moral, religious, and social development.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

S. N. BUYNITSKY, *Clerk.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 31.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February, 9, 1871.*

SIR: In your letter to this Department, under date of July 28, 1870, you mention, among other things, that you inclose a list of the officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company, which does not appear to be upon the files, and although it may not be of any consequence, yet, as the letter contains the statement that a list was furnished, I have the honor to request that you transmit a copy of the list.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Gen. JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company, San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 32.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 10, 1871.*

SIR: I am in receipt of your letters of December 3 and January 3 last, requesting instructions in regard to the disposition to be made of certain wine, ale, and porter transported in bond to your port in contravention of the instructions of this Department of February 8 and August 22, 1870.

In reply thereto, you are hereby directed to retain the merchandise in question in your custody until the parties are prepared to return it under proper transportation-bond to the port from which it was transported, or elsewhere, when it may be delivered them for that purpose. Such shipment, however, should be made under the supervision of a customs-officer, to be designated by you, and every precaution taken to prevent its being relanded in the district of Alaska.

The collector at San Francisco was advised, under date of the 7th ultimo, of the Department's views upon this subject, and instructed not to allow the shipment of intoxicating liquors of any kind to your district.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

WM. KAPUS, Esq.,  
*Collector, Sitka, Alaska.*

(Care of collector of customs, San Francisco, Cal.)

No. 33.

ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
 No. 425 SACRAMENTO STREET,  
*San Francisco, February 17, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, and in reply beg to state that the list of officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company, which accompanied

my letter of July 28, 1870, was returned to me by the Hon. Secretary upon my verbal request, it being at that time considered as a document of no consequence, and not necessary to the files of the Department. I have not the original paper, but believe it to be in the possession of General Jeffries, our attorney, to whom I have written, requesting him to return the paper to the Department. In the event the original cannot be found, I beg to substitute the inclosed copy, which is substantially the same as the original.

I take the liberty, also, to inclose herewith a list of the officers and stockholders of the company at the present time, supposing it may serve some useful purpose should an occasion arise for the use of any such list.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

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*List of officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company.*

*Officers.*—John F. Miller, president; Richard H. Chapell, vice-president; H. M. Hutchinson, secretary.

*Trustees.*—Henry P. Haven, Louis Sloss, H. M. Hutchinson, John F. Miller, Richard H. Chapell.

*Stockholders.*—John Parrott, H. P. Haven, H. M. Hutchinson, R. H. Chapell, Thomas Hood, C. A. Williams, G. Niebaum, Louis Sloss, August Wassermann, Lewis Gerstle, John F. Miller, L. Roscowitz, William Kohl, S. J. Field.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate list of the officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company on the 28th day of July, 1870.

JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

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*List of officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company on the 17th day of February, 1871.*

*Officers.*—John F. Miller, president; John Parrott, vice-president; E. Neumann, secretary.

*Trustees.*—John F. Miller, John Parrott, Lewis Gerstle, H. M. Hutchinson, Richard H. Chapell.

*Stockholders.*—R. H. Chapell, citizen of Connecticut; Henry P. Haven, of Connecticut; Ebenezer Morgan, of Connecticut; E. A. Williams, of Connecticut; Samuel Willets, of New York; Daniel T. Willets, of New York; John F. Miller, of California; Lewis Gerstle, of California; H. M. Hutchinson, of California; L. Roscowitz, of California; William Kohl, of California; Louis Sloss, of California; August Wassermann, of California; John Parrott, of California; Tiburcio Parrott, of California; Simon Greenewald, of California; G. Niebaum, of Alaska.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate list of the officers and stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company on this the 17th day of February, 1871.

JOHN F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

## No. 34.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
Washington, D. C., March 21, 1871.

So much of Executive order of February 4, 1870, as prohibits the importation and use of distilled spirits into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, is hereby modified so as to permit Professor Louis Agassiz to ship one hundred gallons of alcohol to Mr. Charles Bryant, a special agent of the Treasury Department, on duty in that territory, subject to such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe; the said alcohol to be used solely in the preservation of specimens of animals that are being collected for the museum of Harvard College.

U. S. GRANT,  
*President.*

## No. 35.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 17, 1871.

SIR: The act entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to lease the right of taking fur-seals in Alaska; and, in accordance with its provisions, the Secretary leased said privilege to the Alaska Commercial Company.

The act prohibits the killing of fur-seals except during the months of June, July, September, and October; and authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to "further restrict and limit the right of killing" fur-seals, and in such case the rent reserved to the Government to be reduced in proportion to such restriction or limitation.

The Alaska Commercial Company respectfully represents to the Secretary of the Treasury that it did not obtain its said lease until the 31st day of August, 1870; that on receipt of the same it immediately and with due diligence undertook the prosecution of this business, and by the 18th day of September its steamer Constantine sailed from San Francisco, carrying supplies and all necessaries for the same, for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska, which she reached on the 8th day of October, making the voyage in less than the ordinary time.

The months of June, July, September, and nearly one-third of October having thus expired before the company could reach the seal islands, by using, as it did, the utmost dispatch and effort, there remained but nineteen working-days of the four months in which seals could be lawfully killed, and for which entire term of four months (within which the company is authorized to kill one hundred thousand seals) a rental of \$55,000 is reserved to the Government.

The company respectfully represents that during said nineteen days in October it secured but a limited number of seal-skins, instead of fifty thousand, which it might have taken in the full months of September and October.

By a former order of the Treasury Department, this company was restricted to fifty thousand seals for the present year, and the rental reduced in the same proportion. The object of this communication is to respectfully request the Secretary of the Treasury to so modify said order that said limitation and restriction will conform to the actual

number of seals taken under said lease, (when the actual number shall have been ascertained,) and the rental reduced in the same proportion.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON,

*Secretary Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 36.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 5, 1871.*

SIR: Mr. N. L. Jeffries having personally requested, in behalf of the Alaska Commercial Company, that the said company may hereafter be allowed to deposit the amount of their rent, as per the terms of their lease, for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, with the United States assistant treasurer at San Francisco, instead of with the United States Treasurer at Washington, I have to inform you that the said request is hereby granted, until otherwise ordered, but with the express understanding that said contract shall not in any particular be waived or avoided by granting said request.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

JOHN F. MILLER, Esq.,

*President Alaska Commercial Company,*

Per N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Attorney, Washington, D. C.*

No. 37.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May 6, 1871.*

SIR: On behalf of the Alaska Commercial Company, I have the honor to request that it be authorized to pay the tax due the Government on account of fur-seals taken under its lease, pursuant to the act entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," to the assistant treasurer at San Francisco, California.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Attorney for Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 38.

SAINT GEORGE ISLAND, BEHRING SEA, ALASKA TER.,  
*May 14, 1870.*

SIR: Having been appointed by you, October 10, 1870, to act as your assistant on Saint George Island, I beg leave to submit the following report:

On arriving at my post of duty I was furnished by your late assistant,



Mr. S. N. Buynitzky, the following statement, purporting to be the number of seals taken during his term of office, together with that of Lieut. R. Henderson, for the year 1870, up to the time of writing:

SAINT GEORGE ISLAND, *October 14, 1870.*

There was taken this year, up to July 17, fur-seals.....	2,434
From July 17 to October 10.....	4,352
Total.....	6,786

Of this number 1,500 skins are kept free from any private claim, subject to further orders of the Treasury Department.

S. N. BUYNITZKY.

In addition to this number, there was taken during the close of the season 473, making a grand total of 7,259 for the year 1870.

The number of seal-pups killed during the whole season, for native food, foot up to 1,200, and are not included in the above figures.

As the fur-seal season was almost closed before my arrival, I am unable to furnish you with much of a report on this subject, but will confine my remarks chiefly to the native inhabitants of the place, together with other incidents of interest which happened from time to time.

I was not long a resident of the place until I found, to my astonishment, a higher degree of civilization existing among them than I anticipated; and I am happy to add, in reference to this, that the new arrivals, who are in the employ of the Alaska Commercial Company, proved to be no way detrimental to them in their ideas, but, on the contrary, assisted them in carrying out this order of civilization into a higher degree of perfection. Indeed, I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Brown, the agent of this company, who has been very particular in carrying out the conditions of the agreement between the company and the Government, which, together with many other acts of kindness shown them in aid of their comfort, has rendered him quite a favorite among them.

The company, having furnished abundance of everything that is necessary for the comfort and sustenance of life, and from the very low prices charged on many of the principal articles, has left no room for complaints.

In speaking of these people, I may safely state that I know of no class of the human race that enjoy themselves any more than these do. Scarcely has there been an evening pass over their heads but what they would engage in dancing, or some other silly amusements.

The health of the island is good, there being no disease of any kind upon it. The number of deaths since my arrival are three, two of which were infants, and caused by sheer neglect of their parents; the other was a child of five years, the ailment of which had been long standing. Quite different from that of last year, there being nineteen deaths recorded on the books kept by the chief of the island. From inquiry, I am informed that many of those deaths referred to were caused by the manufacture and use of quass, a kind of liquor made by the natives out of flour and sugar. This year there has been a stop put to the manufacturing of the article, the result of which will, doubtless, keep many from filling an early grave.

The number of births up to date is five, four of which are alive and doing well.

On the 1st of November last a school was re-established for the natives, the attendance of which number about 25; and, from the advanced state they were left in by our friend Mr. Buynitzky, it was no

difficult task to get along with them. They are making rapid progress, and feel anxious to learn the English language. Even men who have advanced to the age of thirty and forty attend school, and are making equal progress.

The temperature of the weather I kept, and used Fahrenheit thermometer. For the last two months of the year 1870, the mean temperature ranged as follows: For November, 30.80; December, 28.60. For January, 1871, mean 30.04; February, 23.22; March, 14.85; and April, 32.52. The coldest day during the entire winter season was on the 19th of February, the thermometer indicating as low as zero, although you will perceive that March was the coldest month by great odds.

On the 2d of this month the ice made its appearance, and landed on the north side of the island in a limited quantity; but day after day it forced its way along from the north, till it made a complete bridge between this island and that of Saint Paul. Indeed, I am of opinion that the whole surface of the sea to the north of this was a solid sheet of ice. In a report given by a former agent of the Territory, he stated that the white bear was known to frequent those islands. At that time I doubted the assertion, but to-day I am ready to indorse it; not that I have seen any pay us a visit, but it is not but what an opportunity has presented itself for them to do so.

The schooner H. M. Hutchinson, owners Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., San Francisco, sailed from this island on the 20th of October last, in ballast, and *en route* for San Francisco, E. Henning in command. Also, the steamship Constantine, same owners, sailed from here on the 21st of October last, *en route* for San Francisco, with 1,800 salted seal-skins on board, taken from this island, M. C. Erskine in command.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL FALCONER,

*Acting Assistant Special Agent.*

Capt. CHAS. BRYANT,

*Special Agent Treasury Department, in charge of Seal Islands.*

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No. 39.

OFFICE SPECIAL AGENCY,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska Ter., May 19, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival, on the 15th of the present month, at this island, of the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander, laden with material and supplies for the island. As I have received no communication whatever from the Department by said steamer, I must conclude that such matter must have been sent, by mistake, to Sitka, in which case I am not likely to receive it for a year or so; and I beg leave to request that, as no vessels but those belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company visit these islands, instructions be given that all mails be forwarded to these islands from San Francisco direct.

In the absence of any instructions, I shall be guided by a certified copy of the act of Congress authorizing the lease and the conditions of the lease, as given me by the company.

I am happy to report that thus far the conditions have been fully complied with. The store has been well stocked with goods of good quality, and sold at low prices; provisions also the same.

The health of the inhabitants has been very good since my last report. There have been six births and six deaths, one adult, two boys, and three infants.

The Alaska Commercial Company have now brought, at their own expense, a physician to reside permanently on the island.

In November last a school was opened for the natives, which was attended by twenty-nine pupils, who were between the ages of seventeen and five years; the average attendance was 95 per cent.; all manifested great interest in learning the English language, and made good progress; all learned the alphabet, and many were able to read simple sentences.

I herewith transmit a very able report of Acting Assistant Special Agent Samuel Falconer, on the condition of the island of Saint George, under his charge.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, yours,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 40.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
No. 310 SANSOME STREET,  
*San Francisco, June 13, 1871.*

SIR: Referring to the question reserved for the decision of the Department, as to the amount of rental justly due from the Alaska Commercial Company for the year ending May 1, 1871, under their lease to Saint Paul and Saint George Islands, Alaska, I beg to state that the steamer Alexander arrived from said islands on the 9th instant, bringing from Saint Paul Island 3,448 fur-seal skins, which comprise the whole catch of 1870 on that island after the entry upon the island by the company. On the island of Saint George there were taken during the same time 3,000 skins, which still remain on the island, the same being frozen in the kenches, so that it was impossible to remove them at the time of the departure of the Alexander. The whole number of skins taken by the Alaska Commercial Company during the year 1870 was, therefore, 6,448.

The fact that so small a number was taken is as surprising to the manager of the company as it can be to the Department, and is accounted for by the fact that the cold season began at the islands much sooner last year than is usual, and the seals consequently left the islands nearly a month earlier than they are accustomed to do. There were about nineteen working-days of the season for sealing remaining after the arrival of the steamer at the islands with the lease, in October last, and, owing to the early departure of the seals, nearly half of that time was lost to the company; so that, instead of taking 15,000 skins, as was confidently expected, the number actually taken was only about 6,450.

I beg the Department to consider that to require the company to pay rental proportioned for the whole time from the passage of the act of July, 1870, when, in truth, the company could not begin operations under the lease until the season had nearly expired, will result in serious

loss to the company, and is manifestly not in accordance with the true intent and meaning of the contract existing between the company and the Government.

It will be perceived that it has cost the company the same amount of money to support the natives during the winter of 1870 that it would have cost had the catch been four times as large.

Under the most favorable adjustment of the question of rent, the company will inevitably lose a large sum of money in the first year's operations.

For these and other reasons before given, and because it is just and right as between the company and the United States, I would respectfully request the honorable Secretary to take from the special deposit of \$27,500, made by the company with him to cover the rent for 1870, an amount proportioned to the number of skins actually taken under the lease; that is to say, the whole rent being \$55,000, the maximum number of skins allowed to be taken being 100,000, and the number actually taken under the lease for 1870 being 6,450, the amount of rent exacted should be, as we believe, \$3,547.50.

Should the honorable Secretary require positive proof of the number of skins taken, as above stated, it will be furnished from the islands on the return of the Alexander from her next trip, some time in October next. The certificate of the special agents of the Treasury at the islands, establishing the facts as herein stated, can at that time be produced.

Trusting that a favorable adjustment of this matter may be made at an early day, I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant.

JNO. F. MILLER,

*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

HON. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 41.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., June 28, 1871.*

SIR: You are authorized to proceed to the seal-islands, Alaska, by the steamer Alexander, which is expected to leave San Francisco about the 10th of July next, for the purpose of aiding Captain Bryant in the discharge of his duties there while he shall remain, and with authority, in case he should leave, as it is now expected he will in the autumn, to take charge of the islands in reference to the seal-fishery.

You are instructed to see that the laws of the United States concerning the seal-fishery under the contract with the Alaska Commercial Company are observed; that the natives are protected in their rights; and, in general, you will perform all those acts which shall appear to be necessary for the interests of the United States in those islands.

Should Captain Bryant decide to remain at the islands during the winter, you can also remain through the winter and following season, should it be deemed necessary by him; but in case your services are not required, you may return by the earliest opportunity, bringing with

you such reports as Captain Bryant may transmit, together with a written report of whatever you may deem of importance to the Department.

During your absence you will be allowed your salary as a clerk, and also all necessary actual expenses.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

STEPHEN N. BUYNITZKY, Esq.,  
*Secretary's Office, Treasury Department, Washington, D. C.*

No. 42.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., June 30, 1871.*

SIR: I transmit herewith a copy of lease to the Alaska Commercial Company of the right to take fur-seals in the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska.

The inclosed copy is furnished for your use, and that of Special Agent Charles Bryant.

I am, very respectfully,

J. F. HARTLEY,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Mr. S. N. BUYNITZKY,  
*Secretary's Office, Treasury Department.*

No. 43.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., July 14, 1871.*

SIR: Your letter of the 13th ultimo is received, requesting, for reasons therein stated, a reduction of the stipulated rent of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, proportionate with the number of seal-skins actually taken from such islands for the year ending May 1, 1871.

In reply, I have to say that the Department has concluded to take no action in the matter, until a report shall have been had on the subject from United States special agent in charge of said islands, or it shall have had an opportunity to confer with him in regard thereto.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

JOHN F. MILLER, Esq.,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company, San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 44.

OFFICE SPECIAL AGENCY,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, July 15, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to inform you of the arrival at this island, on the 11th of the present month, of the bark Cyane, of and from San Francisco direct, owned and controlled by the Alaska Commercial Com-

pany, and laden with supplies for this station; said bark returns via Onalaska and other stations, and will take no fur-seal skins. I hereby acknowledge the receipt, by way of Kodiak, of Department letter appointing Samuel Falconer special agent, dated December 28, 1870, and marked "H. S. V." in the upper left-hand corner; also, an accompanying letter of instructions in connection therewith, dated January 3, 1871, and marked "O. D. M." in the left-hand corner; also, twenty-five blank pay-vouchers.

I herewith inclose a duplicate copy of certificate of fur-seal skins shipped per steamer Alexander May 19, 1871.

I have the honor to remain, yours,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

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No. 45.

SPECIAL AGENT'S OFFICE.  
*Saint George's Island, August 3, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival of the steamer Alexander at this island on the 2d instant, bringing a cargo of all needed supplies for the coming winter.

Since the date of my last report, May 14, 1871, the harmonious relations heretofore existing between the natives and the Government and company have continued uninterrupted, the natives having worked faithfully during the past two months in securing skins and provisions for their sustenance next winter; and I am happy to state that, with the co-operation of the company's agent, Mr. Brown, I have succeeded in so far restricting the quantity of spirituous liquor brewed by them from their sugar and flour rations that no intoxication has been manifest.

The number of skins secured to this date amounts to about 19,000, of which some 17,000 of this year's catch and 3,000 of last year's will be at present shipped per Alexander, as per certificates herewith inclosed.

Please find also inclosed certificates for 20 cords of wood turned over to the natives by the company for their use, in accordance with the terms of the lease, and for a full supply of salmon for gratuitous distribution during the winter.

The meteorological record has been kept in accordance with your instructions, and returns are hereto appended, showing an average temperature for the month of May, 38°.32; June, 40°.85; and July, 44°.09. On the night of the 12th ultimo, two sharp flashes of lightning were experienced, accompanied by thunder and heavy rain; and it was noticeable on the next morning the bachelor rookeries were nearly deserted, the seals having gone into the water; they, however, returned during the day.

The school which was supported through last winter has been suspended for the sealing-season, but will be again opened as soon as it shall seem profitable to do so.

I am, respectfully,

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Special Agent.*

CHARLES BRYANT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department, Saint Paul's Island.*

No. 46.

ISLAND OF SAINT PAUL, ALASKA TER.,  
*August 10, 1871.*

SIR: In pursuance of your instructions of June 28, I took passage on the steamer *Alexander*, which left San Francisco on the 13th of July, and arrived here on the 31st. I immediately reported for duty to Capt. Charles Bryant, and was detailed by him on the following day to the island of Saint George, where I remained five days, returning to Saint Paul's on the 6th instant.

As Mr. Bryant has concluded to avail himself of the authority given him to return to Washington, and to leave me in charge of the seal islands, I deem it my duty to lay before the Department such facts concerning the sealing business as seem to me to require an immediate modification of the law regulating the same.

The first section of the act of July 1, 1870, makes it unlawful to kill any fur-seals except in the months of June, July, September, and October. This restriction has evidently no other object than to prevent any killing of seals at a time when the hunting of these animals might be prejudicial to the existence of the seal rookeries; but, probably, owing to inaccurate information at the disposal of the framers of the bill, the limits of time are erroneously defined. The beginning of the hunting-season ought to be determined by the condition of the rookeries at each season; that is, no sealing should be allowed before the rookeries are definitely settled, which, at some seasons, happens to be the case in the month of June, but mostly in May. As to the limitation at the end of the season, I cannot discover any particular reason therefor. The fact is that the security of the rookeries depends mainly on the manner of hunting, and but partially on the time. All restrictions as to time, while failing to attain the object in view, have proven prejudicial to the successful carrying on of the sealing business, and entailed an unnecessary loss upon the Treasury, and a grievous hardship upon the native population of the islands.

Owing to the enormous taxation falling in the shape of rental and of tax proper upon the sealing business under the present lease with the Alaska Commercial Company, the mode of carrying on the same had to undergo a radical change. Formerly every skin was worth taking; at present, none but choice furs will pay; hence the necessity of beginning the hunting as early as possible, taking very few skins in July, none in August, few in September and first half of October, and most at the end of the season, when the furs, which are very poor during the summer months, have become rich again for the winter, as is generally the case with all fur-bearing animals. The number of working-days being necessarily limited at any season by the peculiar requirements of the seal-hunting, with respect to weather and directions of winds, and the number of seals to be taken from any one drove extremely restricted by the exigencies of the market and the difficulty in selecting the proper victims, it is next to impossible to prepare a large number of good skins within the limits of time prescribed by the law without exhausting the working-energies of the population.

In addition to the advantages above stated, a great difficulty arises from the change which occurred in the tone of the foreign market since the cession of Alaska to the United States. The Russian company used the contract with the London firms for a certain number of seal-skins of average quality, to be delivered on payment of a certain sum in bulk. At pres-

ent the seal-skins are taken in London at so much apiece, according to their size and the quality of the fur, so that seal-skins have been, for instance, sold last year in London in a dozen categories, ranging in prices from 55 down to 7 shillings apiece, but few skins being classified in the higher and the greater number in the lower categories; thus the average price obtained last year did not fully amount to 20 shillings per skin. Under the existing circumstances, it is evident that the sealing business cannot be successfully carried on without the utmost exertion on the part of the officers of the government and the agents of the company for the establishment of a new system, which certainly interferes with all former notions and habits of the natives, and creates the necessity of a training altogether novel to them. However successful may be such training, no completely satisfactory results may be attained without the immediate removal of the existing restrictions as to the time of sealing.

Coming to the results of this year's season, I take pleasure in stating, to the honor of all parties concerned, that they have done better than might have been expected under the difficulties described above, the number of skins reported for tax this season being over sixty thousand, (60,000.)

I am, sir, with great respect, your most obedient servant,  
STEPHEN N. BUYNITZKY,  
*Clerk.*

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No. 47.

SPECIAL AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint George's Island, A. T., August 5th, 1871.*

This certifies that the Alaska Commercial Company has this day shipped per steamer "Alexander," from this island for San Francisco, three thousand fur-seal skins of last year's catch, and sixteen thousand nine hundred and forty-nine fur-seal skins of this year's catch; in all nineteen thousand nine hundred and forty-nine skins.

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

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No. 48.

OFFICE SPECIAL AGENCY,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, August 11, 1871.*

I hereby certify that the Alaska Commercial Company has this day shipped per steamer "Alexander," for San Francisco from Saint Paul's Island, forty-one thousand and eighty (41,080) fur-seal skins of this year's catch, and three hundred (300) fur-seal skins in bundles, taken April 28, 1870.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treas. Dept.*



No. 49.

HEADQUARTERS SPECIAL AGENCY,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, August 11, 1871.*

HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury :*

I have the honor herewith to transmit a copy of certificate to collector of customs at San Francisco, of shipment of fur-seal skins, per steamer "Alexander," this date.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treas. Dept.*

No. 50.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SITKA,  
 DISTRICT OF ALASKA, COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,  
*September 23, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 20th of July last, advising me that "information has reached the Department that several parties at this port are permitted to land and receive spirituous liquors, and also that a brewery has been established at Sitka, for the manufacture of beer;" and directing me to inform the Department whether the above information is true.

This letter was received at this office on the 14th of August last, but being absent at the time, at Kodiak and Ounalaska, which ports I visited on official business, and having only returned to this place the day before yesterday, I have been unable to reply to it until now.

Whoever gave the information that several parties had been permitted to land and receive spirituous liquors at this or any other port in this district, for sale or trade, made a statement which he must have known to be false. It was no doubt made by some law-breaker who had his liquors seized by me, and who now feels sore about the matter.

The only instance when distilled liquor was allowed to be landed here for purposes of trade, was in the case of Mr. J. A. Fuller, of this place, and the circumstances under which this landing was permitted are as follows: Mr. Fuller, who is also the postmaster, keeps a drug-store, and as it was absolutely necessary for him, in order to carry on his business, to have a small supply of alcohol to make his tinctures and other preparations with, I allowed him to send for such supplies as he might, from time to time, require. Mr. Fuller never ordered any alcohol without first notifying me of it; and that the privilege thus granted him has not been abused, is shown by the fact that during the last twelve months he has only received about five gallons, part of which he has still on hand.

I do not think that the Department will consider this a violation of the spirit of its instructions, or the executive orders. A drug-store is an absolute necessity in a community, but it cannot be carried on if the supply of alcohol is entirely cut off.

I have permitted the officers of the Army and Navy to send for, and land at this port, wines and liquors in limited quantities, for their *own personal use*; and in connection with this would respectfully refer to my letter upon the subject, of October 6, 1870, wherein I said, "The officers of the Army and Navy stationed at this place have inquired of me

the recent instructions will prevent them from sending for a limited quantity of wine for their own private use. I have told them that I did not think that it was the intention of the Government to deprive them of their table-wines, and that if they would certify, on honor, that the wines sent for were for their own personal and private use, in my opinion no objection would be made. Please direct me on this point. I am desirous to carry out your orders to the very letter, and all I ask is to be fully instructed." As no answer was received to this letter, the inference was that the Department approved of my course, and, as above stated, permission was given to these officers to receive such small quantities of wine, &c., as they needed for their own use.

With these two exceptions there has never been any distilled liquor allowed to be landed; on the contrary, all liquors that could be discovered have been seized and disposed of under instructions from your Department. Wines, ale, and porter have been taken possession of, are now kept by me, and will only be delivered to their owners when these parties are ready to comply with your orders and ship the same out of the district.

In regard to the establishment of a brewery at this place for the manufacture of beer, I would again quote from my report of October 9th, 1870: "I have also to report that there are, and have been for over two years, two breweries in active operation at this place. I can find no law authorizing me to interfere with them, especially as it is a doubtful question whether or not lager-beer is an intoxicating drink. But the internal-revenue tax ought certainly to be paid on the beer made. Special Agent Wicker has called the attention of the Department to this matter, but as that officer left the Territory on the 4th of February last, it is not known what instructions he received in reference thereto." As no answer was received to this report, I did not feel authorized to take any steps in the matter, for I had every reason to believe that, if the Department wished me to interfere with the manufacture of beer, instructions would have been issued me. These two breweries have since been consolidated into one, which has been and is now in active operation. It does seem somewhat strange that this state of things should be permitted to continue. Under your instructions I have as above stated, and repeatedly, reported before taking possession of all ale and porter imported from other places, while right here beer is made and sold in unlimited quantities. The public papers (Alaska Herald, San Francisco Chronicle, New York Herald, &c.) have taken up the case, and as they cannot understand my actions in preventing malt liquors made at San Francisco from being landed in this district, while at the same time any amount of it is being made here at Sitka, and no steps taken to prevent it, have charged me with being personally interested in the brewery at this place. That such is not the case I do not deem it necessary to assure you.

I would again call your special attention to my letter of October 6, 1870, bearing upon all these matters, and the recommendations therein contained.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
WILLIAM RAPUS,  
*Collector, &c.*

HON. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

## No. 51.

SAN FRANCISCO, *October 20, 1871.*

SIR: Intending to establish a trading station at or near Fort Yukon, in Alaska, and being informed that the military department of the Pacific had jurisdiction over and control of the buildings owned by the United States at that place, we had the honor to address a letter to Major-General Schofield, (copy inclosed,) in which we proposed to occupy the buildings as lessees of the Government, at a nominal rent, acting as the agents of the United States, to take care of the same.

General Schofield having referred our letter to the honorable Secretary of War, we have been favored with a reply, (copy inclosed,) in which we understand the honorable Secretary of War to disclaim any control or jurisdiction over Yukon, and he refers us to the honorable Secretary of the Treasury.

We beg therefore to submit our application to the consideration of the honorable Secretary of the Treasury, and to propose further that should the honorable Secretary prefer to sell the buildings mentioned, we will become the purchasers at a fair valuation.

If the sale of the buildings is deemed inexpedient, we respectfully request permission to occupy the same upon such terms and conditions as the honorable Secretary may deem proper.

We have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servants,  
HUTCHINSON, KOHL & CO.

HON. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

## No. 52.

FAIRHAVEN, MASS., *November 10, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival at Saint Paul Island, Alaska Territory, on the 31st of July last past, the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander, from San Francisco, having on board as passengers Stephen N. Buynitzky, esq., a clerk of the Department, with authority to take charge of the island, and allow me to report for duty in the Atlantic States, and now beg leave to submit the following report:

For the details of my administration from the time of my taking charge of the seal-islands, July 10, 1870, until the departure of the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Constantine, October 19 of the same year, I beg leave to refer to my former reports, dated July 14 and October 19, respectively.

The sealing season had so nearly expired at that time that only 1,600 seals were taken for their skins. November 2, about four inches of snow fell, and it became sufficiently cold for the purpose. The natives commenced taking their supply of winter food, and completed it the 11th of the same month, taking in all 2,800 young seals. These were obtained by driving the females with their young to the uplands, where the pups are caught and examined, males only being selected for this purpose, when the others are allowed to return to the rookery, and those selected are driven to the village and slaughtered; after which the chiefs apporportion to each family their part. Some are preserved by salting; others suspend them on poles, allowing them to freeze, and are so preserved for eating fresh. These pups at this time are four months old, and weigh, on the average, 36½ pounds. Their skins have no commercial value.

The principal occupation of the natives during the winter months is hunting foxes, which abound in large numbers on the island, for their skins for sale, and shooting such small game for food as can be found at that time of year. The present year the company have paid premiums to the parties getting the three highest numbers, and under this stimulant 1,400 were taken during the months of November, December, January, and February.

During the holidays, from Christmas to Lent, there was much drunkenness from beer, made by fermenting sugar and flour together. The evil became so great that it became necessary to restrict the sale to a bare ration, sufficient for their tea, and even then so strong was their appetite that they would associate together and save their small allowance until enough could be had to have a holiday, as they term it. This was especially the case on birth and saints' days. Fortunately, it does not make them quarrelsome. I was twice necessitated to interpose my authority to prevent disturbance among the natives, and once a difficulty occurred between the first chief, when drunk, and one of the employés of the company, which led to some dissatisfaction among the people, but was amicably arranged. There is no authority in the native government or provision for punishing crime, other than the church by penance, and this seems insufficient for this kind of misdemeanor. It would seem worthy of consideration whether authority should not be given the officer in charge of the island to impose small fines in these cases and apply the proceeds to relieving the necessities of the poor.

The only possible place where a school could be accommodated was the dining-room of the employés of the company, and that could be had only two hours each afternoon. As early as practicable a school was opened, and both parents and children were deeply interested in its success. It was attended by twenty-nine scholars between the ages of five and eighteen, the average attendance being 95 per cent. All learned the alphabet, and many to read simple sentences, but great difficulty was experienced in enabling them to understand the meaning, their isolated condition being unfavorable to the development of ideas, and it was found that the only effective method was object-teaching, for which there existed a scant supply of material. The school had to be closed in April, and, owing to the difficulty of many attending during the sealing season, it had not been resumed. At the time of my leaving, (August 15,) a large building was being fitted expressly for the school, and a place for the people to assemble.

The past winter has been the most severe in long-continued cold weather in the memory of the oldest inhabitants of the island. On the 5th of February large bodies of drift-ice came down from the north, enveloping the island on all sides, and did not finally disappear until May, a period of ninety days. Although no considerable ice formed along the shores of the island, huge sheets of this drift-ice, three or four feet thick, were pushed by the tide high on the rocks, and remained obstructing the rookeries until late in June, before melting. Owing to this cause the seals were a month later than usual in landing, and many landed in a crippled condition, exhibiting evidence of having suffered injury in washing through the large bodies of ice to the south of the island.

May 15, 1871, the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander arrived from San Francisco, having on board the general agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, and a number of employés of the company, to reside permanently on the island. The steamer had also as passengers, the Russo-Greek bishop from San Francisco, with his attend-

ants, making a parochial visit, and to minister to the spiritual wants of the people. The steamer having touched at Saint George, in accordance with verbal orders given him by me, Special Agent Samuel Falconer, esq., came to confer with me in regard to the affairs of that island. The steamer brought all needful supplies and materials for conducting the business of taking seal-skins. These were landed, and a small number of seal-skins shipped, (3,448, as per certificate dated May 19, 1871.) The steamer sailed on the 19th for San Francisco.

A small number of seal were taken for food during the month of May, and the skins salted.

June 1, the seals being present in sufficient numbers, the company commenced taking skins. This employed all the natives steadily, the working-force of the island being just sufficient to perform the work in the given time.

June 11, the company's bark Cyane arrived from San Francisco, laden with lumber, wood, and salt for the island.

There were several families residing on the island who came here in the employ of the former Russian fur company, from the island of Kodiak. At the time of the transfer of the territory, four of these contracted to work in the employ of Williams & Havens, of New London, Connecticut, to be returned by them to Kodiak at the end of the sealing season of 1869. It not being convenient for the agent of Williams & Havens to do this, they agreed with him to cancel said contract, and received one hundred dollars each instead of the conveyance to Kodiak, and have since resided on the island, sharing with the other natives in the labor and proceeds of the sealing business. As the bark Cyane was to return by way of Kodiak, and the agent gave them permission to take passage, four families availed themselves of it. These contained eight adults and five children.

The bark having landed her supplies, sailed again on the 16th for San Francisco, via Onalaska and Kodiak, and the sealing was continued until July 31.

July 31, steamer Alexander arrived from San Francisco with the supplies for the ensuing winter. After landing part of her cargo August 1, the steamer visited the island of Saint George to land supplies and take on board skins; Stephen N. Buynitzky, acting under verbal orders from me, taking passage on her for the purpose of conveying to Samuel Falconer a letter of appointment as special agent of the Treasury Department, also a letter of instructions from myself, a copy of which, with a copy of his report on the condition of that island, I herewith inclose.

There are on the islands a population of 370 natives, so called; these are about one-half pure Aleutian blood, the other half of creole blood; in several the foreign element predominates. They have a well-organized system of government, under chiefs of their own election, subject to removal at the will of the people, whenever they choose. Those now acting have done so for three years, and are very efficient men. These exercise a kind of patriarchal supervision over the affairs of the whole people, but possess no power to enforce their authority beyond the expression of their will. This meets all their wants as a simple community, but there sometimes arise contingencies when this is insufficient.

The proceeds of the sealing business are a common property, shared by all, and all are expected to participate in the labor.

Sometimes, when delivering skins to ships, some are disposed to shirk their duty for apparently frivolous reasons. In such cases I have felt called on to exercise my authority. There, too, is always a liability of differences arising between natives and the employés of the company

which call for the exercise of judicial powers. These make it worth while to consider how far the resident officer should be empowered to act in cases where an appeal to the Department would require a year to get a decision.

The population of Saint Paul is 249; that of Saint George, 127; this is somewhat unequal in proportion to the labor and proceeds of the sealing business, Saint Paul having two-thirds of the population, with three-fourths of the labor and proceeds; but this will probably be equalized by the removal of some of the people from Saint George to Saint Paul.

The population of both islands, except the chiefs, who live in wooden houses of their own, are living in underground houses built of turf, containing three compartments; an outer one, where in an open space the cooking is done, with blubber for fuel; a middle one, half wash-room and half out-house; an inner one, not larger than ten by twelve, lighted by a single sash. Not half of these have wooden floors or ceilings. Here, crowded together, without ventilation, to keep themselves warm as they best can by animal heat during long, tedious winters, sickness necessarily prevails; and without means to struggle against or for comfort, their average life is shortened, and its later years full of pain and suffering, while full half the infants, for want of care, do not live to six months. And this, where the experience of the military and civil officers and employés of the company demonstrates the climate to be especially favorable to robust health. I would most respectfully ask, in behalf of these people, that application be made to Congress for an appropriation to furnish material to build small wooden houses above ground. There are native carpenters sufficiently skillful to do all the labor. All that would be necessary is to furnish the material at the islands, and place it in charge of the Government officer, who could see to its proper disposal and use. Such material would cost at the island five hundred dollars per house, and the number required would be on Saint Paul forty, and Saint George twenty. The company propose building such houses and allow the natives to live in them, but refuse to sell the lumber or houses to them, being averse to the natives acquiring any right or title to such property on the island. This, for obvious reasons, ought not to be. The natives are already more than sufficiently dependent on the company, and ought not to hold their houses at the will of the resident agent. Congress, by leasing their island and taxing its only industry, the seal fishery, so heavily as to preclude the company's being liberal, owe it to them to see that they have every reasonable comfort, and are fully protected in their rights. It is doubtful whether, without the right of ownership in their houses, they can be induced to change their confirmed habits, so as to secure the necessary conditions of cleanliness and comfort desirable for their better health. Some method might be adopted by which they might repay the outlay for their houses, as the proceeds of the seal fishery, \$30,000 on Saint Paul, and \$10,000 on Saint George, annually paid by the company, is amply sufficient, with proper economy, for all the comforts and many of the conveniences of civilization.

In my report to the Department, dated October 19, 1870, I had the honor of calling the attention of the Department to certain exigencies existing under the new arrangement of affairs at the islands. One was that a suitable building be erected on each island for the accommodation of the Government officers, they being now dependent on the company, whose means are limited for their own employés. Another was that a physician be allowed for each island and paid by the Government,

and a suitable building erected for their accommodation. Should this be granted, I would suggest that one building be erected for both purposes, as less expensive. The other was that an additional officer be allowed each island, and this I deem important for the following reasons: The interests of the Government are too great to be left dependent on the health of a single officer, the great distance and infrequent communication rendering it liable that a whole year might elapse before the information could be transmitted and the want supplied. Another, and equally important, is that the nature of the business is such that the required knowledge necessary to keep the Government informed of its condition in advance can only be obtained by a residence on the island, at least one year, and by careful observation comparing one year with another; nor can it be imparted to another, unless on the ground, and, in the event of a change of officers, the experience of the one leaving would be lost to the Government.

The whole number of seals taken during the year 1869, as ascertained by actual account on their delivery in July, 1870, was:

On Saint Paul's Island .....	60,992
On Saint George's Island .....	24,909
Total .....	85,901

*Seals killed during the year 1870.*

On Saint Paul's Island :	
From April 28 to July 1 .....	3,988
July 1 to October 9, salted .....	6,449
Cut skins not salted .....	278
October 9 to November 30; salted .....	1,597
Cut skins not salted .....	202
Young seals killed for winter supply of food .....	2,800
Total .....	15,314
Saint George's Island :	
Previous to July 1 .....	1,799
July 1 to October 10 .....	4,987
October 10 to close of the season .....	473
Pups for winter supply .....	1,200
Total .....	8,459
Grand total for 1870 .....	23,773

*Skins taken during the present season, 1871, up to July 31.*

On Saint Paul's :	
May, for native food .....	418
June .....	20,042
July .....	24,705
Cut skins rejected .....	335
Total .....	45,503
Saint George's Island, as per report of special agent, Samuel Falconer, up to July 31 .....	17,000
Total on both islands up to July 31, 1871 .....	62,503

Beside the above, 1 per cent. should be allowed for loss by heating while driving and otherwise; this will cover all seals killed at the islands.

During the interval between July 1, the date of the act authorizing the lease and its promulgation at the islands October 10, there were killed on Saint Paul's, 6,449, and on Saint George's, 4,987 animals for food for the natives. These were mostly one-year-old seals, and their skins are not of prime value. Of these, there were reserved in accordance with

the plans stated in my report of July 14, 1870, and salted on Government account, on Saint Paul's, 2,040, and on Saint George, 1,500 skins. These are the same mentioned in my report of May 19, 1871, the necessary order for the shipment of which miscarried by mail, and I only received the certified copy at the date of my leaving the island, when no opportunity occurred for shipping them, the steamer being loaded to her fullest capacity with skins belonging to her owners. The remainder of these skins are in the hands of the Alaska Commercial Company; not being worth the tax, are left on the islands.

Skins damaged by cutting have always sold at half price in market, and the same rates been paid for them at the salt-house. Since the leasing, they not being considered worth the tax, have been rejected by the company. This has resulted in no loss, as will be seen by reference to the foregoing statement. Formerly the average of cut skins equaled 6 per cent. of the whole; since their rejection the average has decreased to three-fourths of one per cent.

About six thousand gallons of oil have been rendered, at a cost of 25 cents per gallon, by allowing the natives 6 cents per gallon for skinning and carrying the blubber to the place of rendering—a compensation scarcely in proportion to the labor, as the saving of the oil doubles the skinning and carrying. The cost of rendering, 25 cents, added to the tax, 55 cents, makes a total of 80 cents per gallon at the island, while the market value is less than 50 cents. It must be obvious no company can afford to incur the expense necessary for carrying on a business involving such positive loss. In my opinion, no great revenue can be derived from taxing the oil, and as the natives are the parties most to be benefited by its saving by us, its affording an additional industry to their island, I would suggest that in place of a revenue tax there be established a regulation fixing a stipulated price, say 20 cents per gallon, to be paid by the company to the natives for all the oil shipped from the island. This would leave a margin sufficient to pay the cost of rendering and shipping. In this way about fifty thousand gallons of oil may be obtained annually above or over what blubber is required by the natives for fuel. The proceeds of this would enable them to purchase wood or coal to warm their houses in winter. The blubber, being entirely unfitted for that purpose, is now burned in an out-house for cooking only, the sixty cords of wood now annually distributed among them being insufficient for baking purposes.

The breeding rookeries, so called, are the rocky shores, selected by the old males for that purpose. They are of variable length, from one-eighth of a mile to three miles in length, and from five to fifty rods in width, separated from each other by intervals of sand beach, from a few rods to six miles in length. The old males land early on these places, and prevent any but females occupying them with themselves. All the other classes, with those selected for killing, occupy the uplands immediately in the rear of these. It is claimed by the natives that the seals return in invariably the second year to their places of birth, and, when not too often disturbed by driving, continue to do so. This is important, as will appear, and I have instituted experiments to determine the fact, by having one hundred male pups selected before they leave, and marked by cutting off the right ear, on a rookery one mile north of the village, and a like number with the left ear, on a rookery to south of village. This has been done for two years, and next year the first will be old enough to be taken. The seals occupy the southeast and southwest shores of the island, a distance of twenty-five miles. For convenience, and to save long driving, three salt-houses have been built, one at the



village, one five miles west of that point, and one at northeast point, twelve miles distant. It being more convenient to take and ship skins from the village, the tendency is to kill an undue proportion of the whole number to be taken from the island from the adjacent rookeries, which contain less than one-fourth of the number. To do this necessitates their being driven at too short intervals from the same places, so that those driven to the killing-ground, and allowed to return to the water as unfit for present use, do not return to their old places, but shift to more distant parts of the island. This has been the effect from the season of 1868, as over one-half the skins taken each year have been from these places. I would, therefore, suggest a regulation be established, requiring the seals to be taken from all the rookeries in such number as the size of the rookery bears to the whole on the island.

The breeding males and females occupy the same ground, from year to year, without leaving their places until the end of July, and no other classes mix with them. These have clearly-defined boundaries, entirely separate from the grounds occupied by the classes driven for killing, and are never disturbed by it.

As these are the sources that produce the supply, and the age at which most of them are killed is three years, their condition will furnish a standard by which to estimate the product three years in advance. A careful comparison of their condition the present year, 1871, with those of 1869 and 1870, shows a decrease in the number of females the present year equal to ten per cent. of the two former years, which showed a gradual increase. This might indicate a necessity for restricting the number to be taken, were it not for the excess of 1870, which will compensate the deficiency for one year; but should two successive years of decrease follow, it will be different. This decrease is the same on the rookeries where no seals have been taken since 1868 as those that have been worked continuously. Whatever may be the cause of this decrease, I am sure it must be looked for outside of the islands, a period of the year in which we have little or no positive knowledge of their habits. Sufficient search has been made for their winter abodes, with a view to taking their skins, to prove they do not land in any considerable numbers on any known land. They begin to leave the islands early in October, and by the middle of December have all left, and none are seen again until April or May. A few hundred, mostly young pups, are taken by the Indians around Sitka, twelve hundred miles east of the islands, during the month of December, and again in March, on their way returning to the islands, and, in February, off the coast of British Columbia, but in such small numbers as to make no appreciable difference to the immense number that visit the islands annually. This is about all that is known positively of their winter habits. It is evident that sharks or other voracious fish prey on the young pups, while in the water, from the fact that of more than a million pups, annually leaving the islands, not one-third return to them in spring.

The time of the arrival of the seals in the spring varies with the season, from the middle of April to the middle of May, and they are present in sufficient numbers for taking their skins before the 1st of June.

In such cases a discretionary power may be granted to the officer, as the least interested party, but as this is the time when they are most easily disturbed, it should be done with caution.

The new system may now be considered as fairly inaugurated, and although it has not been done without some friction on both sides, no serious differences have arisen, and it is now working harmoniously. The supplies have been abundant and of good quality, and sold in quan-

tities desired, except sugar, which, for reasons before stated, has been restricted.

All the conditions of the lease have been as fully complied with as the conditions of the situation permitted. And the Alaska Commercial Company, by their previous establishment on the island, and acquaintance with the business, have been able to meet these difficulties better than any other, less favorably situated, could have done. And in the suppression of intemperance, and introduction of sanitary measures, I have had the hearty co-operation of the agent and employes of the company.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

HON. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 53.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., November 29, 1871.*

GENTLEMEN: In reply to your letter of the 20th ultimo, asking permission to occupy the buildings owned by the Government in Alaska, known as "Fort Yukon," I have to inform you that for the present the Department must decline granting your request.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Messrs. HUTCHINSON, KOHL & Co., P. O. Box 1134,  
*San Francisco, Cal.*

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No. 54.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., December 12, 1871.*

SIR: The president of the Alaska Commercial Company addressed a letter to the Department on the 13th of June, 1871, requesting, in behalf of said company, a reduction of the amount of rent to be paid by them for the year ending May 1, 1871, under their lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, alleging that a comparatively small number of fur-seal skins were obtained by the company during the year 1870, the whole catch comprising 3,448 on the island of Saint Paul, and 3,000 on the island of Saint George.

I will thank you to inform the Department how many fur-seal skins were taken by said company on these islands during the last six months of the year 1870.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Capt. CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent, Washington.*

No. 55.

WASHINGTON, *December 16, 1871.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Department letter dated December 12, 1871, and marked E. G. O. D. M. and B. in the upper left-hand corner, asking information of the number of fur-seal skins by the Alaska Commercial Company on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska Territory, during the last six months of the year 1870, and beg leave to submit the following reply: There were taken on the island of Saint Paul six thousand and five, (6,005,) and on Saint George three thousand nine hundred and sixty, (3,960,) making a total for both islands of nine thousand nine hundred and sixty-five (9,965) fur-seal skins.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 56.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 23, 1871.*

SIR: The undersigned have the honor to offer the sum of one hundred dollars per annum rent for the buildings at Fort Yukon, in Alaska, belonging to the United States, and keep the same in repair.

Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

HUTCHINSON, KOHL & CO.

To the honorable the SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

No. 57.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., January 25, 1872.*

I inclose a draft of a bill in reference to the management of the seal-fisheries in Alaska, which has been prepared after consultation with Captain Bryant, and for which I ask the favorable consideration of the committee.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. SAMUEL SHELLABARGER,  
*Chairman Committee on Commerce, House of Representatives.*

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized to appoint one agent and three assistant agents, who shall be charged with the management of the seal-fisheries in Alaska, and the performance of such other duties as may be assigned to them by the Secretary of the Treasury; and the*

said agent shall receive the sum of ten dollars *per diem*, one assistant agent the sum of eight dollars *per diem*, and two assistant agents the sum of six dollars each *per diem* while so employed; and they shall also be allowed their necessary traveling-expenses in going to and returning from Alaska.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby, authorized to erect a dwelling-house upon each of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George for the use of said agents, the cost of both not to exceed the sum of six thousand dollars.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That the said agents be, and they are hereby, empowered to administer oaths in all cases relating to the service of the United States, and to take testimony in Alaska for the use of the Government in any matter concerning the public revenues.

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No. 58.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., January 25, 1872.

GENTLEMEN: In reply to your letter of the 23d instant, I have to say that you are hereby authorized to occupy, until otherwise ordered, the Government buildings at Fort Yukon, Alaska, upon payment of rent therefor at the rate of \$100 per annum, it being provided that you are to keep said buildings in good repair.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Messrs. HUTCHINSON, KOHL & Co.,  
Washington, D. C.

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No. 59.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., January 31, 1872.

SIR: I transmit herewith a communication, dated San Francisco, the 13th of June, 1871, from Mr. John F. Miller, president Alaska Commercial Company, requesting a reduction of the amount of rent to be paid by said company, under its lease of Saint Paul's and Saint George's Islands, Alaska, for the year ended May 1, 1871.

I also inclose a copy of the lease, and a letter from Special Agent Bryant, dated the 16th ultimo, relative to the number of seal-skins taken on the islands named during the last six months of the year 1870.

I have to request an expression of your opinion as to whether the contract of the Government with this company would in any way be invalidated by granting this request.

Also return the inclosures.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. E. C. BANFIELD,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury.*

No. 60.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., February 13, 1872.

SIR: I transmit herewith a petition from certain citizens of Massachusetts, that has been referred to the Department by the Committee on Commerce, United States Senate, for information and suggestion, praying the enactment of a law for the protection of walrus in the Arctic seas.

I will thank you at your earliest convenience to furnish the Department with such information relative to the walrus as you may be able to give, and to state whether, in your opinion, legislation for the protection thereof is necessary or desirable; and, if so, to make such recommendations pertaining thereto as you may deem proper. Also return the inclosure.

I am, very respectfully;

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
Secretary.

CHARLES BRYANT, Esq.,  
Special Agent Treasury Department, Fairhaven, Mass.

No. 61.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY,  
Washington, D. C., February 13, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, transmitting a letter from the president of the Alaska Commercial Company, asking a reduction of the amount of rent to be paid under its lease of Saint George and Saint Paul Islands, for the year ending May 1, 1871, together with the lease, and a report by Special Agent Bryant. You request my opinion whether the contract of the Government with the company, under the lease, would in any way be invalidated by granting this request. I am of the opinion that it would.

The company, by the letter of their president, allege that to require payment of the amount stipulated in the lease, viz, \$27,500, as the rent for the period of their operations ending May 1, 1871, "is manifestly not in accordance with the true intent and meaning of the contract existing between the company and the Government."

Should the Secretary coincide with the views of the company by granting their request, it may be considered as an acknowledgment of the fact that their construction of the contract is correct.

The Government accordingly will be subject to any contingency operating to lessen the number of seals captured, and thus the sum to be paid yearly would remain an open question.

The result would be that a favorable action by the Secretary would operate as a new and different lease, inasmuch as the company would have a right to calculate on like action under similar circumstances.

The terms of the lease warrant no such conclusion. Its provisions follow the law, and I find therein no power conferred on the Secretary to reduce the rental, except where he shall, for the preservation of the seals, restrict and limit the number to be killed.

Such a reduction has once, already, been made for this reason, before a seal had been taken, and the rental reduced in proportion. But in the

present case, inasmuch as the seals have already been killed and the year has expired, the reduction asked cannot be made on these grounds.

I think, therefore, that the circumstances of the present case are not such as contemplated by the provision authorizing a reduction of the rental.

The papers received are herewith returned, and I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

J. H. ROBINSON,  
*Assistant Solicitor of the Treasury.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 62.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 15, 1872.*

SIR: Referring to your communication of the 13th of June, 1871, requesting a reduction of the amount of rent to be paid by the Alaska Commercial Company under its lease of Saint Paul and Saint George Islands, Alaska, for the year ended May 1, 1871, I have to say that the Solicitor of the Treasury, to whom this matter was referred for investigation, expresses the opinion that the terms of the Government's contract with said company will not, under the circumstances stated, warrant the lessening of the amount of the rent for the year in question.

In that opinion the Department concurs, and your request must therefore be denied.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

JOHN F. MILLER, Esq.,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company,*  
*per N. L. Jeffries, Attorney, Washington.*

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No. 63.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 20, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, inclosing House bill 1342, which passed the House of Representatives on the 5th of February.

The bill was drawn at the Treasury Department, and is the expression of the views of the Secretary of the Treasury, and of other officers of the Government who are acquainted with the seal-fishery in Alaska. I believe that the bill ought to pass. Facts sustaining the bill may be found in the report of Captain Bryant, (who has been acting as agent of the Department in the management of affairs at the seal-islands,) made to Congress during the present session, and printed, I believe, although I am not able to refer to the document.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Hon. Z. CHANDLER,  
*Chairman Committee on Commerce, United States Senate.*

No. 64.

FAIRHAVEN, *February 20, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Department dated February 13, 1872, marked in the upper left-hand corner E. G., O. D. M. B., transmitting a petition of citizens of Massachusetts, praying for the enactment of a law to protect the walruses in the Arctic Seas, and also asking further information concerning these animals, and beg leave to submit the following statement:

These animals being nearly allied to the seals, have similar habits. They are found occupying the western shore of the peninsula of Alaska, thence through British Bay westward to Behring Straits, and north as far as Point Barrow, together with the islands of the Diomedes, Saint Lawrence, Saint Matthew, and one of the small islands of the fur-seal group, all in Alaska waters, and also on portions of the coast of Eastern Asia, opposite. During the winter months they are believed to be nearly all south of Behring Straits. As soon as the bridge of ice closing these straits in winter becomes broken by thawing in spring, the loose ice is borne and held by the current along the line of permanent ice extending across from the American to the Asiatic shores, in about the latitude of 70° north. The females pass through these straits while the males remain behind, going mostly to the westward along the line of floating ice, where they bring forth their young and nurse them, remaining until late in autumn; when the freezing of the sea commences they again return south. At this time the natives secure their supply of winter food and skins for covering their houses and boats.

These animals yield about twenty gallons of oil and from fifteen to twenty pounds of ivory each. They are not considered of sufficient value to pay to cruise for them alone, but when the vessels first arrive in this sea, and are cruising along this line of ice, waiting for the whales to arrive or show themselves, they come upon large herds of these animals and take them for pastime or the lack of more profitable game.

Knowing all the facts as set forth in the inclosed petition to be a true statement of the case, I earnestly recommend the prayer of the petitioners be granted, and would respectfully suggest, as a supplementary act to the act entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of the fur-bearing animals in Alaska," that it be made unlawful to kill, maim, or otherwise injure any walrus on the shores, bays, rivers, coasts, or islands in the Territory of Alaska, or in the waters adjacent thereto, during the months of June, July, and August each year, under pain of incurring all the penalties of the second section of said act, with its provisions for its enforcement.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 65.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 21, 1872.*

SIR: In compliance with your verbal request, I transmit herewith a copy of the opinion of the Solicitor of the Treasury, dated the 13th in-

stant, pertaining to the application of the Alaska Commercial Company for a reduction of rent under their lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, for the year ending May 1, 1871.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

N. L. JEFFRIES, Esq., *Attorney at Law,*  
*Washington, D. C.*

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No. 66.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 28, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that application has been made to this Department, by a missionary priest of the Russian Church in San Francisco, for permission to ship a supply of wine to Alaska for use in the communion services of the Russian churches in said Territory.

Under Executive Order of February 4, 1870, such transaction cannot be authorized.

But in view of the manifest propriety of the object to be attained, I respectfully suggest such modification of said Executive Order as will permit me to grant the request; and herewith inclose the draught of an order for this purpose, if it meets your approval.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

To the PRESIDENT.

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No. 67.

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
*Washington, D. C., February 29, 1872.*

So much of Executive Order of February 4, 1870, as prohibits the importation and use of distilled spirits into and within the Territory of Alaska, is hereby modified so as to permit wine to be shipped to said Territory for use in the communion services of the Russian churches, subject to such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe.

U. S. GRANT, *President.*

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No. 68.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,  
*February 29, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit, professionally, my recollection of the facts connected with the application of the Alaska Commercial Company to the Secretary of the Treasury, asking a restriction of the number of fur-seals to be killed under the company's lease in the year 1870, and the reduction of the rent in proportion to such restriction.

At the time the lease was delivered, the company was advised, by the Acting Secretary of the Treasury, that the Secretary, in response to the company's original application, had fixed the rent for said year at



\$27,500. The attention of the Acting Secretary was then called to the fact that more than one month of the remaining two months in which seals could be lawfully killed in that year would expire before the company could possibly reach the seal-islands, and the request was then made for such further restriction and reduction as would be equitable under the circumstances. To this application the Acting Secretary (Hon. W. A. Richardson) replied, that the question would be taken under advisement for further consideration, and the rent was afterward (April 17, 1871,) deposited with the Treasurer of the United States, with the distinct understanding that the question was reserved until it could be ascertained by the Department what the equities were in the premises.

The request which I had the honor to file in the Department in April last, on behalf of said company, asking for a modification of the original order of the Secretary, in which the rent was fixed at \$27,500, relates to and is a reiteration of the verbal request made to the Acting Secretary at the time the lease was delivered to the company, and was intended as, and is, an application to the Department for a decision on the pending question raised by the former application.

N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Of Counsel for the Alaska Commercial Company.*

To the honorable the SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY.

No. 69.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 2, 1872.*

SIR: I transmit herewith, for your information, copies of a communication, dated San Francisco, the 31st of January last, and of Executive Order of February 29, 1872, relative to shipment of wine to Alaska for use in the communion services of the Russian churches.

The collector at San Francisco has, under said order, been authorized to allow such shipments to be made, provided that, in his judgment, the quantities specified are not excessive for the purpose intended.

I am, very respectfully,

J. F. HARTLEY,  
*Assistant Secretary.*

WILLIAM KAPUS, Esq.,  
*Collector, Sitka, Alaska.*

No. 70.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 13, 1872.*

SIR: You are authorized to purchase, at San Francisco, materials for two houses, authorized by the late act of Congress to be erected on the seal-islands, and the collector at San Francisco will be directed to pay vouchers for such materials to an amount not exceeding \$4,000 in all.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Capt. CHAS. BRYANT,  
*Washington, D. C.*

No. 71.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 13, 1872.*

SIR: You are authorized to ship the materials that may be purchased by you in San Francisco, under an order bearing this date, for the construction of two houses on the seal-islands, and procure such labor and materials on the islands as may be necessary for the completion of the buildings, bearing in mind that the entire expense, including the materials, must be kept within the limit of the law, viz, \$6,000.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Capt. CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Washington, D. C.*

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No. 72.

CUSTOMS-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO,  
*Collector's Office, March 25, 1872.*

SIR: I deem it proper to call the attention of the Department to certain rumors, which appear to be well authenticated, the substance of which appears in the printed slip taken from the Daily Chronicle of this date, herewith inclosed.

In addition to the several schemes mentioned in this paper, information has come to this office of another, which is being organized at the Hawaiian Islands for the same purpose. It is well known that during the month of May and the early part of June in each year the fur-seal, in their migration from the southward to Saint Paul and Saint George Islands, uniformly move through Ounimak Pass in large numbers, and also through the narrow straits near that pass which separate several small islands of the Aleutian group.

The object of these several expeditions is unquestionably to intercept the fur-seals at these narrow passages during the period above mentioned, and there, by means of small boats manned by skillful Indians or Aleutian hunters, make indiscriminate slaughter of those animals in the water, after the manner of hunting sea-otters.

The evil to be apprehended from such proceedings is not so much in respect of the loss resulting from the destruction of the seals at those places, (although the killing of each female is in effect the destruction of two seals,) but the danger lies in diverting these animals from their accustomed course to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, their only haunts in the United States.

It is believed by those who have made the peculiar nature and habits of these animals a study, that if they are by any means seriously diverted from the line upon which they have been accustomed to move northward in their passage to these islands, there is great danger of their seeking other haunts, and should this occur the natural selection would be Komandorsky Islands, (which lie just opposite the Pribolov group, near the coast of Kamschatka,) owned by Russia, and are now the haunt of fur-seals.

That the successful prosecution of the above-mentioned schemes would have the effect to drive the seals from their accustomed course

there can be no doubt. Considering, therefore, alone the danger which is here threatened to the interest of the Government in the seal-fisheries, and the large annual revenue derived from the same, I have the honor to suggest, for the consideration of the honorable Secretary of the Treasury, the question whether the act of July 1, 1870, relating to those fisheries, does not authorize his interference by means of revenue-cutters to prevent foreigners and others from doing such an irreparable mischief to this valuable interest. Should the honorable Secretary deem it expedient to send a cutter into these waters, I would respectfully suggest that a steam-cutter would be able to render the most efficient service, and that it should be in the region of Ounimak Pass and Saint Paul and Saint George Islands by the 15th of May next.

I am, very respectfully,

T. G. PHELPS,  
*Collector.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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[From San Francisco Daily Chronicle, March 21, 1872.]

It is stated in reliable commercial circles that parties in Australia are preparing to fit out an expedition for the capture of fur-seals in Behring Sea. The present high prices of fur-seal furs in London and the European markets has acted powerfully in stimulating enterprises of a like character. But a few days ago we mentioned that a Victoria company was organized for catching fur-seals in the North Pacific. Another party, an agent representing some eastern capitalists, has been in this city for the past week, making inquiries as to the feasibility of organizing an expedition for like purposes.

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No. 73,

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY,  
*Washington, D. C., April 15, 1872.*

SIR: My attention has been called to the letter from this office addressed to you under date of the 13th of February last, relating to the application of the Alaska Commercial Company for a reduction of the amount of rent to be paid under its lease of the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul for the year ending May 1, 1871, and certain additional papers have been filed on behalf of said company.

From these papers I find that it is now claimed that the abatement of rent made by the Secretary for the year above named was not a *final* determination, but that the question of a further abatement was reserved for further consideration, and that the deposit made by the company on the 29th of April, 1871, was in a certain sense a conditional deposit, subject to the final order or decision of the Secretary upon their written request of the 17th of April, 1871.

Upon this state of facts, which did not appear at the time when the question was formerly under consideration in this office, I have the honor to say that if the question was reserved for further consideration and action, as is now claimed, in my opinion it is competent for the Sec-

retary of the Treasury to make such further reduction in the rental for the year ending May 1, 1871, as may seem to him proper and just.

I inclose herewith the additional papers filed in this office relating to the case.

I am, very respectfully,

E. C. BANFIELD,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury.*

HON. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 74.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., April 18, 1872.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of this Department addressed to you under date of the 15th of February last, denying your application for a reduction of the rent to be paid by the Alaska Commercial Company, under its lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, for the year ended May 1, 1871, I have to state that that denial was, as stated therein, based upon an opinion of the Assistant Solicitor of the Treasury, to the effect that the terms of the contract between that company and the Government did not warrant the lessening of the rental for that year, the amount to be paid having, as he understood, been definitely fixed by an amendment to the lease dated August 9, 1870.

An examination of the lease shows that the yearly rental to be paid by said company was \$55,000, and that they were restricted in the number of seals to be killed for their fur-skins to 100,000 per annum. The reduction of rent for that year to \$27,500, made in the agreement of August 9, 1870, was based upon the fact that half of the season had then elapsed, and that no more than 50,000 should be killed that year, but it was understood that the maximum number of skins mentioned would be taken. It appears, however, from the report of Captain Bryant, in charge of said islands, that only 9,965 skins were taken that season, or a little less than one-fifth of the maximum number allowed; by which, if a proportionate reduction in the rent to be paid for that year were allowed, would make the rent for 1870 \$5,480.75.

Upon a reconsideration of the matter, I am inclined to regard the abatement of rent made in the agreement of August 9, 1870, a conditional one, and not final, and the deposit of \$27,500, made in pursuance thereof, also conditional; and, under this view, the Solicitor now states that he considers it competent for the Secretary of the Treasury to make such reduction in the rental for that year as may seem to him just.

In final settlement, therefore, of the amount of rent to be paid under said lease for the year mentioned, I have decided that the sum of \$5,480.75 only, of the deposit of \$27,500, made with Mr. Tuttle, the assistant treasurer, on the 29th of April last, shall be retained, and that the remainder shall be returned to said company or their duly-authorized agent.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

Gen. JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company,*  
*Per N. L. Jeffries, Attorney.*

No. 75.

[Circular.]

OFFICE OF THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, April 1, 1872.*

*To the agents of the company :*

To enable the company to supply the necessary specimens for scientific investigations, which are expected to result in the interest of commerce and of the company, you are directed to secure, and properly pack for shipment, and, by our first vessel, ship to this office, such specimens included in the following list as you may be able to find in the vicinity of your station :

1. Skulls of fur-bearing animals, and, when convenient, the complete skeleton.
2. Fossil shells and bones; particularly the skulls and teeth of animals.
3. Skulls of human beings of various periods; the more ancient desired.
4. Petrifications of bones, wood, or other material.
5. Manufactured articles, both ancient and modern, which illustrate the life and habits of the people at different periods.
6. Specimens of curious stones and ores.

All specimens should be plainly labeled, showing the place where found, the date of finding, the name of the article, and all other information of importance concerning the same.

In procuring skulls of human beings, care must be taken not to desecrate modern burial-places, but seek to obtain specimens at places where there are none who have interest in the dead, so that no offense may be given to the inhabitants of the country.

It is desirable, also, that you make reports to this office from time to time which will contain all information you may be able to gain concerning the history and traditions of the people who have heretofore inhabited the country surrounding your station. Also all facts relating to the life, manners, peculiarities, and customs of the present inhabitants. You will also include in these reports all information you may gain of the nature and characteristics of the fur-bearing animals in the region of your station, the manner of taking them, whether they appear to be increasing or diminishing in numbers, and all general information concerning them. Also all information illustrating the character of the climate at your station, and the general formation and topography of the surrounding country, together with descriptions of the mode of travel and other information of a general character concerning the people and their productions, and the animals of the country. The object in procuring these specimens and the reports mentioned is not to gratify idle curiosity, but it is to aid science in the solution of great problems, and to benefit the company in the management of its affairs. Your careful attention to these matters is therefore desired.

JOHN F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

*Regulations.*

OFFICE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, January, 1872.*

The following regulations are prescribed for the guidance of all concerned :

1. The general management of the company's affairs on the islands of

Saint Paul and Saint George is intrusted to one general agent, whose lawful orders and directions must be implicitly obeyed by all subordinate agents and employés.

2. Seals can only be taken on the islands during the months of June, July, September, and October in each year, except those killed by the native inhabitants for food and clothing, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

Female seals and seals less than one year old will not be killed at any time, and the killing of seals in the waters surrounding the islands, or on or about the rookeries, beaches, cliffs, or rocks, where they haul up from the sea to remain, or by the use of fire-arms, or any other means tending to drive the seals away from the islands, is expressly forbidden.

3. The use of fire-arms on the islands during the period from the first arrival of seals in the spring season until they disappear from the islands in autumn is prohibited.

4. No dogs will be permitted on the islands.

5. No person will be permitted to kill seals for their skins on the islands, except under the supervision and authority of the agents of the company.

6. No vessels other than those employed by the company, or vessels of the United States, will be permitted to touch at the islands, or to land any persons or merchandise thereon, except in cases of shipwreck or vessels in distress.

7. The number of seals which may be annually killed for their skins on Saint Paul Island is limited to 75,000, and the number which may be so killed on Saint George Island is limited to 25,000.

8. No persons other than American citizens, or the Aleutian inhabitants of said islands, will be employed by the company on the islands in any capacity.

9. The Aleutian people living on the islands will be employed by the company in taking seals for their skins, and they will be paid for the labor of taking each skin and delivering the same at the salt-house, forty cents, coin, until otherwise ordered by the Secretary of the Treasury. For other labor performed for the company proper and remunerative wages will be paid, the amount to be agreed upon between the agents of the company and the persons employed. The working parties will be under the immediate control of their own chiefs, and no compulsory means will ever be used to induce the people to labor. All shall be free to labor or not as they may choose. The agents of the company will make selection of the seals to be killed, and are authorized to use all proper means to prevent the cutting of skins.

10. All provisions and merchandise required by the inhabitants for legitimate use will be furnished them from the company's stores, at prices not higher than ordinary retail prices at San Francisco, and in no case at prices above twenty-five per cent. advance on wholesale or invoice prices in San Francisco.

11. The necessary supplies of fuel, oil, and salmon will be furnished the people gratis.

12. All widows and orphan children on the islands will be supported by the company.

13. The landing or manufacture on the islands of spirituous or intoxicating liquors or wines will under no circumstances be permitted by the company, and the preparation and use of fermented liquors by the inhabitants must be discouraged in every legitimate manner.

14. Free transportation and subsistence on the company's vessels will be furnished all people, who at any time desire to remove from the islands, to any place in the Aleutian group of islands.

15. Free schools will be maintained by the company eight months in each year, four hours per day, Sunday and holidays excepted, and agents and teachers will endeavor to secure the attendance of all. The company will furnish the necessary books, stationery, and other appliances for the use of the schools, without cost to the people.

16. The physicians of the company are required to faithfully attend upon the sick, and both medical attendance and medicines shall be free to all persons on the islands, and the acceptance of gratuities from the people for such services is forbidden.

17. The dwelling-houses now being erected by the company will be occupied by the Aleutian families, free of rent or other charges.

18. No interference on the part of agents or employés of the company in the local government of the people on the islands, or in their social or domestic relations, or in their religious rites or ceremonies, will be countenanced or tolerated.

19. It is strictly enjoined upon all agents and employés of the company to at all times treat the inhabitants of the islands with the utmost kindness, and endeavor to preserve amicable relations with them. Force is never to be used against them, except in defense of life, or to prevent the wanton destruction of valuable property. The agents and employés of the company are expected to instruct the native people in household economy, and by precept and example illustrate to them the principles and benefits of a higher civilization.

20. Faithful and strict compliance with all the provisions and obligations contained in the act of Congress, entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, and the obligations contained in the lease to the company, executed in pursuance of said act, and the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury, prescribed under authority of said act, is especially enjoined upon all agents and employés of the company. The authority of the special agents of the Treasury, appointed to reside upon the islands, must be respected, whenever lawfully exercised. The interest of the company in the management of the seal-fisheries, being identical in character with that of the United States, there can be no conflict between the agents of the company and the agents of the Government, if all concerned faithfully perform their several duties, and comply with the laws and regulations.

21. The general agent of the company will cause to be kept books of record on each island, in which shall be recorded the names and ages of all the inhabitants of the islands, and, from time to time, all births, marriages, and deaths which may occur on the islands, stating in cases of death the causes of the same. A full transcript of these records will be annually forwarded to the home-office at San Francisco.

22. Copies of these regulations will be kept constantly posted in conspicuous places on both islands, and any willful violation of the same by the agents or employés of the company will be followed by the summary removal of the offending party.

JOHN F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

No. 76.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., April 19, 1872.*

SIR: Your letter of the 25th ultimo was duly received, calling the attention of the Department to certain rumors circulating in San Fran-

cisco, to the effect that expeditions are to start from Australia and the Hawaiian Islands to take fur-seals on their annual migration to the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George through the narrow pass of Unmak. You recommend, to cut off the possibility of evil resulting to the interests of the United States from these expeditions, that a revenue-cutter be sent to the region of Unmak Pass by the 15th of May next.

A very full conversation was had with Captain Bryant upon this subject while he was at the Department, and he conceived it to be entirely impracticable to make such an expedition a paying one, inasmuch as the seals go singly or in pairs, and not in droves, and cover a large region of water in their homeward travel to these islands, and he did not seem to fear that the seals would be driven from their accustomed resorts, even were such attempts made.

In addition, I do not see that the United States would have the jurisdiction or power to drive off parties going up there for that purpose, unless they made such attempt within a marine league of the shore.

As at present advised, I do not think it expedient to carry out your suggestions, but I will thank you to communicate to the Department any further facts or information you may be able to gather upon the subject.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

T. G. PHELPS, Esq.,  
*Collector, San Francisco.*

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No. 77.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
No. 310 SANSOME STREET,  
*San Francisco, April 26, 1872.*

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's letter of the 18th instant, "H. B. L.," announcing the final decision of the Department upon our application for a reduction of the rent for 1870, payable under the company's lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, and highly appreciating the just and impartial action of the honorable Secretary in the adjustment of this affair, I beg most respectfully to tender to him the company's thanks.

If no disposition has yet been made of the amount to be returned to the company, I would respectfully request that a draft on the United States assistant treasurer at San Francisco therefor, payable to my order, be transmitted to me in settlement of the same.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 78.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *May 4, 1872.*

SIR: I am instructed by the Alaska Commercial Company, of San Francisco, Cal., to request that the amount due said company on account of excess rental placed in the hands of the United States Treasurer as a special deposit, and recently ordered to be returned to said



company by the Secretary of the Treasury, be forwarded to the president of said company at San Francisco by Treasury draft or otherwise. The amount is, I believe, \$22,019.75.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Attorney for the Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 79.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, A. T., May 9, 1872.*

COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, Cal.:*

This is to certify that the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped, on board their steamer Alexander, thirty-three thousand eight hundred and six (33,806) fur-seal skins, and, as per certificate of Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer, in charge of Saint George's Island, dated May 5, 1872, five thousand and fifty-one (5,951) fur-seal skins, all taken in the season of 1871.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

Hon. T. G. PHELPS,  
*Collector Customs.*

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No. 80.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, May 21, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter bearing date the 9th instant, inclosing draft, No. 321, drawn by the Treasurer of the United States on the assistant treasurer in San Francisco, dated May 9, 1872, for (\$22,019.25) twenty-two thousand nineteen dollars and twenty-five cents, being the amount returned to the company as excess of rent for Saint Paul's and Saint George's Islands paid for the year 1870.

Tendering to you the thanks of the company, I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Co.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

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TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, A. T., May 9, 1872.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of Treasury:*

This certifies that I have shipped on board Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander, consigned to collector of customs, San Francisco, three thousand five hundred and forty-one (3,541) fur-seal skins, the property of the United States.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

No. 81.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, May 28, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith the duplicate certificate of the United States assistant treasurer at San Francisco, showing the deposit this day by the Alaska Commercial Company, to the Treasurer of the United States, of \$102,837 on account of tax on seal-skins from the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, for 1871.

The seal-skins upon which this tax has been paid are a part of the catch of 1871, just discharged from the steamer Alexander, and numbering, by official count made by order of the collector of customs at this port, 39,176. The official count at the islands is certified at 38,887, but we have paid the tax on the official count at this port, which is the largest amount.

The Alexander brought to the collector of customs, sealed up in a separate compartment in this ship, 3,541 seal-skins taken during the year 1870, on the island, by order of the Treasury Department. These skins have been properly delivered to the collector of customs at this port as the property of the United States.

The steamer will depart from this port for the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George about the 15th day of July next. Should the honorable Secretary desire to communicate with the agents of Treasury at that time, the company will be pleased to afford him the necessary facilities.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,

*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,

*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

No. 82.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *June 17, 1872.*

SIR: On behalf of Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., of San Francisco, Cal., I have the honor to request that the legal question involved in their application, now pending in the Treasury Department, touching the ownership of buildings purchased by them of the Russian-American Company in Alaska, which buildings are claimed by the Government on the ground that the title thereto passed to the United States by the terms of the treaty ceding the Territory of Alaska, be referred to the Department of Justice for the opinion of the Attorney General as to the proper construction of the treaty in relation to this subject.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

N. L. JEFFRIES,

*Attorney.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 83.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., June 19, 1872.*

SIR: In accordance with the request contained in the inclosed letter of Mr. N. L. Jeffries, attorney for Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.,

your opinion is desired as to the legal title to the ownership of certain buildings described as stores, warehouses, shops, salt-houses, and boat-houses, in the Territory of Alaska, which the United States claim under the provisions of the treaty with Russia, of March 30, 1867, (Statutes at Large, XV, 539,) but which the said firm of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. claim under and by virtue of an alleged transfer to them by the Russian-American Company, on March 6, 1868.

A correspondence between the War Department, the said parties, and this Department on the subject, which is contained in the record-book herewith transmitted, will show you the material facts and circumstances connected therewith, and also inform you fully concerning the claims of the said parties.

Please transmit your views on the question, and return the said record-book and inclosure at your earliest convenience.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Acting Secretary.*

E. C. BANFIELD, Esq.,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury.*

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No. 84.

ASSISTANT TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*St. George Island, August 15, 1872,*

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival of the company's steamer Alexander on the 11th instant, bringing Mr. Adams, who will relieve Mr. Brown, the present agent of the company, and Dr. Meaney, the newly-appointed physician for the island, together with a full cargo of merchandise for the station and the material for the government house.

On the 29th ultimo the company's steamer H. M. Hutchinson touched here, having on board the Rev. Father Nickoli, a priest of the Russo-Greek Church, of the diocese of San Francisco, who attended to the spiritual wants of the people and performed the marriage ceremony for eight couples.

The company commenced driving seals for their skins on the 3d of June last, and discontinued on July 27 ultimo, having secured 25,000, the full number stipulated in the lease for the year 1872.

Last season only 19,077 skins were secured, as was reported when it was the intention of the company to have taken their full number. This, however, they were unable to do on account of the skins being stagey in the last part of the season, and for this reason the full complement has been secured in June and July.

In reference to the appearance of the rookeries, I find that the seals are very numerous, much more so than they were last year, especially the old males and young bachelors, the class that is driven for their skins. In corroboration of this fact, I saw large numbers haul up at the foot of the high cliffs apart and distinct from all other rookeries, where they were never known to frequent before. From these places I deemed it advisable to have them driven away, as they could not be taken if allowed to remain. Why they should resort to places of this kind is more than I can conceive, if it is not that they are prevented, to some extent, from landing on their usual places by the numerous old males that constantly guard the shore-line.

The number of breeding-rookeries on the island are four, viz: North, East, Starry Athille, and Zapeny; they, too, seem to be in a flourishing condition this year, as their breeding-grounds are enlarged to some extent. Their positions on the island are as follows: Zapeny is on the southwest side and about five miles from the village; Starry Athille is on the north side, two miles from the village; North rookery is also on the same side and not more than one mile from town, and East rookery is on the northeast side and about two miles from town.

The following figures will show the number of drives made from each of those places, also the number of skins obtained from each rookery during the season:

	No. of drives.	No. of skins.
North rookery .....	16	4, 818
East rookery .....	16	9, 714
Starry Athille rookery .....	14	5, 274
Zapeny rookery .....	11	5, 194
Total .....		25, 000

From the last-mentioned rookery two drives of 2,583 were made to the killing-ground near the village, the balance being salted at that place; on this rookery a larger number of skins would have been secured this year, had there been sufficient salt on hand with which to cure them. There has been, however, a salt-house recently erected, which will contain all the skins taken at that place in future.

The number of seals lost from overheating while driving was very small, not more than one in one thousand. I would also mention that great care has been taken not to molest nor disturb the breeding-rookeries at any time during the season, and the same amount of precaution has been used, after arriving on the field, not to kill any that appeared to be the slightest damaged, as you will observe that out of the entire number taken this year only 164 have been rejected by the company on account of accidental cuts in skinning; this is considerably less than one per cent. I would also state that through the course of the season a few seals were killed in which were found buck-shot and a rifle-ball; it would appear that they had been down about the coast of British Columbia, or somewhere east of Sitka, as the natives on the entire Aleutian chain use no other weapons than the spear in killing seals. I also noticed a few this season, apparently about three years old, with the tips of the right ear off; probably they were some of those clipped by your direction on Saint Paul two years ago, as no experiment of this kind had ever been tried on this island.

Their arrival at the island this spring was on the 6th of May, nearly the same time as last year, and on the following day I collected and took charge of all fire-arms belonging to the natives, as I did the year before. This I found to be necessary, for the reason that there are two fresh-water ponds within gunshot of a like number of breeding-rookeries, where numerous flocks of wild fowls constantly frequent, and the temptation is so great that they cannot resist shooting if allowed to retain them. The preventing of the use of fire-arms during the sealing-season, together with other precautions taken concerning the rookeries, is, in my opinion, the cause of the increase of seals on the island during the past two years. Mr. Tessen, your assistant, joined me early in May last, and has ably assisted me in the discharge of the duties on the island since that time.

The general health of the island has continued good. There has been one birth and one death since the date of my last report.

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

CHARLES BRYANT, Esq.,  
*Agent in charge of Seal Islands.*

OFFICE TREASURY AGENT,  
*Saint Paul's Island, A. T., September 6, 1872.*

I hereby certify the above to be a true copy.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge of Seal Islands.*

No. 85.

OFFICE OF TREASURY AGENT,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, August 20, 1872.*

This is to certify that the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped, on board their steamer Alexander, twenty-one thousand (21,000) fur-seal skins, for transshipment at Onalaska to San Francisco by the bark Cyane, or any one of the company's vessels; these skins being all of this year's catch.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge of Seal Islands.*

No. 86.

ASSISTANT TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint George Island, August 27, 1872.*

This is to certify that there have been shipped this day on board the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander eight thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven (8,877) fur-seal skins, the balance (16,123) having been shipped by the company's vessels to Onalaska a few days ago.

(Signed)

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

A true copy.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge of Seal Islands.*

No. 87.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, A. T., September 5, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the affairs of the seal-islands since my last, dated May 7, 1872.

July 19 the Alaska Commercial Company's steam-schooner H. M. Hutchinson arrived at this island, having on board Father Nickoli, a

priest of the Russo-Greek Church, who administered to the spiritual wants of the people and married four couples. The schooner sailed again on the 29th for Saint George with Father Nickoli on board.

August 15 the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander arrived, laden with supplies for this island, having previously touched at Saint George on her way hither, and landed supplies, together with the frame and material for the house to be erected for the use of the Government officers on that island. The Alexander brought, as employes of the company, to reside permanently on the island, Wm. Kupus, esq., as general agent of the company, in place of Dr. H. H. McIntyre, who returns to San Francisco, and E. C. Church, as a school-teacher. The steamer also brought to reside on the island Mr. C. P. Fish, esq., of the United States Signal Corps, for the purpose of establishing a signal-station here on this island. There being more than a full load of skins for the steamer ready for shipment, after discharging her cargo the steamer took on board from this (Saint Paul's) island twenty-one thousand (21,000) fur-seal skins, and from Saint George Island sixteen thousand one hundred and twenty-three (16,123) fur-seal skins, and sailed on the 20th for Onalaska, to store them for transshipment from there on some other of the company's vessels to San Francisco.

August 25 the Alaska Commercial Company's bark Cyane arrived here from San Francisco, laden with salt, coal, and merchandise for the island, having on board as freight the frame and material for the house to be erected on this island for the use of the Government officers.

August 29, steamer Alexander returned from Onalaska, laden with salt and coal.

September 2, bark Cyane having landed her supplies for this island sailed for Saint George, taking on board as passengers to Onalaska two native families who wish to reside there, also two other natives who go to San Francisco to remain during the winter and return in spring. In my last report, of May 7, 1872, I stated some new facts in regard to the relative difference of value between seal-skins taken in June and July, and those taken in September and October, owing to their shedding their over-hair in the later season. There were taken during the months of June and July, 1871, on Saint Paul's Island forty-five thousand (45,000) fur-seal skins, and on Saint George Island nineteen thousand (19,000) fur-seal skins. The remaining portion of the one hundred thousand to be taken that year were left for the months of September and October. It was found that about the middle of August the seals began to shed their over-hair; the new covering appearing as short black bristles in the fur, injures the skin for manufacturing. In this condition they are called stagey; this condition continues until late in October. This would be too late to take the requisite number within the time prescribed by law, so that in order to secure them they had to be taken in this stagey condition and were not of prime value. In my opinion there exists no necessity for the restriction of the taking of skins after October, or during the period they remain on the island, before leaving for the winter.

The seals appear to be governed by the weather somewhat, in the time of their arrival in spring; they were first reported May 5 of the present season, but light snows being frequent, kept the breeding-grounds covered so that they landed very slowly. The first drive for food was made May 15, obtaining two hundred animals, but they were not present in sufficient numbers to furnish continuous occupation in taking them for their skins until June 10. In view of this depreciation in value by shedding late in the season, it was desirable to take

as many as possible during the months of June and July; therefore all available native labor was devoted to this object, and the result was that on Saint Paul's Island there were taken, up to July 27, seventy thousand skins, the remaining five thousand being left for the skins of animals killed by the natives for food, in the months of October and November. At the same time there were taken, as per report of Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer, in charge Saint George Island, twenty-five thousand (25,000) skins, thus making a total of ninety-five thousand on both islands, up to the end of July, 1872. The present season the beach-masters or breeding-bulls have landed in excellent health and condition, and in greater numbers, occupying much larger grounds than ever before. The females also come in sufficiently increased numbers to occupy all the grounds thus mapped out, and the number of young seals produced greatly exceed any former years. The weather, although excessively foggy and disagreeable to the residents of the islands, has been especially favorable to the young seals. It is also observable that a larger number of yearlings or last year's pups than usual have returned to the island the present season. There is now only a deficiency of one class, that of the four and five year old seals. This is clearly traceable to the following causes: During the season of 1868 there were killed on both islands two hundred and twenty thousand animals for their skins; and in the season of 1869, 85,000 for their skins. At that time the relative value of the sizes or ages of the skins was not understood, and all the skins being paid for at the same price, the natives, who were quick to perceive the difference between taking a small skin and a large one, and carrying it to the salt-houses, killed all the yearlings they could; these were the products of 1867 and 1868. These were sent forward in 1870, to market, and overstocked it with small skins. This created a demand for larger skins, and the Alaska Commercial Company instructed their agents to take all the large skins possible in 1871; this was done, and as many four and five year old seals as could be taken. This again fell on the already diminished product of 1867 and 1868. When these were sent to market, they were found too old, and now the proper medium being ascertained, the seals will be selected accordingly.

It will be seen, by reference to my report of November 30, 1869, containing a detailed description of the habits of these animals, that this class of four and five year old seals perform an important service along the shores during the season of incubation; but as there was already existing an excess of old bulls from former years, the detriment to the rookeries from the absence of this class, growing out of the excessive killing of 1868, can work no serious injury to the rookeries for this two years, and at that time they will be supplied from the growing seals. Under the present system, the rookeries show a steady increase that warrants the assertion that, by 1874, an addition of 30,000 skins may be added to the number now taken annually.

The civil affairs of the natives have been administered by their chiefs, with very little necessity for any assistance. There has been considerable drunkenness from the use of quass or native beer, manufactured by themselves from fermenting sugar and flour together, and so fond are some of this artificial excitement that they save all that is sold for their families to use in tea and coffee until enough is obtained for a good drunk, and then indulge in it, and in two cases it has been necessary to confine the parties until sober, to prevent them from doing injury to their families or others. That they have worked well and faithfully, the taking of the seventy thousand skins in so short a time bears evi-

dence. The supplies have been of good quality and in sufficient quantity, and the prices reasonable. The school has been discontinued during the sealing season, but will be resumed again as soon as the vessels are gone. The company, last year, built six wooden dwelling-houses above ground for the natives. These have not proved wholly a success for comfort and convenience, as was hoped. Six more are laid out and partly completed on an improved plan, based on last year's experience, which promise to attain more fully the object desired. The officers of the island of Saint George are in an equally prosperous condition, for the details of which I beg leave to refer to a copy of the report of Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer, in charge, inclosed herewith.

I desire to bear witness to the able manner in which all my assistants have aided in forwarding my plans for the comfort and improvement of the natives.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

Hon. GEORGE S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

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No. 88.

OFFICE TREASURY AGENT,  
*Saint Paul Island, Alaska, September 9, 1872.*

This is to certify that the Alaska Commercial Company has this day shipped on board of its steamer Alexander, for San Francisco, direct, 49,551 fur-seal skins, and included in this number are 7 casks of sample skins, marked "Fur-Seal Skins, London," and numbered as follows:

- Cask No. 1, containing 25 skins, not bundled.
- Cask No. 2, containing 30 skins, bundled.
- Cask No. 3, containing 24 skins, not bundled.
- Cask No. 4, containing 36 skins, bundled.
- Cask No. 5, containing 32 skins, bundled.
- Cask No. 6, containing 36 skins, bundled.
- Cask No. 7, containing 36 skins, bundled.

And further this is also to certify that the Alexander has on board, shipped at Saint George Island, as per certificate of Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer, a copy of which is herewith inclosed, 8,877 fur-seal skins, the balance, 16,123, as per said certificate, having been previously shipped to Ounalashka, for transshipment to San Francisco, together with 21,000 from this (Saint Paul) island, as per certificate dated August 20, 1872. All of this year's catch.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

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No. 89.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
No. 310 SANSOME STREET,  
*San Francisco, November 4, 1872.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose herewith the certificate of Charles Bryant, esq., Treasury agent at the islands of Saint Paul and Saint



George, Alaska, showing that this company, in compliance with the terms of their lease of said islands from the United States, delivered to the United States Treasury agents thereon, during the month of August, 1872, 25,000 salmon and 60 tons of coals for free distribution to the inhabitants of said islands for and during the year 1872.

Inclosed herewith I have the honor, also, to transmit the certificate of the United States assistant treasurer at New York, No. 65, which shows that the Alaska Commercial Company deposited with him, to the credit of the Treasurer of the United States, on the 17th day of October, 1872, \$252,181.12, being the amount revenue-tax on 96,069 fur-seal skins taken on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, and shipped to the port of San Francisco during the year 1872. A duplicate of this certificate has been deposited with the collector of customs at San Francisco. The number of skins above mentioned is the official count at San Francisco, made by the order of the collector of customs.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,

*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,

*Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

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OFFICE OF TREASURY AGENT,  
SAINT PAUL ISLAND, ALASKA,  
*August 30, 1872.*

I certify that, in accordance with the provisions of the lease from the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company, dated at Washington, D. C., August 3, A. D. 1870, the said Alaska Commercial Company has, during the month of August, 1872, landed upon the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, and turned over to the Government agents, for gratuitous distribution among the natives of said island, 25,000 salmon and 60 tons of coal, in lieu of 60 cords of fire-wood.

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge of Seal-Islands.*

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No. 90.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., December 2, 1872.*

SIR: Mr. John F. Miller has, under date of the 11th ultimo, transmitted to the Department a certificate of deposit with the United States assistant treasurer at New York, for the sum of \$252,181.12, which he states is for the internal-revenue tax on 96,069 seal-skins taken to your port from the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George during the season of 1872.

I will thank you to inform the Department if the number of seal-skins mentioned was verified by you upon their arrival at San Francisco.

I am, very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary.*

COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 91.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY,  
Washington, D. C., December 4, 1872.

SIR: I herewith return, upon your verbal request, the inclosed two papers relative to the application of Messrs. Hutchinsen, Kohl & Co., touching the ownership of certain buildings in Alaska, referred to on the 19th of June last, without any opinion upon the question therein presented.

I am, very respectfully,

E. C. BANFIELD,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 92.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,  
San Francisco, Cal., December 12, 1872.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 2d instant, relative to a certificate of deposit with the United States assistant treasurer at New York, for the sum of \$252,181.12, forwarded by John F. Miller, and which purports to be the internal-revenue tax on 96,069 fur-seal skins brought into this port from the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George during the season of 1872.

In reply to your inquiry, if the number of the seal-skins mentioned was verified by me upon their arrival at this port; I beg to say that the number was verified, as will appear by the inclosed copies of the "returns of merchandise unladen."

In future, when the Alaska Commercial Company elect to pay the tax upon fur-seal skins brought into this port, from those islands, at New York, the certificate of deposit will be transmitted through this office, accompanied by a certified copy of the inspector's returns.

I am, very respectfully,

T. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector.*

Hon. GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 93.

ASSISTANT TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
Saint George Island, May 27, 1873.

SIR: Having reported to you in detail, in the month of August last, concerning the fur-seal rookeries, and the number of skins taken by the company, leaves me but little to say on this subject at present, as nothing important transpired on the island since that time. The seals, however, continued in large numbers until late in autumn, a few remaining as late as the 19th of December.

The number of pups and other seals taken by the natives for winter

food at the close of the season, foot up to about 2,000, the same as last year.

The material for the Government house landed here by the steamer Alexander, in August last, was erected according to plans and specification, with this exception: a rock foundation was placed underneath the building instead of posts, as the plan provided, there being good material near at hand for that purpose. I also found it necessary to erect an addition nine feet square, inclosing the back door, and furnishing a suitable place for water, coal, &c.

The labor-account for the erection of this building amounted to \$377, as per vouchers herewith inclosed; also please find bills to the amount of \$159.97, for necessary articles purchased for the use of the building; in all, \$536.97.

I may here state that the foundation, when complete, cost about one hundred dollars extra, thus making an additional expense, but as there were no posts on the island suitable for the purpose, I was compelled to use the rock, and it is in my opinion well worth the difference.

The laborers were paid according as the work progressed, through the kindness of the Alaska Commercial Company, and at the same rate per diem as paid by said company when employed by them.

Much difficulty was experienced during the erection from the continuous rains and general foul state of the weather; in consequence of this there was but one other building erected last season by Mr. Adams, the company's agent, which was finely fitted up for a store, the old one having been converted into a school-house.

In September last, the company's bark Cyane landed a large quantity of lumber for native houses, but their erection was prevented for like reasons already stated.

In the month of October last, the island was visited by a vast number of violent gales, causing buildings to shake to the very ground; fortunately no serious damage was done.

The winter following was unusually rough and cold, the ice arriving as early as the 27th of January and remaining until May 21.

The school was maintained through the winter, but has met with quite a drawback on the part of the children's parents; they entertain the idea that by learning an English education it will interfere with their religion. The absurdity of this has been fully explained to them, and a few have consented to have their children attend, although not regular, while others are still of the original belief; thus, where no inducement is held forth by the children's parents, slow progress may be expected—not but what much pains has been taken by their teacher. Would it not be well to notify their bishop at Sitka in reference to this, who would be most likely to banish this erroneous idea from their minds entirely?

The general health of the island is comparatively good, the particulars of which I will refer you to Doctor Meany's report to the company's agent stationed on your island.

The number of births since the month of August last are 4, and the number of deaths for the same period are 2.

The meteorological record for the island will be forwarded you in a separate inclosure.

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent, in charge of Saint George Island.*

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal-Islands.*

No. 94.

[Triplicate.]

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul Island, A. T., June 2, 1873.*

SIR: This is to certify that the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped on their steamer Alexander, for transshipment on barge Cyane, or other vessel, at Ounalaska, for San Francisco, three thousand nine hundred and six (3,906) fur-seal skins, all of last year's catch, being the balance of the catch for 1872.

Very respectfully, yours,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

To the COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 95.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul Island, A. T., July 14, 1873.*

To COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, California:*

I hereby certify that the Alaska Commercial Company has this day shipped, on board their steamer Alexander, from this island, for transshipment at Ounalaska on board the barque Cyane for San Francisco, thirty-two thousand seventy-six (32,076) fur-seal skins; also, the same steamer has on board, shipped at Saint George Island, July 7, 1873, five thousand two hundred and eighty-six (5,286) fur-seal skins, all of this year's catch.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

No. 96.

OFFICE OF NOAH L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney and Counselor at Law,*  
*Washington, July 21, 1873.*

SIR: On behalf of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., of San Francisco, California, I have the honor to request that the case pending in the Treasury Department involving the title to certain buildings purchased by them of the Russian-American Company in Alaska be referred to the Department of Justice for the opinion of the Attorney-General upon the question involved in the case.

The entire question depends upon the proper construction of the treaty between the United States and Russia ceding Alaska.

Very respectfully,

N. L. JEFFRIES,  
*Attorney for Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

No. 97.

ASSISTANT TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint George's Island, August 1, 1873.*

SIR: Owing to the lateness of last spring the seals were about three weeks behind their usual time of arriving. This, however, would not appear anyways detrimental to them, as their breeding-rookeries are in as good if not better condition this year than they have been at any one time since my arrival at the island; for I notice on some of the rookeries the passage-ways formerly occupied by young bachelors in hauling up on the back ground, are completely blocked up by females, thus preventing the young seals from landing; and as the greater portion of this island's shore is composed of high cliffs, it renders it difficult for any great number to effect a landing. There are also numerous old males constantly guarding the shore-line, which makes it still more difficult for the younger ones to work their way on to the back ground. Of this class there is a scarcity this year, and I am of the opinion it is in a great measure owing to the above reasons.

From personal observations, taken on your island last spring, I am persuaded to believe that the proper number and ratio has not been assigned to this island; for I do not hesitate in saying that Saint Paul's Island is better able to furnish one hundred thousand annually than Saint George's is ten.

I would therefore suggest that the Secretary of the Treasury be informed of this, in order that the act relative to the number of fur-seals taken on each island might be repealed and amended, so that, say, fifteen thousand be taken on Saint George's Island and eighty-five thousand on Saint Paul's.

On the 4th of June the Alaska Commercial Company commenced driving seals for their skins, and during this month only 6,727 were obtained; but in July they came in greater numbers, and the company succeeded in securing their number, 25,000, by the 28th of this month. Should a warm, dry season happen to set in, unfavorable for the hauling of seals, I feel confident that the number assigned this island could not be taken within the time considered best for the taking of skins; thus the company would fall short of the desired number and the Government out of the revenue, when in reality there are millions to be had on Saint Paul's.

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

Capt. CHAS. BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Island Saint Paul.*

A true copy.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal-Islands.*

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No. 98.

FAIRHAVEN, MASS.,  
*September 30, 1873.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report on the condition of the fur-seals and the general affairs of the seal-islands since my last, dated September 9, 1872. At that time there had been taken and

shipped from Saint Paul's Island, of the quota of 1872, seventy-one thousand and seventy (71,070) fur-seal skins, the balance of the quota being left to be supplied from the skins of animals necessarily killed for food for the natives. Of this balance were shipped, as per certificate dated June 2, 1873, 3,906 fur-seal skins, making a total of skins shipped from Saint Paul's Island, of the catch of 1872, of 74,976; so the account for seals taken stands as follows:

*Seals taken by the Alaska Commercial Company for their skins.*

	No. of seals killed.	Skins salted.	Condemned as valueless.
For the month of June.....	36,068	35,976	92
For the month of July.....	33,714	33,600	114
For the month of October.....	3,294	3,199	95
	73,076	72,775	.....
Seals taken for native food, May.....	687	687	301
Seals taken for native food, August.....	504	489	15
Seals taken for native food, September.....	345	117	*223
Seals taken for native food, October.....	801	774	27
Seals taken for native food, November.....	753	401	352
Seals taken for native food, December.....	538	457	81
Total number of seals killed.....	76,704	75,700	1,004

\* Stag.

Of these 74,976 were shipped as above stated, the balance of 724 skins remaining over to be counted on the quota of 1873.

Besides the above there were taken in November 5,121 young male seals as a supply of seal's flesh for winter food for the natives. This makes the whole number of seals killed on Saint Paul's Island during the year 1872, 81,825. This gave 70 animals per family, with an average weight of flesh, when dressed, of 9 pounds, or 630 pounds per family, the usual supply. The skins of these have no commercial value.

There were taken at the same time on the island of Saint George, by the Alaska Commercial Company and by the natives, for food, 25,164 seals; of these were salted 25,000; the balance, 164, were rejected as damaged by cutting or otherwise. All of those salted were shipped in September, 1872.

Besides, there were killed for a supply of food for winter use for the inhabitants 2,090 young male seals. This gives a total for seals of all classes killed on Saint George during the year 1872 as 27,254.

Some changes are observable in the habits of the seals, growing out of the present system of killing three, four, and five year olds instead of two, three, and four, as formerly, it having been ascertained that these sizes are of greatest value in market. There is a much smaller number of five-year-olds seen swimming along the shore of the breeding-rookeries during the period of copulation, and more of the young females maturing are seen to press up through the rookeries to the old males always gathered there. And where formerly the shore had been occupied in short sections, with open spaces between—through which the young males pressed to the uplands to lie down—these spaces have been

filled by the addition of the annually-increasing number of females maturing until these spaces become closed and the rookeries form continuous lines along the shore, thus obliging the young seals to seek new resting-places further on, and where they accumulate in larger numbers and wider distances from the breeding-places. This is rather an advantage than otherwise, as it facilitates the gathering them for killing with less liability to disturb the breeding-seals. It was also observable that a much larger number of one-year-old seals arrived on the island during July and August, as if the season had been more favorable for them while absent during the winter, and the destruction of them less than usual: The seals began to leave the island in the latter part of September, and on the 27th of December had all left for the winter.

The winter of 1872-'73 was unusually cold and severe, the sea freezing around the island in February, and continued frozen until the 23d of May. This delayed the arrival of the seals at the island ten or fifteen days later than usual. The first seals were reported near the island on the 9th of May.

The first drive for fresh food for the people was made May 23, when, by driving from three places, 297 seals were obtained. From that time they continued to increase, so that on June 3 the Alaska Commercial Company commenced taking them for their skins. At that time I estimated their number equal to what it usually is at twelve days earlier in former years, or that they were twelve days behind their usual time. The females began to arrive June 9, and no change in their habits or movements was observable except their increased numbers from the annually-maturing females, which I estimate at 5 per cent. a year, or 15 per cent. since 1870, the date of the lease.

The Alaska Commercial Company made their first drive for the taking of skins June 3 and continued until July 23, having taken in all 74,397 seals. Of these, 73,884 were salted; 361 were spoiled by being cut in skinning; 152 were damaged by heating on the field before they could be skinned. The account of seals killed up to August 1, 1873, stands as follows:

Seals taken by the Alaska Commercial Company for the month of—

	Number killed.	Salted.	Damaged by cutting.
June .....	38,070	37,732	338
July .....	36,327	36,152	175
<hr/>			
Total by Alaska Commercial Company—killed .....	74,397	Salted ..73,884	Condemned, 513
For native food, May .....	297	284	13
To these is added the skins left over from 1872.....		724	
<hr/>			
Total number seals killed....	74,694	Shipped, 74,892	Condemned, 526

Of the above were shipped, as per certificate to collector of customs for San Francisco, copies of which are already deposited with the Department, dated as follows:

July 14, 1873 .....	32,076
August 8, 1873 .....	5,100
August 9, 1873 .....	37,804
<hr/>	
	74,980

A difference of 88 in excess appearing in the counting the skins from the salt-houses for shipment over the account as rendered on their being taken.

There have been shipped from Saint George Island of the quota of 1873, as per certificate, dated—

July 16 .....	5,286
August 10 .....	19,464
	24,750
Total fur-seal skins .....	24,750

Copies of these certificates have been already filed with the Department. A detailed report of the seals damaged or rejected has not yet been received.

The same conditions in regard to the changes in their habits growing out of the established system of killing older seals were observable as noted last year.

When the seal-islands were visited by myself and Special Agent H. H. McIntyre, in the season of 1869, there was no opportunity afforded for either of us to visit Saint George Island, to ascertain by actual observation its condition and proportion, as regarded number of seals, as compared with Saint Paul. From the best sources of information then obtainable, it was believed to contain from one-third to one-half as many as Saint Paul, and on this information the number of seals to be taken annually was fixed at 25,000, and Saint Paul at 75,000. It is now ascertained that the number of seals annually breeding on Saint George is less than one-eighth of the number on Saint Paul, and that the island of Saint George cannot be relied on to furnish the established quota of 25,000 skins annually of the desired size and quality to be of prime value, and to obtain the requisite number the past season it has been necessary to take seals too small to be first-class skins. I therefore recommend that the number to be taken annually on the island of Saint George be limited to 15,000; and, in order that this may work no hardship to the people of Saint George by depriving them of a part of their necessary support, that it be recommended to Congress to so amend the act limiting the number to be taken on the island of Saint Paul to 75,000 annually, as to allow an addition of 10,000 to the quota of that island, which is amply supplied to yield the requisite number, and thus a portion of the population of the island of Saint George may remove to the island of Saint Paul temporarily, during the sealing season, or permanently, as they choose.

In my report dated November 10, 1871, I stated that I had caused a number of young male seals to be marked by cutting their ears. This was done to determine whether, as a rule, they returned to the rookery where they were born, as was claimed by the natives. This was done in 1870, and the present year they were old enough to be taken for their skins. Six out of one hundred thus marked have been taken, two on the island of Saint George and four on the island of Saint Paul, and none of these were found on the same rookery where they were marked; this would go to prove that they are not governed by any special instinct to return to the exact place of their birth. This, also, furnishes some evidence of the percentage of seals that live to grow up. There yet exists but little information of their haunts or habits while absent from the islands. That they have numerous and powerful enemies is apparent by the great disproportion between the number that leave the islands at four months old, and those that return again at one year of age.



During the fall months, while the young seals are leaving the islands, shoals of a small species of the whale, known among whalers as the killer, from its sometimes attacking and killing the right-whale, are seen in the vicinity of the islands often, apparently chasing the seals, and in one instance, while so doing, one has run into shoal water, been killed, and two seals found in its stomach. From the most careful observation, extending over five seasons of sealing, I cannot estimate the number of young seals that return the first year after birth to be over 30 per cent. of the product, and that were no seals taken for their skins not over 10 or 12 per cent. would live to the age of five years. Thus it is seen that the older the class of seals taken for their skins the smaller the supply from which to take them.

The breeding-rookeries during the breeding-season have a fixed and permanent character. They begin to fill at the water-line, and fill in equal numbers in a given space, extending their boundaries no farther than can be so filled, so that by carefully noting these boundaries from year to year, an approximate estimate can be made of the ratio of increase, by the addition of the young females maturing annually. These, as compared with their area in 1870, now show an expansion equal to 15 per cent. in three years, or an annual increase of 5 per cent. since the date of the lease. The full-grown males that do not find room on the breeding-places, gather as near as possible to await for opportunities to supersede the weak and wounded while fighting for the possession of the females. Here the proportion their numbers bear to the necessities for breeding purposes can be readily estimated, and of this class for breeding purposes there is a full supply. The classes driven for their skins during the sealing season are too often disturbed to afford opportunity for estimating their numbers. But after the sealing is all done, and the full quota taken for the year, we know what remains as a future supply. In a few days they settle quietly on their resting-places and can then be fairly estimated. On Saint Paul Island there is evidence of a steady increase that exceeds the demand to fill the quota for that island, while on Saint George Island, as before stated, the supply falls short of the number necessary to furnish large-sized skins. All other conditions appear to be the same on Saint George as on Saint Paul, the females annually increasing in numbers, showing it to be only necessary to reduce the number of males taken for their skins, to afford the necessary complement for breeding purposes. Thus may be summed up the general condition of the fur-seals at the seal-islands, after three years' practical application of the present established system for their management.

The number of breeding-females has increased 15 per cent. while one hundred thousand males have been taken annually for their skins, and there is still left a surplus of males required for breeding purposes.

The general affairs of the natives have been administered by chiefs of their own selection, and in accordance with their former customs, with only such slight changes as the new conditions required, it being my policy to accustom them to rely on themselves in all matters that concern only themselves. Such incidents as seem worthy of note, follow in their regular sequence. On the departure of the steamer *Alexander* for San Francisco September 9, 1872, three families and seven unmarried parties, seventeen persons in all, availed themselves of the privilege accorded them by the Alaska Commercial Company, of a free passage on their vessels to and from the islands, to remove, temporarily for the winter, to Unalaska, intending to return to Saint Paul again in the spring.

With the departure of the steamer ended the sealing, and during the months of October, November, and December the natives were employed in work of grading and building the house erected for the use of the Treasury agents, and six other houses that were erected for the use of the natives, by the Alaska Commercial Company. In November, the weather being sufficiently cold for the purpose, the necessary supply of seal-flesh and blubber for winter-use of the natives was secured and preserved by either salting or freezing.

December 20, 1872, in accordance with a regulation adopted by themselves, the natives made their annual division of the fund derived from the labor of taking the fur-seal and sea-lion skins, which amounted to \$30,637.97. The same rules are observed as under the former Russian Company, they arranging themselves into four classes. Those who are most expert in skinning seals and otherwise good citizens, constitute the first class, which contained thirty-four men; those who failed to come quite up to this standard constitute the second class, twenty-three men; those more idle and lazy the third class, four men; while those sick and working irregularly, together with boys just learning to take seals, constitute a fourth class, numbering ten men. (It is always practicable to rise by merit from the lower to the higher classes.) In this division the second class get 90 per cent. of the first, the third class 80 per cent., the fourth 70 per cent.; to these is added one first-class share for the acting priest, and two first-class shares set aside to create a fund to pay for a new church; in all, seventy-four shares. This gives as a first-class share, \$451.22; second class, \$405.09; third class, \$360.97; fourth class, \$315.85.

The same rules are observed on Saint George Island in classification, but a given number of skins are set apart, according to classes, for which each man is paid for taking.

First class, 17 men, 971 skins, at 40 cents.....	\$388 40
Second class, 2 men, 935 skins, at 40 cents.....	374 00
Third class, 7 men, 821 skins, at 40 cents.....	328 40
Fourth class, 3 men, 400 skins, at 40 cents.....	160 00

It will be seen, by comparing the amount of the shares on both islands, that Saint George Island has already a larger population in proportion to the amount of skins taken and money received for them than Saint Paul's; therefore it will be necessary, on diminishing the present quota of Saint George, to provide for the removal of a part of the population to Saint Paul's.

The census taken January 1st, 1873, on Saint Paul's Island, gives the number of the native inhabitants on the island 218; to these should be added the seventeen then absent and properly to be reckoned as belonging to the island, making in all 235, showing a decrease since 1870 of twelve persons. These are divided as follows: males 114, females 121. The oldest person was a female, aged 58 years; she has since deceased, leaving the oldest native now living 56. There were, during the year previous, four marriages, ten births, and twelve deaths, the mortality being greatest among young children, the average life of deceased being seven years and four months; average length of life of those now living, twenty-two years and eleven months. It will be seen that the severity of the climate is not favorable to longevity. During the winter and spring following, there has been, up to August 1, two births and twelve deaths, mostly from consumption.

A school-house was fitted up and properly consecrated, and a school commenced October 2, and continued eight months; but on account of

a prejudice among the people, who have a fear that in learning English their children will forget their Russian, and weaken their attachment to their church, only seven attended regularly. Under the assiduous care of the teacher, these made very commendable progress. There were at the same time three classes taught by natives, two in Russian and one in Aleut; in all, seventeen scholars attended schools of all kinds. Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer reports the same difficulties existing on the island of Saint George in regard to securing attendance at school. See copies of his reports inclosed herewith.

The sixty tons of coal accepted in lieu of sixty cords of wood for gratuitous distribution was divided according to the population, forty tons being received at Saint Paul's and twenty tons landed on Saint George. It was stored until the severity of the weather rendered its use necessary in December, 1872, when it was distributed by the chiefs in weekly rations, and lasted until March 1, 1873, after which the supply on hand by the Alaska Commercial Company for sale lasted until May.

The store was well supplied with dry goods and provisions of good quality, and sold at low prices and in such quantities as desired, except the article of sugar, the sale of which was limited to one-half pound per person per week; this was necessary to prevent, as much as possible, the manufacture of quass or native beer, and the drunkenness produced by its use; and it is believed that during the holidays very little of the small quantity sold was used for tea, being saved in small parcels until sufficient had accumulated to brew into beer.

The ice-pack that completely inclosed the island in February, remained until May 23, when it broke up and drifted to southwest, rendering it for the first time possible for a vessel to approach the island. The steamer Alexander arrived May 28, bringing mails, &c., from San Francisco, having on board the general agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, and a number of employés of the company to carry on the sealing. The steamer also brought, as passengers from Onalaska, the men that belong to the island who took passage to that place in September, 1872, to winter there. The steamer also brought two carpenters from San Francisco to frame and build a church for the natives, the people of both Saint Paul and Saint George having last year agreed with the Alaska Commercial Company to furnish the materials and a part of the labor for this purpose, to pay for which a fund nearly sufficient has been already accumulated, by setting aside for that object two first-class shares of the seal fund annually. The materials have since then been landed on the islands, and the church on Saint Paul has been raised and boarded, and will be completed before another year; that on Saint George will be built during the ensuing winter.

The steamer having finished unloading and taken on board the balance of skins left on the island to fill the quota of 1872, again sailed for Onalaska June 2, to reload at that place with lumber, coal, salt, and stoves for the use of the islands, she being employed to ply between that place and the seal-islands until the end of the sealing season.

Immediately after the departure of the steamer, the sealing commenced, and all the natives of the islands worked continuously, Sunday excepted, until it was finished, July 23. Eight natives from Onalaska were brought up to assist in unloading vessels and do the other work of the company while the sealing lasted.

An attempt was made, on June 11, by the general agent of the Alaska Commercial Company to induce the chiefs to adopt, as a native, to share in the sealing and its profits, an employé of the company, a Spanish creole, a native of the Ladrone Islands. This being contrary to the for-

merly-established law of the Russians, and the principle always kept in view in all legislation—that to the natives of the island belongs the privilege of doing the labor and receiving the pay—this was not permitted.

In my report, dated November 10, 1871, I had the honor to recommend to the Secretary of the Treasury to ask for an appropriation by Congress for the purchase of lumber and materials to enable the natives of the seal-islands to build wooden houses for themselves. As the president of the Alaska Commercial Company voluntarily offered to build those houses, and allow the natives to live in them free of rent, no further action was taken in the matter. There have since been built, on Saint Paul's island, thirteen such houses, and so disposed of, and three more will be built this present season. There are now forty-three native families living in thirty-five turf huts. The proposition was made by the company to build a large number of these houses, the present year, instead of the church, but the people unanimously desired the church first. On Saint George there have been built three houses for the use of natives, and one more to be built the present season. Arrangements were made with the general agent of the company, before I left the islands, by which the people will all be comfortably housed during the coming winter.

A very large amount of the necessary supplies for the uses of the natives have been stored on the islands for the coming winter. Eighty tons of coal have been landed on Saint Paul's, but, owing to the pressure of other matters, the forty tons for the natives have not yet been delivered to the Treasury agent in charge. The twenty tons for Saint George island have been delivered to the officer in charge, and duly receipted for.

The Alaska Commercial Company has this year introduced two labor-saving improvements on Saint Paul's Island, of great advantage to the people. The first, a movable railway-track, placed on the beach, extending into deep water, so that boats come to and discharge their freight into cars to be hauled on shore. This saves the men from the necessity of wading through the water to land coal, salt, and other heavy articles on their shoulders, as formerly. The other is the introduction of a horse and mules to haul the skins from the killing-ground to the salt-houses while sealing, instead of the men bringing them on their shoulders. This improvement alone reduces the labor of taking the skins fully twenty-five per cent., and is the principal reason of the work being done so much earlier this year than before.

It will be seen by the foregoing report that all the conditions of the lease have been fulfilled by the Alaska Commercial Company in a broad and generous spirit that entitles them to very high commendation.

I inclose herewith copies of the reports of Samuel Falconer, assistant Treasury agent, in charge Saint George Island, and at the same time desire to express in the strongest manner my appreciation for the able manner in which he has administered the affairs of that island since the date of his taking charge, November 9, 1870.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal-Islands.*

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT.

The seal-skins being all cured and shipped on board the steamer Alexander, she sailed for San Francisco, September 9, to touch at Saint

George and take on board the remainder of the quota of that island; the general agent of the Alaska Commercial Company and employes, except the winter force of three men, returning to San Francisco; also as passengers, myself and family, and Assistant Agent H. W. Elliott and family; Samuel Falconer, esq., assistant Treasury agent, remaining in charge of Saint George Island, acting under the following instructions:

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND, A. T.,  
April 24, 1872.

SIR: You are hereby assigned for duty and placed in charge of Saint George Island. It will be your duty to see that the laws of the United States concerning the taking of fur-seals under the lease with the Alaska Commercial Company are observed; that the natives are protected in all their rights, and, in general, it will be your duty to perform all those acts which shall be for the interest of the United States, and the comfort and improvement of the natives of the island.

You are herewith furnished with a blank book to keep a record of the following objects, said book to be kept on the island for future reference.

It will also be your duty to see that when seals are driven for their skins that they are taken from all the different rookeries or families in such proportion as the size of the rookery bears to the whole number on the island; to keep a list of the number of seals killed, time of driving, and place from whence driven, with, as near as may be, the loss from overheating while driving or otherwise; to give special attention to the condition of the breeding-rookeries, as to their increase or otherwise, from year to year, adding any observation pertinent to the object of their increased development that may suggest itself, and report the facts to me in detail as often as practicable; and, in addition, you are requested to give attention to the following items of observation and inquiry:

1st. To prepare a list which will give the full name, sex, age, and condition, whether married or single or widowed, of every man, woman, and child now living on the island.

2d. To prepare a list which will show the number of families and names of members living on the island.

3d. Keep an accurate record of marriages, births, and deaths, and the cause of their death, as they occur.

4th. Keep an accurate record of changes and removals, arrivals of the natives to and from the island.

5th. Keep a daily journal of the weather, together with any observations or remarks that are likely to be of future use to the general interests of the island.

Assistant Agent Francis Lessen, a copy of whose instructions is herewith transmitted to you, will report to you to assist in the performance of these duties.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

SAMUEL FALCONER, Esq.,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska Territory, April 24, 1872.*

SIR: Should Bishop John, of Sitka, wish to place a curate on the island of Saint George, to minister to the spiritual wants of the people, you

will permit him to do so, understanding him to confine himself strictly to his parochial duties.

Respectfully, yours,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Island.*

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent, Saint George's Island.*

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, August 1, 1873.*

SIR: You are hereby instructed that in all cases where skins are shipped from Saint George's Island, on the vessels of the Alaska Commercial Company bound direct to San Francisco, without affording opportunity to communicate with this office, to give a certificate for the number so shipped to the master of said vessel on which the skins are so shipped, also forwarding two copies of the same to the Secretary of the Treasury and the collector of customs for San Francisco, one of these copies to be forwarded by the vessel taking the skins, and the duplicate copies should be sent the next opportunity occurring after, and report the same at this office the earliest opportunity.

You are further instructed not to permit any person or persons other than natives of the seal-island, or directly in the employ of the Alaska Commercial Company, to reside on Saint George's Island, without written permission from the Secretary of the Treasury.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Agent in charge Saint George's Island.*

This last was necessary, as in some cases the vessels touch at Saint George's after leaving Saint Paul's on their way to San Francisco.

The island of Saint Paul is left in charge of Francis Lessen, esq., assistant Treasury agent, with instructions, of which the following is a copy :

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND, A. T.,  
*August 7th, 1873.*

SIR: You are hereby placed temporarily in charge of the island of Saint Paul, where it will be your duty to maintain the laws of the United States relating to the protection and preservation of the fur-seals; the conditions of the lease with the Alaska Commercial Company, and the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury under said lease for the taking of the same.

It will be your duty to see that no seals are killed, except under the directions of the chiefs, for the purpose, and as provided in section first of the act entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of the fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1st, 1870.

You are further instructed not to permit any person or persons other than natives of the seal-islands, or directly in the employ of the Alaska Commercial Company, to land or reside on Saint Paul's, except by written permission of the Secretary of the Treasury.

However, should a curate of the Russian Orthodox Church, furnished with proper testimonials from Bishop John, of Sitka, wish to land and reside on the island to administer to the spiritual wants of the people, you are hereby authorized to permit him to do so, with the understand-

ing, however, that in all civil matters he will be subject to the laws of the United States, and the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury which may be made in pursuance thereof.

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

FRANCIS LESSEN, Esq.,

*Assistant Treasury Agent Saint Paul's Island.*

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent for Seal-Islands.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,

*Secretary Treasury.*

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No. 99.

WASHINGTON, D. C., October 31, 1873.

SIR: Three points connected with the general interests of the Government upon the Prybiloo group of seal-islands seem to call for your immediate personal consideration, and as such I take them from my general report and present them in this special communication to yourself:

*1st. The annual waste of seal-oil.*

Upon the Prybiloo Islands one hundred thousand seals are annually slaughtered and the blubber suffered to rot and waste away upon the killing-grounds, owing to the tax now levied by law upon every gallon of seal-oil that may be made and exported to home ports.

In this way over forty thousand gallons of excellent oil are annually lost to the aggregate of national wealth. As the matter now stands no party can profitably render this seal-blubber into oil and transport it twenty-five hundred miles to San Francisco for market, and enter into successful competition there with the makers of lard, rape-seed, and other oils, who have no such impost to support.

I would, therefore, respectfully suggest that as this waste of seal-oil on the Prybiloo Islands is a public loss, the tax now levied by law upon its shipment from the islands to home ports be abolished.

*2d. With regard to the inhabitants of the Prybiloo Islands, who are the "natives" as specified in the law of the lease.*

This is a matter of great importance to these people, and to prevent confusion and illegal action in the future, I earnestly urge upon you the propriety of settling this question beyond any possibility of evasion or misapprehension, for as the case now stands it is not clear or explicit as to what class of the classes of people now living upon the islands are the "natives," who are by law guaranteed, as they should be, the sole right of independent residence on the islands and participation in the sealing labor and reward.

The people now living upon the islands may be divided into three classes, viz:

First. The natives, properly speaking, or those who have been born and raised upon these islands.

Second. The people who are living there but not born at the time of the transfer of the territory.

Third. The people who were living and working upon the Prybiloo Islands at the time of the granting of the present lease.

If you decide exclusively in favor of the first class, you will deprive three-fourths of the present population of the right to live and labor upon the islands.

If you decide exclusively in favor of the first and second classes, you will deprive six Kodiak and Aleutian families of the right to live and labor there, a loss which the people could not well sustain, as their working gang for the sealing business is none too large now, and many days, during the press of the best driving and killing season in June and July, they are short-handed.

But if you decide in favor of the third class also, and exclusively, you will settle the matter in the most satisfactory manner with regard to the wishes of the people themselves. Accurate records of the people living upon the islands at the time of the granting of the lease can be found in the church registers on both islands. A copy of the one on Saint Paul I embody in my report, and the record with regard to Saint George was in the custody of Father Shalesneekoff, of Ounalaska, who was absent on the occasion of my being there, August, 1873.

### *3d. The brewing of beer or "quass" upon the Prybiloo Islands.*

The existing law, which prohibits the importation, making, or vending of spirituous or fermented liquors in the Territory, is an excellent one, but natives can evade it almost everywhere, and do so by brewing a species of beer from sugar, rice, flour, &c., &c., with which they become intoxicated; but upon the seal-islands this law can be thoroughly enforced, and it should be done rigidly, with honest regard for the best interests of the people there, who, had they the opportunity, would be in a chronic condition of drunken debauchery. This is natural only on their part, for most of their time is passed in idleness, owing to their position and the character of service they are called upon to render, which engages them over two working-months in the year.

The Government agent upon these islands can quietly and effectually abate this existing nuisance of beer intoxication by marking the offending persons, and instructing, or rather authorizing the company's agent to discontinue the selling of sugar, hops, &c., to the parties who abuse the privilege of purchasing them, and this agent of the Alaska Commercial Company will cheerfully do so.

As matters now stand, the law is simply nothing in regard to preventing the great evil of intoxication among these simple people, carried out as it has been by the Treasury agent in charge of the islands during the season of my residence there in 1872-'73.

The physicians on the two islands should alone have the dispensation of liquor, and they should be well supplied with it for medicinal use only; but to all others living or visiting on the Prybiloo Islands the law should be patent and real.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY W. ELLIOTT,

*Special agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. WM. A. RICHARDSON,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*



No. 100.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., October 14, 1873.

SIR: I am in receipt of a letter dated the 19th ultimo, from the collector of customs at Sitka, Alaska, in which he states that he is advised that the Attorney-General has decided that the introduction of spirituous liquors into the Indian country is exclusively under the control of the War Department, and that the deputy internal-revenue collector for that district has confirmed this statement. Under this state of facts, he is apprehensive that the military authorities stationed there may attempt to exercise jurisdiction in the premises.

Respectfully referring to the fourth section of the act of July 27, 1868, in regard to the Territory of Alaska, I will thank you to inform this Department whether you consider the Territory of Alaska as embraced within the term "Indian country," and whether your Department claims to exercise control over the introduction of spirituous liquors into that Territory.

The Department takes this precaution before communicating with the collector of customs in the premises.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

Hon. W. W. BELKNAP,  
*Secretary of War.*

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No. 101.

FAIRHAVEN, MASS., December 4, 1873.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the Alaska Commercial Company's schooner, William Sutton, touched at the seal-islands, Alaska, on the 4th of October last, for the purpose of taking to San Francisco Messrs. Mossman and Davidson, of that place, two carpenters, who had been employed in building the native church.

By this mail I received a brief report from Francis Tessen, esq., district treasury agent in charge of Saint Paul's island, containing information of the condition of that island two months later than I left, August 9, of which the following is a copy:

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, October 4, 1873.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit to you a short report on the condition of this island. Since your departure, August 9, I have, according to your instructions, examined the near rookeries frequently, and on three occasions Mr. Adams, myself, and Bootrim, the chief, went in a whale-boat around the island to the west and northeast point rookeries. I find our opinions on the unusual quantity of young seals, (pups,) and the good condition of the rookeries, all agree.

In regard to the health and comfort of the inhabitants, I have much pleasure to state that the management of the company's officers under Mr. Adams, agent for the Alaska Commercial Company of this island, although short as yet, has proven to me sufficiently that he intends and does as much to improve their condition as circumstances do permit.

August 15th a division was made among the inhabitants of the earnings of this year's sealing, which amounted to \$29,674.60, and was divided by the chief, in my presence, as follows:

- 38 first-class shares at 100 per cent., \$435.11 per share.
- 20 second-class shares at 90 per cent., \$391.59 per share.
- 10 third-class shares at 80 per cent., \$348.08 per share.
- 6 fourth-class shares at 70 per cent., \$304.57 per share.

On the arrival of the company's schooner, William Sutton, October 4, I have received from the Alaska Commercial Company, on account of the Government, for distribution among the inhabitants of this island, 27 barrels salted and 8,000 pounds dried fish; also, 40 tons of coal, as provided for in the lease.

The school for the education of the children was opened on the first of October, under the management of Mrs. Fish as teacher.

FRANCIS TESSEN,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal Islands.*

In my report of September 30, I stated that previously to leaving the island, August 9, arrangements had been made to secure the comfort of the natives during the ensuing winter. From private correspondence I learn that these have all been fully carried out, and that they are now all comfortably housed.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal Islands.*

Hon. W. M. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 102.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 15, 1874.*

SIR: In relation to the value of seal-oil, and the cost of taking it, I beg to submit the following for your consideration:

The number of gallons that may be taken annually at the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George has been variously estimated at from twenty to forty thousand; and the cost of taking and delivering it in San Francisco will average thirty cents per gallon.

The market-value of seal-oil in San Francisco ranges from thirty-five to forty-five cents per gallon. The highest price we have received for it was fifty-six cents in Boston, for a small lot shipped around Cape Horn, less cost of commissions and other expenses.

The Alaska Commercial Company would be glad to take the oil, if it could be done at a small profit or without loss, as it would save property that is now wasted, and give additional employment and compensation to the natives.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON,  
*For Alaska Com. Co.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 103.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., January 19, 1874.

SIR: I inclose herewith a communication, dated the 15th instant from Mr. H. M. Hutchinson, in behalf of the Alaska Commercial Company, requesting that said company be relieved from that clause of the lease of the United States to them of the right to take fur-seals in Alaska, which provides that they shall pay fifty-five cents per gallon for each gallon of oil obtained from said seals, &c.

In view of the statements presented and from various sources of information, this Department sees no good reason why said tax should not be removed in whole or in part, if (with the consent of the lessees) the requisite power lies in the Secretary of the Treasury to do so, without invalidating the lease in other respects, reference being had to said lease, a copy of which is inclosed, as also to the act entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, in pursuance of which said lease was made.

An expression of your views upon the legal question raised in the premises, with return of the two inclosures, is respectfully requested.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

E. C. BANFIELD, Esq.,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury, Department of Justice.*

No. 104.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,  
OFFICE OF SOLICITOR OF THE TREASURY,  
Washington, D. C., February 4, 1874.

SIR: In reply to your letter of the 19th ultimo, inquiring whether or not the Alaska Commercial Company can be relieved from that clause of the lease of the United States to them which provides that they shall pay fifty-five cents per gallon for each gallon of oil obtained from seals, I have the honor to say that as the clause referred to was not one of the conditions of the lease specifically prescribed by Congress, but was imposed by the Secretary of the Treasury himself, I am of opinion that he may waive the collection of the tax referred to in whole or in part, for such time as he may see fit.

The inclosures are herewith returned.

I am, very respectfully,

E. C. BANFIELD,  
*Solicitor of the Treasury.*

Hon. WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 105.

WASHINGTON, February 15, 1874.

SIR: In reply to your verbal inquiries in regard to obtaining a revenue from the oil of the fur-seals killed annually at the fur-seal islands in Alaska, I beg leave to submit the following statement:

During the season of 1871, about six thousand gallons of oil was ren-

dered at the island of Saint Paul, at a cost of twenty-five cents per gallon, allowing six cents per gallon to the native for skinning and delivering the blubber at the place of rendering. But as the addition of the present tax of fifty-five cents per gallon would make it cost, on shipping, eighty cents per gallon, while its market-value being less than fifty cents, would involve such positive loss, that it was kept and stored on the island, and now remains there, and no more of the oil has since been saved.

In my opinion no revenue can be obtained from taxing the oil, and as the parties most to be benefited by the saving of the oil are the natives of the islands, I would therefore most respectfully suggest the present tax of fifty-five cents per gallon be removed, and in its place a regulation be established fixing a stipulated sum, say six cents per gallon, be paid the natives for skinning and of delivering the blubber to the agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, not required by the natives for their own uses on the island. This would still leave a margin sufficient to pay the cost of rendering and shipping. In this way about fifty thousand gallons of oil may be obtained annually. The proceeds of this would thus enable the natives to buy wood or coal for warming their houses in winter, said blubber being wholly unfitted for this purpose, and the sixty tons of coal provided for general distribution by the condition of the lease, insufficient for a full winter supply.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent for Seal-Islands.*

Hon. WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

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No. 106.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., February 16, 1874.*

SIR: Referring to your letter of the 15th ultimo, relative to the taking of seal-oil on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George by the Alaska Commercial Company, upon which oil a tax of fifty-five cents per gallon was agreed to be paid by the lease entered into between the United States and said company, I have to say that upon due consideration, I have decided to waive the collection of tax upon such seal-oil as may be taken by said company and shipped from said islands; such waiver to stand in full force until otherwise ordered by the Department.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 107.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 13, 1874.*

SIR: On the 16th ultimo, the Department addressed to you a letter in which you were informed that the collection of the tax of 55 cents per gallon on seal-oil obtained by the Alaska Commercial Company on the

islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, which was agreed to be paid by the lease entered into between the United States and said company, would be waived until otherwise ordered by the Department.

Since then, upon the representation of Special Agent Bryant, in charge of said islands, the Department has further considered the matter, and has decided that the natives of the islands should be compensated for their time and labor in skinning and delivering the blubber of the seals at the place of rendering the oil, and that a fair rate of compensation for such services would be ten cents per gallon for each gallon of oil taken.

In view of the above, the Department has this day instructed Special Agent Bryant to cause such fee of ten cents per gallon to be collected on the shipment of seal-oil from those islands, the proceeds to be devoted and applied by him to the general welfare of the natives performing such services.

The Department, however, reserves the right to rescind or modify this order at any time whenever, in its opinion, it may be for the benefit of the natives or the Government to do so.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

A. M. HUTCHINSON,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 108.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 13, 1874.*

SIR: Referring to your letter of the 19th ultimo, in relation to the seal-oil obtained on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Alaska, by the Alaska Commercial Company, I have to say that the Department, after due consideration, has decided that such company shall pay, as compensation to the natives of the islands for their time and labor in skinning and delivering the blubber of the seals at the place of rendering the oil, ten cents for each gallon of oil taken. Mr. Hutchinson, of said company, has been this day duly informed of such decision, and has also been informed that such fee or tax will be collected under your supervision, and will be devoted and applied by you to the general welfare of the natives of the islands performing such services. You will, therefore, be governed accordingly.

The Department, however, reserves the right to rescind or modify this order at any time, whenever in its opinion it may be for the benefit of the Government or the natives to do so, and said company has been advised accordingly.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

CHAS. BRYANT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

No. 109.

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1874.

SIR: I hereby acknowledge the receipt of Department letter dated March 15, marked "H. B. J." in upper left-hand corner, containing instructions concerning the taking of seal-oil on the seal-islands.

As the carrying-out of these instructions involves the necessity of ascertaining the number of gallons shipped, I would hereby most respectfully request that I be allowed two gauging-rods, one for Saint Paul's and one for Saint George's Island.

Very respectfully, I remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge of Seal-Islands.*

Hon. WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 110.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 20, 1874.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of the Department addressed to you under date of the 13th instant, informing you of its decision in regard to the compensation that should be paid to the natives on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George for the taking and rendering of seal-oil, I have to say that the instructions given to the special agent on the 13th instant have this day been modified so as to require that the compensation due the natives for their services in taking and rendering the oil shall be paid to them directly, and not to the Government agent, and that the ten cents per gallon shall be for all labor performed in taking the oil and delivering it to the vessel.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington, D. C.*

No. 111.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 20, 1874.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of the Department addressed to you under date of the 13th instant, making regulations concerning the taking of seal-oil by the Alaska Commercial Company, on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, I have to say that said instructions are hereby modified so as to require that the ten cents per gallon shall be paid directly to the natives performing the labor, and that such compensation shall be for all services in taking the oil and delivering it to the vessel.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

CHARLES BRYANT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent United States Treasury Department,  
San Francisco, Cal.*

No. 112.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 21, 1874.*

SIR: The Alaska Commercial Company begs leave to acknowledge the receipt of your communications of February 16, March 13, and March 20, respectively, in relation to the tax on seal-oil to be paid by this company, in compliance with the terms of its lease from the United States, dated August 3, 1870.

In reply, this company respectfully informs the Secretary of the Treasury that it concurs in his opinion as to the right of the Government to reduce the amount of said tax, on the ground that the said tax is imposed by a regulation of the Treasury Department, and not by act of Congress; and that it is, in no sense, a modification of the terms of said lease in a material part thereof; and, as such, is respectfully accepted and concurred in by this company.

The Alaska Commercial Company further begs leave to respectfully inform the Secretary of the Treasury, that the acceptance of said modifications is not to be construed as a waiver of any of its rights under said lease, or to be regarded as any admission of the right of the United States to vary the form or terms of the said lease without the consent of said company.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON,  
*For Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 113.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 24, 1874.*

SIR: I am in receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, acknowledging the receipt of Department communications of February 16, March 13 and 20, respectively, in relation to tax on seal-oil, to be paid by the Alaska Commercial Company, in compliance with the terms of its lease from the United States, dated August 3, 1870, and I have to say that your understanding of the terms under which the waiver of tax on said oil was made, is correct; that is, it is in no sense nor in any manner a modification of the terms of said lease, and that the Government reserves the right to enforce fully the provisions of said lease at any time it may see fit so to do.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington, D. C.*

No. 114.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., March 25, 1874.*

SIR: In accordance with the authority contained in the act approved March 24, 1874, conferring discretion upon this Department to regulate the number of seals which may be killed on the islands of Saint Paul

and Saint George, Alaska, and to regulate the period in each year during which such seals may be taken, I inclose herewith an agreement, in addition to the lease between the United States and the Alaska Commercial Company, executed by me on the part of this Department, and which is intended for execution in duplicate by the proper officers of the Alaska Commercial Company, under the seal of that company.

Upon the execution of this contract by the said officer, and upon the sureties to the bond, residing in San Francisco, signing the agreement indorsed upon this contract, you will deliver to such officer of said company one of these copies, and return the other to the Department.

You will also, upon the execution of such document, deliver to Captain Charles Bryant, special agent, the inclosed instructions to him, prepared in accordance with the law and said agreement.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

T. B. SHANNON, Esq.,  
*Collector, San Francisco, Cal.*

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Whereas, by a certain indenture made August third, eighteen hundred and seventy, between William A. Richardson, then acting Secretary of the Treasury, and the Alaska Commercial Company, a corporation duly established under the laws of the State of California, it was covenanted and agreed as follows, to wit:

“And the said lessees further covenant and agree not to kill upon said island of Saint Paul more than seventy-five thousand fur-seals, and upon the island of Saint George not more than twenty-five thousand fur-seals per annum; not to kill any fur-seal upon the islands aforesaid in any other month except the months of June, July, September, and October of each year; not to kill such seals at any time by the use of fire-arms or other means tending to drive the seals from said islands; not to kill any female seal, or any seal less than one year old; not to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands, or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain.”

Now this indenture, made this twenty-fifth day of March, eighteen hundred and seventy-four, by and between William A. Richardson, Secretary of the Treasury, in pursuance of an act of Congress approved March 24, 1874, and entitled “An act to amend an act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, approved July first, eighteen hundred and seventy,” and the said Alaska Commercial Company, lessees in said indenture of August third, eighteen hundred and seventy, acting by John F. Miller, its president and agent, in accordance with a resolution of said corporation, duly adopted at a meeting of its board of trustees held January 31, A. D. 1870, witnesseth that the parties hereto do hereby mutually agree to rescind and annul, from and after the ratification hereof, the within-recited covenant in said indenture of August third, eighteen hundred and seventy, and in place thereof the said Alaska Commercial Company, lessees as aforesaid, do hereby covenant and agree not to kill upon the island of Saint Paul more than ninety thousand fur-seals, and upon the island of Saint George not more than ten thousand fur-seals, per annum; not to kill any fur-seal upon the islands aforesaid in any other month except the months of June, July, August, (from the first to the fifteenth of said month,) September, and October of each year; not to kill such seals at any time by the use



of fire-arms or other means tending to drive the seals from said islands; not to kill any female seal, or any seal less than one year old; not to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands, or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain.

And the said parties hereto, by virtue of the act of Congress herein referred to, hereby agree that the covenant set forth in said indenture of August 3, 1870, and herein recited, shall, from and after the ratification of this indenture, be revoked and rescinded, and the covenant hereby entered into shall be and remain in force as the covenant of the parties hereto in this regard, from and after the ratification hereof, during the remainder of said lease of August third, eighteen hundred and seventy.

In witness whereof the said parties have hereto set their hands and seals, the day and year above written.

[L. S.]

WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

[L. S.]

LEWIS GERSTLE,  
*Vice-President, Acting President Alaska Commercial Company.*

We, the obligors in a certain bond, dated August 3, 1870, given in accordance with the provisions of an act of Congress approved July 1, 1870, entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," hereby consent to the within change made in a lease given by the Secretary of the Treasury to the Alaska Commercial Company under said act, dated August 3, 1870, and agree that said change shall not discharge us from any liability under said bond.

Witness our hands and seals this twenty-fifth day of March, eighteen hundred and seventy-four.

JOHN PARROTT.  
LEWIS GERSTLE.

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No. 115.

MARCH 26, 1874.

SIR: In accordance with the act approved March 24, 1874, I have, on behalf of the Department, executed an agreement with the Alaska Commercial Company, whereby that company may be permitted to take, during the coming season, on the island of Saint Paul, seals to the number of 90,000, and on the island of Saint George seals to the number of 10,000, the total number to be taken on both islands not to exceed 100,000.

You will also observe that, by the terms of said agreement, a copy of which is herewith inclosed for your information, the company have been granted from the 1st to the 15th of August, in which to take seals, in addition to the time specified in the lease.

The regulations heretofore in force governing your action in the premises will be observed with the changes indicated herein.

I have also to call your attention to the fact that Mr. H. M. Hutchinson, of the Alaska Commercial Company, has stated to the Department that some of the natives of said islands are in the habit of brewing quass from sugar, and thereby producing an intoxicating liquor, which is distributed among them.

If any such cases come within your knowledge, or you have reason to believe that any special natives are indulging in such practice, you will be careful to see that it is broken up, and that supplies to them of

sugar and other articles from which such quass can be brewed, are furnished in such limited quantities as to prevent a repetition of the practice.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

Capt. CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Special Agent United States Treasury Department,  
San Francisco, Cal.*

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No. 116.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
*Collector's Office, April 16, 1874.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 25th ultimo, relative to the act approved March 24, 1874, conferring discretion on the Department to regulate the number of seals which may be killed on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, &c., inclosing an agreement which I am directed to have executed in duplicate by the proper officer of the Alaska Commercial Company, after which to deliver one copy to the company and return the other to the Department.

The agreement having been executed as directed, and all the sureties to the bond residing in San Francisco having signed the agreement indorsed on the contract, one copy has been delivered to the proper officer of the Alaska Commercial Company and the other is inclosed herewith. I have also delivered to Capt. Charles Bryant the instructions inclosed in your letter.

I am, very respectfully,

T. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

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No. 117.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 4, 1874.*

SIR: In pursuance of the act of Congress entitled "An act to enable the Secretary of the Treasury to gather authentic information as to the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska," approved April 22, 1874, and under which you are appointed, you are hereby instructed to enter at once upon the duties required of you by the provisions of that act, a copy of which you will find inclosed for your official information and guidance.

You will therefore proceed to Port Townsend, Washington Territory, where you will join the United States revenue-cutter Reliance, Captain Baker in command, by June 1 proximo, that vessel having been designated to perform the service of conveying you and Lieut. Washburn Maynard, United States Navy, or such other officer as may be detailed by the Secretary of the Navy in the performance of the duties required by said act, to such places as it may be necessary and important for you to visit.

The nature of the instructions to Captain Baker you will find in a communication addressed to you of even date, which will be forwarded to you for your information.

You will observe that you are required to visit the various trading stations and Indian villages in the Territory of Alaska, the seal-islands, and the large islands to the north of them in Behring Sea, for the purpose of collecting and reporting to the Secretary of the Treasury all possible authentic information upon the present condition of the seal-fisheries of Alaska; the haunts and habits of the seal, and the preservation and extension of the fisheries as a source of revenue to the United States, together with like information respecting the fur-bearing animals generally, the statistics of the fur-trade, and the condition of the people or natives, especially those upon whom the successful prosecution of the fisheries and fur-trade is dependent.

It may be found impracticable to visit all the various trading-stations and Indian villages in the Territory of Alaska, but you should visit such of them as may be found at all important in collecting "all possible and authentic information" on the subject mentioned in the act.

Although not specially required by act to inquire and report whether the contracts as to the seal-fisheries have been complied with by the persons or company now in possession, and whether said contracts can be safely extended, you are instructed to carefully examine those subjects and report upon them distinctly and separately from your general report to the Department.

It having been officially reported to this Department by the collector of customs at Port Townsend, from Nee-ah Bay, that British vessels from Victoria cross over into American waters and engage in taking fur-seals, (which he represents are annually becoming more numerous on our immediate coast,) to the great injury of our sealers, both white and Indian, you will give such proper attention to the examination of the subject as its importance may seem to you, after careful inquiries, to demand, and with a view to a report to the Department of all facts ascertained.

In carrying out these instructions the Department relies upon your intelligence and experience to collect such authentic and reliable information as may prove of service to the Government in its future management of the interests involved; and while no limit is placed upon your expenses, they should be such only as may be actually necessary, keeping in view the important object of your mission.

Upon the completion of your investigations you will report in person at this Department, and prepare your reports, which it is desirable should be completed before the preparation of the next annual report of the Secretary of the Treasury, and before the meeting of Congress in December next.

Very respectfully,

F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

HENRY W. ELLIOTT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent, Cleveland, Ohio.*

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 4, 1874.*

SIR: I acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 24th ultimo, requesting, in order that you may the more thoroughly carry

out the intent and purpose of act of Congress approved April 22, 1874, providing for an investigation into the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska, &c., that this Department issue such orders as will secure for you and the naval officer who is to accompany you, conveyance to those islands and points in Behring Sea and on the coast of Alaska which you may desire to visit.

In reply, you are informed that Capt. J. G. Baker, United States revenue marine, commanding the revenue-cutter *Reliance*, now at Port Townsend, Wash., has this day been authorized to afford yourself and the naval officer conveyance on board his vessel to such points in the region named as you may desire to visit in your official capacity, as the discharge of the regular duties of the vessel as prescribed by law and the regulations of the service will permit, and has been instructed to prepare for an extended cruise, and be ready to start by June 1st next.

It is expected, however, that you and the naval officer referred to will furnish your own subsistence while on board the *Reliance*, but it has been suggested to Captain Baker that it might be for the interest of all concerned to allow you to mess with the officers of the vessel.

I am, very respectfully,

F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

HENRY W. ELLIOTT, Esq.,  
*Special Agent Treasury, Washington, D. C.*

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No. 118.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 7, 1874.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of this Department addressed to you, under date of 5th instant, inclosing a copy of orders issued by this Department to special agent H. W. Elliott, who has been appointed, under the act approved April 22, 1874, to investigate the seal-fishery business, I inclose herewith, for your further information, copies of additional correspondence of this Department upon the subject.

It is respectfully suggested that Lieutenant Maynard, who has been detailed by you to accompany Mr. Elliott, confine his attention more especially to the duties required of him under the last clause of the act, and for that purpose that he remain at the seal-islands, leaving Special Agent Elliott to proceed elsewhere; and that, if circumstances shall not indicate to the contrary, he return to San Francisco on the steamer *Alexander*, which leaves the seal-islands in the fall with the skins of the summer's catch.

It is also suggested that the report of Lieutenant Maynard be made direct to your Department, so that the investigation to be made by him and by Special Agent Elliott may be as separate and independent as possible.

I am, very respectfully,

F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Hon. G. M. ROBESON,  
*Secretary of the Navy, Washington, D. C.*

No. 119.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 7, 1874.*

SIR: I inclose herewith a copy of an act approved April 22, 1874, entitled "An act to enable the Secretary of the Treasury to gather authentic information as to the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska."

Mr. H. W. Elliott has been appointed special agent, under the authority contained in this act, and the Secretary of the Navy has detailed Lieut. Washburn Maynard to go in connection with him, and to inquire into the relations of the Alaska Commercial Company with the Government, and whether the contracts as to the seal-fisheries have been complied with by said company, and whether said contract can be safely extended.

The United States revenue-cutter *Reliance* has been placed at their command, and it is probable that Lieutenant Maynard will remain at the seal-islands for the purpose of making the investigation required by the law, while Mr. Elliott will pursue his inquiries in regard to the other objects specified in the act, in the waters and islands adjacent to the seal-islands.

You are hereby requested to afford either or both of these gentlemen all the facilities necessary to make a thorough examination of the subject intrusted to them, placing the books and papers under your charge at their disposal; and you are also requested to see that proper accommodation and living are afforded them during their stay, they to pay the cost thereof.

It is probable that Lieutenant Maynard will return on the *Alexander* when she brings down her next cargo of skins.

I am, very respectfully,

F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Capt. CHAS. BRYANT,  
*Special Agent.*

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No. 120.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 7, 1874.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the act of Congress approved April 22, 1874, entitled "An act to enable the Secretary of the Treasury to gather authentic information as to the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska," I have to say that, under the authority contained in that act, Mr. H. W. Elliott has been appointed to collect the information therein specified, and that the Secretary of the Navy has detailed Lieut. Washburn Maynard to accompany him. It will be seen that the naval officer detailed under the authority contained in this act is charged with the duty of inquiring into and reporting whether the contracts as to the seal-fisheries have been complied with by the persons or company now in possession, and whether said contracts can be safely extended.

The United States revenue-cutter *Reliance* has been placed at the disposal of these gentlemen, and it is expected that she will sail from San Francisco by the 1st of June; will land Lieutenant Maynard at the seal

islands, and proceed with Mr. Elliott to such places and waters as he may direct, for the purpose of making the investigation required of him.

I have to request that you issue such orders to the officers of your company located at said islands as will secure to either or both of these gentlemen the opportunity to examine, so far as may be necessary, the books and papers of your company, the mode of killing the seals and shipping them, and, generally, all subjects connected therewith, especially the question whether the contracts now existing between your company and the Government can be safely extended.

I am, very respectfully,

F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary.*

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington.*

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No. 121.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 8, 1874.

SIR: I am in receipt of yours of the 7th instant, informing me that the Secretary of the Navy has detailed Lieut. Washburn Maynard to accompany Mr. W. W. Elliott in his expedition, authorized by the act of April 22, 1874, &c.

In reply, I beg to say that I have inclosed your letter to the Alaska Commercial Company, and that said company will afford every facility in their power to aid Lieutenant Maynard in making a thorough investigation of the management of its business, under its lease from the United States, in relation to taking fur-seals in Alaska, or on any other subject upon which the Government desires information.

The books and papers of the company relating to this business are open to the inspection of Lieutenant Maynard, or any officer detailed by the Government to examine them, at any and all times.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON.

Hon. F. A. SAWYER,  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*

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No. 122.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., May 9, 1874.*

SIR: I have received from the collector of customs at San Francisco a contract prepared in this Department, which has been signed by myself, as Secretary of the Treasury, and by Lewis Gerstle, as vice-president of the Alaska Commercial Company, which was executed on the 25th of March, 1874, and is an agreement that the said company may kill 90,000 fur-seals upon the island of Saint Paul and 10,000 upon the island of Saint George.

It is necessary, however, to give validity to this contract, that the acting vice-president of the company should have authority from the company by a vote of the board of directors to execute this contract, and

I will thank you to procure and forward to this Office a formal ratification of the action of the vice-president in the matter.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary.*

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
*Of Alaska Commercial Company, Washington, D. C.*

No. 123.

NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, May 11, 1874.*

SIR: Referring to your letters of the 5th and 7th instant, with their respective inclosure, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of instructions, dated the 9th instant, given to Lieut. Washburn Maynard, who has been detailed under the act of April 22, 1874, to inquire, in connection with the special agent of the Treasury Department, into the condition of the seal-fisheries in Alaska.

Very respectfully, &c.,

GEO. M. ROBESON,  
*Secretary of the Navy.*

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

NAVY DEPARTMENT, *May 9, 1874.*

SIR: You are hereby detailed, in conformity with law, bill No. 2667, inclosed.

A copy of the original contract, made August 23, 1870, marked A; supplementary contract, dated March 25, 1874, marked B; letter from the Secretary of the Treasury of May 5, 1874, to this Department, and the appended instructions of Captain Baker, commanding United States revenue-cutter *Reliance*, and Henry W. Elliott, esq., marked C, are also inclosed for your instruction and guidance.

You will observe that the proviso through which your detail upon this duty is necessary, not only gives you the same duties as are given to the special agent, to be appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury, but also directs that you shall inquire and report whether the contracts as to the seal-fisheries have been complied with by the persons or company now in possession, and whether said contracts can be safely extended.

This latter duty being under your sole charge, you will consider it your special one, and will give it your careful and earnest attention, and consider the joint duties devolving upon the special agent of the Treasury and yourself as secondary with you to the main object of your inquiry, and requiring your personal attention, and report only so far as may be possible, without in any way interfering with a careful, full, and proper discharge of what has been specially assigned to you.

The provisions of the law do not design a joint report, but that the special agent of the Treasury Department should report to it, and that you should report to this Department, in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Great discretion will be required on your part to ascertain all the facts

desired, and arrive at the conclusions required in your report, and in avoiding all discussion and expression of opinion other than in an official form, for the purpose of guarding against misapprehensions and cavil.

The Department recommends a careful study and consideration of the delicate and responsible duties assigned you, and for this object the terms of the agreement and all of its stipulations will be borne in mind by you, and it desires that you will weigh well the testimony, of whatever sort, that may present itself or be presented in the discharge of your duties.

You will also keep the Department advised of your movements, both past and prospectively, as far as possible, and the particular subjects that have been engaging your attention; but it is not supposed, on so difficult a subject, that you will report until your investigations are ample, and that you will have the advantages derived from a sufficient experience.

Information of a maritime character, as obtained, will be forwarded, and especially such as will aid in the development of the cod and other sea fisheries, or whatever else that may tend to open new fields of employment, or to increase our maritime interests in those waters.

You will proceed, in obedience to these instructions, in such a manner as may be determined upon after conferring with Mr. Elliott, the special agent of the Treasury Department, and Captain Baker, commanding the revenue-cutter *Reliance*.

Very respectfully,

GEO. M. ROBESON,  
*Secretary of the Navy.*

Lieut. WASHBURN MAYNARD,  
*United States Navy, San Francisco, Cal.*

P. S.—I inclose also a copy of a letter dated the 7th instant, from the Secretary of the Treasury, with its accompaniments.

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No. 124.

WASHINGTON, *May 11, 1874.*

SIR: I am in receipt of yours of the 9th instant, requiring the Alaska Commercial Company to forward to the Treasury Department its formal ratification, by a vote of directors, of the contract executed by its vice-president on the 25th of March, 1874, by which it is agreed that the said company may kill 90,000 fur-seals on the island of Saint Paul and 10,000 on the island of Saint George.

In reply, I have the honor to state that your communication has been forwarded to the Alaska Commercial Company, and that, at its regular annual meeting in June next, the ratification will be duly made and certified to the Treasury Department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON.

Hon. W. A. RICHARDSON,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*



No. 125.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 20, 1874.

SIR : I have the honor to transmit copies of the following papers, viz :

First. A resolution of the board of directors of the Alaska Commercial Company, ratifying the agreement executed by Lewis Gerstle, esq., vice-president of the said company, with the Secretary of the Treasury, March 25, 1874, under the authority of the act approved March 24, 1874,

Second. A letter of instruction to H. W. McIntyre, agent of said company at Saint Paul and Saint George Islands, Alaska, directing him to afford all proper facilities and information to Professor Elliott and Lieutenant Maynard in their examination of the affairs of said company at said islands.

Third. A letter of instructions to the agents of said company in the Territory of Alaska, containing similar directions.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. M. HUTCHINSON.

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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*Resolutions of Alaska Commercial Company.*

Resolutions passed at the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Alaska Commercial Company, San Francisco, Cal., June 10, 1874.

Whereas a certain agreement was made and entered into, in writing, between William A. Richardson, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, pursuant to an act of Congress approved March twenty-fourth, eighteen hundred and seventy-four, entitled "An act to amend an act to prevent the extermination of the fur-bearing animals in Alaska, approved July first, eighteen hundred and seventy," and this company, through Lewis Gerstle, vice-president and acting president, by authority of this company, which agreement bears date the twenty-fifth day of March, eighteen and seventy-four; and whereas the Treasury Department at Washington desire evidence of the authority of said Gerstle to execute said contract on behalf of this company: Therefore,

*Resolved*, That the acts and doings of said Gerstle in signing said contract on behalf of this company, and attaching thereto the corporate seal of this company, be, and the same is hereby, ratified, affirmed, and in all respects made valid, and that the said agreement shall, at all times and in all places, be taken and held to be the act and deed of this company.

*Resolved*, That the secretary of this company be, and is hereby, directed to make and certify, under the corporate seal of this company, a copy of these resolutions, and to forward the same to the honorable Secretary of the Treasury.

[SEAL.]

E. NEWMAN,  
*Secretary Alaska Commercial Company.*

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SAN FRANCISCO, May 18, 1874.

DEAR SIR: In compliance with an act of Congress approved April 22, 1874, H. W. Elliott, esq., has been appointed for the purpose of gathering

authentic information as to the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska.

The honorable Secretary of the Navy, under the same authority, details Lieut. Washburn Maynard to accompany Mr. Elliott to the seal-islands, to examine into and report whether the contract as to the seal-fisheries has been complied with by the persons or company now in possession, and whether said contract can safely be extended.

Anxious to furnish the Government with the most accurate and reliable information in reference to the subject above referred to, the board of directors of this company have authorized me to issue an open letter of instructions, directed to the agents at the different stations in Alaska, commanding that every possible facility shall be afforded to either or both of these gentlemen, and every information that they may desire in the discharge of their respective duties shall be given freely and without reserve.

In view of the foregoing facts, no further instructions are necessary on my part, and I wish simply to add that the fullest opportunity should be given for a thorough investigation of the company's affairs on both islands, not only in respect to the mode of killing the seals, and the shipment to this port from the date of our contract with the Government until now, but it is also desirable that you should permit either or both of these gentlemen to examine all the books and papers of the company, so far as it may be deemed necessary for a proper understanding of the question under consideration.

Very respectfully, yours,

LEWIS GERSTLE,  
*Vice-President.*

H. W. MCINTYRE, Esq.,  
*Agent of the Alaska Commercial Company,  
Saint Paul's Island, Alaska.*

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*To the Agents of the Alaska Commercial Company, Alaska :*

It affords me much pleasure to introduce to your acquaintance the bearer of this, Prof. H. W. Elliott, appointed by the Treasury Department in accordance with an act of Congress approved April 22, 1874, for the purpose of gathering authentic information as to the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska.

In order to enable Professor Elliott to report to the Department correctly in reference to the subjects above referred to, you are hereby authorized and instructed not only to afford Professor Elliott all the facilities in your power to the discharge of the duties assigned to him by the Treasury Department, but it is also expected that you will take special pains to furnish him with whatever information he may desire in connection with the fur-trade of your district.

Professor Elliott being also connected with the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, you are hereby authorized to permit him to select at his option any articles of curiosity that he may find among your stores, and should you be in possession of any particular kind of fur which he may deem of special interest for the purpose above indicated, you are hereby instructed to deliver the same to him.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.,

LEWIS GERSTLE,  
*Vice-President.*

No. 126.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, May 24, 1874.*

To COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, Cal.:*

I hereby certify that there have been this day shipped, on board the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander, for transshipment at Onalaska, 40,000 fur-seal skins, all of this year's catch.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

No. 127.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, Alaska, August 7, 1874.*

To COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS,  
*San Francisco, Cal.:*

I hereby certify that the Alaska Commercial Company have shipped, on board steamer Alexander, for San Francisco direct, 49,238 fur-seal skins, taken on this island this year. Said steamer has also on board 5,620 fur-seal skins shipped at Saint George Island, July 31, being the balance of this year's quota for this island.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

No. 128.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
*Collector's Office, November 16, 1874.*

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith inspector's returns of cargoes unladen from the American bark Cyane and steamer Alexander, discharged September 2 and 5, respectively, said cargoes consisting of 45,068 and 54,656 fur-seal skins; total, 99,742 of the catch of the year 1874.

I also inclose original certificate of deposit No. 927, by B. Davidson & Company, of San Francisco, for account of the Alaska Commercial Company, through A. Belmont & Company, with the assistant treasurer at New York, of the amount of \$261,822.75, being the tax on 99,742 skins.

I am, very respectfully,

T. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

No. 129.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, D. C., November 30, 1874.*

SIR: Respectfully referring to the letter of this Department addressed to you August 31, 1870, transmitting for the files of your office the lease and bond of the Alaska Commercial Company, under the act of July

1, 1870, I inclose herewith an agreement made between this Department and said company under an act of Congress approved March 24, 1874, and dated March 25, 1874, making certain changes in the conditions of said lease, and would request that said agreement may be placed on file in your office with the other papers above referred to.

I am, very respectfully,

B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary.*

R. W. TAYLER,  
*First Comptroller.*

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No. 130.

ISLAND OF SAINT GEORGE, BEHRING SEA,  
*March 15, 1875.*

SIR: On the 1st of September last the natives reported that the crew of the otter-hunting schooner *Cygnets* were shooting seals from the deck of the vessel, as she lay at anchor in Zapadne Bay, five miles from the village. When a seal was killed they would lower a boat, take it on board, and, after skinning it, would throw the carcass overboard. I immediately sent a party of natives to watch the *Cygnets*, and ascertain, if possible, how many seals were killed, and also sent a letter to the captain of the vessel, informing him that his actions were illegal and that he must leave these shores at once. As there were no boats on the south side of the island, signals were made for a boat from the *Cygnets* to come ashore.

The next day the natives informed me that the signals were unanswered and that no communication was had with the vessel; that the crew had lowered two boats, and were killing seals in the water, under the cliff near the rookery, and that the seals were evidently very much alarmed, as they were leaving the breeding and hauling grounds, and were taking to the water in great numbers. A heavy sea was running on the north side of the island, and the breakers rendered it extremely hazardous to launch the whale-boat and sail around the island to Southwest Bay, and, as the natives are poor sailors, I did not deem it prudent to make the attempt. Still, I wished to give the captain of the vessel timely warning before proceeding to any harsh measures. (I had armed the natives, with the intention of repelling by force any attempts to kill seal on the rookeries or within rifle-shot of the shore, if the crew still persisted in doing so after the receipt of my letter by the captain.) I had the natives carry one of their *bydarkies* across the island to Zapadne and sent the letter before referred to, and also requested an interview with the captain on the beach, which he at once granted.

Captain Kimberly was very much astonished when informed that he was violating the laws of the United States; acknowledged that he had been killing seals, but maintained that the jurisdiction of the Government did not extend to the waters of Behring Sea, but only over the *Pribilof* Islands. I informed him that the phraseology of the act approved July 1, 1870, was quite plain and there was no mistaking its meaning; that the second section of said act provides \* \* \* "that it shall be unlawful to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands, or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain; and any person who shall violate either of the provisions of this or the first section of this act shall be punished, on conviction

thereof, for each offense by a fine of not less than two hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months, or by such fine and imprisonment both, at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction and taking cognizance of the offense; and all vessels, their tackle, apparel, and furniture, whose crew shall be found engaged in the violation of any of the provisions of this act, shall be forfeited to the United States."

He replied that, if that was the law, of course he had violated it, but had done so innocently; that he was engaged in otter-hunting, and had at that time two hundred skins on board; that he was looking for a kelp-patch to the west of the island, where he expected to find otter in abundance, and was only waiting for calm weather, so that he could hunt them in small boats, and that he had not fitted out for any purpose other than otter-hunting. In reply to the inquiry as to why he had not answered my signals and sent a boat ashore, he replied that he supposed they were made by the natives, prompted either by motives of trade or curiosity, and therefore paid no attention to them; had he known that they were made by white men he should have sent a boat ashore at once.

I informed Captain Kimberly that he must return to me the skins of all the seals he had killed and leave the shores of this island at once. The natives reported that he had killed thirty-four seals, but Captain Kimberly said that he had killed thirty-five, and would bring them ashore at once, which he did. These skins I salted and stored in the company's magazine at Zapadne, where I supposed they would be perfectly safe; but the foxes effected an entrance into the salt-house by digging under the floor and destroyed every one of them. It may be proper, however, to state that these skins were deemed stagey by the company's agent, or I should have turned them in to the company, to be included in this year's quota. The Cygnet left that same afternoon, September 2, 1874, and has not been seen in these waters since.

The captain's full name is Samuel Kimberly, and the second officer's Cannon; the latter was engaged in sealing on this island in 1868.

I am, very respectfully, yours,

WM. J. McINTYRE,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent, Saint George, Alaska Ter.*

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No. 131.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND, ALASKA.

May 12, 1875.

SIR: I have the honor to inform you of the arrival at this island, on the 10th ult., of the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander, 22 days from San Francisco, laden with supplies for the seal-islands, also bringing as passenger, Samuel Falconer, esq., assistant Treasury agent, returned from leave of absence, and reports here for assignment for duty. I have received no communication from the Department by mail, but learn from Mr. Falconer that Assistant Agent Teven had been relieved and another appointed in his place, and from his non-arrival must conclude he was detained on the road and failed to connect with the steamer, and may be expected to arrive here late in June. Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer will be again placed in charge of Saint George's Island, and no changes need be until the arrival of the newly-appointed agent.

I have received the letter granting leave of absence, to take effect at the close of the season, of which I shall avail myself, and would most respectfully request that the collector of customs at San Francisco be authorized to pay, on my vouchers, my salary from April 14th to August 31st, inclusive. This advance is necessary to enable me to settle my bill in San Francisco, and meet the expense of taking my family East.

I have had no communication with the island of Saint George since August last, as the steamer did not touch there on her way here, and as she will go to Onalaska from there on her way down, before she returns here, I am compelled to delay any report on that island until I receive the report of Assistant Agent William J. McIntyre, now in charge of that island.

As there will be no opportunity for the Department to again communicate with these islands before my return to Washington, when I shall file a detailed report, covering my six years' administration of these islands, I now only submit a brief statement of the occurrences since my last report, dated August 7, 1874. At that date the Alaska Commercial Company had finished taking seals for their skins, the number then taken being sufficient, when added to the skins of animals killed for food after the close of the last season, to fill the quota for 1874. There were taken for food after the close of the sealing season, from July 30 to December 30, 3,585 fur-seals. Of these skins, 626 were of no value, from the animals shedding their fur. The remainder, 2,959, were accepted and salted by the Alaska Commercial Company, to be counted as a part of the quota for the year 1875.

The past winter has been one of unprecedented mildness, the mean temperature of the months of November, December, January, and February all being above the freezing-point, while the lowest degree of cold occurred in March, the thermometer falling to 14 degrees above zero. Owing to the mild weather, the seals delayed their departure from the island much later than usual, considerable bodies of them remaining until February, and a few still lingered until March. The first seals returning the present season, landed the 5th of April, and they are now present in about the same condition as last year at this date.

A census, taken on January 1, shows the whole number of native population on the island to be two hundred and twenty-two, divided as follows:

	Males.	Females.
Children under five years .....	103	119
Between five and fifteen .....	8	17
Births during the year .....	17	28
Deaths during the year .....	5	9
Infants less than one year old living January 1, 1875 .....	3	6
Deaths during the year .....	3	7

These people are divided into sixty-four families, living in fifty-eight houses, forty-four of them built of wood and all above ground, and fourteen are turf huts, built partially in the ground. The past year twenty-one cottages have been built, and the church advanced as far as the material on the island permitted. This is the first year since I have had charge of the island in which the births have exceeded the deaths, and there is a marked improvement in the health of the population, partly due to the mild weather, but more to the advantages of improved houses and the facilities thus furnished for cleanliness, ventilation, and other comforts. The supplies have been abundant and the prices reasonable, except the article of coal. Had the winter proved severe there would have been some suffering. With the new houses this becomes one of

the greatest necessities, and arrangements are now made to secure the landing of an ample supply for the present year. The forty tons provided for distribution gratis by the lease was stored until January, when it was distributed proportionately to each family weekly, and the supply lasted until the end of March.

The school was commenced in the first week of October, and kept continually, except public and church holidays. The first months a very general attendance was secured, but with the commencement of the church holidays the attendance fell off, and it was difficult, without actual compulsion, to secure so great an attendance as was desirable. Mrs. C. P. Fish labored diligently and perseveringly to accomplish her task, and a few who have become attached to her have made good progress in reading, writing, and simple arithmetic. The strong prejudice that exists among some of the more bigoted against their children learning English, lest it should weaken their attachment to the Russian Church, prevents a cordial action on the part of many.

In regard to the suppression of the making of beer or quass, from fermenting sugar and flour together, some progress has been made, and there has been less drunkenness than in any former year. During the month of September berries were very plentiful. With their juice, fermented with sugar, the evil became so serious that I found it necessary to restrict the sale of sugar to four ounces per week for each person, and this sufficed to check the evil. This regulation was maintained until the berrying season had passed, when, on the promise of better behavior, the former ration was restored of one half-pound weekly to each person. But with this allowance some save theirs until sufficient is accumulated to brew a quantity, and then the consequence is they drink it secretly until drunk and make a disturbance, and I find their quass and destroy it.

The civil government of the natives has been administered by their own chiefs, or tyores, as they are called. There are three of these, who exercise both the judicial and executive functions, and I have always made it a point not to interpose my authority in their private affairs unless necessary, and have only had two cases where interference was necessary to sustain the authority of the chief. Good order and quiet have been maintained and all misdemeanors known have been punished. No serious acts occurred, and only a few cases of petty theft occurred.

On the morning of August 20, a schooner was reported approaching the island from eastward. Supposing it to be a vessel belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, a flag was set to indicate the point of landing; but when near the southeast point of the island she kept away and ran down toward Otter Island, about eight miles distant, and lowered a boat that pulled to the landing. Lest the seals should be disturbed I took one of the chiefs and boat and started for the island. Before reaching it the vessel took up her boat and stood to westward. On landing I found no appearance of the seals being disturbed. The vessel still steering to westward, at 3 o'clock I returned to the village of Saint Paul's. As soon as I had returned, the vessel changed her course and returned to the Otter Island again; and at dark was near the east point of the island. Men were stationed on the rookeries to prevent any disturbance there. At daylight the schooner pressed near the reef and along the southwest shore, heading to north, passed out of sight behind the island. A messenger sent to observe her movements returned at noon and reported the vessel going around the island to north-east. The vessel, after rounding the northeast point, steered to eastward, passing out of sight.

On the evening of the 29th of August some natives who had been

out fishing came in at dark and reported a schooner at anchor behind Otter Island, and that boats were moving about, and that they heard reports of guns and saw smoke, as if they were shooting seals. Kerek Bootrin, the first chief, volunteered to take a boat and go and see about the truth of the report. Mr. Benj. G. McIntyre accompanied them, and from him and the chief gathered the following statement: The boat arrived at the island half past 11, and, on crossing to the other side, saw the schooner at anchor under a high bluff, completely concealing her from view from Saint Paul's Island. In the morning, as soon as it was sufficiently light, they launched their boat, and, pulling around the island, came on the schooner by surprise. Before she could get under way they were on board. It proved to be the schooner *Cygnets*, of Santa Barbara, Cal.; Kemberly, master. He was evidently much disturbed by being boarded so unexpectedly. The captain said he was hunting for sea-otters, and had taken one hundred and sixty pelts near the island of Saronake. There were the carcasses of two fur-seals hanging in the rigging, and the pelts lying on deck. Captain Kemberly said he had captured them in the water for fresh food for some Kolah Indians in his crew. The boats were stained with blood, as if recently used. Captain Kemberly explained that they did not usually clean their boats until the end of the season. In the mean time the vessel had got under way, and the boat's crew were informed that they must leave or go to sea with them. Captain Kemberly stated that the vessel had been at anchor thirty-six hours when boarded by the boat. No doubt could be entertained that they were taking seals by shooting them in the water. The boat landed and examined the shore by daylight, and found no seals had been killed there; then returned to Saint Paul's village.

Sea-Otter Island is a small, rocky island, about eight miles distant from Saint Paul's. It is one-half mile long and half that in breadth. Its ends and further side are perpendicular cliffs, against which the sea breaks, and afford no foot-hold for landing. Its other side faces Saint Paul's and slopes from the center gently to the shore. Here is the only boat-landing; any object the size of a vessel can be seen from the hill in the rear of the village. Should this attempt be repeated, it will be necessary to put a party on it to prevent its injury by disturbing the seals. As it is only a rock, without any reliable supply of fresh water, it will be necessary to have a large boat for the purpose of carrying supplies there. This island has no breeding-rookery on it, but in the months of August and September five or six thousand seals resort there to rest and play on its outlying rocks and ledges.

I have the honor to remain,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

ST. PAUL'S ISLAND.

I herewith inclose an affidavit sworn before me by Benjamin G. McIntyre on September 10th, that it may be of service should any proceeding be instituted.

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*



*Affidavit.*

ST. PAUL'S ISLAND,

*Alaska Territory, ss :*

Personally appeared before me, Charles Bryant, special agent of the Treasury Department, under the act of Congress approved March 5, 1872, B. G. McIntyre, who, on being duly sworn, deposes and says:

I am agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, in charge of said company's business at Saint Paul's Island, Alaska.

That on the 19th day of August, A. D. 1874, the schooner *Cygnnet*, of Santa Barbara, Captain Kemberly, appeared off said island.

That on the attempt being made by Capt. Charles Bryant, special Treasury agent in charge of the seal islands, to board said vessel, she stood away, after she had lowered her boat.

That said schooner sailed around the island on the night of the 19th of August, 1874, and disappeared on the 20th of that month.

That on the 29th day of said month, said vessel was again discovered by the natives of said island, at anchor behind the bluffs of Otter Island, where she was engaged, as they believe, in unlawfully shooting fur-seals in the water near said Otter Island.

That on the night of the 29th of said month, deponent went to Otter Island, under cover of darkness, where he hid until daybreak on the morning of the 30th of said month, when, by pulling alongside said vessel suddenly, he surprised her crew and boarded her.

That he saw on board said vessel the carcasses of several fur-seals, and which were admitted to be such by the captain of said vessel.

That the said Captain Kemberly informed deponent that he had on board the skins of several fur-seals caught in the waters about the seal islands of Alaska, and requested deponent to inform the special Treasury agent in charge of the seal islands that he intended to keep said skins.

That said Captain Kemberly informed deponent that he had endeavored to avoid seeing any person from the islands.

That on different occasions deponent saw several shots fired from the deck of said vessel, and saw the boat lowered and something taken on board which he believed to have been fur-seals unlawfully shot and killed in the waters adjacent to the seal islands.

B. G. MCINTYRE.

Done at my office on Saint Paul's Island, this 10th day of September, A. D. 1874.

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Special Treasury Agent in charge of the Seal Islands.*

No. 132.

ISLAND OF SAINT GEORGE,

*Behring Sea, May 20, 1875.*

SIR: The steamer *Alexander* arrived here on the 8th of August last, on her way to San Francisco, and brought me your letter of instructions for the winter.

About the middle of August last I punished three natives for drinking "quass." I then informed all the natives that it was the intention of the Government to break up the practice of brewing and drinking "quass" on these islands, and that it must be discontinued in the future. This was the first as well as the last instance of "quass" having been made or drunkenness observed during the winter; the natives have been sober, steady, and industrious, and have conducted themselves upon all occasions in the most exemplary manner. I watched them so closely that they could not make "quass" and escape detection.

There has been a great deal of sickness on the island during the past winter. At one time it seemed as if every one in the village was down with sickness. From the 8th of August up to the date of this report there have been nine deaths and only four births. Among the deaths three were grown people and the remainder were children.

Only one accident occurred during the winter, and that was occasioned

through carelessness in handling a gun, the charge of which passed through the native's hand, necessitating amputation at the wrist.

The bull-seals commenced to haul up on the 5th instant, and on the following day I called in all fire-arms and forbade any person going near the breeding-rookeries.

Two thousand four hundred and ninety fur-seals were killed for food; of this number 205 were accepted by the company, to be included in the quota of 1875; of the remaining, 2,100 were pups and the rest stagey.

The school has been kept open in accordance with law; the average daily attendance was eleven, and the progress of the scholars has been very flattering.

I have had the Government house thoroughly, cleaned, papered, and painted both inside and out with two coats; the inside I painted white and the outside a very pretty brown, with white trimmings. I have also painted the fence a light brown. In the fall I banked the foundations up to the woodwork. A new floor is necessary for the office and large rooms; the old floor is badly worn, and has shrunk a great deal, and I have to request that you authorize me to put down a new floor during the fall or winter; a new stove is also wanted, and a new carpet and double bedstead; these are the only additional improvements necessary at present. I considered the repairs made this spring absolutely necessary for the proper preservation of the property.

The following is the meteorological record for the twelve months ending April, 1875:

Months.	Average monthly temperature.	Months.	Average monthly temperature.
May.....	40.22 above zero.	November.....	42.20 above zero.
June.....	33.2 above zero.	December.....	47.9 above zero.
July.....	36.11 above zero.	January.....	49.7 above zero.
August.....	37.3 above zero.	February.....	52.9 above zero.
September.....	32.26 above zero.	March.....	49. above zero.
October.....	32.26 above zero.	April.....	40. above zero.

I inclose a separate report concerning the killing of fur-seals by the crew of the otter-hunting schooner *Cygnets*, September, with affidavit.

I respectfully request to be furnished with a copy of the lease and all acts of Congress pertaining to the seal-islands, and any other information pertinent thereto.

In accordance with your instructions, I have turned over all Government property to Assistant Treasury Agent Samuel Falconer, who arrived here on the 15th instant.

At the close of the sealing season of 1875, I shall make a report concerning the breeding and hauling grounds, the approximate strength of the rookeries, and the mode of selecting killing seals; I will then be able to verify my figures made this spring, and take advantage of the information acquired during the past year.

While in charge of this island I have seen that the natives were protected in all their rights, and that the spirit of the act and lease was carried out in every particular.

I am, very respectfully, yours,

WM. J. McINTYRE,  
Special Agent, *Saint George*.

No. 133.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, A. T., May 26, 1875.*

SIR: I herewith transmit to the Department a letter, with accompanying affidavit, received from Assistant Treasury Agent Wm. J. McIntyre, concerning the killing of fur-seals unlawfully by the officers and crew of the schooner *Cygnat*, near the island of Saint George, during the month of September of the year 1874. The letter will explain the whole proceedings, and the promptness and energy with which said Assistant Agent Wm. J. McIntyre acted was very commendable. This is the same vessel mentioned in my report of May 12 ultimo, and I have since learned said vessel has since been to the port of Victoria, British Columbia, and sold her furs, and refitted for another cruise on these waters this coming season. Every precaution will be taken to prevent any killing of seals by the officers or crew of said vessel, or to seize her, if possible, in the act.

I have the honor to remain, with respect,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary Treasury.*

[Affidavit of Zecar Oustigoff.]

Personally appeared before me, Wm. J. McIntyre, assistant Treasury agent United States, (appointed under the act of March 5, 1872,) at Saint George Island, A. T., this fifth day of September, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy-four, Zecar Ostigoff, who, upon being duly sworn, deposes and says:

That on the first and second days of September, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy-four, I saw the crew of the schooner *Cygnat*, as she lay at anchor a quarter of a mile, or thereabouts, from the shore of said island of Saint George, A. T., shoot and kill fur-seals from the deck of said vessel, and skin said seals on board; that the said crew did also shoot fur-seals in the water under the cliff, about five hundred yards or thereabouts from the shore of said island; and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, thirty-four fur-seals were killed at the times and in the manner before specified.

That fur-seal skins, to the number of thirty-five, were, on the said second day of September, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy-four, returned to Wm. J. McIntyre, the Government officer on said island, and that I, by the direction of said Wm. J. McIntyre, did assist in the counting and salting of said skins in the salt-house of the Alaska Commercial Company, at Saint George Island, A. T., on the date last mentioned; and, further, that the said thirty-five fur-seal skins were killed by parties other than the Alaska Commercial Company, and without their consent, or the consent of the Government of the United States.

ZECAR OUSTIGOFF.

In testimony whereof, I subscribe my hand and seal on the said fifth day of September, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and seventy-four.

WM. J. MCINTYRE, [L. S.]  
*Assistant Treasury Agent, U. S. Treasury Department.*

No. 134.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, May 28, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report on the affairs of Saint George Island. The steamer, when driven from her anchorage here on the 14th instant, proceeded to Saint George, where, finding landing impracticable at the village, it went round on the opposite side, and, after landing Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer and Mr. George F. Adams, subagent for the Alaska Commercial Company, the steamer proceeded to Onalaska with the freight for Saint George on board.

Returning thence she arrived at Saint George on the 24th instant, and, after discharging the portion of freight for that station, again left for this island, arriving here on the morning of the 25th. The steamer brought as passengers Father Inocent Shisenekoff, arch-priest of the Russo-Greek Church for this district of Aleutian and seal-islands; also Paul Shisenekoff, a former resident of this island, who has been to San Francisco to be ordained as a resident priest here; also Zachar Shisenekoff and family, former residents here, who have been living at Onalaska. All these are to reside here except the arch-priest, who will return to Onalaska after performing the necessary ceremonies for installing his brother as pastor over the church here. Also five native laborers to do the labor outside, while the natives here are employed in taking seals; one carpenter from Onalaska, to take the place of the one who now returns to San Francisco.

By this vessel, I am in receipt of the report of William J. McIntyre, assistant Treasury agent, who has had charge of Saint George Island during the absence of Assistant Agent Samuel Falconer. A duplicate copy of this report is herewith inclosed. It will be seen by this report that he has, *without authority*, incurred a bill for labor and materials for painting and refitting the Treasury agent's house and the fence around it of over one hundred and seven dollars. The vouchers for this bill, together with the pay-roll, have been forwarded for my approval. I have examined these, and find the prices reasonable and just, and have approved them, and they will be presented to the collector of customs at San Francisco, and I have to request that they be authorized to be paid.

As this bill is nearly double my estimates for this purpose, as asked for in my report dated August 7, 1874, I can but think more has been done and greater expense incurred than the exigency of the circumstances demanded. It will be seen, also, that he asked for authority to put down a new floor and purchase a new stove and carpet and double bed. As both houses were built at the same time and furnished alike, with the exception of the bed, (the officer then in charge preferring a spring-bed to a mattress,) and these articles here in this house scarcely half worn, I must consider that the necessity is not so great for their renewal as to justify my giving authority to purchase new ones without waiting the pleasure of the Department, though it requires a year to do so.

I shall visit Saint George as soon as the newly-appointed assistant arrives. To do so now, and leave this place for a month without an officer, would be detrimental to the Government interests.

From the general tenor of the report it would appear that the affairs of the island had been very ably administered, but I regret to have to state that I have information from other sources going to show that Assistant Agent McIntyre has been guilty of unwarranted harshness in his treatment of the natives.

Gregor Kolichieff, the second chief of Saint George Island, is here in charge of the working-party of eleven men.

Last evening, said Kolichieff, accompanied by Keprian Makoolieff, Nicholi Ostigoff, Zahar Ostigoff, and Berese Gallanisu, came before me and made the following charges: It would appear that Keprian Makoolieff has a son named Esau, a boy about eight years old, and that, instead of sending him to the English school kept by Mr. McIntyre himself for the Alaska Commercial Company, his father sent him to study with aforementioned Kolichieff and learn Prussian. In November, when the boy's father was away from home, Mr. McIntyre went to said Kolichieff's house and forbid his teaching the boy Prussian, and ordered him to send the boy to the school-kept by himself. Kolichieff said he had no right to send the boy, as he was not the boy's father, whereupon Mr. McIntyre took the boy to the school-house and locked him in to keep him in all night, as a punishment for not coming to school. The boy, not being used to such treatment, escaped through the window in the night and fled to Zapadnez, a place on the opposite side of the island, distant five miles, where the father was gathering drift-wood. In the morning, Mr. McIntyre sent Zahar Oustigoff to order the father to bring the boy home, and immediately on their arrival, he, Mr. McIntyre, attempted to seize the boy, but the father would not let him. He, Mr. McIntyre, returned to his own house, got a pistol and pair of handcuffs, and again returned to the native's house for the purpose of punishing both father and son. Upon seeing this, the native, fearing for his life, fled from his house with only his pants and shirt, and in this condition hid himself in the cliffs at the east end of the island, where the people found him on the third day after, so exhausted by cold and hunger that they had to carry him home on their backs. When they arrived there, the doctor took charge of him. On the fourth day after, he, Mr. McIntyre, took him from his house, put handcuffs on, and lodged him in the cellar of the company's house, a very cold, damp place, and kept him four days on bread and water, and during all this time the son had been confined in a dark closet in the company's house, and kept on bread and water.

All agree in the truth of this statement, and say they never experienced such treatment from the Prussians, and they all unite in asking me to remove him. They say they are afraid of their lives, and if he is to remain on the island they all wish to leave it. All the former residents say that the said Keprian Makoolieff is a very quiet, inoffensive man, and gave no occasion for such treatment, and made no effort in self-defense.

They also complain that on assuming charge of the island, he (Mr. McIntyre) took from their chief the Prussian translation of the act of Congress reducing the quota of skins for their island, with the necessary instructions I had given in relation to coming over here to help take seals, and told them he should govern them in his own way. This paper was of no real value to them, but they have a great reverence for a written document, and I find they considered this one as their guarantee for the right to come to this island and help seal and share in the benefit of it.

And so thoroughly assured do they feel of his unfitness for the position, that, were it practicable, I should ask his immediate removal.

I shall order Mr. Falconer here on the next trip of the steamer, that I may go there and investigate these matters.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE, SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND,  
*May 27, 1875.*

SIR: Learning there had been some questions raised at the custom-house on account of shipments of fur-seal skins from these islands, under certificates dated prior to June 1st, the legal time for commencing the sealing, I desire to offer the following explanation: It has been the rule of the Alaska Commercial Company to kill and ship the number of skins a little short of the full quota, and wait until the count at the island is verified by the count of the custom-officers on their arrival at San Francisco; when this deficiency is known, it is made up from the skins of seals killed subsequently for food for the natives; and the surplus then remaining in the salt-house is, on the first of June, transferred to the Alaska Commercial Company, to be counted as a part of the quota for the ensuing year.

The Alaska Commercial Company had taken the desired number for the quota on the 17th of July, 1874; the skins of seals killed for food since that date remain in the salt-houses, and as it is very desirable for said company's vessels, after discharging their heavy cargoes here in the spring, to have these skins for ballast in returning, and no possible injury can accrue to the interest of the Government, these skins on hand have been shipped as per certificate inclosed.

Yours, respectfully,

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

HON. THOMAS SHANNON,  
*Collector of Customs for San Francisco, Cal.*

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE, SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND,  
*May 28, 1875.*

I hereby certify that the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped on board steamer Alexander, from this island, three thousand eight hundred and fifty-six (3,856) fur-seal skins, being the skins of seals taken for native food from July 18th, 1874, to this date.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent in charge Seal Islands.*

No. 135.

5294.]

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, June 23, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose copy of communication from the commanding officer Sitka, Alaska, dated the 19th April last, relative to the importation into the Territory of Alaska of breech-loading rifles and ammunition, by the Alaska Commercial Company, for sale to Indians; and inviting your attention to the copies of accompanying papers, and to the suggestions of the commanding general Military Division of the Pacific, I beg to request that measures may be taken, if legal and proper, to carry out the suggestions of General Schofield.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,  
*Secretary of War.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

HEADQUARTERS., SITKA, ALASKA,  
April 19, 1875.

I wish to call attention to the fact, credibly reported to me by a former employé of the Alaska Commercial Company of San Francisco, that large quantities of modern breech-loading rifles, and ammunition for the same, are being imported into this Territory by the above-named company for sale to Indians. I have noticed a few Henry rifles in the hands of the Sitkins, who say they got them from the Northern Indians. There would be little trouble in keeping the upper hand of the Alaskan Indians as long as the Hudson's Bay musket is their only arm, but with their intelligence, and power to concentrate rapidly by canoe navigation, would render them very formidable with such arms of precision and power. Their villages are built of large timber houses, in many instances as capable of defense as a scientifically-constructed block-house. These Indians have heretofore refused to buy breech-loading arms, preferring the old flint-lock musket, because of the difficulty they had to procure the proper ammunition, or even percussion-caps. Now, however, they eagerly seek breech-loaders, and offer large prices for them, which is conclusive proof to me that the ammunition difficulty has been solved to their satisfaction. I respectfully suggest that it would be well to renew the executive restriction to the importation of such arms and ammunition, or at least to regulate it in some way. It is now left to the military authorities to regulate the sale. In this connection I will say that no such arms are sold this side of Yacutat Bay I believe. The Alaska Commercial Company is free and unrestricted in all their operations on account of the great distance of its scene of operations, and takes good care to keep its agencies, stores, and factors as far as possible from military authority. They pay for a monopoly of Saint Paul's and Saint George's Islands, but they have spread themselves all over Northern Alaska, and have a trading scheme upon the Yucon River. Some idea of the extent of their operations may be judged from the following list of stations occupied by them upon the islands and main-lands of this country. The same authority who gives information concerning the arms, tells me that the company's vessels bring large amounts of liquor into the country for sale to Indians, and that at almost all of their posts the distillation of spirits is carried on.

They have stores or traders' stations at—

Fort Etches, on Heuchenbrook Island.

Constantine, on Heuchenbrook Island.

Elena or Helena, on Heuchenbrook Island.

Alexandroosk, on English Harbor.

Fort Kenay, or Kenai, }  
Saint George. }

Kuqek, on Kunk river.

Shushitua, on river of same name

Iliamanua, on river of same name.

Katmaq, or Katmai, on Katmai Bay.

Fort Kodiak, or Saint Paul.

Bemkooskoia.

Unga-ila, on Ounga Island.

Delarov, on Ounga Island.

Onimyak, or Unimai, on island of same name.

Ougashink, on Soulima River.

Sourvoroff, or Pugalusk, on Makuck River.

Alexander, mouth of Nushagak River.

Kijunok, on river of same name.

Michaelooski, Nortors Sound.  
Tshitschayoff Harbor, Attow Island, (great supply depot.)  
Ounalashka, or Ileoluk, Ounalashka Island—  
and in places on Atkha Island.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. B. CAMPBELL,

*Captain Fourth Artillery, commanding.*

ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL,

*Headquarters Department of the Columbia, Portland, Oregon.*

[1st indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE COLUMBIA,  
*Portland, Oregon, April 30, 1875.*

Respectfully forwarded to the Assistant Adjutant-General Military Division of the Pacific, it being understood the alleged shipments are made from San Francisco.

The recommendation for a renewal of the executive restriction to the importation of arms and ammunition into the Territory of Alaska is concurred in.

A copy of this communication has been retained to be submitted to the department commander for his information.

In the absence of the department commander,

H. CLAY WOOD,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

[2d indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION PACIFIC,  
*San Francisco, May 7,*

Respectfully referred to Lieut. Col. R. Jones, A. I. G., who will please ascertain the facts as to shipment of modern arms and ammunition from this city to Alaska.

By order of Major-General Schofield.

J. C. KELTON,

*Lieut. Col., A. A. G.*

[3d indorsement.]

INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
MILITARY DIVISION PACIFIC,  
*San Francisco, Cal., May 13, 1875.*

The records of the custom-house show that during the past twelve months large shipments of arms, ammunition, powder, and lead have been made from this city to the waters of Alaska, but from the bonds required of shippers engaged in this traffic the number of breech-loading rifles shipped would appear to be very small, and of the number actually shipped the Alaska Commercial Company can be credited with but a small proportion.

If General Miller, president of the company, were in town, I think I might ascertain the exact number shipped, and also the quantity of ammunition, by his company; as, however, I cannot communicate with him before leaving for Camp Wright, I have thought it best to return this communication with the meager information above set forth.

Respectfully submitted.

R. JONES,

*Lieut. Col., A. I. G.*



[4th indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE PACIFIC,  
*San Francisco, May 26, 1875.*

Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant-General, (through headquarters of the Army,) requesting an executive order prohibiting the importation of arms and ammunition into the Territory of Alaska, except upon permits granted by the commanding general Military Division of the Pacific or the commanding general Department of the Columbia, the same as in the case of spirituous liquors; the purpose being to allow the Alaska Indians to procure necessary supplies of ordinary muzzle-loading rifles for hunting, but to prevent, as far as possible, their being supplied with breech-loaders and metallic cartridges.

Under existing Treasury regulation fire-arms, including breech-loaders with cartridges, are imported into Alaska by the Alaska Commercial Company and private traders, before the military authorities are authorized to interfere in regard to their disposal. But as these arms are never shipped to Sitka, the only military station in Alaska, there virtually exists free trade with the Indians of that Territory in such arms as they will receive.

The number of breech-loaders shipped is not known, as there exists here no supervision over the matter at all. It appears probable, from the manifests at the collector's office, that private traders ship arms as hardware to avoid giving the required bonds.

Shipments by the Commercial Company embrace rifles with cartridges; it is inferred, therefore, that these rifles were breech-loaders. It will soon be a serious matter for the military, and may be an expensive one for the General Government, if this traffic has been long carried on, and to any extent, and must be a complete bar to any exploration in or settlement of the Territory.

I earnestly request, therefore, that it be ascertained just what arms have been shipped to and disposed of in Alaska, in order that the military may know what they have to contend against, and that henceforth no importation of arms and ammunition into Alaska be allowed, except as permitted by the military authorities.

In connection with the traffic with Indians in fire-arms and liquors in Alaska, I think it will be found that there is absolute need of a revenue-vessel being permanently stationed in the waters of that Territory.

J. M. SCHOFIELD,  
*Major-General.*

[Inclosures.]

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
*Collector's Office, May 20, 1875.*

DEAR SIR: In reply to your note of inquiry relative to executive restrictions upon the importation of arms and ammunition, particularly breech-loading rifles, into the Territory of Alaska, I respectfully transmit herewith copy of the President's proclamation of date February 4, 1870, issued under and in pursuance of authority vested in him by the second and fourth sections of the act of Congress, approved July 28, 1868, from which you will perceive that no restriction is placed thereby upon the importation of fire-arms and ammunition into Alaska, except into the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George. This order is still in force, and all vessels clearing from this port for either of said islands with arms on board are simply required to give bond that said arms will not be landed upon either of the islands mentioned.

I know of no subsequent act of Congress or proclamation placing any restrictions upon importations of fire-arms to any other portion of the Territory.

I am, very respectfully,

A. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector.*

Major-General SCHOFIELD,  
*United States Army.*

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
February 8, 1870.

The attention of collectors and other officers of the customs is directed to the following Executive order:

EXECUTIVE MANSION,  
Washington, D. C., February 4, 1870.

Under and in pursuance of the authority vested in me by the provisions of the second section of the act of Congress approved on the 27th day of July, 1868, entitled "An act to extend the laws of the United States relating to customs, commerce, and navigation over the territory ceded to the United States by Russia, to establish a collection-district therein, and for other purposes," the importation of distilled spirits into and within the district of Alaska is hereby prohibited, and the importation and use of fire-arms and ammunition into and within the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in said district, are also hereby prohibited, under the pains and penalties of law.

U. S. GRANT,  
President.

In conformity with the foregoing order of the President, and to insure its faithful execution, collectors of customs are hereby instructed to refuse clearance to all vessels having on board distilled spirits for ports, places, or islands within the territory and collection-district of Alaska.

Vessels clearing for any port or place, intending to touch, trade, or pass within the waters of Alaska with distilled spirits, or fire-arms and ammunition on board, will be required to execute and deliver to the collector of customs at the port of clearance a good and sufficient bond in double the value of the articles so laden, conditioned that said spirits, or any part thereof, shall not be landed upon or disposed of within the Territory of Alaska, or that said arms and ammunition, or any part thereof, shall not be landed, disposed of, or used upon either the islands of Saint Paul or Saint George, in said district.

GEO. S. BOUTWELL,  
Secretary of the Treasury.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, February 20, 1869.

The prohibition hitherto resting upon the importation of arms and ammunition into Alaska is hereby removed, subject, however, to such restrictions upon the disposal of the same when so imported as shall be imposed, (in regard to the disposal of the same when so imported) by the military authorities.

By order of the President.

H. McCULLOCH, Secretary.

Approved:

ANDREW JOHNSON, President.

Official copy:

J. F. HARTLEY, Assistant Secretary.

No. 136.

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
Saint Paul's Island, Alaska Territory, July 8, 1875.

I hereby certify the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped, on board steamer Alexander, thirty-nine thousand and thirty-six (39,036) fur-seal skins for the quota of 1875.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
Treasury Agent, in charge Seal-Island.

No. 137.

(General Orders No. 72.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
Washington, July 20, 1875.

The following circular from the Treasury Department, relative to the importation of breech-loading rifles, and fixed ammunition suitable

therefor, into the Territory of Alaska, is published for the information of the Army:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., July 3, 1875.

*To Collectors of Customs:*

The importation of breech-loading rifles, and fixed ammunition suitable therefor, into the Territory of Alaska, and the shipment of such rifles or ammunition to any port or place in the Territory of Alaska, are hereby forbidden; and collectors of customs are instructed to refuse clearance of any vessel having on board any such arms or ammunition destined for any port or place in said Territory. If, however, any vessel intends to touch or trade at a port in Alaska Territory, or to pass within the waters thereof, but shall be ultimately destined for some port or place not within the limits of said Territory, and shall have on board any such fire-arms or ammunition, the master or chief officer thereof will be required to execute and deliver to the collector of customs at the port of clearance a good and sufficient bond, with two sureties, in double the value of such merchandise, conditioned that such arms or ammunition, or any part thereof, shall not be landed or disposed of within the Territory of Alaska. Such bond shall be taken for such time as the collector shall deem proper, and may be satisfied upon proofs similar to those required to satisfy ordinary export bonds, showing that such arms have been landed at some foreign port; or, if such merchandise is landed at any port of the United States not within the limits of the Territory of Alaska, the bond may be satisfied upon production of a certificate to that effect from the collector of the port where it is so landed.

CHAS. F. CONANT,  
*Acting Secretary.*

Approved:

U. S. GRANT, *President.*

By order of the Secretary of War:

THOMAS M. VINCENT,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

Official:

THOMAS M. VINCENT,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

HON. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

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No. 138.

SPECIAL TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint Paul's Island, August 7, 1875.*

This certifies that the Alaska Commercial Company have this day shipped on board steamer Alexander, M. C. Erskine, master, forty-six thousand nine hundred and seventy-four (46,974) fur-seal skins of the catch of 1875; that said company have also shipped three thousand six hundred and sixty-two (3,662) fur-seal skins from Saint George Island of the catch of 1875, and that said steamer has on board five thousand three hundred and twenty-eight (5,328) fur-seal skins from Onalaska, covered by certificate of July 8, 1875.

Total number on board, 55,967 skins.

CHARLES BRYANT,  
*Treasury Agent, in charge Seal-Islands.*

No. 139.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, October 16, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to inclose for your information copy of a detailed report from Gen. O. O. Howard, commanding Department of the Columbia, of a tour in Alaska in June, 1875.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP.  
*Secretary of War.*

The Hon. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE COLUMBIA,  
*Portland, Oreg., June 30, 1875.*

SIR: As I contemplated in my letter to your Office, dated March 29, 1875, I left Portland for Alaska on the 2d instant, and proceeded by the way of the North Pacific Railroad, Puget Sound, and the steamer California, from Victoria.

THE STEAMERS BENICIA AND WOLCOTT—NANAIMO—COAL-MINES—INDIANS.

Hearing that the United States war-steamer Benicia was ordered to Alaska waters, I visited Captain Hopkins, her excellent commander, on board his vessel at Esquimault. He then told me that his order northward had been countermanded, and that he should leave in a day or so for San Francisco. At Port Townsend I had gone on board the revenue-cutter Wolcott, Captain Scammon commanding. Though ill at the time, he assured me that he should set out soon for Alaska, probably Monday, the 7th instant. I was in hopes the Wolcott would reach Sitka in time to enable me to go to parts of Alaska which it is not practicable for the California to visit; but I was on my way back when she passed us in the night, near Wrangel. Being limited in the amount of fuel to burn and the number of knots allowed (six, I think) per hour, it took a long time for the Wolcott to make the voyage. I was much disappointed, for I had hoped this season to have seen more than I did of the inhabited portions of Alaska.

We spent the 5th at the English post Nanaimo, enabling me, with the officers of the court-martial accompanying me, to visit the extensive coal-mines there. Some idea of their extent may be gathered from the fact that from \$25,000 to \$30,000 per month are here paid, on an average, to the workmen, or disbursed in connection with the mines.

I made some observation on the condition of the Indians in this neighborhood. There are but few—not far from 200—mostly pretty well dressed, and having clean faces; no regular school; a small unimportant mission of the Methodists. In characteristics, like the Indians with Father Chirouse at Tulalip, and elsewhere on Puget Sound.

#### NATURE OF THE INLAND PASSAGE TO FORT WRANGEL.

The voyage from Nanaimo to Wrangel was exceedingly pleasant. The gulfs and sounds, not rough at this season, are connected by the straits and passes that seem like a succession of beautiful rivers. A wall of magnificent mountains, often from 2,000 to 3,000 feet in height, rises

on the right and left, covered with trees, and snow-crowned; cascades dropping hundreds of feet; streams coursing like silver threads down the mountain-sides; snow-slides and an occasional glacier; every such natural feature that travelers go far to see, here meets and delights the eye. Notwithstanding official reports and conversations with officers and voyagers to Alaska, I never before realized the fact of this beautiful, sheltered, and comparatively safe inland passage from Fort Townsend or any part of Puget Sound to Sitka. It is apparently not nearly as dangerous as the rapids of the Columbia, over which the steamers of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company are passing every day. But it requires steady care, such as is exercised by our indefatigable Captain Hayes and his pilot, Captain Hicks, to know when, where, and how to pass the swift currents of the several narrows.

#### INSPECTION OF FORT WRANGEL—SETTLEMENT WITH STICKEEN INDIANS.

By 2½ p. m., Tuesday, June 8, we were at anchor near Fort Wrangel. I first made a thorough inspection of the detachment and post. Lieut. John A. Lundeen, Fourth Artillery, is in command. He had with him Lieut. M. M. Macomb, Fourth Artillery, and twelve enlisted men. The stockade and buildings appeared in a fair state of preservation, and the condition and discipline of the command good. The garrison being small, he rents and occupies only a part of the stockade inclosure, so that he is necessarily more or less exposed to annoyance from people who are not connected with the Army. He reports successful attempts to manufacture strong drinks for sale to Indians and others near by, which, as yet, he has not had the facilities to reach and hinder. I authorized him to employ a canoe for this work, when the distance rendered it practicable. Major Campbell's vigorous administration has already had an evident effect in this part of Alaska to check and almost prevent the illegal traffic in spirituous liquors. As soon as the inspection was over, the Indians from the "ranches" (as their long rows of houses in plain sight are called) came with dejected looks to interview me. They fortunately had a prime interpreter, in Mr. Alexander Choquette, who speaks English and the Stickeen (Thlinket tongue) with equal readiness. The complaint was that we had taken away their chief, Fernandeste, by force; that our people (the accused prisoners, no doubt) had so frightened him as to the consequences of his detention and journey to Portland, that in terror he took his life; that his immediate relations were worried almost to madness by the sneers and gibes of other Indians, who said they were cowards because they did not have their "revenge" or "settlement."

I learned that under the influence of this passion and drink, an attempt had been made more than once to kill a white man, and that the promise of a "settlement" by me was what the Indians rested in. Now that I had come, they thought I would make it all right. They made several urgent requests, but finally settled on the condition of a "potlatch" of 100 blankets and the dead body of Fernandeste. Having already obtained the permission of the Secretary of War for the issue of blankets, and having the body of Fernandeste with us, (it having been disinterred at Astoria and put on board,) I deemed it the wisest plan to yield to their fervent entreaty, and gave the blankets and body. The whole appearance of the Stickeens changed. That night they gave us a characteristic dance of satisfaction, depicting in their rude way the departure, the suicide, and return of Fernandeste, our visit, and the settlement.

EXPEDITION UP THE STICKEEN—CUSTOM-HOUSE; ITS LOCATION—  
BOUNDARY-LINE IN DOUBT—GLACIERS, ETC.

The next day, by the courtesy of Captain Irving, the owner of the small river-steamer *Glenora*, having arranged to pay merely the extra expense of fuel, I took our party up the Stickeen River as far as the boundary between our territory and British Columbia. No building is yet erected for the custom-house. The place for the English custom-house officers' tents is supposed to be selected within the British line. Some of our shrewd frontiersmen say that it is not ten marine leagues from the sea, as it should be, there being really doubt as to the summit of the coast-range of mountains. I took a copy of the statement of the boundary-line as published in an English journal. (See paper attached, marked "A.") It seems now to an observer of little consequence among these rough mountains where the exact line of division really is; but remembering the trouble the settlement of the channel question gave us at Vancouver Island, I deem it of sufficient importance to recommend that the attention of the proper Department be called to the existing doubt not plainly settled by the treaty, that the line may be definitely fixed.

I obtained from a civil engineer, Mr. Wright, who journeyed with us up the river and guided us to the immense glacier and to the hot springs a few miles above the boundary, a recent sketch of the Stickeen River, drawn by himself, (copy attached, marked "B;")\* also an excellent topographical map, quite in detail, of British Columbia. The largest of the two glaciers that we saw appears about two and one-half miles in breadth, and is said to extend twenty-five or thirty miles back. It is evidently moving slowly toward the Stickeen, with its immense pile of *débris* of gravel, blocks of granite, and crushed rocks of all kinds along its front. The hot springs form a short confluent of the Stickeen; two miles above and on the opposite side of the river. They do not differ from other springs I have visited, except in the great abundance of the flow and in the great heat; the water being so hot as to scald the hand, at the sources.

## SITKA—INSPECTION—REPAIRS—HOSPITAL.

We were back at Wrangel by 6 p. m., and were soon on the way to Sitka, by the outside. Here was the only part of the entire passage where there were any symptoms of sea-sickness among the passengers. We came to our anchorage at Sitka Thursday evening, June 10. At 9 a. m., Friday, I made my inspection. As every inspection has shown, the command was in fine condition. Many of the buildings, from long use, need repairs, but their police was excellent. The guard-house has been thoroughly renovated, the cells re-arranged and fixed for light and ventilation; it is the best, considered in all respects, that I have seen in this Department. I authorized some repairs and changes that were so urgent as to demand immediate attention; for example, the repair and extension of the stockade. As it appeared at my inspection, there was no real separation between the commanding officer's quarters and the Indian village. This was the cause of constant danger and annoyance, which will be prevented by the proposed stockade extension. Several of the buildings show rapid signs of decay. The flooring of the rampart surrounding the castle is so rotten that it is dangerous to step upon. The hospital-building is at an inconvenient distance from the

\*Inclosure marked "B" not received at headquarters Military Division Pacific, headquarters of the Army, nor in Adjutant-General's Office.

garrison, and the commanding officer urges a change to a building inside. I authorized the change, and suggested to Major Campbell, acting as Indian agent, to use the other building vacated for general asylum and hospital purposes. Since then, the protest of the medical department has been so strong, on sanitary grounds, that I have suspended the change till the subject can be again fairly considered.

#### COMPLAINTS.

Having been troubled by numerous newspaper charges concerning the present management of affairs at Sitka, I deemed it best to give those who are called citizens, consisting of Russians, Aleuts, half-breeds, American and foreign traders now residing in the town, the opportunity to see me apart from the officers of the garrison.

In keeping with this purpose, I met them by appointment at the house of the United States collector, Mr. Berry. Mr. Berry kindly briefed the complaints, which I subsequently carefully considered and acted upon, as will be seen by the memoranda attached, marked "C."

(NOTE.—The paper marked "C," as received at the Adjutant-General's Office, appears to be a duplicate of "A." The mistake probably occurred at department or division headquarters.)

#### POLICE REGULATIONS—GENERAL HOSPITAL—POWERS OF ACTING INDIAN AGENT.

The complaints did not prove to be of much importance; certainly not very grievous. To remedy the real ills of the complainants, most of whom are indigent people, I advised Major Campbell to introduce a few police regulations; establish a general hospital, and raise a small revenue, just sufficient to meet the necessities, and detail one of his humane officers to act in the capacity of a police judge. I did not *order* these things, because, as military commander, I wished to assume no doubtful powers, but am confident that the law under which Major Campbell will exercise jurisdiction as Indian agent, in an Indian country, will warrant his doing everything that humanity requires for the relief of a community, thus far, suffering from being within the limits of the United States, and yet absolutely without law.

#### GENERAL HALLECK'S INSTRUCTIONS—JUDGE DEADY'S DECISION—LEGISLATION RECOMMENDED.

The instruction from General Halleck, and transmitted from one commanding officer to another, did imply that the military government should be extended to the Alaska people till Congress should otherwise provide; but the late decision of the Hon. Judge Deady, United States district court, limiting military jurisdiction to the execution of the liquor-law, makes it necessary to be exceedingly cautious. I wish to renew my earnest recommendation that, by proper and speedy legislation, Alaska be attached as a county to Washington Territory, or in some other way be furnished with such a government as the treaty with Russia, in the transfer, plainly contemplated.

#### MINES AND TIMBER.

With a few gentlemen, I spent Saturday, June 12, in moving around and exploring Baranoff Island to the point where the road from the different mines emerges at the landing, distant, perhaps, twenty miles from Sitka. We ascended the mountain (for here it is nothing else but a wooded mountain) three miles. The first mine had been opened and a considerable quantity of rock thrown out, but was not now worked.

The second one, Stewart's, belonging to the Alaska Gold Mining Company, half a mile higher up, presented about the same condition; no one at work. There were evidences of a fair yield of silver and gold in several specimens that I examined. Some one or two miles farther up the mountain our party met half a dozen Sitka Indians carrying bags of quartz upon their backs down the fearful road from the upper or Francis mine. I was struck with the ease with which these muscular Indians carried enormous loads of broken stone, loads I could hardly lift from the ground. The mountain was covered with timber, hemlock, fir, and cedar, the hemlock prevailing.

A log building had been constructed at the second mine, (Stewart's,) of the celebrated Alaska cedar, of large size; yet here this timber was not very abundant. The ground *en route* was springy for the most part, covered with a soft soil, coated with mosses; at intervals in the ascent a shelving or slaty rock appeared. The trees, for the most part, are large and very high, often reaching two hundred feet, and the pathway obstructed by decaying logs of vast proportions, sometimes eight or ten feet through, crossed by steps cut in their sides. We traversed Silver Bay on our return; a water, narrow like a river, hemmed in by mountainous islands, and remarkable for its quiet surface, very clearly mirroring the rugged and lofty shores in its depths. The few glimpses at the islands here showed me how difficult a matter it is to prospect the country, but convinced me that, in time, patient exploring and prospecting would show more abundant mineral resources than the present few openings, made with so much labor and expense, lead those interested to believe to be in existence.

#### MORALITY AT SITKA—CIVILIANS—INDIANS.

Sunday, June 13, in the morning, I attended the Russian religious service, conducted according to the ritual of the Greek Church. The cathedral is undergoing repairs, so that the morning service was held at smaller rooms, at the priest's house. The ceremonial is impressive; men, women, and children stand or kneel during the exercises; little boys help in the singing, as in Catholic and some Episcopal churches; all attendants, perhaps one hundred people, mostly those who speak the Russian tongue, were neatly dressed and devoted in worship. I wish I could report that the morality of the priest and people was equal to their devotion. He is reported frequently for drunkenness, and among the people (perhaps not the worshipers) licentiousness, with dreadful consequences, prevails. There is no minister for the Lutheran chapel; a lay service was improvised at 11 a. m., of song, reading the Scriptures, and speaking, well attended by the garrison. In the evening, by special appointment, I addressed the people; the house was full; a portion of my remarks were translated into the Russian language. I tried to show a depressed people what I believed to be a sovereign remedy, that they themselves could apply, for the ills that afflicted them; but I could not fail to see that our Government has not carried out in good faith the treaty stipulations made at the time of the purchase of the Territory.

Good civil government, as well as religious and secular teaching, is nowhere in heathendom more needed than in Alaska; and yet up to the present there is none.

At 2 o'clock p. m. I met the Indians and had an interview with the chiefs and people. Sitka Jack was absent. He controls, at least, one-half of the households, (in each house there are usually a family and branches, sometimes numbering twenty or thirty people.) Anahootz, the chief who governs the rest, spoke at the meeting for the whole. He



first submits his recommendations from prominent officers, Russian and American, of sea and land. He is supported on right and left by an adopted father and a wealthy young Indian. Anahootz said, in substance :

"Ever since General J. C. Davis came here I have tried to live on terms of peace and good-will with the whites; nine of my people have been killed or wounded by white men long ago; *now* I have the best of feelings; recognize the fact that the present 'Boston Tyce' (commanding officer) was not responsible for the acts of those before him." (The first whites seen among the coast Indians were from Boston. They call all whites "Boston" men or women.) "No troubles now, for Major Campbell had a just way of punishing the Indians. My people never had trouble with the Russian authorities; but there had been difficulty under the five predecessors of Major Campbell; *now* surely the Indians had no cause of complaint. They do have hard feelings against some of the store-keepers here, who treat them like dogs. The price the Indians received for cutting wood was better when it sold for \$5 than now, when it sells for \$2. They are paid for labor with a little hard-tack or flour; and if they complain are kicked from the stores." Anahootz does not think his Indians go to British territory for blankets, but spend most of their money here at Sitka. Indians from other places certainly did this. "I object to payments in trade. My people are just beginning to arrive at what I have long desired: amity with the whites and with each other, under the protection of a good chief. I have had many battles in maintenance of this, and my people are just beginning to see that I am right." I spoke to him of the education of his children, as the best means of inducing mutual understanding, and of diffusing knowledge of our ways, and advised him to lay the subject before his people. He approves; has "spent sleepless nights thinking for the interest of his people. Wants a good teacher; will build him a school-house. A teacher once came, but did not stay." Then I addressed all the Indians, urging education and industry, and co-operation with their good chief. They heartily assented; hoped the traders would give them better pay, that they might be better dressed next time I came.

Here, as elsewhere, the Indians seemed to have abundance of food; they paint their faces (in part or in full) black, making them present often a hideous appearance. They seem generally well-disposed, and are learning to surrender the idea of revenge for the death of a friend. One prominent Indian (a hereditary chief, Anheka by name) brought me Major Tidball's written statement, that though his relative had been killed, he had acted rightly in the matter, and abstained from acts of revenge. People report that these people have no idea of chastity. I doubt the statement. It is as fair to infer from the practice of some white men here, that *they* have no just ideas of chastity. Surely they have not improved the Indians by their precept or their practice, though of course they know that adultery is forbidden by civil and divine law. The Indians seem gladly to conform to the marriage-law in the British territory, on Puget Sound, and in many other places, where they get a decent example.

#### VISITS TO SEVERAL INDIAN TRIBES—THE KOUTZNOUS—ADMIRALTY ISLAND—LAND, HOUSES, ETC.

Tuesday morning, June 14, the court-martial having adjourned, we proceeded northward by the steamer California, passing through Peril Straits. Here, as farther south, are narrow and deep passages of water

flanked by high, snow-crowned hills, covered with rocks and trees, and frequent cascades. We stop at the Koutznous Bay, row a small boat around a point four miles to the north, along Admiralty Island; in a pleasant little nook we come upon the Indian village. Here the island is comparatively low, has some open, cultivated land; potatoes are planted here like the celery in eastern gardens, and are said to do well; so also they may obtain a fair crop of turnips, cabbages, beets, and parsnips. The cleared land, not otherwise occupied, had on it good grass. This island is the one General Davis speaks of as better located for a post than Sitka. The Indians were like those at Sitka; seemed to be hearty and fat, living in the same sort of houses as the coast Indians generally in this northern country. The houses have a pitched roof, quite broad and flattish, one door under the gable, (of different shapes in different houses,) just big enough to crawl through. You generally ascend to it by a few steps. The frame is of very large beams, and the planking is always of large and thick material. I measured single planks four feet broad and six inches thick and sixty feet long. The houses, I judge, are generally sixty feet along the front, and eighty feet back. In the best of these there is a brick or paved square for hearth and fire, at the center, under an opening in the roof; around this square, a few feet back, a nice banquet terminated inward by a handsome single plank standing on edge, of three feet in breadth. This plank is often carved and colored, looking like the inside of the canoes. On the top of the banquet are usually a few small sleeping-rooms. Over the fire you notice pots, kettles, poles with salmon drying and smoking; skins, furs of different kinds, are thrown upon or against the banquet. I saw, too, curious square casks, water-proof, for the fish-oil; and well-made water-tight trunks, that the Indians use in their canoes on long voyages.

In one house we observed a very large-sized Indian, with finely-shaped head and high forehead. He was wounded in an Indian skirmish some years ago. His leg was fixed straight by props; his knee swollen to perhaps three times its natural size; his toe-nails, uncut, had grown long and pointed. He lay there on the floor with great patience. His wife seemed ill, and was moaning, apparently with great pain, at the door of a banquet-room.

The Koutznous treated us with much kindly attention, and told us they did not want Sullivan and his partner, who lived near by and ran a small schooner in and out, with liquor, to stay there. One woman and one man took their part, and chided the other Indians for telling us. These traders understand the game of getting them partially drunk in order to buy their furs, oil, &c., cheap. Sullivan, who is a decrepit old man, lost his partner by sickness and death before our return; and Major Campbell thinks Sullivan is too old and weak to do much more mischief. Thus far, attempts to catch him at his illicit trade have not been successful.

THE CHILCATS—SITKA-JACK—METEOROLITE—INDIANS FROM THE INTERIOR OF ALASKA.

Wednesday, the 16th, at daylight, we are anchored at the mouth of the Chilcat River. The strong, cold wind lashes up the waves, and everything appears wild and dreary. The Indians (Chilcats) are paddling around the steamer. They appear thin in flesh, but very tough and hardy; not so well clad as those at Sitka. In other respects, in language, size, and features, like them. Here Sitka-Jack, of whom I have spoken, with his canoe thoroughly manned with paddles, and carry-

ing a United States flag in the stern, comes up to us in style, and he is welcomed on board the California. He pilots our row-boat over the flats to the small Indian village four miles up the river; tells us that the main Chilcat ranches are some sixteen or eighteen miles farther up. The village we visit is under the shelter of an immense mountain. It is so similar to the Koutznous that I will not further notice it. Here I met an Indian woman from the interior. She said, and others confirmed it, that two days' rowing and walking brought them to a level and open country; that the Indians, speaking a different tongue from the Thlinket, (the Sitka language,) were very numerous there. We found here an enormous meteorolite, and tried to get it for the Smithsonian, but some prospector, now up the Chilcat, had engaged it, and the Indians were keeping it for him.

#### AWKS—THE CACHE.

Having passed in the night from Lynn's canal southward and to the east into the Stephens passage, I find myself, at 4 a. m., in sight of another Indian town. Choquette, the interpreter, and I start in a ship's boat for the town, skirting a rough, wooded shore to our left. Suddenly a small dog appears, barking and moaning; judging from this circumstance, I concluded the Indians had left. Going on shore we found the dog, poor, almost starving, watching an Indian cache in the edge of a wood. Afterward meeting a boat-load of these Indians, (the Awks,) they told us there was not a single person in the town—all had gone off hunting and fishing with their canoes and temporary shelters.

The cache was made of logs, in a place not likely to be noticed; on top, certain curious racks were lying. These, Choquette says, the Indians use for making sugar.

When we are again on board, the steamer starts for the Tacon River, and reaches its mouth in a few hours. The Tacons are so like the other Indians in everything, that a separate notice is not necessary. The most of the tribe live up the Tacon, but have a small village at its mouth. We had here a pleasant example of a very old Indian, blind and feeble with age, being tenderly cared for by his children or grandchildren. Choquette says this kindness is not usual among these Indians.

#### SUMDUMS—ICEBERGS—GLACIERS.

We next pass the Sumdums. Just after noon we begin to encounter icebergs, very blue, some apparently as large as the ship. Several remarkable glaciers are working their slow way between the hills toward the strait; one glacier near the Sumdums is immense; extends from top of a mountain 2,500 feet high, to the foot; two or three hundred yards broad and narrowing near the base. The Sumdums live near it. The young chief, Foustchou, meets our boat at a half-way island. He is pleased that I get into his canoe and return to steamer, beating the steamer's boat. After an interview, he asks for a "paper" for himself and the old chief Harteshawk, who was left at the village. I give him one; Choquette reading its contents to him, in substance, that I had met him, putting in a strong word against the liquor-trade with his people, and some other sentiment desirable to leave with them. This was done with each chief. They esteem these "papers" highly, and I think, when they know the contents, they are influenced constantly by them.

## PRINCE FREDERICK SOUND.

Perhaps two hours before the sun touched the horizon, this 17th of June, we find ourselves in Prince Frederick's Sound. It may be twenty miles wide, shores irregular, calm and smooth as a mill-pond; mountains rising in the distance, of different shapes, like ghosts; glaciers, in the dimness and evening light, look like the mists and foam of Niagara. The islands and nearer shores are as clearly defined below the water as above. The steamer moves noiselessly toward Prevontet Island, whose distance is four times what it seems. The whole scene is indescribably grand and beautiful. Captain Hays thinks of the centennial anniversary of Bunker Hill; loads his only cannon stoutly, and fires—dipping his flag. The echo is remarkably loud and prolonged.

## THE CAKES—DIFFICULTY COMPLETELY SETTLED.

At 10 p. m. we pass, to our left, into a snug little bay named Saganaw. The Cakes, who live near at hand, had undertaken to revenge themselves for the killing of some of their number by the sad mistake of the officers of an armed vessel visiting the bay. The "avengers" were demanded of the tribe, and not being delivered, a gunboat was sent, and their village was destroyed. Either from timidity or hostility, these Cakes had kept aloof from our people ever since. Such is the story told me by the interpreter. As soon as we were at anchor, a Sitka Indian and child appeared in a canoe; by him I send for the chief; he soon appears and comes on board the steamer. He explains why he did not visit Major Campbell; he was warned against it by a Sitka woman; feared we were against him still, and that he would not be kindly treated; the next time he visited Sitka he would surely report himself to the commanding officer. This chief, a young man, was well dressed, and behaved with dignity, and showed good sense, and I believe has good intentions. The Cakes, such as we saw, appeared well, were pretty well clad and fed. I have not given the numbers of the different tribes, having no means of verifying those already on record. I have assumed their correctness. Some of the villages do not seem to have nearly as many as when the record was made.

## FORT TOUGASS.

During the night we returned to Koutznous and left Major Campbell, the little steamer *Rose* meeting us to take him back to Sitka. We now turn homeward, touching at Shakan and Wrangel. At Fort Tougass it was not safe to anchor in the narrow stream, so that we moved past slowly, that I might see the situation. The Indians communicated with us by canoes. A small tribe, not more than one hundred and thirty, live here, near the beach. Chief's name is Yah-Shute. A custom-house officer lives at the old fort.

## CONCERNING PORTIONS OF ALASKA NOT VISITED—EXTRACTS FROM MAJOR CAMPBELL'S REPORTS—FIRE-ARMS, LIQUOR, ETC.

Before closing my report I will present certain complaints and reports that have reached me, where there appears to have been improper administration or a "violation of law." Major Campbell has frequently reported that, through the "Alaska Commercial Company," arms of the modern type are being distributed to the Indians. He says, in report of July 17, just received:

With what are known as Hudson Bay muskets the Indians are comparatively harmless. \* \* \* It will be a very different thing, however, if they succeed in arming themselves with modern arms of precision and power. They are much more

intelligent than the Indians of the plains; good marksmen, and throughout the coast are united by a class or caste of warriors called Koch-wou-tons. This will enable them to concentrate in vast numbers.

After speaking of President Johnson's countermanding his executive order of August 2, 1868, by another of February 20, 1869, he continues

The result is that arms and ammunition are shipped to Kodiack and Unalaska, of any kind and in any quantity, and from there distributed among the various trading-posts of the Alaska Commercial Company, to be disposed of as they see fit.

I approve Maj. J. B. Campbell's suggestion, that if not practicable or expedient to compel the arms to be landed at Sitka, that the parties be required to apply for permission to ship through him or some other superior military authority. Other communications go to show that the breech-loading arms have reached even the Sitka Indians from the sources named.

#### REPORTS OF A CAPTAIN—THE MEASLES—LIQUOR MANUFACTURED—ARMS SOLD.

Major Campbell, in a letter of July 10, says:

A schooner arrived here the 1st of the month, from Kodiack. From the captain, who is a very well known and intelligent man, named Howard, and from Mr. Shearan, ex-deputy collector at Saint Paul, Kodiack, I learned that the measles had been very badly epidemic there; 515 natives and creoles died of the disease last winter. They tell me a liquor called "quass," made of hops, potatoes, sugar, and flour, is very extensively made in that locality. It is said to be very intoxicating. \* \* \* \* Mr. Sherman tells me that \$250,000 worth of furs (valuation there) are annually shipped from Kodiack, which is the fur-depot for the coast, from Sea-Otter Rocks and Onja Island to Neutchuck. He tells me he knew extensive distilling carried on at Ilyanna and Saint Nicholas; and that all whalers carry liquors to trade to the natives. He also says, a man named Redfield runs a bark from San Francisco to Petropuluski, on the Asiatic side of Behring Sea, in conjunction with a man in San Francisco, that carries liquor almost exclusively. They clear for the Asiatic port, and then run across to this side with the liquor. He tells me that the ships of the Alaska Commercial Company clear direct for Unalaska and Saint Paul Island; that vast quantities of superior arms of all kinds are shipped in their vessels, bonded only not to land on the fur-seal islands of Saint Paul and Saint George; that they are landed at Unalaska, and thence distributed throughout Upper Alaska by means of the company's agencies and ports. The two members of the Icelandic commission that remained at Kodiack to observe the winter climate were passengers on the steamer for San Francisco. They told me that the country suited their people better than any other part of America they had seen; said Kodiack was a fine cattle-raising or sheep country; that herd-grass or timothy grows there luxuriantly, and is indigenous. \* \* \* I concluded, from my conversation with them and others on the schooner, that these people have been discouraged to the full extent of the fur company's ability.

Major Campbell urges that immigration thither be facilitated, saying:

Alaska will long be a source of trouble and expense to the General Government, until a sufficient number of industrious and honest people become inhabitants to enable them to form a government and take a permanent interest in the good order and welfare of society.

#### COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE ALASKA FUR COMPANY.

A citizen of long standing on this coast writes me:

That the fur company who have leased the seal business from the United States Government make millions of profit; and that their operations are concealed as much as possible; that vastly greater numbers are killed annually, more than their agreement allows, and that large amounts of hush-money are paid to keep the matter quiet.

In addition to this private letter and official report, I had, while in Alaska, a pamphlet put into my hands entitled "A history of the wrongs of Alaska." Deeming the subject of such great importance as to need a thorough investigation of the proper authorities, and that even complaints might become of official cognizance, I attach a copy to this re-

port. Of course I have not the means of judging of the truth or falsity of most of the statements therein contained; but do believe it to be a mistake, and a dangerous precedent, on the part of our Government, to give into the hands of any company, however benevolent in its intentions, so vast a monopoly. The subject comes to me directly in the performance of my military duty in the execution of laws and instructions concerning ardent spirits, the sale of arms to Indians, and other police measures.

After leaving Fort Tougass, the steamer anchored, about 10 a. m., (Sunday, June 20,) in the vicinity of Fort Simpson, B. C. All on board had the opportunity of going on shore and attending the service held with the Indians by the Rev. Mr. Crosby. The Indians here speak a different language, but are in other respects like those we had visited, in complexion, size, manner of building houses, and nature of subsistence. The noticeable contrast between these Indians, men, women, and children, and the others, was the cleanliness and order everywhere apparent. The whole population flocked to church, neatly dressed, and engaged in the services almost with unanimity.

The marriage relation is respected; fighting and drunkenness of rare occurrence; and all in consequence of simple and faithful teaching by the missionary here, and the missionary who has reached them indirectly from Mitlicatah, which is located eighteen miles south.

As the military authority is now held responsible for Indian affairs in Alaska, I have thought it best to make a full statement of my observations, with the hope that speedy legislation may be had to give to our Indians there, as well as others, already said to be in advance of others in point of intelligence, certainly as good opportunities in the way of government and instruction as those have in contiguous British territory.

We reached the dock at Portland Friday evening, the 25th of June. As I have already made a verbal report, and General Schofield has acceded to my recommendations of a military nature, I will not repeat.

I propose to embrace an account of my visit to Fort Klamath, the lava-beds and vicinity, in my annual report.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

O. O. HOWARD,

*Brigadier-General Commanding.*

ASSISTANT-ADJUTANT GENERAL,  
HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE PACIFIC,  
*San Francisco, California.*

[Inclosure marked "A."]

*The Northwest Boundary.*

The discovery of Cassiar has rendered the following information of value to the government and people of this province. Its publication at this period will probably prevent much apprehension and suspense on all sides.

Convention for the cession of Russian possessions in North America to the United States; concluded March 30, 1867. Ratification exchanged June 20, 1867. Proclaimed June 20, 1867.

ARTICLE I. His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias agrees to cede to the United States by this convention, immediately upon the ratification thereof, all the territory and dominions now possessed by His Majesty on the continent of America and in the adjacent islands, the same being contained within the geographical limits herein set forth, to wit:

The eastern limit is the line of demarkation between the British possessions in North America as established by the convention between Russia and Great Britain, of Febru-

ary 25-16, 1825, and described in article 3d and 4th of said convention in the following terms: Commencing from the southernmost point of the island called the Prince of Wales Island, which point lies in the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes north latitude, and between the one hundred and thirty-first and one hundred and thirty-third degrees of west longitude, (meridian of Greenwich,) the said line shall ascend to the north along the channel called the Portland Channel as far as the point of the continent where it strikes the 56th degree of north latitude. From this last-mentioned point the line of demarkation shall follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude, (of the same meridian,) and finally, from the said point of intersection, the said meridian line of the 141st degree, in its prolongation as far as the "Frozen Ocean."

4th. With reference to the line of demarkation laid down in the preceding articles, it is understood: 1st. That the island called the Prince of Wales Island shall belong wholly to Russia, (now, by this cession, to the United States.) 2d. That whenever the summit of the mountains which extend in a direction parallel to the coast from the 55th degree of north latitude to the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude shall prove to be at the distance of more than ten marine leagues from the ocean, the limit between the British possessions and the line of coast which is to belong to Russia, as above mentioned, (that is to say, the limit to the possessions ceded by this convention,) shall be formed by a line parallel to the rounding of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom.

OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
No. 310 Sansouci Street, San Francisco, August 11, 1875.

Col. H. CLAY WOOD,  
A. A. G. Dept. Columbia, Portland, Oregon:

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, with inclosures, and on behalf of the company I beg to express our thanks for the courtesy of answering the inquiries made by us.

I take the liberty of inclosing herewith an application made to Captain Campbell, commanding at Sitka, for license, authorizing the company to continue its business at the place named therein, which I have to request you to subject to the examination of the general commanding the department, and, if found correct by him, and necessary to be made, I will thank you to forward it to its proper destination. It is supposed that the license mentioned in paragraph 3, of order 96, Sitka, July 12, 1875, is requisite in order that the company may continue its business, although that portion of your letter which says that "so long as the company and its agents and employes strictly comply with the provisions of the acts of Congress and the military orders relative to Alaska trade, the company will not be interfered with by military commanders," &c., &c. might with some propriety be regarded as a sufficient license. We do not suppose, however, that it was so intended; that it was meant rather to admonish the company that its business interests and trade are subject to the searching scrutiny and impartial supervision of the military authority. In this connection I beg to assure the general commanding that to all this the company makes no objection, but, on the contrary, rejoices that the new régime has been established.

When the general commanding comes to know that chiefly through the efforts of the managers of this company the act of March 3, 1873, was passed, which has made Alaska Indian country and brought it under military control, he will begin to appreciate the motive of the company and the struggle which it has maintained singly and without substantial aid from the Government to prevent the utter destruction alike of trade and Indians in Alaska by the traffic in spirituous liquors. In that part of Alaska where the company carries on its business it has been the only barrier to the nefarious and murderous traffic in whisky with the Indians, and much of the abuse and misrepresentation of this company, which has found its utterance in the public prints and anonymous pamphlets, has originated with the disappointed and thwarted liquor-traders in Alaska and their confederates in San Francisco.

This company has been, now is, and will continue to be, the vigilant and relentless and uncompromising enemy to the liquor-traffic in Alaska, and all its agencies and connections, and we are glad to know that the power of the Government, through its most reliable and effective Department, (for such purpose,) is to be exerted to protect the people of Alaska from the great enemy of the Indian race.

Very respectfully, yours,

JOHN F. MILLER,  
President Alaska Commercial Company.

Official copy respectfully furnished the assistant adjutant-general Military Division of the Pacific, to accompany my report of visit to Alaska Territory, dated June 30, 1875.

O. O. HOWARD,  
Briquetier-General Commanding.

[First indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE PACIFIC,  
*San Francisco, August 23, 1875.*

Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant-General, (through headquarters of the Army,) in connection with General Howard's report of June 30, 1875, referred to with-  
in, forwarded from these headquarters August 21, 1875.

J. M. SCHOFIELD,  
*Major-General, U. S. A.*

## A HISTORY OF THE WRONGS OF ALASKA.—AN APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE AND PRESS OF AMERICA.

[Printed by order of the Anti-Monopoly Association of the Pacific coast, February, 1875.]

### AN APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE AND PRESS OF AMERICA.

SAN FRANCISCO, *January, 1875.*

Inasmuch as the hope of receiving redress of the Government has hitherto been disappointed, and all appeals to the same which have been made during the last six years in behalf of the cause, in which we now raise our voice again, have been left unheeded; and a flagrant stain on the honor of our free country, which could be wiped out by one word of the Congress of the United States, is suffered to exist—a monument of the shame of America—we now address ourselves to the people, in the heart of which love of freedom, patriotism, and justice still live, and to its mighty voice and champion, the Press, and appeal to them to take up this cause which ought to concern every citizen that loves his country. We speak of the serfdom of the civilized inhabitants of Saint George and Saint Paul islands in Alaska, and of the fur-seal monopoly that has been granted by the Government.

The wrong that has been done is so great, the violation of the principles of republicanism and the Constitution of the United States so flagrant, and the corruption that has been connected with this disgraceful affair so glaring, that were the circumstances as well known throughout America as they are to people on the Pacific coast, it would have been struck down long ago, and would have shared the fate of the Credit Mobilier.

We will therefore give briefly a history of the wrongs of Alaska, in which we will strictly adhere to the truth, avoid all exaggeration, and will be just to all; and in order that this history may be universally known, it will be sent in thousands of copies to all parts of the Union and to every leading paper in the United States.

## A HISTORY OF THE WRONGS OF ALASKA.

### THE RUSSO-AMERICAN COMPANY.

Alaska was discovered about a century ago by Russian fur-hunters, who, sailing east from the coast of Siberia, first came upon the Aleutian Archipelago, which they took possession of in the name of the Czar.

Having established themselves on these islands, and having thoroughly subjected and christianized the docile natives, they pushed farther east, found and explored the extensive coast of the main land, and, after many hard fights with the warlike tribes of these regions, established posts along the Behring's Sea and the North Pacific.

The Russian government had granted to these early adventurers especial rights in regard to the countries which they had discovered for the Crown, and thus was the foundation laid of that tremendous concern, the Russo-American Company, that held undisputed sway over Alaska till it was purchased by the United States.

This company enjoyed, under the suffrage of the Emperor, the most positive power, and over half a century ruled the country with an iron rod, having absolute right over it, and everything in it, except the unexplored regions of the far interior, and the many tribes of free savages that recognize no master. The sole object of this company was the fur-trade, and as it was constantly fearful that the attention of the Russian government might be excited, it strictly forbade the search after minerals, allowed no enterprises except those connected with the fur-trade, stifled immediately any reports of discoveries, permitted no outsider to remain in the country, and guarded the latter with a jealousy equal to that of our Chinese neighbors. Of the imperial commissioners who were, from time to time, dispatched to this far-away piece of the Czar's dominions, several suddenly died on their way home through Siberia, while most of them were dealt with according to the American style, that is, they returned richer and happier men, and reported everything as desired. Finally the government at St. Petersburg became disgusted, and sold Alaska to the United States. The insurmountable barrier that had walled it in so long, fell on the day when



## THE STARS AND STRIPES

ascended that old flag-staff at Sitka, and the Territory was thrown wide open to every energetic individual. There now commenced a time such as had never been seen in Alaska before; vessel after vessel, laden with merchandise, left the Golden Gate, and shaped its course for the new acquisitions; trading and fishing stations arose everywhere on the coast; a fleet of gallant schooners cruised on the cod-banks; gold, copper, and coal were discovered at many localities, and the sails of American ships whitened every sound and bay. There was no doubt that Alaska was in a fair way of being developed, and all those engaged in the Territory were convinced of the fact. It was about this time when a party of capitalists proposed to stock the Alaska peninsula with sheep and cattle, when there was a plan of establishing a settlement of New England fishermen at Kinai, and when an eastern firm made preparations for ship-building at Sitka.

But the people that had chanced their time and capital, and often enough their personal safety, in Alaska; that were preparing the way for civilization and development, and fondly believed themselves under the protection of a free and just Government, did not know that corruption stalked almost undisguised through the congressional halls at Washington; that the representatives of the people were ready for personal gain to violate the sacred principles of our Constitution, to ignore the rights of the people, and to pollute the fair name of America with an indelible stain. A cloud arose that nipped the beginning development of Alaska in the bud, and put an end to all enterprise except the fur-trade of one rich and powerful company.

Although our space is limited, we must go a little into details to make the circumstances fully comprehensible, and to show how the ruin of Alaska was wrought.

The Russo-American Company had at the time of the transfer the following property that had to be disposed of: A large number of ware, store, and dwelling houses at Sitka and Kodiak, and all their forts and stations on the islands and on the main-land; an enormous stock of goods, representing a capital in proportion, and a fleet of steamers and sailing-vessels. All this was to be sold, and Prince Maksoutof, former governor of Alaska and president of the company, was intrusted with the business.

He had not long to wait for a customer, for a number of capitalists of San Francisco had formed themselves into a trading company and hastened to make overtures to the Russian prince.

The concern that thus sprang into existence was the firm of

## HUTCHINSON, KOHL &amp; CO.

This company proposed to buy the whole property as it stood, ships, stations, and goods, and their offer was eagerly accepted by Maksoutof. What the arrangements were, what price was paid, has never leaked out, but it is known that everything was sold at a ruinous figure; that Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. cleared over \$500,000 on the transaction, and that Prince Maksoutof returned to Russia with a fortune. This, however, does not concern us or the public, but there was immediately inaugurated a system of suppression and high-handed outrages by Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., with the assistance of this Russian prince and by Federal officers which deserves our closest attention, while a number of fraudulent transactions showed that the new and powerful, but entirely unprincipled concern, was capable of any action, no matter how lawless and contemptible, to approach the object which it was aiming at, which was nothing less than the *monopolization of the entire Territory of Alaska.*

## INTIMIDATING THE NATIVES.

As soon as said sale between Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. and the Russo-American Company had been effected, the representatives of the former and Prince Maksoutof started on a tour along the coast of the territory, for the purpose of transferring the various stations and the property belonging thereto. Wherever they went, the prince, of whom they stood in mortal fear, announced to the natives that Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. had taken the place of the Russian Company; had the same absolute power; had complete jurisdiction over them, and that if they would dare to trade with any other parties they would be punished in the most severe manner.

Placards in the Russian language, which made known the decree of the prince, were hung up at all stations, and the Aleuts and ignorant Russians were threatened with imprisonment and corporal punishment if they would dare to break the commands.

These poor people, although they were Christians, and of average intelligence, of course thought all this was true, especially as American officers (to their shame be it said) used their official position and authority to furthermore intimidate these natives and represent to them Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. in the same manner as Maksoutof and his Russian officials had done.

The natives thus imposed upon were the civilized and Christian Aleuts and Creoles along the coast and on the Aleutian Islands, (for the spirited savages of the interior and the Alexander Archipelago cared as little for the prince as they did for Brigham

Young,) and so great was the terror that the former had been inspired with, that it was at first with the greatest difficulty, and at many places impossible, to induce them to trade with other parties, or, if so, only secretly and under cover of night.

#### CHEATING UNCLE SAM.

A little stroke of business was also indulged in by this happy combination of this princely Russian and those republican Americans, by which the Government of the United States was cheated out of a large amount of, then, very valuable property. The accounts of the Russian company being somewhat obscure to the Americans, Prince Maksoutof claimed nearly all the Government buildings as company's property, and delivered them to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and thus the Government had frequently to buy back what was already its rightful property.

These things happened during the years 1867 and 1868. It was also about this time that Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s steamer *Fideliter*, which was an English vessel, was fraudulently brought under the American flag, through the assistance of Collector Dodge, at Sitka, for which she has since been confiscated by the Government.

#### MAKING WAR UPON ENTERPRISE.

While Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. were thus ruling the Aleuts by false representations and tyrannical treatment, they also found means to severely annoy and often crush the other traders and fur companies that were also engaged in the territory. As the restless energies of most of these parties at once forbade all hope of driving them out of the field by fair means, unfair and corrupt ones were immediately resorted to, and it was principally through the assistance of the United States revenue officers that this was accomplished. Of course it is hard to prove that these officers were hired, but their favoritism was so undisguised, and the rewards, which they received for their services, so openly distributed, that there can be no doubt in this matter. The most zealous revenue officials, in the interest of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., were W. S. Dodge, collector at Sitka; Samuel Falconer, acting-collector at Sitka, (afterward in the employ of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.,) Mr. H. H. McIntyre, special agent of the Treasury Department, (now general agent of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., or the Alaska Commercial Company;) Wm. Kapus, collector of Sitka, (afterwards general agent of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., or the Alaska Commercial Company;) General Miller, collector of San Francisco, (now president of the Alaska Commercial Company,) and several others.

In those days Sitka was the only port of entry in Alaska, and all vessels coming to the Territory had to enter and clear at that port before they could proceed on their voyage. There also existed a law prohibiting the introduction of liquors, arms, and ammunition into the country, (except under severe restrictions,) making them articles of contraband; and there had been adopted, by the Secretary of the Treasury, a great number of special regulations in regard to Alaska, which were of the most unpractical and conflicting nature, and seemed to have no other object than to throw obstacles in the way of the trade.

These circumstances now afforded the revenue-officers the most welcome opportunities to annoy whomsoever they pleased, and this they did with a vengeance.

#### FAVORITISM SHOWN TO HUTCHINSON, KOHL & CO.

While Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s vessels left San Francisco without difficulty, came to Sitka, entered, cleared, and departed without hinderance, without search, and without delay, the other parties had to undergo a perfect ordeal of tribulations before they got out of the clutches of these Federal officers. At San Francisco the trouble generally commenced, and, thanks to Collector Miller's kind efforts, it was connected with nearly as much trouble to clear a vessel for Alaska as if she had been suspected of being a pirate, intending to start on some filibustering expedition.

This was, however, nothing compared with the annoyances that commenced when the ships arrived at Sitka. Here they were often detained for days and weeks, without a shadow of a cause; vessels, of which there could not be the slightest doubt that they had, in every respect, complied with the revenue-laws, were searched from deck to keelson; lighters were hauled alongside and every package was taken out, and then, if nothing could be found against them, they were reluctantly allowed to reload their cargoes and depart. The more anxious these parties seemed to be to reach their trading-grounds, the longer were they generally kept at Sitka, the confusing revenue regulations serving the officers as ample excuse for their arbitrary measures.

But those that got off with delays and annoyances only, fared comparatively well, for a number of vessels were actually seized on the most flimsy pretext, and, in charge of revenue-officers, sent back to San Francisco. In every case, as soon as a hearing could be had, these vessels were released by the courts, but the voyages were broken up; enterprises had to be abandoned, and failures and ruin came over the owners and shareholders.

## ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS CASES

is that of the ship *Cæsarowitch*, which, on March 24, 1869, was seized by Collector Falconer, at Sitka, and was sent back to San Francisco in charge of a lieutenant of the revenue-cutter *Reliance*. She arrived in San Francisco April 18th; the case was heard in the district court on April 20th, and at once dismissed, and a few days later the good ship was again on her way to Alaska. The damage done to the owners by this little trick was estimated by outsiders at at least \$100,000, and the former commenced suit against the Government for double that amount. This little affair broke Mr. Falconer's back; he lost his position, but he at once received a profitable situation with Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., as a reward for his services.

The cases of the General Harney, the steamer John L. Stephens, the Lewis Perry, the Alaska, and other vessels, were all of a similar kind, and against none of them could a case be made out.

But while Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s ships went always scot free, it must not be supposed that their undisturbed holds never contained any of the contraband articles; on the contrary, arms, ammunition, and liquor reached their stations in abundance, and they openly flaunted in the faces of their rivals the advantages which they enjoyed.

Our space permits us not to refer to all cases and incidents which we have recorded in connection with these matters, but we will briefly relate one occurrence which particularly illustrates to what member of the firm of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. stooped to injure those who traded in Alaska.

In the spring of 1868 the steamer *Constantine*, belonging to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., sailed from Sitka to Victoria, carrying a number of passengers and some freight, among the latter several lots of furs belonging to traders at Sitka.

When the steamer reached Plumper Pass, not far from Victoria, she struck upon a rock and knocked a hole in her bottom, but sustained no serious damage, as she lay in a calm, river-like channel, high out of the water, and had settled down on the reef on an even keel and in an easy position. The passengers, some of whom were ladies, remained on board till assistance came from Victoria. The ship, too, was hauled off after a few days, and she was soon as good as ever.

But some of the members of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., who had been on board, and who were now in Victoria, asserted that most of the freight, and especially the skins, which had a value of about \$8,000 to \$10,000, had been lost, and, in spite of numerous protests of the owners, asserted that nothing had been saved. Mr. D. Schirpser, who had shipped a lot of fine skins, and who had come down on the *Constantine*, in vain appealed to Captain Kohl, Mr. Hutchinson, and Mr. Boscovitch, all members of the firm, and finally gave up all hope of recovering his property.

But one day when Mr. Schirpser managed to get into the back yard of Mr. Boscovitch, who had a tobacco business at Victoria, he there discovered his casks and packages of furs, still having his name on them, stowed away under a shed. Mr. Schirpser had Mr. Hutchinson immediately arrested, who had to give bonds to the amount of \$10,000; but he afterward concluded to have the case brought before the courts of San Francisco; but while he was on his way down, Boscovitch telegraphed to the company and they immediately settled with Mr. Martin, (partner of Mr. Schirpser, in San Francisco,) who had heard of the wreck, but knew no details, for about one-quarter the value of the skins, and when Mr. Schirpser himself arrived he found his way to justice cut off.

## A PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION.

The traders and business men who were interested in Alaska, and who were thus beset on all sides, and had in vain sought redress from the Government, finally joined hands for mutual protection against the warfare that was carried on against them by Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and their allies, the revenue-officers, and in 1869 formed "The Alaska Traders' Protective Association," Mr. C. J. Janson, president, which, on May 3d, organized, and adopted the following resolutions:

Whereas for more than a year past the commerce of Alaska, with its great natural wealth and resources, has been monopolized by one firm, to the prejudice of the public interests, and in manifest disregard and violation of the legal rights of the citizens of the United States, and especially of the merchants of San Francisco; and

Whereas the revenue-officers of the Federal Government in Alaska have persistently used, and still continue to use their power, authority, and influence to assist a monopoly, and to crush out and drive away from that Territory all other traders; and

Whereas the said firm, possessing a monopoly, favored by the revenue-officers, has been allowed to control the trade of Alaska, to the exclusion of all other traders; and

Whereas Treasury and custom-house regulations, and military orders, have been made and enforced, to destroy the public trade with Alaska by burdening it with enormous restrictions, impossible of observance, which said firm has been permitted and is still allowed to utterly disregard; and

Whereas the ships and steamers sent by merchants of San Francisco to Alaska, for the purpose of trade, have been repeatedly seized, and their cargoes confiscated, without due process of law, and in violation of law; and

Whereas merchants in Alaska, engaged in trade, have been illegally seized, imprisoned, and their property taken from them for the purpose of expelling them from the said Territory, thereby to leave the same under the control of said monopoly; and

Whereas the corruption of Government officers in Alaska, and the ignorance of the Government at Washington in reference to affairs in that Territory, are such that redress or protection from these quarters now seems hopeless; and

Whereas it seems impossible by individual action to exert any influence with the Government to secure justice and break down and destroy said monopoly: Therefore,

We, merchants and citizens of San Francisco, interested in the trade of Alaska, have formed and united ourselves into an association, to be called "The Alaska Traders' Protective Association," for the protection and enforcement of our rights in and to the trade of said Territory.

Adopted, San Francisco, May 3, 1869.

Then follows the constitution, which is of no interest.

Here the whole tale of lawlessness, violence, and corruption, that would have disgraced Mexico, is told in a few words; comment is unnecessary.

But it was to come

#### A GREAT DEAL WORSE THAN THAT,

and the public were soon to find out that this concern of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.—that had trampled under foot everything that had the name of justice, fairness, and humanity; that had been the worst enemy of the new Territory—was to become the especial favorite of the Government; that for its sake the rights of American citizens were to be disregarded, and that for its sake the Constitution of the United States and the settled policy of our country were to be violated.

We will explain how this happened.

#### THE FUR-SEAL ISLANDS.

In the Behring Sea lie the two small islands Saint George and Saint Paul, which are inhabited each by a community of Christian and fully civilized Creoles and Aleuts. Of all the wealth in furs that the whole immense territory of Alaska produces, these two islands furnish over half; for here assemble every spring the precious fur-seals in countless numbers, haul up in immense rookeries on the shore for breeding purposes, and remain till late in autumn. These seals are very easily taken, as it is only necessary to drive a number of them inland, for a mile or two, and there kill them with clubs. It was natural that, as soon as the Territory was opened to the Americans, a number of companies should immediately dispatch their ships to these mines of wealth; and in 1868 we find Taylor & Bendel, Williams & Havens, Parrot & Co., Captain Morgan, Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and others, having stations on these islands and energetically engaged in taking skins; and, strange as it may seem, in spite of the obstacles thrown into the way of the other parties, Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. were among the last that arrived; which shows with what energy the former were possessed.

This year, 1868, was a golden one for the inhabitants of Saint George and Saint Paul; the rival companies strove for their favor; every man, woman, and half-grown child found the most profitable employment; and the coveted luxuries of the Americans, as clothing and dresses, groceries, implements of all kinds, ornaments, musical instruments, &c., which these parties furnished them, as well as the treatment which they received and the liberty which they enjoyed, made their life happy and comfortable.

#### ATTEMPTING SPECIAL LEGISLATION.

But this was not to remain so long; the arch-enemies of Alaska were plotting to get these islands into their sole possession, and how well their deeply-laid plan succeeded has been shown by subsequent events. It became soon evident, already as early as 1868, that Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. not only controlled the revenue-officers in Alaska and the collector of the port of San Francisco, (who is now the president of the Alaska Commercial Company,) but that they had also gained a great influence at Washington; that deep games were being played in our national capital, and that the Executive and Treasury Departments, as well as Congress, were discriminating in favor of said concern.

The most shrewd and wily members of the company came to Washington, backed by unlimited funds to gorge the greedy vultures that hover around our seat of government, and immediately such shameless lobbying and intrigues were set in operation that even the old war-horses of the lobby were astounded. As if touched by magic, we see, suddenly, a number of Senators and members of the administration assume the championship for Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and soon it was reported that the fur-seal islands were to be leased to them, to the exclusion of everybody else.

When the first rumor of the intended lease of said islands and their inhabitants to a mercantile firm got abroad, it was not believed that such a violation of the letter of

law and the spirit of our free country would be attempted. People knew that they were living in the United States of America and not in Turkey, and that a President stood at the head of the nation and not the Shah of Persia. But when the infamous scheme assumed more form, and when Senator Cole, of California, actually introduced his villainous bill in Congress, there arose an outcry against it so loud and distinct that any administration but that then at the helm at Washington would have heard and respected it.

## GENERAL OPPOSITION.

Not only was the matter daily discussed by the press and universally condemned, not only were the frauds, the corruption, and the misrule in Alaskan affairs again and again exposed and denounced in the most severe language, but all classes of citizens, especially on the Pacific coast, raised their voice against this gigantic scheme. The Chambers of Commerce of San Francisco and several eastern cities held special sessions and protested against it, and these, as well as the most influential merchants of San Francisco, repeatedly memorialized President Grant and Congress, and appealed to their sense of justice, their patriotism, and their duty.

## QUOTATIONS TAKEN FROM THE PRESS AND GENERAL PROTESTS.

We will quote a few of the expressions made in regard to this matter by California papers. In a long article headed "Monopolizing Alaska," in the Bulletin, January 23, 1869, we find:

"Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., having, however, secured for themselves, under a republican government, all the privileges enjoyed by a company that was one of the worst representatives of Russian serfdom," &c.

The Daily Herald, January 29, 1869, in speaking of Senator Cole's bill, says:

"The bill is utterly indefensible."

The Daily Morning Call, February 18, 1869, brings an article, headed "Gigantic scheme to monopolize the fur-trade of Alaska," from which we extract the following:

"The bill introduced by Mr. Cole, in the Senate of the United States, to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, embodies a scheme for the wholesale appropriation of all the resources of that region by a handful of capitalists, such as cannot but excite public indignation."

The Bulletin, February 25, says:

"Now, it is better that every fur-bearing seal in Alaska should be destroyed within the next twelve months than that such a monopoly as this, proposed in Congress, should ever be perpetuated in the new Territory."

From the Chronicle, January 29, 1869, we quote:

"The merchants of San Francisco, whose interest would suffer severely by the successful passage of the 'monopoly bill,' have concluded to memorialize Congress against its passage, and we have been shown the document, which bears the signatures of many of our most prominent commercial firms."

The Alta California, January 30, 1869, after having commented upon Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s doings in Alaska, continues:

"But a bolder step became necessary to protect them against the restless enterprise of American citizens, and accordingly they have applied to the Congress of the United States for such a charter."

And again, in the same article, we find:

"A proposition so monstrous has never been made to any Congress."

And again:

"These wretched Aleuts are handed over, body and soul, to the tender mercies of a single, grasping firm, to have and to hold in a worse than Russian serfdom, by the legitimate successors of the imperial monopoly which has just been routed out of its stronghold of power by the (nominal) dawning of republicanism in the hitherto benighted regions of the North."

And in a letter to the Bulletin, dated Washington, March 26, 1869, we find:

"For some time the pressure brought to bear on the House committee to induce favorable action on the Senate bill has been exceedingly heavy, and the efforts of the would-be monopolists have been of a nature so earnest and persistent as to excite surprise even among the *habitues* of the Capitol who were most accustomed to witness displays of desperate lobbying—surprise, however, which was dissipated when the magnitude of the coveted prize was placed in view."

While thus the press not only of California, but of the Eastern States as well, condemned this monstrous scheme, the Chamber of Commerce and the most influential citizens of San Francisco took the most active steps to prevent the passage of the bill. A memorial to Congress was prepared by San Francisco merchants, January 28, 1869, which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned merchants of the city of San Francisco, California, specially interested in the trade of Alaska, and also interested for the honor of our country in the estimation of the civilized world, and anxious to save the inhabitants of Alaska

from a slavery inconsistent with our Federal Constitution, and opposed to a ruinous monopoly, destructive not only to the interests of trade, but obnoxious to our free institutions, do solemnly protest, in behalf not only of ourselves and of the Pacific coast, but of commerce, humanity, justice, and an enlightened public policy, against the passage of the bill now before the Congress of the United States, and introduced by Senator Cole, of this State, entitled 'An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, and to protect the inhabitants thereof.'

"We, in common with all the citizens of the Pacific coast, feel a deep interest in the newly-acquired Territory of Alaska, and see in its great natural resources a legitimate source of wealth to enterprising merchants and traders, and we are unwilling that the whole trade of this vast region should be monopolized by one firm, whose only claim to public consideration is the large fortune it has made in that Territory, and its persistent and too successful endeavors to discourage and destroy competition.

"While the helpless inhabitants of Alaska are unable to memorialize your honorable body for themselves, and plead in their own behalf, we, as a matter of justice and humanity, protest in their name against the attempt now being made through this bill to reduce them to a condition of vassalage to one company, from whom we believe they have already suffered much.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"Agapius Houcharenko, Taylor and Bendel, E. Tibbey, John Parrott, Louis B. Parrott, Alsop and Co., W. H. Ennis, H. Cohen, S. Martin, Langley, Crowell & Co., A. S. Rosenbaum & Co., L. E. Heck and Co., Fordham and Jennings, Wellman, Peck and Co., Mitchler and Kessing, Irvine and Co., Wilmerding and Kellogg, A. Walker, L. N. Handy and Co., Pioneer American Fur Company, Smith and Kittredge, N. B. Edgerly and Co., Jacob Deith, Coffin and Patrick, Elisha Higgins, G. H. Collins, A. Crawford and Co., Charles Hare, Wright and Browne, L. W. Williams, W. B. Holcombe, George M. Josselyn, C. J. Hansen, Cox and Nichols, J. and J. Sprance, W. W. Dodge and Co., Lynde and Hough, George Hughes, George L. Debrow, R. H. Waterman, L. H. Bonestell, B. H. Freeman, R. Pestein and Co., I. Shipser, Samuel Adams, C. W. Hane, Wheelan & Co., Adolph Muller, F. H. Rosenbaum and Co., Frederic Clay, Dodge Bros. and Co., George W. Stewart and Co., James N. McCune, Fargo and Co., Josiah Stanford, L. L. Treadwell, Hobbs, Gilmore and Co., H. Liebes and Co., Pacific Fur Emporium, T. Bearward, W. O. Gray, Marsh, Pillsbury and Co., James R. Kelly, R. B. Swain & Co., E. A. Fargo.

"San Francisco, California, January 28, 1869."

Another memorial, to President Grant, which was prepared in June, and very extensively signed, contains still more urgent language. It reads:

*Memorial to the President of the United States, for the protection of the rights and interests of the people and Government of the United States in the Territory of Alaska, by merchants and citizens of the city of San Francisco, California.*

Your petitioners, merchants, bankers, and business men of the city of San Francisco, engaged or deeply interested in the trade of Alaska, and in its development, respectfully submit the following memorial for the consideration of the Executive of the United States, trusting that it will be favorably regarded and acted upon.

The condition of affairs in Alaska, from the time that Territory was ceded to the United States, has been, and still continues to be, highly prejudicial to the rights of the citizens of the Pacific coast, and especially of this city, interested in its commerce, and, we deeply regret to say, disreputable to the United States revenue-officers in that Territory, and unfortunate for the true interests of our Government therein.

We will not weary you with lengthy details, but respectfully submit the following facts, of which we have been informed, and which we believe to be true. They are within the personal knowledge of some of your petitioners.

The trade of Alaska, or, at least, that portion of it which relates to the killing of seals and the acquisition of their skins, has been, from the first, controlled by the firm of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., to the exclusion of other merchants and traders, who possess the same legal right in that Territory.

The said firm has been permitted to control the action of United States revenue-officers in Alaska, to secure its interests and break down and expel all competitors.

Mr. Samuel Falconer, special deputy collector at Sitka, is an agent of said firm. In confirmation of this statement we submit the following extract from the Alaska Herald, published in this city, of May 1, 1869:

"Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. imagine that all Russian America is their empire. A few weeks ago Mr. Falconer, the agent of this firm in Alaska, also deputy collector at Sitka, seized the schooners Alaska and Lewis Perry, not for the violation of the law, but to prevent these traders from doing business in their empire."

Nearly every sutler attached to the United States military posts in Alaska is an agent or employé of said firm. The six citizens permitted by law to remain upon the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, a United States military reservation, are all connected

with said firm. Other officers of the Federal Government in Alaska, if not in the actual employ of said firm, are at least attached to it in interest by corrupt means.

The natural consequence of this deplorable condition of things is, that the said firm controls almost the whole revenue-service of this Government in Alaska, and that the revenue-officers use their power, authority, and influence, in many cases corruptly, to advance the interests of said firm, and crush out all competition, thereby leaving the whole trade of Alaska, or the most valuable portion of it, with said firm.

Said firm has been repeatedly permitted to openly violate or disregard the Treasury and custom-house regulations and military orders, affecting the trade of Alaska, while the same have been enforced against all others with undue rigor, in violation of their true spirit and intent. All but the agents and employes of said firm have been expelled from the United States military posts in Alaska.

Steamers and ships belonging to citizens of San Francisco, lawfully engaged in trade with Alaska, have been seized by United States revenue-officers, in said Territory, in the interests of said firm, and for its benefit, without due process of law, and in violation of law.

Even vessels attached to the revenue-service of the United States have been used by said firm for the transportation of its property, while the expense of the same was paid out of the public Treasury.

Upon the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, said firm, through its agents in sutler-ships attached to the United States military posts, has been permitted to monopolize the trade in the fur-seals, only found on said islands, to the exclusion of all other citizens.

We respectfully submit, that the monopoly of the trade of Alaska, possessed by the said firm, is in violation of our laws, and of the spirit of our institutions, and is in gross violation and disregard of the rights of your petitioners, in common with all other citizens of the United States in said Territory, and that we feel deeply aggrieved thereby. We respectfully pray that such measures may be taken by this Government as will put an end to said monopoly, and admit all other citizens of the United States to equal rights and participation in the trade of Alaska.

We further submit that the natives of Alaska are ignorant of the United States laws and Treasury regulations for that Territory, because the same have not been published in their language—the Russian—which nearly all the Alaskans can read and write.

We respectfully recommend that the same be published in the Alaska Herald, a newspaper printed in the Russian and English languages in this city, in the Russian language, and also printed in that language for gratuitous distribution among the five thousand natives of Alaska, who, we are informed, can read. We further respectfully submit that said laws and regulations are not known and understood by the people on this coast, and respectfully recommend that the same be published in one or more of the public newspapers of this city.

Your petitioners pray that an investigation may be ordered, forthwith, into the administration of the revenue laws and regulations in Alaska, and that all officers in the employ of, or receiving pay from, said firm of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. be forthwith discharged from the public service, and be succeeded by faithful and disinterested men, who shall be free from the corrupt influences of said firm, and abstain from administering their offices and wielding their power and authority for its benefit. That all the sutlers now attached to United States military posts in Alaska, being all, or nearly all, in the employ of said firm, be forthwith discharged, and superseded by disinterested men.

Your petitioners further recommend and pray that no person, other than natives of Alaska, be permitted to engage in the trade of said Territory, unless he first file his declaration of his purpose so to do with the collector of this port; that no vessel be permitted to clear for Alaska, or enter any of its ports, or touch at any portion of its territory, without first having obtained a clearance from the custom-house of San Francisco direct for Alaska, and the filing in said office of a declaration by the owner or master of such vessel that the same will engage in the trade of Alaska. Several vessels have sailed from Siberia to Alaska, loaded with opium and other goods, upon which heavy duties are imposed; and by going direct to Sitka and clearing there for this city, as though their cargoes were the products of Alaska, have escaped the payment of duties upon their cargoes, thus defrauding the revenue of the United States of large sums, which, we believe, amount in the aggregate to more than two hundred thousand dollars. That no vessel be permitted to engage in the fur-seal trade of Alaska without a clearance from the custom-house at San Francisco, and a declaration by the owner or master thereof, filed therein, of intention to kill or purchase fur-seals, or to do both; that none but citizens of the United States be permitted to engage in the trade or fisheries of Alaska.

Your petitioners would further respectfully recommend and pray, with respect to the fur-seal trade of Alaska, that laws be passed, and in the mean time Treasury regulations be promulgated, prohibiting the killing of seals upon the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul by any but natives of Alaska, and except from September to November

of each year, and that only a certain number per annum on each island be killed; that it shall be unlawful to kill female seals, or pups under one year of age. That every seal-skin, before its sale, be exhibited to a United States inspector, to be appointed on each of said islands for such purpose, who, if the same appears to have been killed in violation of law, shall confiscate the same for the public benefit, and fine or punish, in such manner as may be prescribed, the person exhibiting the same; that said skins be sold to traders in the presence of such inspectors, and that at the time of sale by the natives the purchaser thereof be required to pay such inspectors such Government tax as may be imposed for each skin, and, after such payment, the said skins shall be stamped or branded by such officers.

We respectfully submit that, at present, no person other than United States troops and revenue-officers, and agents to said Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., are permitted to reside or land upon either of said islands, or to purchase seal-skins procured thereon, and that, consequently, said firm possesses a monopoly of said trade, to the manifest prejudice of the public, and to the detriment of the public revenue, which loses the sum that might, with competition, be collected on said skins.

We respectfully recommend and pray that some one place on each of said islands may be designated as a public market, in which citizens of the United States may be permitted to reside and purchase said seal-skins, during a certain season to be designated for the sale of the same; and that the purchase of such seal-skins in said markets may be thereon open to the competition of citizens of the United States; or, that the right to purchase said seal-skins upon said islands, each separately, be sold at public auction, in San Francisco, to the responsible bidder who offers the highest sum therefor, and that no person or firm be permitted to purchase such franchise for more than one of said islands; or that sealed bids for the sale of such franchise be received by the collector of this port, or the Treasury agent of the United States in this city.

We respectfully request that an answer to this memorial be forwarded to the \_\_\_\_\_.  
SAN FRANCISCO, June 15, 1869.

The chamber of commerce, at regular and special sessions, discussed the matter most earnestly, and at a meeting held on February 22, 1869, the president was instructed to telegraph to our delegates in Congress, requesting them to unitedly use their influence to at least delay action upon the subject of a disposition of the fur-seal interest of Alaska.

At this meeting a petition of Aleuts to the chamber of commerce of San Francisco was received, imploring the same for aid and protection against oppression by Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

Soon after, a special meeting having been called for the purpose, the chamber of commerce memorialized Congress, asking equal rights for all parties, and at the same time protection to the fur-bearing animals; and a bill in regard to Alaska was prepared by the former, and submitted to the latter, which, if it had been adopted, would have solved the problem to everybody's satisfaction.

But amidst all this storm of indignation and protests, the President of the United States and the Congress, then in session, exhibited the utmost disregard for the wishes of the people so unmistakably pronounced.

The interest of the whole Pacific coast, the clamor of the entire press, the loud voice of the public, and the plain letter of the Constitution of the United States were outweighed by the influence of one concern, that came prepared with unlimited funds which it distributed with a lavish hand. It was coolly resolved that the principal wealth of Alaska should be handed over to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and that the unfortunate Aleuts of Saint Paul and Saint George should be delivered into their hands; but as this could not be done without Congress having regularly acted upon it, a plan was devised which would enable Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. to enjoy, in the mean time, all the privileges which they coveted.

#### FAVORITISM SHOWN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO HUTCHINSON, KOHL & CO.

This was done in the following manner: In order to prevent the speedy extermination of the fur-seals, it was resolved that the Government itself should take charge of the islands till Congress had acted upon the matter, and that no more seals should be killed than were needed for the support of the inhabitants, say from 2,000 to 3,000; (so far, so good, a most excellent measure; but now comes the real object;) and that all parties then having stations on the islands should be driven off, except Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and Williams & Haven, the latter of which had consolidated with the former.

Collector Miller, of San Francisco, received, therefore, a dispatch signed by Secretary McCulloch, and dated Washington, February 13, 1869, which says:

"Steamer Alexander (belonging to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.) may clear in ballast with sea-stores direct for Saint Paul and Saint George, to remove property of owners and part of their employés; send with her two trustworthy inspectors to remain on said islands, and prevent landing of any person or merchandise until relieved by Lincoln."



Thus Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s vessel was commissioned to do the Government's work, and General Miller, who soon after resigned his collectorship to become president of the Alaska Commercial Company, was intrusted with the selection of two trustworthy inspectors. Of course these orders were only a form; the real intention was that Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. should take immediate possession of Saint Paul and Saint George, and when Col. Frank W. Wicker, then collector of Alaska, and Mr. Vincent Colyer visited the islands during 1869, as special agents of the Government, they found that instead of 3,000 seals altogether, over 60,000 seals had been killed on Saint Paul alone; and when Colonel Wicker made a report of the fact to the Government, he was immediately relieved. The skins were of course appropriated by Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.

During the same year, when Mr. Thomas Taylor, of the firm of Taylor & Bendel, of San Francisco, touched at the islands in his schooner Page, to look after his property, which his employés had been forced to abandon, he found that his buildings had been appropriated by the Government, and he was peremptorily ordered to leave.

#### THE LEASE.

When the chances of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. of getting possession of the fur-seal islands became almost a certainty, not only Williams & Haven had joined them, but Collector Miller (who is a special friend and favorite of General Grant, and who had served the company so well and his country so badly) resigned his collectorship of the port of San Francisco to become president of this enlarged concern, which now called itself "The Alaska Commercial Company." In the mean time, while the lobbying at Washington went bravely on, it had been decided that said islands were to be leased, but in order to preserve at least an appearance of fairness, not to the Alaska Commercial Company, but to the highest bidder; but that this was nothing else but a blind to satisfy and appease the public, subsequent events have sufficiently proven.

Congress passed an act entitled:

AN ACT to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska, approved July 1, 1870.

The principal provisions of the act are the following:

No more than 100,000 seals a year are allowed to be killed on both islands together. (75,000 seals on Saint Paul Island, and 25,000 on Saint George Island,) under pain of forfeiture of the lease.

Terms of the lease twenty years from May 1, 1870. The yearly rental to be no less than \$50,000 per annum.

The lease to be made immediately after the passage of the act—to the best advantage of the United States—to proper and responsible parties, having due regard to the interest of the Government, the native inhabitants, the parties heretofore engaged in the trade, and the preservation of the seal-fisheries.

The wording of the act clearly indicates that the lease should go to the highest responsible bidder filling the conditions and qualifications required by the act. This seems also to have been the opinion of Secretary Boutwell, but the Alaska Commercial Company insisted that the lease-act was passed for their special benefit. They were so importunate that the Secretary of the Treasury felt induced to apply to the Attorney-General for advice.

This application was made in a letter, under date of July 2, 1870, to the purport that the lease should be awarded to the highest responsible bidder, to the best advantage of the United States, according to the wording of the act.

The Secretary of the Treasury then issued the following advertisement, dated July 8, 1870:

#### "Advertisement.

"The Secretary of the Treasury will receive sealed proposals until 12 o'clock noon, Wednesday, the 20th of July instant, for the exclusive right to take fur-seals upon the islands Saint Paul and Saint George, Alaska, for the term of twenty years from the 1st day of May, 1870, agreeably to the provisions of an act approved July 1, 1870, entitled 'An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska.'

"In addition to the specific terms prescribed in the act, the successful bidder will be required to provide a suitable building for a public school on each island, and to pay the expense of maintaining a school therein for not less than eight months in each year, as may be required by the Secretary of the Treasury.

"Also to pay the natives of the islands for the labor performed by them, as may be necessary for their proper support, under regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury."

The remaining Alaska traders, though having strenuously worked against the lease-act while it was pending, knew full well that the lease in such hands as those of the Alaska Company would be equivalent to a monopoly of the whole of Alaska Territory, and also equivalent to their gradual ejection from it.

They were consequently compelled, in order to save their investments, to compete for and bid on the lease.

The 20th day of July was the last day of receiving bids. On that last day the Treasury Department issued a singular memorandum, which we subjoin:

"OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, July 20, 1870.

"Memorandum in reference to bids for the exclusive right to take fur-seals upon the islands Saint Paul and Saint George, read before the persons present at the opening of the bids at 12 o'clock noon, July 20, 1870:

"First. The successful bidder will be required to deposit security within three days, to the amount of \$50,000 in lawful money or bonds of the United States, for the due execution of contracts, agreeably to 'An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska,' approved July 1, 1870.

"Second. It being apparent from the language employed in the act aforesaid that it was the intention of Congress to give a preference to the Alaska Commercial Company in the award of their contracts, I think it proper to state, before the bids are opened, that the contract will be awarded to the said company if their proposals shall be not more than ten per cent. below that of the highest bidder.

"Third. No bid will be accepted unless made by a responsible party acquainted with the business, or skilled in kindred pursuits to such an extent as to render it probable that the contract will be so executed as to secure the results contemplated by the lease."

The Secretary then proceeded to open the bids, of which there were fourteen.

The lowest bid was that of the Alaska Commercial Company, amounting to \$65,000 rental a year, and the highest bid that of Louis Goldstone, for a combination of various San Francisco firms, amounting to a yearly rental of \$227,500.

The principal parties in the combination of firms for whom Goldstone had made the bid were the firm of Taylor & Bendel, one of the most respectable and prominent houses of San Francisco, that had been engaged in the Alaska trade from its opening, and having the additional advantage over the Alaska Commercial Company of prior occupation. The inquiries immediately instituted by the Government in Washington, through the agency of Custom-house Collector Phelps, of San Francisco, as to their standing and responsibility, were of a character in every way satisfactory.

Notwithstanding this and the great discrepancy in the bids, the Alaska Commercial Company entered various protests, which were referred by Mr. Boutwell to the Attorney-General, then Mr. A. T. Akerman, who heard arguments on both sides, and under date of July 29th decided in favor of Goldstone and associates.

After the delivery of Mr. Akerman's opinion, it was everywhere taken for granted the lease would be awarded to Goldstone. Nobody had any doubt of it. All obstacles had been removed, and all protests done away with.

On July 30 Mr. Goldstone consequently called at the Treasury Office for the lease, but to his utter astonishment and consternation he was informed that the lease had been awarded to the Alaska Commercial Company, on the terms of his own (Goldstone's) bid. The communication was made by Acting Secretary William A. Richardson, whose face in giving the information was crimsoned with shame. Mr. Boutwell had secretly left for Massachusetts.

Thus it came to pass that the scheme succeeded; that slavery and bondage, for the abolishment of which a few years before the best blood of America had been sacrificed, was here restored and was openly sanctioned by Congress; that free and liberal America had openly granted a monopoly of trade, and was placed on a footing with the most despotic of the powers of Europe, Russia, and that Christian communities, together with their two islands, were leased to the Alaska Commercial Company for twenty years. Alas! Alaska was then, indeed, an appropriate term.

#### ACCUSED OF BRIBERY.

If the prize that the Alaska Commercial Company had thus gained was enormous, it can be imagined that a tremendous sum had to be sacrificed to satisfy the political cormorants, and the press in those days made the most sweeping charges against members of Congress and members of the administration, and there was an ugly rumor that the brother-in-law of the President, Mr. Dent, had been made a partner of the concern at the eleventh hour.

#### STATE OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE FUR-SEAL ISLANDS.

Although the Alaska Commercial Company has, ever since the wretched people of Saint George and Saint Paul were delivered into their hands, asserted that the latter are well satisfied with their condition, and that they are as happy as the day is long; yet the meager news that, in spite of the vigilance of the company, have reached San Francisco, tell a different tale, and they are so restricted by the terms of the lease that they are in nothing else but a state of bondage and slavery.

The inhabitants of these islands are shut off from communication with the outer world like a colony of convicts, as no vessel is permitted to touch at, or no person allowed to land on, their soil except those belonging to the Alaska Commercial Com-

pany. They are not allowed to leave the island without permission. They are forced to accept 40 cents per skin, which are worth from \$10 to \$20 each at London, and they must pay for the commodities of life what the Alaska Commercial Company demands of them. And if we consider that they are brought into this condition by the Government of the United States, which has the sacred duty to protect the personal liberty of every individual within its domains, we cannot imagine a more flagrant case of the violation of the principles of republicanism than that which here presents itself.

Considering, furthermore, the course which Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., which is now the Alaska Commercial Company, have ever pursued since their name has been known, how little they have respected what humanity, law, and justice demand, we are forced to believe that the condition of the inhabitants of Saint George and Saint Paul is not such as they represent; and that the latter deeply feel their degradation and long for the light of freedom which sheds its rays everywhere within the wide boundaries of our country, except at this benighted spot, has been shown by that touching appeal which, after many obstacles, finally reached the ears of the American people, but only to be left unheeded by those parties that wielded the power and that held the remedy in their hands, but whose interest was at stake.

#### THE SUPPRESSED PETITION.

We refer to the famous petition of the inhabitants of Saint George Island, which can not be read without a feeling of regret, shame, and indignation, and the history of which, briefly given, is as follows:

When the fur-seal islands had been about a year in possession of the Alaska Commercial Company, there arrived in San Francisco a native of the island of Saint George, by the name of Peter Rupi, who brought to Agapius Honsharenko, editor of the Alaska Herald, a paper published in San Francisco, a petition, written in the Russian language, which had been drawn up by the same Aleuts who once before appealed to the chamber of commerce, and which had been signed by all the leading men of said islands.

The following is the petition translated into readable English:

#### THE SUPPRESSED PETITION.

We, the undersigned, natives of Saint George Island, Alaska, and citizens of the United States, by virtue of treaty-stipulations, feeling aggrieved at the mismanagement of the affairs of this Territory, resulting in serious grievances to us, availed ourselves of the medium of a petition to the General Government, in the hopes of accomplishing, through such means, such reforms in the management of Alaskan affairs as would tend to ameliorate the unhappy condition in which we found ourselves placed.

This petition was framed in 1869, and was intrusted to the care of our countryman I. Archimandritoff, to be forwarded to the proper authorities at Washington for their action thereon in our relief, but, we are sorry to say, it never reached its destination. Again we prepared the petition, and this time, to assure its delivery to the authorities at Washington, we intrusted it to Mr. N. Buynitski, a United States official from Washington, at the time present on the island. This officer received the petition in 1870, and promised faithfully to present the same to the authorities at Washington; but on his return among us, in the year 1871, we were again destined to disappointment, for on our urgent inquiry as to what had been done with our petition we received no answer. We have, in view of these facts, been forced to the conclusion that our petition to insure us the redress of our grievances, addressed to the supreme authority at Washington, has been suppressed.

Now, therefore, we, the undersigned, forward for publication in the Alaska Herald a copy of the said suppressed petition, in hopes that it may, by that means, reach the ear of the General Government, and the proper authorities thereof, at Washington.

#### *Petition.*

SAINT GEORGE ISLAND, ALASKA, August 5, 1871.

We, the undersigned natives of Saint George Island; Alaska, and citizens of the United States, consider that we have been treated by the United States Government without due consideration to our wants and necessities.

That we can read and write, and are capable of holding correspondence with the Government.

That Government, without consulting us, or understanding our situation, wants, and necessities, leased the island on which we live for twenty years, thereby virtually sentencing us to a twenty years' imprisonment.

That we recognize by this act that we have been reduced to a species of slavery, and that we are compelled to labor and to receive therefor only forty cents per fur-seal-skin, or fifty cents per day for labor, when we can procure it, an amount entirely inadequate to our wants, and which leaves us dependents and paupers, checking our prosperity and impeding the progress of our civilization.

That in consequence the education of our children, a privilege secured to other citi-

zens of the United States, must be abandoned. Morally, religiously, socially, and commercially, our destiny is in the hands of the lessees of the Government.

We are the slaves of these lessees and at their mercy.

We are shut out from all intercourse with other portions of the republic, and are consequently debarred from improvement by mutual correspondence with sister communities, and from learning through such intercourse how to advance in the common civilization of our country.

Even merchants and traders are excluded from our shores by these lessees, and competition is thus cut off, and we are dependent only on the mercies of our masters. The employes of the company (lessees of our island) often beat and violently assault us, threatening to drive every Aleut from the island, and that they have that power through this lease, obtained by them from Government at a cost of many thousand dollars. These employes are careless and indifferent about the fur-seal, our only resource and support for ourselves and families. The lessees are permitted to kill 25,000 per annum. When we bring them skins they select only the first-class skins, and order us to take the rest out of their sight. By this means, out of one hundred skins, about seventy-five are purchased by them, and the rest, twenty-five skins, have to be thrown into the sea. The rejected skins which are cast into the sea and destroyed would find a ready sale with other outside traders, who are eager to purchase them; and these are the fur-seals gradually disappearing; our labor is partially lost, and 25 per cent. of the wealth of our industry is lost to us because no one is allowed to visit our shores to trade with us but the lessees of our island, whom we are compelled to regard in the light of masters and even tyrants.

In conclusion, we beg respectfully of the United States Government, and of our fellow citizens all over the republic, to regard us not as wild Indians—we are not such—but as fellow-citizens struggling to advance in civilization, and to become worthy to be esteemed as fellow-citizens of the republic.

Peter Rezantzow.  
Andronic Rezantzow.  
Niciphor Veculow.  
Peter Rupi.  
Alexis Shvetcow.  
Egor Kolechow.  
Ivan Philemonow.  
Sabba Kolechow.  
Job Philemonow.  
Zachar Ustugow.

Platon Veculow.  
Ciprian Mercuriew.  
Peter Chlebow.  
Ustin Shvetcow.  
Semen Philemonow.  
Alexis Galamin.  
Gabriel Galamin.  
Boris Galamin.  
Alexis Ustugow.  
Barpholomeus Malovanski.

Ivan Shein.  
Ivan Popoff.  
Alexander Ustugow.  
Sebastien Mercuriew.  
Neophit Shvetcow.  
Joseph Shvetcow.  
Nicholas Ustugow.  
Phoca Shein.  
Ivan Akupski.

This petition created a sensation in California as well as in the East, and was a bomb-shell to the Alaska Commercial Company.

Again did the press raise its voice in behalf of these unfortunate Aleuts; again was the unconstitutionality of the lease held up before the public, and again were justice and fairness demanded. But once more did the storm of indignation break upon the stoical front that the Government presented; the Alaska Commercial Company declared the petition a fabrication, and probably spent another cool \$50,000 where it did most good, and that ended the matter. The Government did not take the slightest notice of the petition, and the Alaska Commercial Company has been careful that not another one should leave the island again.

We exclaim, again, Alas, Alaska!

#### ONE MORE EFFORT.

It was now evident, beyond all doubt, that, although the General Government was fully acquainted with every detail of this disgraceful affair, no redress could be obtained at Washington; still, one more effort was made by the indignant citizens of San Francisco, and in February, 1872, the senate of the State of California was memorialized and implored to use its influence with the Government of the United States in behalf of this cause. We give here the memorial:

*Memorial to the honorable the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of California.*

The memorial of the undersigned, citizens of the United States and merchants and traders of the city of San Francisco, most respectfully represents:

That whereas the purchase of the Territory of Alaska by the United States Government, at a cost of over \$7,000,000, paid out of the public Treasury, was a national act, the purpose of which was the acquisition of territory with a view to the eventual carving out therefrom of a State or States for admission into the Union, with power reserved in the General Government intermediate such acquisition, and the ultimate object for which all territory is acquired, to exercise such authority over the same as a wise and prudent administration should dictate;

And whereas the isolated position of Alaska, and the peculiar resources of that Territory, render the inhabitants thereof singularly dependent on commerce for the supply

of most of the necessaries of life, without which they must be abandoned to the most pitiable privations and be reduced to the most urgent distress ;

And whereas, in view of the above facts, a wise and prudent administration of the affairs in the government of said Territory would dictate that trade and intercourse between said Territory and the rest of the republic should be guaranteed free, uninterrupted, and untrammelled, and every facility should be afforded by the General Government to promote such intercourse for the mutual benefit of all citizens of the Republic and for the development of such resources as may lie dormant in that distant Territory ;

And whereas the entire Pacific coast is immediately interested in the promotion of such trade and intercourse with Alaska, and especially the State of California, whose position and resources and commercial facilities eminently designed it to be the purveyor to the wants of its fellow-citizens in Alaska, and the magazine from which may be drawn such supplies as may be required by them and not afforded in their latitude ;

And whereas the Congress of the United States, in the exercise of its legitimate authority, given under paragraph 3 of Section VIII of Article I of the Federal Constitution, which empowers Congress "to regulate commerce among the several States," &c., has unwisely, injudiciously, and imprudently, and in the absence of all knowledge of the wants, rights, and desires of the people of that Territory, and by undue influence and corrupt practices of parties personally and pecuniarily interested, seeking to betray the interests of said people, and to mislead and deceive the General Government, made a certain contract with the Alaska Commercial Company, in the nature of a lease of the important islands of Saint Paul and Saint George in Behring Sea, the said islands being the only known home of the fur-seal in America ;

And whereas by the terms of said contract, or lease, Congress has surrendered to the said company, for a period of twenty years, the entire resources of the said islands, together with the inhabitants thereof, in their foreign intercourse and the entire regulation of the trade therewith, and has invested the said company with such arbitrary privileges and powers as to virtually give to said company a monopoly of the entire resources and commercial interests of the said Territory, thereby shutting in the inhabitants thereof from all intercourse, through the medium of commerce, with their fellow-citizens elsewhere in the Union except through the agents and employes of the said monopoly ;

And whereas, by the terms of the said contract or lease, the Congress of the United States has abdicated in favor of said monopoly that portion of the sovereign power of the Government of the United States which can rightfully be exercised by Congress alone ;

And whereas the executive branch of the General Government, through its officers and agents, thereto prompted by like undue influences and corrupt practices and means, has been led to sustain and support the said monopoly in the illegal exercise of its unconstitutional privileges and powers ; in that—

It has surrendered itself, through its revenue-officers in Alaska, to the control of this monopoly ;

It has permitted Federal officers to act as agents of the said monopoly ;

It has permitted Federal officers to become stockholders in said monopoly ;

It has suffered the said monopoly, from time to time and on repeated occasions, to violate with impunity the customs, regulations, and military orders affecting trade with Alaska, by the laxity and collusion of its agents, acting in the double capacity of Federal officers and agents of the said monopoly, while the said regulations and orders were rigorously and arbitrarily enforced against other merchants and traders, to a degree in violation of the spirit and intent of the same ;

It has caused steamers and vessels to be illegally seized and sold by its officers in Alaska at the dictation of the said monopoly, and upon pretended infractions of the said regulations and orders, solely for the purpose of impeding commerce, driving out competition with said monopoly, and to suppress trade with the people of Alaska, and have thereby entailed great loss to the commercial interests of California, and subjected the merchants of this State to great cost and expense in contesting false and frivolous charges preferred by executive officials acting in the said double capacity as Federal officers and agents of the said monopoly ;

It has, through its agents on this coast, prostituted its powers at the dictation of, and in the interest of, said monopoly, to hedge in, confine, and cripple the rights and privileges of the salmon and codfish fleets of this State sailing in Alaskan waters, by forbidding the bartering of merchandise, even for necessary supplies, while the same officials have permitted the fishing-vessels of the said monopoly to exercise unrestricted trade with that Territory ;

It has suffered its revenue-cutters, while in public service and under public expense and pay, to be used by the said monopoly for the transportation of the effects of said monopoly ;

And whereas the executive branch of the General Government, by the acts aforesaid and otherwise, has abdicated that portion of the sovereign power and authority which

can rightfully be exercised by the Executive of the Government alone, acting through agents and officers exclusively devoted to the duties of their respective offices, in favor of the agents of said monopoly, claiming to act under the double capacity of agents for both the Government and said monopoly;

And whereas the legitimate consequence of said abdication by the legislative and executive powers of the General Government, and the delegation of these powers to the said monopoly, its agents and officers, has been an almost total suppression of trade and commerce with every portion of Alaska, so that intercourse with the people and inhabitants of that Territory is rendered difficult and expensive if not impossible; the productions of the said Territory have been locked up, and the large commercial interests of the Pacific coast, and of this State in particular, suffer and decline; while the inhabitants of Alaska have been, by the action of the General Government, consigned to a species of slavery for the term of twenty years; they are thus held as prisoners, virtually chained and manacled, without having committed any breach of the laws or been found guilty of having committed any crimes. This is a violent usurpation of the sacred guarantees of the Constitution. The people of the United States have shed their best blood and hampered themselves with debt to give freedom to four millions of slaves. Now, by a strange coincidence, they find that they have paid over \$7,000,000 for Alaska, one direct result of which has been the enslavement of a portion of its inhabitants. Such a gross insult to the American spirit of liberty deserves to be blotted from the records of our national life which it has disgraced. In this age, when the watchword is the universal brotherhood of man, when the Africans, the Chinese, and other nations, long held in servitude, are feeling the glorious impulses of freedom as known to the citizens of the American Republic, is it not a shame and a crime that the foul spot of serfdom and slavery curses Alaska? Surely the action of Congress in legislating away the lives and liberty of the Alaskans to a soulless monopoly, must arouse in the hearts of the American people a public sentiment which will immediately annul such a piece of barbarous legislation:

Now, therefore, we, the undersigned, being personally cognizant of the above facts, and sincere in the deductions derived therefrom, would, in view thereof, most respectfully petition your honorable bodies in joint convention, by concurrent resolution, address the Congress of the United States, at its present session, petitioning that honorable body, in the interests of your memorialists, and of the merchants and traders and commerce of San Francisco, the Pacific coast, and the entire nation, and in the interests of humanity and progress, of right and justice, and in vindication of the integrity of our institutions which denounce all efforts at the enthrallment of the people or any portion thereof, to annul the said illegal and unconstitutional contract or lease above mentioned, and to open up Alaska to free and unrestricted commercial intercourse, subject only to such wise and wholesome general regulations of trade as will act and be binding upon all alike; and as a preliminary to such a step, praying that a commission be appointed by Congress at its present session to investigate the evils which attend the management of Alaskan affairs, and the infractions of the terms of the said contract or lease by the said Alaska Commercial Company, said commission to be composed in whole or in part of merchants of San Francisco.

A. Crawford & Co., Johnson, Nickerson & Veasey, Lynde & Hough, Morgan & Co., Thomas J. Foster, John H. Carman & Co., Sherwood, Buckley & Co., Thomas Burden, J. Sturtevant, J. Marks, S. Folpe, Thomas W. McCallum, A. C. Nichols & Co., H. Horst, Starr & Little, James R. Finlayson, D. Beadle, Charles Hare, S. M. Holderness, David Shirsper, Sam. P. Holden, M. J. Kelly, Charles J. Janson, Royal Flsk, And. Welch, A. C. Rand, Jacob Schrieber, W. A. Hughes, Wm. H. Rouse, J. M. Hixson, A. W. White & Co., Hill, Sloat & Co., A. Pallies, J. H. Harn, James Cormack, jr., W. J. Loury, C. F. Bassett, Adam Booth & Co., S. Levy & Co., J. Green, John Laws, Duff & Co., Lowry & Wightman, Wm. Kibbe Benjamin, S. M. Henry & Co., P. B. Smith, H. F. Baker, Heywood & Hendley, Dakin & Libbey, Brous & Perkins, Littlefield, Webb & Co., H. K. Cummings, A. A. Haseltine, J. W. Wolf, George E. Cole, J. Scott, James Rope, D. B. Stewart, C. McCann, R. D. Thilpoll, L. E. Noowan, R. E. Haseltine, C. R. Jones, G. S. Rogers, John Bills, William Chipman, Wm. Fullard, T. J. Parker, W. Robbins, Geo. E. P. Hunt, Francis P. Devine, B. H. Madison, Geo. W. Boyd, Wm. DeWitt, John C. Gunn, Henry Dneyer, Henry Anderson, L. S. Allen, George Charles Lester, H. Heine, John McPherson, R. D. Rhafon, G. D. Plato, John H. Druhe, O. J. Preston, James McLoughlin, H. Applebee, Peter Muhelson, Thomas Bewick, and 300 others.

Now, what was the fate of this memorial? It was presented to the California legislature by Senator Perkins on February 9, 1872, and referred to the committee on Federal relations. General Miller immediately interviewed this committee, and pronounced the statements set forth in said memorial as false, and his word outweighed the signatures of hundreds of the best citizens of San Francisco; and said honest committee refused to forward the memorial to Congress.

#### THE RESULT OF THE LEASE.

From the day the lease was signed, the doom of Alaska was sealed. Baffled and cut off on all sides, the dismayed firms and individuals that followed their various pursuits

in the country were forced to withdraw, one after another; the plans then under consideration were abandoned, and to-day there are hardly any white men in the Territory but the employes of the Alaska Commercial Company.

It seems strange, at the first glance, that the lease of two small islands should stop the development of the whole immense Territory, but it is not more so than that the possession of a narrow thread of land through a country should give a railroad-ring the power to lord it over cities, counties, and States.

On said two islands—Saint George and Saint Paul—the wealth is heaped up on the beach in the form of millions of fur-seals, worth from \$10 to \$20 each, and without exertion the Alaska Commercial Company makes here alone about \$1,000,000 clear profit per year. (The dividends of the Alaska Commercial Company for 1873 reached \$1,300,000.) Now, with such tremendous riches at its command, it is an easy matter for this company to crush any enterprise in the rest of the whole Territory, which it claims as its own dominion, and where enough natural dangers and difficulties await the trader, fisherman, and explorer without those prepared for them by an overwhelming monopoly.

As already the old tyrannical Russia company correctly anticipated that enterprise, discovery, and the development of the Territory would interfere with their fur-trade, would attract the attention of outsiders, and would curtail their privileges, so has also the Alaska Commercial Company made it its principle to exclude everybody but itself from Alaska, and has therefore declared war against everything that looks like enterprise, exploration, discovery, immigration, and development; and, as already explained, through the means of the tremendous wealth and other advantages furnished to it by the lease of the fur-seal islands, has already succeeded in making itself the master of the whole Territory.

To give striking proof how, since the advent of the Alaska Commercial Company, the trade with the Territory has almost entirely ceased, we will give the lists of the vessels that cleared for Alaska during the months of February, March, and April, respectively, in 1869 and 1874.

## GREAT DIMINUTION OF TRADE.

We will say, as an explanation, that the spring and early summer is the time when most ships sail for Alaska. They go up in spring and return in fall, as during the winter the coasts of Alaska are the most dangerous localities in the world.

*Vessels cleared for Alaska in—*

1869.	1874.
Feb. 3. Schooner Idahø, Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.	Feb. 6. Francis Halmer, Janson.
Feb. 7. Schooner Legal Tender, Alsop & Co.	Feb. 17. Wm. Sutton, Alaska Commercial Company.
Feb. 7. Bark Cyane, Pickett & Co.	Mar. 6. W.H. Stevens, Alaska Commercial Company.
Feb. 13. Steamer John L. Stephens, Holladay & Brenham.	Mar. 7. Schooner Urania, Shirkser.
Feb. 16. Bark Francis Palmer, C. J. Janson.	Mar. 18. Steamer Alexander, Alaska Commercial Company.
Feb. 24. Schooner Lewis Perry, Tilby.	Apr. 17. Schooner Eustace, Alaska Company.
Feb. 27. Bark Washington, N. Richard.	Apr. 18. Bark Cyane, Alaska Commercial Company.
Mar. 5. Steamer Alexander, Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.	
Mar. 6. Schooner Luella, Malovansky.	
Mar. 7. Schooner Alaska, Lynde & Hough.	
Mar. 7. Schooner General Harney, F. G. E. Tittel.	
Mar. 10. Steamer Constantine, Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.	
Mar. 10. Schooner Alice, Malovansky & Co.	
Mar. 11. Ship Cesarewich, Ice Company.	
Mar. 26. Schooner Lizzie Shea, Murdock.	
Mar. 26. Brig Victoria, Wright & Bowne.	
Apr. 2. Schooner Page, Taylor & Bendel.	
Apr. 7. Brig Commodore, Parrott & Co.	
Apr. 17. Brig Olga, Ice Company.	
Apr. 18. Schooner T. L. Steele, Pioneer American Fur Company.	
Apr. 18. Bar Peking, Ice Company.	
Apr. 18. Schooner Fanny, W. N. Shelby.	
Apr. 27. Schooner Lizzie, C. I. Janson.	
Apr. 27. Bark Atalanta, Pope & Talbot.	

This list does not include the fishing-vessels.

We see that while during the months of February, March, and April, as many as twenty-four vessels sailed for Alaska in 1869, of which only three belonged to Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., and twenty-one to other parties, during the same months in 1874 only seven vessels cleared for the Territory, of which five belonged to the Alaska Commercial Company and only two to other firms, or eighteen less than in 1869.

Do not these figures tell a serious tale? Does it not prove that we can safely assert that the interest of the whole Pacific coast has been injured by the lease; that the Alaska Commercial Company has a monopoly over the whole Territory of Alaska, and that it has killed its trade?

Most positively does it prove all this, and this state of affairs has long been feared and predicted by the press, by the merchants, and by the general public of the Pacific coast, as we have already circumstantially explained in the foregoing pages.

#### THE COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

We will again quote a few of the many papers and authors that have recognized the fact and have discussed the matter

In a work entitled "Hidden Treasures; or, Fishing Around the Northwest Coast," a very able little work, by J. L. McDonald, we find the following:

"The villainous law, passed ostensibly for the protection of fur-bearing animals, should have been more justly entitled 'An act to enslave the people of Alaska, to obstruct the fisheries, and to check the development of the northwest coast.' By the terms of this act the inhabitants of Saint Paul and Saint George and the adjacent islands are strictly walled in, being forbidden any intercourse with 'the rest of mankind;' they are forced by necessity to sell their products to the company, and to receive such considerations in return as this soulless monopoly may see fit to give. The obstructions which the fur company has in former years thrown in the way of individual traders and fishermen in those regions are very well known. The subsidized Federal officers in the interests of the company have given much trouble to private enterprises; several vessels have been seized on very flimsy pretexts and sent for trial to San Francisco. In every instance those vessels have been liberated, and the masters and supercargoes exonerated by the courts. Voyages have thus been broken up, heavy losses have fallen upon humble adventurers, failures have followed, and peaceful commerce has been seriously obstructed. Several suits for heavy damages are now pending in the courts in the North Pacific coast against the revenue-officers formerly serving on the coast of Alaska."

And again, in the same book:

"Sincerely believing that the 'fur franchise' in Alaska is obstructive to the development of the vast resources latent in those regions, subversive of the best interests of the people of that Territory, and embarrassing to the traders and fishermen in and around those shores, we most earnestly ask Congress to repeal that odious measure, and 'let justice be done though the heavens fall.'"

The Sacramento Reporter, July 8, 1870, says:

"Gradually this firm or company threw off all cloak, openly claimed a monopoly and warred upon all traders."

From the Chicago Tribune, January 4, 1873, we take:

"It practically holds the same relation to Alaska that the old Russo-American did and that the Hudson's Bay Company does to the adjoining British possessions. It has rivals in the trade, but they are gradually disappearing under the treatment known in California as 'the little game of freeze-out.' The company is reported very wealthy, and can afford to undersell and overbuy its rivals, until they have to give up the losing game. It is accommodating, even generous, when its own interests are not at stake. It discountenances everything which tends to the development of the country, such as exploration, immigration, &c., because a settled Territory produces no furs. If a man is bound to go there, and it cannot help it, it is then full of accommodation, and helps him all it can during his stay there, and hastens his departure."

This is an extract from an article by Mr. Harrington, astronomer in the United States Coast Survey, who had been a year in Alaska.

But of the greatest weight are the words of a distinguished officer of the United States Army, General Jefferson C. Davis, commanding the Department of Alaska. He says:

"Since the declaration of Congress, at its last session, of Saint Paul and Saint George islands as special reservations of the Government, they have been under the control of officers of the revenue-service, sent there for the purpose of executing the laws prohibiting the landing at or killing of fur-seals upon them. During my official visit there, in the beginning of the present summer, and while engaged in investigating the affairs of the natives, as well as the manner in which the troops had performed their duties, I learned that, under one pretext and another, privileged parties had been permitted to land and remain on those reservations, and had been allowed to kill the animals at



pleasure. During last summer at least 85,000 seals were killed on the two islands; probably more than that number. The pretext under which this was authorized was that of enabling the natives to subsist themselves without expense to the Government. In an economical point of view this would seem quite right; but the facts are that the natives are cooped up on these islands where they are compelled to work for those private parties or starve; in other words, *they are to-day in a complete state of slavery*. Competition in trade has been universally established, and is now pretty well understood by the natives and traders throughout the country; wherever the former can paddle his canoe, or the latter penetrate with his goods, such is the case. *These isolated islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, in Behring Sea, the richest possessions in natural wealth, considering their small area, on the continent, form the only exceptions.* The natives are peaceful, honest, and capable of transacting ordinary business quite well, and would doubtless improve themselves if they had a fair chance; *but their present complete enslavement and robbery, by an unscrupulous ring of speculators, will ever prevent such progress.*"—Report of brevet major-general commanding Department of Alaska, to Secretary of War, August 20, 1870.

#### CONCEALING THE TRUE VALUE OF ALASKA TERRITORY.

In order to stifle the interest that the public took in Alaska, and to prevent, as much as possible, that the same should be made the object of American enterprise, the Alaska Commercial Company has always been very anxious to have Alaska represented as a very undesirable and inhospitable country, without charms of any kind, and its fur-trade as throwing off but a limited profit, exhibiting in this respect again the same spirit as the old Russian company.

The Government officials, who in various capacities were sent out from time to time to Alaska, and who were generally won over to private interests before they even left San Francisco or Washington, gave, therefore, always the most unfavorable account of the country; while men whose honor and integrity cannot be doubted, represent the country as it is, so far as they know it. Such men are Secretary Seward; Professor Davidson, of scientific fame; General Jefferson C. Davis, former military governor of Alaska; Vincent Colyer, and Dr. W. H. Dall, of the United States Coast Survey.

All these distinguished persons speak of the astonishing mildness of climate of certain portions of Alaska, of the rankness and luxuriousness of the vegetation, of the density and extension of the timber-lands, of the indications of minerals, of the magnitude of the fur-trade, and of the incredible abundance of aquatic life.

#### REPORT OF HENRY W. ELLIOTT.

The last official report submitted to the Government is that of Mr. Henry W. Elliott, special agent of the Treasury Department, which, we are sorry to say, is in direct contradiction to the statements made by such persons as we have just named. Mr. Elliott has publicly claimed, this winter, at Washington, that he knows more about Alaska than any one person; that he had been in the Territory before the transfer to the United States, and many years since, and that he is the only person qualified to judge what that country needs. Let us see what right Mr. Elliott has to these claims.

During the year 1865, Mr. Elliott, then an employé of the telegraph company that attempted to establish a line from America to Europe via Siberia, was stationed at Puget Sound, about eight hundred miles from the southern boundary of Alaska, and never approached it nearer than that until the year 1872, when it had been five years American territory.

On the strength of this Mr. Elliott asserts that he had been in Alaska before the American advent. We will now show what experience he has had in the country since.

Mr. Elliott went first to Alaska in the spring of 1872, in a subordinate position, being assistant to Captain Bryant, who was then the Government agent on Saint Paul, the largest of the fur-seal islands, where he, Mr. Elliott, married a native girl. Mr. Elliott remained on the island about a year, returning in 1873, without having seen anything of the rest of the immense Territory, except the little Aleut village Illiuliuk, on Ounalaska Island, where he touched on his way up and down. After his arrival at Washington he published a work on the habits of the fur-seals, and made himself conspicuous by preferring charges against Captain Bryant, who, by the way, had proved himself not very pliable in the hands of the Alaska Commercial Company, and consequently was anything but popular with them.

With a strong breeze of powerful influence, we now see Mr. Elliott sailing into a position specially created for him, and for which an appropriation is set aside by Congress. He was appointed a special agent of the Government to investigate the resources of the fur-trade, and the condition of the natives of Alaska, and last May he set sail in the revenue-cutter *Reliance*, which had been placed at his service for this purpose.

Mr. Elliott proceeded first to Sitka, on Baranof Island, thence to Ounalaska Island, thence to the two fur-seal islands, Saint George and Saint Paul, thence to Saint Matthew's, and lastly to Saint Lawrence Island, staying only a few days at each place,

and returning via Ounalaska to San Francisco, where he arrived again in September. That is to say, Mr. Elliott, having landed on six of the countless islands of Alaska, and having never set a foot on or even been in sight of the main-land, has now submitted a circumstantial report on the Territory to the Government.

If we bear in mind that Alaska has as much area as one-quarter of the whole United States, and a coast-line of ten thousand miles; that it is fringed by thousands of islands, and that it is inhabited by hundreds of tribes of aborigines, belonging to three distinct stocks of men, and speaking many different languages, it becomes plain that it requires years of travel, exploring, and study to become acquainted with the subject upon which Mr. Elliott has reported, after a few months' pleasure-cruise in the North Pacific and the Behring Sea; after having landed on said six islands, and after having seen a few hundred Aleuts of the three thousand civilized and the fifty thousand savage inhabitants of Alaska.

Mr. Elliott's report is now just such as the Alaska Commercial Company desires, and might be mistaken for a statement written by a member of that company.

#### ELLIOTT'S RECOMMENDATION IN FAVOR OF THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY.

Mr. Elliott very minutely describes scenes and people which he has never approached within five hundred or more miles, and represents the whole Territory a desolate and barren mass of basaltic rock, where no white man, not even the hardy Iclander, would live without being forced. He says the climate is fearful, and that no vegetable, not even the potato, will flourish under its frowning sky; that all its resources, the timber, the fisheries, and even the fur-trade, are vastly overrated, and that there is but one praiseworthy institution in the whole country, and that is the Alaska Commercial Company.

He is of the opinion that in order to give this poor but honest company a chance to make a little money, and the seals getting too thick on the islands anyhow, the former should be allowed to take 150,000 skins instead of 100,000, as stipulated by the lease; while he also gently hints at his own merits in bringing these facts to the cognizance of the Government.

The aim and purpose of such arguments are too transparent to need comment, and although we have no doubt that it does not pay for Mr. Elliott to have any different views, yet we are surprised to find him so little shrewd as to come out with such undisguised and clumsy praise of the Alaska Commercial Company, which lets at once the cat out of the bag.

But we must admit that we admire Mr. Elliott's cheek, not only in asserting that he knows more of Alaska than any one man, but in submitting to the Government a report, so weak and absurd, and so full of mistakes and misstatements, that we cannot accept them all as having been made through his ignorance of the country.

We should have thought that Mr. Elliott would have posted himself a little on the subject that he was going to report upon, by reading the excellent books that have been published on Alaska, and avoid such blunders as will neither do him or the Alaska Commercial Company any good.

Considering that the Government has the very best means to get reliable information about Alaska, and could, for instance, utilize the experience of Dr. W. H. Dall, (who, since 1865, has been nearly every year in the Territory surveying and exploring,) and still persistently selects men of little experience to get its advice and information from, the question naturally suggests itself, are really correct and true statements and reports in regard to Alaska wanted, or only such as will serve certain purposes?

#### A CURSORY DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCES OF ALASKA.

Of course we must abstain from giving a description of such a Territory as Alaska, which covers an area larger than the territory of California, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona together, but a few statements in regard to its climate, &c., will perhaps not be lost.

The climate of Alaska, (excepting that portion which lies within the Arctic circle,) and especially that bordering on the North Pacific Ocean, is, varying according to latitude and local geographical conditions, equal to that of North Germany, Scotland, and Scandinavia. This country is traversed by large navigable rivers, with many tributaries, has beautiful forests, and millions of acres adapted to agriculture and grazing; and when we mention that during the summer the plains and valleys are waving breast-high with grass and vegetation, while the air is laden with the fragrance of the wild flowers, nothing more need to be said of its fertility. Game of all kinds is abundant everywhere. On the Alaska peninsula herds of reindeer are found at all seasons of the year, and the fisheries are not insignificant, as Mr. Elliott thinks, but immense, for the cod-fish abounds everywhere on the coast; large schools of herring fill the bays, and the dense masses of salmon that during the running season crowd up even the smallest stream, must be seen to be appreciated. As a matter of course, a rough winter follows the delightful summer, but along the coast the former is tempered

by the influence of warm currents of the sea, that here course along the American continent.

There is not any doubt that rye, barley, and oats, as well as all kinds of vegetables, can be raised there as easily as in Northern Europe or in the State of Maine, and that for stock-raising the country is particularly well adapted.

To show that the potato will grow very well in Alaska, contrary to Mr. Elliott's statements, we will illustrate by examples: During 1868 and 1869, a man by the name of Doyle used to supply the town of Sitka with green peas, string-beans, and all other kinds of vegetables, which he raised on a small island in the harbor; the same were also grown in the military garden at that place. The Russians always raised their own vegetables, including cabbage. The same man, Doyle, raised small quantities of barley and wheat, as an experiment, at Kinaï, which grew up rank and tall, filled well, and ripened completely. At Kodiak, and on the Aleutian Islands, the vegetables grow enormously large, though their flavor is a little coarse, and even at Northern Saint Michael, in latitude 64°, turnips and potatoes for the use of the fort are successfully raised.

But it is especially cod-fishing, the canning, smoking, and salting of salmon, lumbering, ship-building, mining, and the fur-trade that will bring people to Alaska, and will induce capitalists to invest their money in it, and if the lease should be abolished and free competition opened once more, there would soon spring up an era of enterprise and activity throughout the Territory, which would surpass that of any former epoch, and ten ships would sail for our beautiful northern empire for every one that now shapes its lonely course to its deserted coasts.

#### THE REMEDY.

And now, we ask, how long is this burning shame of leasing civilized creoles and of granting monopolies to continue, in open violation of the Constitution? How long shall this immense territory, that belongs to the people and not to President Grant, nor to the Alaska Commercial Company, be practically the property of a few wealthy individuals, and how long shall we be obliged to bow our heads with shame before the more liberal nations of Europe, that have abolished slavery, monopolies, and royalties of trade?

The history of the wrongs of Alaska, which the foregoing pages contain, and which we submit to the public, although it is necessarily brief and incomplete, is a true and just statement of these events. It has not been written with a view of injuring personally the members of the Alaska Commercial Company, but simply to expose the unconstitutionality and the injustice of the Alaska business; and as said company is so deeply implicated in it, and has been the direct cause of all this wrong and misrule, we had to strike at it with all our might.

Still, we did forbear to give many examples and statements of cases of cruelty and oppression, and condemnable actions, which would implicate personally members and employes of said company, but we will not hesitate to give them publicity if this cause demands it.

As Congress has reserved, in the bill in regard to this lease, the power to repeal the same at its pleasure, and as this lease has already been violated and fully forfeited, especially by killing more seals than are therein stipulated, (only the best skins being shipped, and the rest rejected and thrown into the sea,) we have no doubt that the first Congress of the United States to which this matter will be presented in the proper light will at last do justice to all—will abolish the lease, and adopt a plan in regard to Alaska similar to that proposed by the Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco several years ago; a plan that would make of Alaska what it was originally intended to be—a vast tributary to the wealth of our nation.

And once more, before we close, we call upon the people and the press of America, in the name of humanity, patriotism, and the public interest, to use all their influence to have a law repealed that does injustice to thousands of citizens, that has killed a large portion of the trade and enterprise of the Pacific coast, and that has delivered into bondage whole communities of civilized human beings that feel their situation deeply, and are capable of drawing up such touching petitions as we have given.

Published by order of the Anti-Monopoly Association of the Pacific Coast.  
CHAS. LEEGE, *Secretary*.

Communications must be addressed to P. O. box No. 218.

FAIRHAVEN, *October 11, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report on the condition of the seals and general affairs of the seal-islands since my last report, dated May 12, 1875:

The first seals were seen in the vicinity of the island on their return, April 5, and the usual precautions taken to insure their not being disturbed. They came with their usual regularity and order, the full-grown males landing on the breeding-grounds and the young males passing these to the hauling-grounds. Enough of these had arrived to make a drive and kill for fresh food for the natives for the first time May 7, and only one more drive was made for this purpose before the first of June, the time at which the Alaska Commercial Company commenced taking the seals for their skins, after which the natives subsist on the carcasses of the seals killed for this purpose.

There was on hand in the salt-houses June 1, of the skins of animals killed for food for natives from July 17, 1874, to May 31, 1875, inclusive, five thousand and sixty-three (5,063) prime skins, to be counted as a part of the quota of 1875. The Alaska Commercial Company commenced taking seals for their skins June 1, and continued up to July 22, taking in all eighty-four thousand nine hundred and thirty-three (84,933) seals, from which eighty-four thousand eight hundred and sixty (84,860) prime skins were salted. These, when added to the skins on hand June 1, as stated above, made a total of skins on hand eighty-nine thousand nine hundred and twenty-three, (89,923.)

This was all the Alaska Commercial Company desired to take for the quota of 1875, as it has been their invariable rule to ship a little short of the full quota, and make up the deficiency after the count at the islands has been verified by the official count of the customs officers in San Francisco from the skins of animals killed for native food.

No seals are allowed to be killed on the islands except by permission of the Treasury agent in charge of the island and under the direction of the regular chiefs. When seals are killed for native food, care is taken as far as possible to take only such seals as their skins will be of prime value. These skins are all taken to the salt-houses, where the agent of the Alaska Commercial Company examines and accepts all that are of prime value, and they are salted as a part of the quota of the following year. Those rejected are thrown away as worthless. This waste is usually very small, except during the time from August 15 to October 15, when the seals are shedding their over-hair and the skins are of no value. An account is kept in the record-book in the Treasury agent's office of all seals killed, and for what purpose, and of all skins, and what disposition is made of them. All skins accepted at the salt-houses are counted in at the salting, and again on their delivery for shipment by the Treasury agent, and there is always a slight difference, but the counting on their delivery is taken on the official count, as that is direct, while the count of salting extends over the operations of the whole year.

Appended is a series of tables showing the number of seals killed, prime skins salted, and those stagey or of no value.

The information of the Alaska Commercial Company's leasing the right to take seals was first made known at the islands October 9, 1870, too late for sealing that year, and the skins of seals taken for native food from July 10 to December 30 were shipped May 19, 1871, amounting in all to three thousand seven hundred and forty-eight, (3,748.)

*Fur-seals killed on Saint Paul's Island during the year 1871.*

	Seals killed.	Prime skins salted.	Skins damaged.
May 16 to 23, for native food.....	432	418	14
June and July, by Alaska Commercial Company, for their skins.....	45,008	44,674	334
August 11 to September 30, for native food.....	1,349	882	467
October 2 to 31, by Alaska Commercial Company, for their skins.....	29,760	29,591	169
Quota full.....	76,549	75,565	984
November 7 to December 19, for native food.....	1,376	1,352	24
Total number of seals killed.....	77,925		

During the winter of 1871 and 1872, S. N. Buynitsky was in charge of the island, and the number of young seals was not recorded.

*Seal-skins shipped for the year 1871.*

Per certificate dated August 11..... 41,020

*Fur-seals killed on Saint Paul's Island during the season of 1872.*

	Seals killed.	Skins salted.	Rejected.
May 11 to 31, for native food.....	687	687	.....
June 1 to July 31, by Alaska Commercial Company, for their skins.....	69,879	69,576	206
August 1 to December 6, for native food.....	6,033	4,678	1,345
Young seals killed for winter food.....	76,492	74,941	1,551
	5,121		
Total number of seals killed for all purposes.....	81,613		

*Fur-seal skins shipped in 1872.*

May 9, of the quota of 1871..... 33,806  
 August 2, of the quota of 1872..... 21,000  
 September 9, of the quota of 1872..... 49,551

104,357

*Fur-seals killed on Saint Paul's Island during the season of 1873.*

	Seals killed.	Skins salted.	Rejected.
May 23, for native food.....	297	284	13
June 1 to July 24, by Alaska Commercial Company.....	74,397	73,884	513
August 4 to December 30, for native food.....	1,793	914	879
Pups for winter food.....	76,487	75,082	1,405
	5,489		
Total number of seals killed for the year.....	81,976		

June 2, of the quota of 1872..... 3,906  
 July 14, of the quota of 1873..... 32,076  
 August 8, of the quota of 1873..... 5,900  
 August 9, of the quota of 1873..... 37,804

78,886

*Fur-seals killed on Saint Paul's Island for the year 1874.*

	Seals killed.	Skins salted.	Rejected.
From April 27 to May 30, for native food .....	1, 279	1, 270	9
By the Alaska Commercial Company from June 2 to July 17.....	87, 923	87, 802	121
Quota full .....	89, 202	89, 072	130
Seals killed for native food from July 23 to December 31.....	3, 585	2, 959	626
Pups killed for winter food .....	92, 787	91, 031	756
.....	4, 697	.....	.....
Total seals killed, 1874.....	97, 684	.....	.....
May 14, of seals killed for food from July 22 to December 31, 1873.....	.....	.....	918
July 10, 1873 .....	.....	.....	40, 000
August 7, 1873 .....	.....	.....	49, 238
.....	.....	.....	90, 156

This year the deficiency in the quota by the count of customs-officers is not reported for correction.

*Fur-seals killed on Saint Paul's Island for the year 1875.*

	Seals killed.	Seals salted.	Rejected.
Skins of seals killed for native food from July 17 to December 31, 1874, brought forward .....	.....	3, 223	.....
Seals taken for native food from February 10 to May 31.....	1, 850	1, 840	10
By Alaska Commercial Company from June 1 to July 22 .....	84, 933	84, 860	73
Quota full .....	86, 783	89, 933	83
May 28, of skins left over from 1874.....	.....	.....	3, 836
July 8, catch of 1875 .....	.....	.....	39, 036
August 7, catch of 1875.....	.....	.....	46, 974
.....	.....	.....	89, 866

It will be seen by reference to the foregoing tables that there have been killed annually on Saint Paul's Island five thousand seal-pups or young seals, four months old, nominally for winter-food. I can find no precedent for this previous to the transfer of the island to the United States, only that the former Russian Fur Company allowed as an extra indulgence to the natives, after the close of the season's sealing, to take five hundred of these young seals for feasting. This, under the clause in the act providing for the lease, that allows the killing of young seals for winter-food, has been construed to mean these young pups instead of half-grown seals taken for food at other times. The skins of these pups are of no value as a part of the quota, and these seals only yield eight pounds each of eatable flesh, and are nearly all immediately eaten up as a luxury, and the same number of half-grown seals required for salting for winter-use as before, it seems a great waste. I have, therefore, limited the number to be taken on Saint Paul's Island to three thousand, providing, however, that as a substitute there shall be killed a sufficient number of larger seals whose skins may be salted as a part of the annual quota.

In my opinion this ought not to be allowed ; or if so, the number limited to five hundred on Saint Paul's and two hundred and fifty on Saint George.

The rule governing the taking of these seals for their skins is to take only such surplus males as are not required for breeding purposes, reserving all the females to be added yearly to increase the original stock. The animals being polygamous in their habits, one male being considered the equivalent to ten or more females, for breeding purposes, the sexes being produced in equal proportions, always leaves a surplus of males to be taken without loss or decrease in the yearly product. What the number of this surplus was could only be determined by a careful observation of their habits and necessities, covering five or six years, or the time it takes for the animal to mature.

At time of writing my detailed report on the habits of these animals, dated November 30, 1869, it was stated to be one hundred thousand. This number was based on the best information obtainable at that time from the natives of the island and the few employés of the former Russian Fur Company remaining in the Territory. Since then a residence of seven successive seasons on the island, in charge of these animals, has furnished me with the desired opportunity for determining this surplus product by actual study of their habits and requirements, and the result is, the killing of one hundred thousand per annum does not leave a sufficient number of males to mature for the wants of the increase in the number of females. And, as it is desirable to state some of the methods by which these conclusions have been reached by me, a brief statement of the habits of these animals and the effect of the killing of one hundred thousand per year for the past five years seems necessary.

The seals return to the islands in spring, in the same order and at nearly the same date in point of time, the males always arriving first. Those full-grown, or seven or more years old, land on the breeding-grounds and occupy them to the entire exclusion of all the younger ones, who are obliged to seek resting-places elsewhere. They select for their breeding-grounds the rocky slopes of the projecting points and headlands, each occupying as much space as he can defend from intrusion, for the use of his anticipated family. These, for sake of distinction, are called "beach-masters." When these grounds are fully occupied, the remainder of the full-grown males fight their way to the rear of these breeding-places, and lie in wait for opportunities to rush down and forcibly occupy any vacancies that occur among the "beach-masters." These are called "reserves." When I first examined these grounds in 1869, none of these breeding-grounds occupied continuous shore-lines of more than a quarter of a mile without spaces between them, where the younger seals passed to the uplands and laid down in groups by themselves, but in 1871 and 1872, the increase in the number of females so crowded the families that these spaces were entirely filled by the breeding-seals, and the seals less than six or seven years of age were compelled to find resting-places on the beaches at the head of the bays and coves formed by these projecting points and headlands. This removed them farther from the breeding-places and facilitated their being driven with less chance of disturbing the breeding-seals than before, when the separate groups had to be gathered in the rear of the breeding-seals and herded for driving.

The first females arrive about the middle of June, two months later than the males, who are at that time all arrived and located in their places. The females do not land until forced to do so to give birth to

their young, which generally occurs within two days, producing one at a birth each. Immediately after landing the female is appropriated by the nearest male and forcibly added to his family, where she is jealously guarded until she has borne her young and been covered for the ensuing year, which occurs in three or four days after the birth; then she is allowed to go at will, and spends the greater portion of her time in the water, returning to nurse her young when necessary, the young seal being cared for by the male. The females all arrive, have their young, and are covered by the end of July. Soon after this the males leave the breeding-ground and do not return to them again. The young seal requires to be thirty-five to forty days old before going into the water to learn to swim, and to be four months old to acquire sufficient age and strength to follow the mother at sea. Hence it is very important that there should always be a sufficient stock of breeding-males to insure the impregnation of all the females during their first heat in July, for the period of gestation being one year, if they miss the first heat and return in August or September, they have their young in the next year too late in the season to give it time to get strength for living at sea.

The young seals return to the islands the first year at the same time of the females in July, and for every additional year of age ten or fifteen days earlier, so that when they attain to puberty, at four years old, their time of arrival is the same as the old seals; that is, from the first of April to the middle of June. These on their arrival not being permitted to land on the breeding-places, join the younger seals on the beaches, where they lie quietly until the time of the females being in heat, when they leave the beaches and play along the shores of the breeding-places, proving an auxiliary force in covering the females, many of whom escape from the shore to be met by these males and coupled with them in the water. These beaches occupied by the intermediate ages, from one to six years old, together with the few superannuated ones whose age unfits them to cope with the beachmasters, are called, to distinguish them from the breeding-places, the hauling-grounds. It is from this class on these hauling-grounds that the seals are taken for their skins. These seals, as they lie on the beaches, are surprised by the hunters, cut off from the water, and driven inland in droves to the salt houses, where they are separated into groups of sixty or seventy at a time and surrounded by the sealers with their clubs. Under the direction of the chief, the prime seals are selected and killed, and those too young or too old are allowed to go into the water and return to the hauling-ground again.

These hauling-grounds are swept and driven two or three times a week during the months of June and July, and the prime seals culled out for killing, and every seal growing up has to run this gauntlet for his life his second, third, and fourth year before he escapes to grow up as a breeding-bull. Thus it will be seen the method of killing does not admit of the setting apart of a special number and taking the remainder for the quota for market, and the only possible way to preserve the requisite number for breeding purposes is to restrict the number to be killed so far within the product as to insure enough escaping for this object.

When the lease was put in practical operation in 1871, there was a very large excess of breeding-males on hand; since then this surplus has been diminished by the dying out of the old seals faster than there has been younger seals allowed to escape and grow up to fill their places,



until the present stock is insufficient to meet the necessities of the increasing number of breeding females.

The beach-masters leave the island in August and September, and the females with their young from October to January, and do not return until the following July. Of their life while absent from the island we have no definite knowledge. They are frequently reported as being seen by coasting-vessels on the coast of British Columbia and Eastern Alaska during the months of December, January, February, and March, and a few skins are taken by the Indians of that coast, but are not known to land and haul up on the shores anywhere. The most probable conjecture is that they remain near shoals and banks where fish and food abound during the winter-months, and gather the necessary stores of fat and blubber to sustain them through the summer-months. From the birth to the time of the seals leaving the islands at four months old, the loss by death is comparatively small, but during the time they are absent from the island, from December to July, it is very large, only about forty per centum returning at one year old, and this loss is still considerable; the second year after this they appear to be able to protect themselves, or rather avoid their enemies. What all their enemies are is not fully known. In the month of September, about the time the young seals begin to go into the water, a species of small whale, called the "killer," make their appearance in the winter off the island, in shoals of from five to ten, and are seen near the shores apparently choosing the seals who manifest great fear of them. Three instances have occurred where these killers have got into shoal water, and they have been taken and young seals found in their stomachs. These whales undoubtedly follow the seals to their feeding-grounds and prey upon the young seals during the winter. These large and voracious animals are sufficient to destroy the young seals in great numbers, and fully account for this immense loss.

One other cause should be stated that has directly contributed to diminishing the present stock of breeding-males. During the season of 1868, before the enactment of the prohibitory law, the several parties sealing there took 240,000 seals monthly of the products of the years 1866 and 1867. These would have matured and been added to the present stock of breeding-males in the years 1872 and 1873, and to this a part of the prospective deficiency is to be attributed.

It became my duty as special agent of the Treasury Department to reside on Saint Paul's Island during the season of 1869, for the purpose of studying the habits of the fur-seals with a view to determining the practicability of preserving and deriving a revenue from these animals. At that time no opportunity was afforded of visiting the island of Saint George, to compare the number of seals breeding there with those on Saint Paul's Island, but, from the best information obtainable, it was believed to be equivalent to one-third of the latter island, and the proportion of the quota of that island was fixed at 25,000. In the year 1873 it was found that the proportion was too large, and, for reasons set forth in my report of September 30 of that year, the number of seals to be taken from Saint George was fixed at 10,000, and 15,000 added to the quota of Saint Paul's.

From the report of Assistant Treasury Agent Samuel Falconer, now in charge of that island, (copy of which is herewith transmitted,) it will be seen that since that date the breeding-seals have so increased as to warrant an increase in the quota of that island of five thousand, making it fifteen thousand:

*Schedule of seals killed on Saint George Island.*

This schedule comprises the number of seals killed on this island by the Alaska Commercial Company and natives from 1870 to 1875, both included.

Year.		No.	Cut.	Rejected.	Accepted.	Total.
1870	Seals killed by company .....	7,259			7,259	
	Seals killed by general agent .....	1,500				
	Pups for food .....	1,290				
1871	Seals killed by general agent .....	19,027	97		19,077	9,959
	Pups killed by natives for food .....	2,090				
1872	Seals killed by company .....	25,064	164	64	25,000	21,167
	Pups killed by natives for food .....	2,100				
1873	do .....	2,191				27,164
	Seals killed by company .....	25,072	180	72	25,000	
1874	do .....	10,029	78	27	10,000	27,263
	Pups killed by company for food .....	2,446				12,473
1875	Seals killed by company .....	10,031	63	31	10,000	10,031
	Total for six years .....					108,036

Pups for native use are not yet taken, therefore cannot be included in this list of 1875.

SAMUEL FALCONER,

*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

Constant and careful attention has been given to the condition and changes in the different classes of seals, and the data kept for comparison from year to year, and the result, as summed up the present year in comparison with 1870, shows the present stock of breeding-females has steadily increased in a ratio of five or six per cent. per annum added to the original stock, while the stock of breeding-bulls has decreased, by loss from age and other causes, so much faster than there has been young seals grown up to replace them, that its present condition is only equal to the present demand, and the stock of half-bulls, or those to mature in the next two years, is not sufficient to meet the wants of the increase in the females. Under these circumstances, I feel it my duty to recommend that for the next two years the number of seals to be taken for their skins be limited to 85,000 per annum, to be apportioned between the two islands as follows: for Saint Paul's Island, 70,000, and for Saint George Island, 15,000.

The civil affairs of the natives have been conducted by themselves, through their chiefs of their own selection, and, with two exceptions, good order and quiet maintained. One of these occasions was while the chief was making his rounds, at 2 o'clock in the morning, to wake and send a party of men to drive seals, he came upon a party of four young men who had, during the night, been drinking quass, or native beer, and got into a drunken quarrel. While he was attempting to quiet them, one of them struck him, inflicting a severe wound over the left eye. At this others interfered and separated the combatants; and while the chief went to the surgeon to have his wound dressed, the party dispersed to their homes. The next day an investigation of the matter was had at my office; and, as the man was clearly proved in the wrong, the three chiefs, who exercise both the judicial and executive functions, decided to punish the offender by creating a lower class in the division of the seal-fund, for the purpose of punishing misdemeanors of this kind, and placing him in it, which would be equivalent to a fine of \$80. This condition was accepted by the offender, and finally exe-

cuted in the regular order of settlement of the fund derived from the killing of seals and other labor done by the people as a community.

The other case was one where one of the chiefs and a party of natives had made a lot of quass, and, through fear of detection, drank it in the night, and came on the field next morning under its influence; were very careless about skinning seals. When the skius came to be salted it was found a much larger number were damaged by cutting than usual. It was necessary to call them up and give them a severe reprimand, on which they promised to do better, and the effect lasted until after the sealing was over.

Twelve additional houses had been built this year up to the time of my leaving the island, and six more were in process of erection; these would be ready for occupation by October 1; this makes in all sixty-four cottages built by the Alaska Commercial Company for the use of the natives. These have been built with special reference to the wants of the people, and they are allowed to live in them free of rent. This gives each family a separate residence, with ample accommodation, so that where, five years since, the population were crowded into mud huts half-underground, suffering from scrofula and other diseases incidental to living without chambers or ventilation, there now is a village of seventy houses with well-graded streets, and the advantages derived by the people from their improved condition are already apparent in the better health of the community.

The quantity of fish and coal provided for in the lease for gratuitous distribution have been landed on the island, and will in due time be delivered to the custody of the Treasury officers in charge, and besides this a large supply of the latter for sale for the use of the natives. The supplies of dry goods and provisions have been of good quality and ample in quantity, and sold at rates not exceeding twenty-five per cent. on the cost prices, the widows and orphan children fed and clothed at the expense of the company, and all the conditions of the lease been fulfilled in a most broad and liberal manner.

The yearly account of the natives was made up for settlement, and the annual division, July 24, is as follows:

1, 930 seal-throats, † .....	\$ 43
66 sea-lion throats, 15 cents .....	9 90
547 sea-lion skins, 60 cents .....	228 20
53 sea-lion small intestines, 20 cents .....	10 60
109 sea-lion large intestines, 10 cents .....	20 90
908 cut seal-skins, 20 cents .....	181 60
74, 791 cut seal-skins, 40 cents .....	29, 374 03
Total .....	30, 374 03

This was divided among six classes, the whole containing 78 shares:

First class, 36, at 100, giving .....	\$432 07 per share.
Second class, 21, at 90, giving .....	388 88 per share.
Third class, 13, at 60, giving .....	343 64 per share.
Fourth class, 3, at 70, giving .....	302 45 per share.
Fifth class, 4, at 60, giving .....	259 24 per share.
Sixth class, 1, at 50, giving .....	216 03 per share.

At the end of the sealing season on Saint Paul the party from Saint George returned to that island, having the credit for the taking fifteen thousand seals on Saint Paul's transferred to their island.

On the return of Samuel Falconer, assistant Treasury agent, from his leave of absence in May last, he was again placed in charge of Saint George Island, and Wm. J. McIntyre remained as his assistant. On the return of the steamer for the last time, August 1, to this island, Assistant Agent Wm. J. McIntyre was ordered to Saint Paul's Island, to act

as an assistant to George Marston, assistant agent in charge of that island. This removal was rendered necessary on account of the strong feeling of dissatisfaction of the people against his, Wm. J. McIntyre's, former administration at that place, they all asking either to have him removed or to be permitted to remove themselves, as they could not live with him on the island another winter. I was not able to visit that island until my return on my way down, when the steamer stopped there for six hours, and I availed myself of it to inquire into the truth of the complaints by the party of sealers who came over here to seal in May last, as stated in my report of May 23. These charges were fully sustained by the chief and people remaining on the island, the chief giving me a written statement, in the Russian language, of the whole affair, with the desire to have it transmitted to the Secretary of the Treasury. This letter is inclosed herewith.

The chief also informed me that the copies of the regulations of the company governing their employés in their relations with the natives, together with their letters of instructions from myself that I had caused to be translated into Russian and filed with them for their use, that Mr. McIntyre took from them on his assuming charge of the island, he had returned again on Mr. Falconer's resuming the charge. There were also many individual complaints made of meddlesome interference by Mr. McIntyre in their private affairs, and of frequently disturbing their families by forcing their doors and rushing into their houses with pistols at unreasonable hours of the night, searching under their beds for beer, and frightening their wives and children, and treating them generally with a harshness they never experienced from the Russians. From my long experience of the natural timidity and docile obedience of these people under all reasonable circumstances, I am led to believe there must have been very strong provocation on his part to have made them prefer removing from the island to remaining on it with him another winter. Under these circumstances I could not have confidence in his ability or fitness to have charge of either island, and therefore ordered him to Saint Paul's Island, and assigned him for duty as assistant to Col. George Marston, assistant Treasury agent, in charge of that island.

I herewith append the letter of the chief and people of Saint George Island, and beg leave to recommend that it be referred for translation to Stephen A. Buynitzky, esq., a clerk of the Department who was detailed to assist me, as interpreter, in 1870, and who while so employed resided four months on Saint George's Island as officer in charge, and who is personally acquainted with the people signing the letter.

[Translation by S. N. Buynitzky.]

ISLAND OF SAINT GEORGE,  
June 17, 1875.

SIR: We, the inhabitants of the island of Saint George, declare to you our complaint, and request that you will lay our humble petition before your President, for we feel aggrieved since last fall, November 29, 1874 by reason of the following: One of our people, the Aleut Cyprian Mercoulier, was absent on a hunting expedition at the western side, when Captain McIntyre took his son into the school-building and had him shut up. Toward the evening the boy escaped, and went to the west side to join his father. In the morning of the following day, Captain McIntyre dispatched an Aleut to tell Cyprian Mercoulier that he should come with his son on that very day. C. Mercoulier came with his son, bringing some wood for his own use. Then, Captain McIntyre grasped him from behind, and tore the overcoat which C. Mercoulier had on. Thereupon Captain McIntyre said to C. Mercoulier, "Wait here for me; I am going to kill you," and ran to fetch his pistol. Meanwhile C. Mercoulier ran away and concealed himself among the rocks. Having on but a woolen shirt and a pair of trousers, and no boots, he kept there concealed for two nights and two days. On the third day C. Mercoulier was found half dead, and conducted home by two men, walking one on each side of him. Then Captain McIntyre allowed him to remain at home for a few days. When C. Mercoulier commenced to recover, Captain McIntyre took him to his quarters and

put his hands into irons, and had him shut up in a cellar, but set his son free. Then Captain McIntyre kept C. Mercoulier in the cellar for several days, after which he set him free. Since that time Captain McIntyre gave us no peace, incessantly visited our houses, breaking doors, and, moreover, forbade us to work for the company which paid for our work. Ever since we are in expectation of being shot dead by him; and so we lived with him all winter, and we do not wish to live with him on the island any longer.

CAPT. CHARLES BRYANT:

(Signed by several citizens of the island.)

Col. George Marston, the last appointed assistant Treasury agent, arrived and reported for duty at Saint Paul's Island, June 27, and after a month's careful instruction in the special duties of his position, on my departure, August 6, he was placed in charge of that island during my absence on leave, with the following instructions:

*Copy of instructions given to Col. George Marston.*

TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE, SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND, A T.,

August 6, 1875.

SIR: You are hereby placed in charge of Saint Paul's Island during my absence on leave, by the Secretary of the Treasury. It will be your duty to see that the leases of the United States concerning the taking of fur-seals under the contract with the Alaska Commercial Company are observed, that the natives are protected in all their rights, and, in general, it will be your duty to perform all acts which shall be for the welfare of the United States, and the comfort, improvement, and well-being of the natives of the island.

Your station with a book keeping a record of all transactions and occurrences that may be useful in furnishing information for guidance in the future government of the affairs of the island.

You will see that no seals are driven or killed except under the direction of the chiefs, with your permission, and in killing for food for natives you will see that, as near as may be, only such seals are killed as whose skins may be of the class to be accepted by the Alaska Commercial Company as a part of the quota of next year. And in killing young seals for winter food you will limit the number to be taken to three thousand, instead three thousand as was done last year; you will, however, have a sufficient number of larger seals killed when the weather sufficiently cold for their curing properly with salt, to insure a winter supply of food in case the weather should prove too warm during the winter for the usual supply to be kept frozen.

You will permit no person, not a native of the seal-islands, to reside on the island, other than the employés of the Government or of the Alaska Commercial Company, with a written permission of the Secretary of the Treasury; you are further instructed that if any cases come within your knowledge of the natives brewing quass or beer from sugar, or you have reason to believe such natives are indulging in such practices, you will be careful to see that it is broken up, and that supplies of sugar and other articles from which such quass or beer is made and sold to them in such limited quantities as to prevent a repetition of such practices.

By permission of the Secretary of the Treasury, a priest of the Russian orthodox church is permitted to reside on the island to minister to the spiritual wants of the people, with the understanding, however, that in all civil matters he will be subject to the laws of the United States and the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury made in pursuance thereof.

As soon after the leaving of the steamer as convenient for yourself and the agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, you will receive forty (40) tons of coal as the proportion for this island, of the sixty cords of wood provided as a condition of the lease. You will, on receiving this coal, give to the agent of the Alaska Commercial Company a receipt therefor, and have this coal stored until, in your judgment and the chiefs of the people, its use becomes necessary, when you will cause it to be distributed to the people on the same principle and method as described on page 221 of the book of records for the island, under date December 14, 1874.

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

GEORGE MARSTON, Esq

*Assistant Treasury Agent in charge Saint Paul's Island.*

I have the honor to remain, yours, respectfully,

CHARLES BRYANT,

*Treasury Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

ASSISTANT TREASURY AGENT'S OFFICE,  
*Saint George, August 1, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to report the arrival of the Alaska Commercial Company's steamer Alexander at the island, for her last time this season.

On her way down to Unalaska, July 10, there was shipped on board six thousand three hundred and thirty-eight (6,338) seal-skins, and to-day three thousand six hundred and sixty-two, (3,662,) as per certificates herewith inclosed, making, in all, ten thousand for this year.

On the 1st of June last the company commenced driving seals, and finished on the 17th of last month.

From the various observations taken of the seal-rookeries this season, I find that the four on the north side of the island compare favorably with that of former years, while the one at Zapadney, on the south side, has increased at least one-third over that of any year since my arrival at the island, 1870.

The young ones, from one year old up to four, have also increased one-half. Should this hold out, I am of opinion that five thousand additional could be taken without detriment to the rookeries. As regards the old bulls, there seems to be a slight falling off, which can be accounted for in a measure owing to the yearly increase of female seals.

I would here remark, for some reason or other which would seem unaccountable, the seals were about two weeks later in arriving this year.

I have nothing further of interest to communicate except the company is building a very fine church for the natives, and I think the majority of native houses, if not all, will be built this season.

I am, respectfully,

SAMUEL FALCONER,  
*Assistant Treasury Agent.*

Capt. CHAS. BRYANT,  
*Agent in charge Seal-Islands.*

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No. 141.

CUSTOM-HOUSE, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,  
*Collector's Office, December 8, 1875.*

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of October 29 last, inclosing copy of a communication from the United States military officer in command at Sitka, Alaska, relative to the introduction of breech-loading arms into Alaska, in which he recommends that said practice be again prohibited by Executive order.

You call attention to the statement therein incidentally made that large quantities of spirituous liquors are being introduced into that Territory by the Alaska Commercial Company for sale to the Indians, and request me to report fully upon that point, in regard to such shipments, if any, whether from this port or from any other place. In reply, I beg to state that as the communication charges a direct violation of the law, relative to the introduction of spirituous liquors into Alaska by the Alaska Commercial Company, and as General John F. Miller, late collector at this port, (who is a man of unswerving integrity, and held in very high esteem by the citizens of this State,) is president of said company, I deemed it but just to acquaint him with the facts, and I inclose herewith his reply for your consideration.

It seems to have been for some time past the object of certain persons in this city to direct the attention of the revenue officers to the Alaska Commercial Company, and to this end information of suspected shipments of liquors by the company to Alaska has frequently been given to this office, and every precaution has been used by the customs officers here to detect and prevent such shipments. Search of the company's vessels has been made from time to time, and their movements and shipments have been under close scrutiny for years, but never in a single

instance have our investigations and searches resulted in finding the slightest evidence of any shipment of liquor to Alaska by the company. The hostility of the president and chief officers of the company to the liquor-trade in Alaska is well known in this community, and it is, I believe, sincere. As an evidence, it is but a short time since that information was filed in this office, indirectly by the company, that a vessel was about to depart from this port with quite a large quantity of liquor concealed on board, intended to be unlawfully landed in Alaska. As the vessel had already cleared and was lying in the stream, it was too late to search the cargo; but a letter was sent to the customs officer at the port for which she cleared, giving him detailed information, and requesting him to search the vessel upon arrival, and, if circumstances warranted, make seizure of the vessel and cargo.

In this connection, I beg to state that whenever the manifest of a vessel bound for any port in Alaska, or for any port in Asia to reach which she has to pass through the waters of Alaska, shows any liquor to be on board, a bond is taken as required by regulations, and I inclose herewith an exhibit showing the shipments by such vessels and bonds taken during the last year. There is nothing, however, to hinder the master of the vessel, after he has landed the liquor in Asia, and procured the proper evidence of landing, from again shipping the liquor and proceeding with it to Alaska, and of this movement we could have no evidence unless specific information were filed by some one cognizant of the facts.

It is possible, too, that a vessel may take on board liquor at this port (which could be done in a clandestine manner) intended for Alaska, but unless the manifest showed the shipment, or some one filed information thereof, this office would have no knowledge of said shipment, because it is impracticable to search and examine every coasting-vessel clearing to ports in Alaska. This could not be done except at a great expense, and so doing would work great injustice to parties making legitimate shipments, by the injury to their goods resulting from examination.

Having sought so long to detect the Alaska Commercial Company in the practice attributed to them by the class of persons referred to, and having failed in every attempt, I am forced to the conclusion that if liquors are unlawfully shipped into Alaska from this port it is done by other parties and in the manner above described.

In view of the above, I have come to the conclusion that the prevention of the liquor-traffic into Alaska can only be accomplished by the officers there, and any scheme to that end must be put into operation in said Territory.

Inclosures returned herewith.

I am, very respectfully,

T. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary of the Treasury.*

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OFFICE OF ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
No. 310 Sansome Street, San Francisco, November 18, 1875.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, with inclosures, and, in compliance with your request for a statement of facts and such remarks as I may deem fitting in relation to the alleged shipment of breech-loading arms and spirituous liquors into Alaska by this company, I beg to submit the following: It appears by the inclosures with your note, that Captain Campbell, command-

ant at Sitka, and Indian agent for Alaska, states, in a letter to General Howard, under date of April 19, 1875, that it has been "credibly reported to him by a former employé of the Alaska Commercial Company that large quantities of modern breech-loading rifles, and ammunition for the same, are being imported into this Territory by the above-named company for sale to Indians," and further on, after stating the difficulty of keeping "the upper-hand of the Alaskan Indians," if they should be armed with breech-loaders, he says: "The same authority who gives information concerning the arms tells me that the company's vessels bring large amounts of liquors into the country for sale to Indians, and at almost all their posts the distillation of spirits is carried on." Solely upon the authority of this nameless "former employé who credibly informs" the captain, these charges are made and forwarded, and the headquarters of the Department of the Columbia, and the headquarters of the Military Division of the Pacific and the War Department, and then the Treasury Department, and finally the Customs Department, are all in turn disturbed and put in motion to make investigation.

Had Captain Campbell been less credulous and taken the trouble to investigate these statements before making them the subject of official correspondence, he would have found that "the former employé" of the Alaska Commercial Company was an immeasurable liar, and thus he would have saved himself and his superiors some trouble.

First, as to the shipment of breech-loading arms: At the time this charge was made, April 19, 1875, the shipment for sale in Alaska of breech-loading arms and ammunition therefor, was perfectly legal and legitimate, there being neither law nor Executive order against it. It was not until the 20th day of July 1875, that the Executive order prohibiting such shipments was promulgated. Since that time this company has not shipped a breech-loading rifle or other breech-loading arm, nor ammunition for breech-loaders, to Alaska. Prior to that time, the company made shipments of breech-loading arms as specified in the tabular statement hereto attached, the total number shipped for four years being 261.

By this it will be seen that if the Army is in very great danger from breech-loaders, the fault is not with this company. It has been the settled policy and practice of this company to strictly comply with every law and Executive order relating to Alaska without question or murmur, and we do not now question the wisdom of the late prohibition against breech-loading arms; we had thought, however, that in the struggle between the wild beasts and the Indian constantly going on in Alaska, the breech-loader would give the Indian an acquired advantage; but since it appears probable from the remarks of Captain Campbell that the Army may at some future time take sides with the wild beasts, it is quite prudent to confine the Indian to flint-lock muskets and Hudson Bay guns.

Second, in respect to the shipment of liquors by the company: This story has been so often told and refuted, and again repeated and again refuted; so frequently the subject of official investigation, and always found to be false, that it has become a chronic charge, and we are no longer surprised by anything that may be said about it. Whoever states it as a fact, knows it to be untrue; and whoever repeats it aids in spreading a malicious slander. The company has never at any time made shipments of spirituous liquors nor wines of any sort to Alaska, nor sold nor given away liquors nor wine of any sort to Indians or other people. It has been the constant practice of the company to prevent the landing on board its vessels liquors of any kinds, and every one of its vessels, together with the luggage of every seaman or other person on board, has been thoroughly searched by an officer of the company in the stream just prior to departure for Alaska ports, and all liquors found have been thrown overboard into the bay. Every employé of the company is made to know that the introduction of liquors into Alaska, or the manufacture, sale, barter, or giving away of liquors in the Territory is an offense which will be followed by prompt dismissal, and that it will never be pardoned or condoned. In two or three instances, employés have been detected in possession of small parcels of liquors, and these persons have been immediately discharged and have never been employed by the company since.

The truth is, that this company has been almost the only barrier against the liquor-traffic in all that part of Alaska in which it maintains trading-posts. In 1873, in order to break up, if possible, the trade in liquors, then carried on by rival traders, whalers, and small trading-schooners in Northern Alaska, the company used its endeavors with success to have the laws prohibiting the sale of liquors in the "Indian country" extended over Alaska, and when this was done by act of Congress we requested, through the supervisor of internal revenue for California, the appointment by the Interior Department of an agent for the execution of the law in all Northern Alaska, with power of seizure and arrest for violations of the law. Frederick S. Hall was appointed such agent, and he was conveyed by the company's vessels to Saint Michael, and other places. He remained about one year on the northern coast, doing excellent service, but there being no appropriation for payment of his salary, he was recalled by the Department, and there has not been an agent of the Government charged with the execution of the prohibitory liquor-laws in that region since. The only distillery ever destroyed north of Sitka (so far as we have heard) was destroyed



near Saint Michael, by an agent of this company, by force, he having found the owner (an opposition trader) engaged in distilling spirits in a still and from material imported from the Amoor. A suit for damages against the company was threatened, but never brought. The company's agents throughout Alaska are instructed to destroy by force any distillery apparatus found in proximity to our stations, and the company assumes the responsibility of the act of destruction. The statement that, "at almost all the company's posts the distillation of spirits is carried on," is false. In all the Aleutian country the Aleuts are in the habit (much to their injury) of making from flour and sugar, by a fermenting process of their own invention, an intoxicating liquor or beer called "quass," and this they will probably continue to do until the importation of flour and sugar is prohibited. The appetite for strong drink is so strong in these people that they will drink anything containing even the smallest quantity of spirit, or anything found in a bottle.

It does not seem to have occurred to Captain Campbell and other credulous people, that there may be other agencies than this company through which spirituous liquors and the dreaded breech-loader have been or may be introduced into Alaska. It would not be difficult to find out and comprehend that many whalers fitted out at the Hawaiian Islands or elsewhere are in the habit, on the voyage down from the whaling-region, of touching and trading at ports on the coast of Alaska, always provided with articles of trade, chief among which are spirits, tobacco, and breech-loading and other arms. Also, that there are small trading-craft, some of which bring the supplies from Asiatic ports, who touch and trade without hinderance along the coast; and that in addition to these there are the known traders in Alaska, other than the company, whose names and the names of their vessels are given in the annexed statement, No. 2.

This company has never yet attempted the rôle of the informer, nor will it begin now; but we submit that the fashion of attributing every violation of law or wrong done in Alaska to the company, is becoming a little tiresome, and we suggest that it is about time that officials planted at Sitka, and who attempt to supervise from an office there the whole of Alaska, and write as if they knew the condition of affairs in a remote region they have never seen and know nothing of, should move out and investigate before repeating the tales of every vagabond who chooses to wag his lying tongue against the company. It will be well, also, to look after those who raise the hue and cry in San Francisco, and with such industry publish and circulate anonymous and libelous pamphlets and absurd newspaper articles against the company, hoping by such means to attract the whole attention of the officers of Government toward the Alaska Commercial Company, that they may pursue their peculiar business without suspicion or interruption.

This ruse has succeeded well, and seems likely to continue to succeed. Captain Campbell complains that the company has established stations on the Youkon and at various places remote from his station at Sitka. To use his own language, "the company takes good care to keep its agencies, stores, and factors as far as possible from military authority." He then proceeds to give a list of the company's stations, naming several places which do not exist, and several more at which the company never had a post, and others twice by different names, and finally exclaims, "they have spread themselves all over Northern Alaska."

He does not seem to know that the company is the successor of the Russian-American Company, and that most of these stations were established more than seventy years ago. It may be very wrong to "spread all over Northern Alaska," but we cannot help it; still, we promise not to spread any further, unless the business pays better than it does now.

To bring the company's "agencies, stores, and factors" within the circle of military authority, would involve a serious change of base, and we fear that to rally around the post of Sitka would be rather inconvenient for business. It would be easier to move the "military authority" than to move the "agencies, stores, and factors," and we think much more economical and profitable for the company. If permitted, we prefer to remain in Northern Alaska.

Despite all that has been or may be said against the policy and practice of the Alaska Commercial Company, I here assert that it has pursued its business legally, legitimately, humanely, and honorably; it has been the uncompromising foe to the liquor-traffic, for its business is carried on with a view to permanency. It has more than a million dollars invested in the Territory, and its business is not pursued in the manner of itinerant traders, who in single ventures sacrifice a future trade for a present advantage. By fair dealing with the people, (who are not easily deceived,) and certainly in the fulfillment of all promises, the company inspires a confidence not easily shaken, and the native people learn to regard it as their best friend and unflinching support. Whatever tends to disturb their relation is an evil to them.

Of the remarks contained in Captain Campbell's letter, in reference to the lease of the seal-islands, I shall take no notice, because that is a matter with which he has and can have nothing to do.

In conclusion, I have to say that the company is ready and willing at all times for full and thorough investigation by any competent authority. We challenge the most searching scrutiny into all the acts, the policy, purposes, and practices of the company, and will at all times afford most ample facilities for information regarding them to any one making official inquiry. The intervals between official investigations of the company have been exceedingly short. Perhaps with a few more the demands of justice and curiosity will be satisfied.

Thanking you for the courtesy of your note, I remain, respectfully yours,  
 JOHN F. MILLER,  
*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

Hon. THOS. B. SHANNON,  
*Collector of Customs, San Francisco.*

## No. 1.

*Shipments of breech-loading arms by the Alaska Commercial Company.*

Date.	Vessel.	Destination.	Price.	Purchase from.
April 23, 1872	Eustace .....	Saint Michael...	\$3	A. J. Plate Co., and Liddle & Kaeding.
June 13, 1872	H. L. Thierman.	Kodiak .....	20	John Skinker.
Jan. 25, 1873	John Bright .....	do .....	3	A. J. Plate.
Mar. 28, 1873	Cyane .....	Ounalaska .....	3	John Skinker.
April 24, 1873	Eustace .....	Saint Michael .....	21	Do.
Aug. 15, 1873	Cyane .....	Ounalaska .....	3	A. J. Plate.
Feb. 17, 1874	Sutton .....	do .....	8	Do.
Mar. 6, 1874	W. H. Stevens .....	do .....	4	John Skinker.
April 17, 1874	Eustace .....	Saint Michael .....	53	John Skinker, and Liddle & Kaeding.
June 25, 1874	Thierman .....	Kodiak .....	10	John Skinker.
Feb. 6, 1875	General Miller .....	Ounalaska .....	4	Do.
Feb. 10, 1875	Cyane .....	Kodiak .....	19	Do.
April 14, 1875	Eustace .....	Saint Michael .....	90	John Skinker, Plate, and Liddle & Kaeding.
May 12, 1875	Cyane .....	Ounalaska .....	1	Do.
July 2, 1875	Legal-Tender .....	Kodiak .....	19	Do.
	Total .....		261	

## No. 2.

*Names of firms and individuals trading in Alaska west of Sitka.*

Shirpser & Co.: David Shirpser, manager. Stations: Kodiak, Kenay, Suchitua, Afognok, Elamna, Keneck, Bilkofski, Maszomy, Ounga. They trade besides that in schooners at all other points in Alaska where trade is carried on by the Alaska Commercial Company.

J. C. Merrill & Co.: Posts at Ounga and Shoumagin Islands, and trades with brig Timandra in the Arctic and on northwest coast of Asia.

Russian-American Ice Company: Post at Kodiak, and nearest surrounding stations.

J. C. Janson trades at Kushkoguim and Saint Michael; the last six years also at Ounalaska.

E. Hennig at Ounalaska, Atka, Attoo, Tigalda, and from vessels around the Aleutian Islands; owns the schooner William Sutton.

Haritonoff & Co., at Kodiak, Cook's Inlet, Bilkofski, and Maszomy; owns a small schooner, name not known.

Ben Levi, at Cook's Inlet.

John Wilson, at Cook's Inlet.

There are about a dozen small traders in various parts of Alaska, principally Youkon district and Cook's Inlet, who are supplied with trading-goods by those parties owning vessels, and occasionally import goods by fishing-vessels.

The Arctic is visited every year by a number of whalers and trading-vessels (some foreign) for the purpose of trading for furs and whalebone with the Indians.

Vessels fitting for codfishing in variably do some trading with the natives of the Aleutian Islands.

I hereby certify, that between the 1st day of May, 1873, and the 29th day of November, 1875, bonds were taken at my desk that no part of the following merchandise should be landed in the Territory of Alaska, and the following are all the bonds taken within said dates for such purpose:

Date of bond.	Vessel.	Barrels or cases.	Gallons and merchandise.
May 7, 1873	Schooner Urania.....	1 barrel .....	42 gallons whisky.
May 7, 1873	.....do.....	$\frac{1}{2}$ barrel .....	30 gallons alcohol.
May 7, 1873	.....do.....	2 cases .....	2 dozen bottles claret.
Mar. 17, 1874	Brig Timandra.....	3 barrels .....	135 gallons whisky.
Mar. 17, 1874	.....do.....	15 cases .....	150 gallons whisky.
Mar. 9, 1875	Schooner Banner.....	4 barrels .....	— gallons whisky.
Mar. 10, 1875	Brig Timandra.....	1 barrel .....	41 gallons whisky.
Mar. 10, 1875	.....do.....	2 barrels .....	82 $\frac{1}{2}$ gallons whisky.
Mar. 10, 1875	.....do.....	11 barrels.....	500 gallons alcohol.

W. FORD THOMAS,  
*Bond and Recording Clerk.*

No. 142.

*Report (printed) of Special Agent H. W. Elliott, dated November 16, 1874, made to the Secretary of the Treasury, upon the condition of affairs in the Territory of Alaska.*

[NOTE BY PRINTER.—This report is printed from the original stereotype-plates, and will be found following No. 143.]

No. 143.

SIR: On the 14th day of May, 1875, I had the honor to receive from you the following communication, viz:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
*Washington, May 13, 1875.*

SIR: You are instructed to proceed, at the earliest possible date, to San Francisco, for the purpose of gathering all available statistics of the trade of that port with China, Japan, and South American countries. It will be useful to ascertain the usual mode of putting up packages in which tea and opium are brought to the port of San Francisco. You will also look carefully into the South American trade, and furnish this Department a more detailed statistical account of the products imported. It is further desirable to ascertain an exact statistical return of the foreign fur-seals killed on Copper Island, and their proportion to the seals killed by the Alaska Commercial Company. You will, at the same time, collect the correct statistics of the number of seals killed by the Alaska Commercial Company, during the period of their contract, which have passed through the San Francisco custom-house, the number of gallons of oil that has been returned by the company, and any further statistical and useful information with regard to these fisheries that you may deem necessary.

You may ask such information as you desire on any or all of these points from the collector of the port of San Francisco, from the officials of the Government of all classes, and from the contractors of the Alaska Commercial Company, who will doubtless be glad to aid your inquiries in every respect, and for the purpose of these inquiries this letter will be to them a sufficient authority.

The statistics and information thus collected you are requested to hand to this Department upon your return from the Pacific coast.

Very respectfully

B. H. BRISTOW,  
*Secretary.*

J. S. MOORE, Esq.,  
*New York.*

In pursuance of these instructions I proceeded to San Francisco, in which city I arrived on the 9th of June.

I presented myself to Hon. Thomas Shannon, collector of the port of San Francisco, to obtain such assistance necessary to my inquiries as the nature of my investigations demanded.

The collector very promptly and courteously gave me the utmost facilities that his department afforded. Indeed, nothing can surpass the readiness and urbanity of the custom-house officials of the port of San Francisco, from the collector, chief appraiser, and auditor, to the employés, in aiding any inquiry that comes from the Treasury Department.

As far as regards the first portion of your instructions to inquire into the China, Japan, and South American trade, I have verbally communicated partly the result, and will, in a separate report, give a more detailed account of my investigations.

But as the principal object of my visit to San Francisco was a thorough examination of the carrying out of the contract of the Alaska Commercial Company with the Treasury Department in the lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, the killing of the proscribed number of fur-seals, and in fact anything bearing on this important contract, I shall now endeavor to give the result of my investigations.

On the 11th of June I first presented myself to the vice-president of the Alaska Commercial Company. (The president, General Miller, being at the time temporarily absent.)

In making known my request and showing the authority of the Treasury Department, the vice-president of the company immediately stated his willingness, on his own part and on behalf of the company, to furnish all the information I desired, and although I had no legal authority to demand it, yet of their own accord and with much frankness the officials of this corporation placed their books, papers, letters, accounts of sales, and available documents voluntarily at my disposal.

And if in my investigation I have neglected anything, the fault must be entirely my own, as the highest authority from Congress could not have elicited greater access to books and papers and personal information than was given me by the officials of the Alaska Commercial Company.

The Russian lease of the Behring, Copper, and Robbin Islands to Hutchinson, Kohl, Philipens & Co. As instructed by your letter I collected information as to the number of seals killed in the Russian-Asiatic islands, their proportion to the numbers killed on Saint Paul and Saint George, and other useful data and statistics. I will first give a full statement on this important subject before I report the investigation of the Treasury lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George to the Alaska Commercial Company.

The Russian Empire has in its Asiatic possessions several islands on which the fur-seals annually make their breeding-station. These are known on the map as Behring, Copper, and Robbin Islands.

These islands were leased to Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Company by the Russian government for a period of twenty years from the year 1871 at an annual rent of 5,000 rubles, and two rubles to the government and also 50 kopecks silver to the natives for each fur-seal skin taken, on condition that no less than 1,000 fur-seals should be killed, but granting, as it seems, perfect freedom to kill as many more fur-seals over and above the stipulated 1,000 as the contractors and governor of the islands may agree upon—the reverse of the order of our own lease of Saint Paul

and Saint George, which prohibits the killing of more than 100,000 fur-seals annually.

The other stipulations of the contract, a copy of which will be found in Appendix A, are almost identical with our own contract with the Alaska Commercial Company.

Hutchinson, Kohl & Company are also interested in the Alaska Commercial Company, and the latter in the former, with the exception of the Russian partner, Philipens. But the accounts of these joint interests are kept strictly distinct, a fact of which I have convinced myself by examining the books and ledgers, and which are corroborated by the separate shipments and distinct separate accounts of sales of Lampson & Co., in London, where both the whole catch of fur-seals of our own islands and those of the Asiatic islands are annually sold.

My first investigation, therefore, was to satisfy myself that no equivocal amalgamation has taken place between the fur-seals taken in the Russian islands and our own, or *vice versa*.

In order to test the integrity of this trade I found that all the Russian fur-seals from the islands of Copper, Behring, and Robbin are sent first to Peterpoulski, a port of Kamschatka. There they are counted by a Russian official, and a tax of two rubles, silver, is collected on each skin. From thence the skins are shipped by two vessels, the John Bright and the Olga, direct, without touching anywhere, to San Francisco. The test I submitted these shipments to was as follows, viz :

First. I compared the custom-house clearance of Peterpoulski and the entry in San Francisco with the company's books. These I have found from 1871 to 1874 (the latest period of the investigation) quite correct. Second. I compared the number of skins received by Messrs. Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. from the Russian islands, and the certified tax paid to the Russian government, and I found it to agree to within a few score of skins, which small discrepancy only the more satisfied me of its correctness, as the count in four years of some 100,000 skins thus handled by rude hands will naturally differ some.

But the still greater test was the account of sales from Lampson & Co., in London, of the separate fur-seals, and which very closely (a difference of a few scores of skins only) agrees with all the foregoing data. In other words, I found that the number of skins taken from the Russian islands agreed with Hutchinson, Kohl & Co.'s books, with the tax paid to the Russian government of 2 rubles per skin, and with Lampson & Co.'s account of sales rendered. It was perfectly obvious to my mind that a collusion was highly improbable, as it would be necessary to have in it not only the representatives of the Russian government but also the house of Lampson & Co., in London. Besides this, before any change of skins could take place, not only our own officials on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George had to become a party to it, but the captains and crews of the John Bright and Olga, and sundry persons on the station where the amalgamation must needs to have taken place, had one and all to be in collusion in order to carry it out.

The following is an exact transcript from the books of Hutchinson, Kohl, Philipens & Co., of fur-seals received and shipped from Copper, Behring, and Robbin Islands, to London to Lampson & Co., and the account of sales returned by the London house, every date and figure of which I have verified from the original documents.

*Fur-skins from Copper, Behring, and Robbin Islands, shipped to London to Lampson & Co.*

Date.		Casks.	Skins.	Date.		Casks.	Skins.
1871.				1871.			
July 7	.....	50	2,131	Dec. 21	.....	50	2,129
Oct. 6	.....	62	5,060	1872.			
Nov. 1	.....	122	5,856	Feb. 15	.....	50	4,131
1872.					.....	12	903
July 11	Lease and taxes paid.	127	7,208		.....	122	5,845
Oct. 28	..... do .....	357	22,168	1873.			
1873.				Jan. 12	.....	127	7,182
Nov. 17	..... do .....	550	30,336	May 6	.....	349	21,614
1874.				June 28	.....	8	496
Nov. 13	..... do .....	259	14,931	1874.			
Nov. 18	..... do .....	291	16,300	Apr. 2	.....	550	30,361
				1875.			
				Apr. 3	.....	516	24,325
					.....	34	1,981
					.....		4,986
					Held over in London.		
		1,818	103,990			1,818	103,953

It thus appears that the total amount of fur-seals brought from the Asiatic Islands, shipped and sold from July, 1871, to November, 1874, inclusive, was, according to the company's shipping-account, 103,990, and according to Messrs. Lampson & Co.'s account of sales, 103,953, a difference of 37 skins. The evidence I was able to collect on this Russian contract, the test I subjected it to, and the proofs I hereby append, exclude the doubt that the actual facts in every respect are now distinctly and fully stated.

#### HISTORY OF THE LEASE OF SAINT PAUL AND SAINT GEORGE.

After the acquisition of Alaska by the United States, one of the first things that engaged the attention of the Government was the preservation of the fur-bearing animals in the Territory, but chiefly the regulation of the seal-fisheries of Saint Paul and Saint George.

Many interesting accounts have been written by scientific men of the habits of this valuable fur-animal. All that is necessary to say in this report on the subject is, that there are but two islands in our possession, Saint Paul and Saint George, on which fur-seals congregate in considerable number; that their numbers in both islands is estimated at between 3,000,000 to 4,000,000, and that an indiscriminate injudicious killing of these animals would drive the seal away, or exterminate them in less than five years.

This has actually proved to be the case in the islands south of the Cape of Good Hope, and in other parts of the world. It was, therefore, wisely resolved to regulate the killing of fur-seals on these two islands by an act of Congress. It may, however, be of interest to state that during the Russian possession there existed a Russian trading-company which had a chief station in Sitka, and had the control of the fur-seal islands of Saint Paul and Saint George.

When the cession of the territory was made to the United States, this Russian Company sold out their stations and interest to the persons now composing the Alaska Commercial Company, hence the latter claimed a sort of succession of possession. But during 1867-'68 the enterprise of Americans was active in killing seals on the two islands, and the indiscriminate slaughter of the animals; during that time, was extremely injurious to the breeding of fur-seals. And there is no doubt that the act of 1870, which limits the killing to not more than 100,000 seals, prevented the extermination of these highly-prized animals.

Great confusion and continued strife had also set in in the islands between the natives and the Americans who came there to kill seals. The natives were naturally adverse to an indiscriminate slaughter of the seals, while rival adventurers came in numbers to reap the harvest which only lasts a few months annually.

Among those who claim to have had, as far back as 1867-'68, a fair footing on the islands as traders and successors of the Russian Trading Company, are the chief members of the present Alaska Commercial Company; and in 1868-'69 some agitation was made by the members of the present company to get a lease of the islands from our Government, which would preserve the fisheries and give them the sole control of them.

It was not until July, 1870, that an act of Congress was passed with regard to the lease of Saint Paul and Saint George.

It is claimed by the present Alaska Commercial Company that this act of Congress, or at least a portion of section 4, was made and worded so that they would at least be entitled to the refusal of the lease.

The following is the portion of the section in the act of July, 1870, "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals," &c., referred to:

"SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That immediately after the passage of this act the Secretary of the Treasury shall lease, for the rental mentioned in section 6 of this act, to proper and responsible parties, to the best advantage of the United States, having due regard to the interests of the Government, the native inhabitants, the parties heretofore engaged in the trade."

A contract, or rather a lease, was effected by the Secretary of the Treasury on the 3d of August, 1870, to the Alaska Commercial Company, which is herewith given in full, and is as follows:

*Copy of lease from the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company of the right to take fur-seals in Alaska. Delivered August 31, 1870.*

This indenture, in duplicate, made this third day of August, A. D. eighteen hundred and seventy, by and between William A. Richardson, Acting Secretary of the Treasury, in pursuance of an act of Congress, approved July 1, 1870, entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," and the Alaska Commercial Company, a corporation duly established under the laws of the State of California, acting by John F. Miller, its president and agent, in accordance with a resolution of said corporation duly adopted at a meeting of its board of trustees held January 31, 1870, witnesseth:

That the said Secretary hereby leases to the said Alaska Commercial Company, without power of transfer, for the term of twenty years from the first day of May, 1870, the right to engage in the business of taking fur-seals on the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, within the Territory of Alaska, and to send a vessel or vessels to said islands for the skins of such seals.

And the said Alaska Commercial Company, in consideration of their right under this lease, hereby covenant and agree to pay for each year during said term, and in proportion during any part thereof, the sum of fifty-five thousand dollars into the Treasury of the United States, in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary to be made for this purpose under said act, which payment shall be secured by deposit of United States bonds to that amount, and also covenant and agree to pay annually into the Treasury of the United States, under said rules and regulations, a revenue-tax or duty of two dollars upon each fur-seal skin taken and shipped by them, in accordance with the provisions of the act aforesaid; and also the sum of sixty-two and one-half cents for each fur-seal skin taken and shipped, and fifty-five cents per gallon for each gallon of oil obtained from said seals for sale on said islands or elsewhere and sold by said company. And also covenant and agree, in accordance with said rules and regulations, to furnish, free of charge, the inhabitants of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, annually during said term, twenty-five thousand dried salmon, sixty cords fire-wood, a sufficient quantity of salt, and a sufficient number of barrels for preserving the necessary supply of meat.

And the said lessees also hereby covenant and agree, during the term aforesaid, to maintain a school on each island in accordance with said rules and regulations, and

suitable for the education of the natives of said islands, for a period of not less than eight months in each year.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree not to kill upon said island of Saint Paul more than seventy-five thousand fur-seals, and upon the island of Saint George not more than twenty-five thousand fur-seals per annum; not to kill any fur-seal upon the islands aforesaid in any other month except the months of June, July, September, and October of each year; not to kill such seals at any time by the use of fire-arms or other means tending to drive the seals from said islands; not to kill any female seal, or any seal less than one year old; not to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands, or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree to abide by any restriction or limitation upon the right to kill seals under this lease, that the act prescribes or that the Secretary of the Treasury shall judge necessary for the preservation of such seals.

And the said lessees hereby agree that they will not in any way sell, transfer, or assign this lease, and that any transfer, sale, or assignment of the same shall be void and of no effect.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree to furnish to the several masters of the vessels employed by them certified copies of this lease to be presented to the Government revenue-officers for the time being in charge of said islands, as the authority of said lessees for the landing and taking said skins.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree that they, or their agents, shall not keep, sell, furnish, give, or dispose of any distilled spirits or spirituous liquors on either of said islands to any of the natives thereof, such person not being a physician and furnishing the same for use as medicine.

And the said lessees further covenant and agree that this lease is accepted subject to all needful rules and regulations which shall at any time or times hereafter be made by the Secretary of the Treasury for the collection and payment of the rentals herein agreed to be paid by said lessees, for the comfort, maintenance, education, and protection of the natives of said islands, and for carrying into effect all the provisions of the act aforesaid, and will abide by and conform to said rules and regulations.

And the said lessees, accepting this lease with a full knowledge of the provisions of the aforesaid act of Congress, further covenant and agree that they will fulfill all the provisions, requirements, and limitations of said act, whether herein specifically set out or not.

In witness whereof, the parties aforesaid have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year above written.

WILLIAM A. RICHARDSON, [SEAL.]  
*Acting Secretary of the Treasury.*  
 ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY, [SEAL.]  
 By JNO. F. MILLER, *President.*

Executed in presence of—  
 J. H. SAVILLE.

I certify that the foregoing printed copy of the lease of the United States to the Alaska Commercial Company, of the right to take fur-seals in the Territory of Alaska, has been compared with the original on file in this Department and is a true copy thereof.

J. H. SAVILLE,  
*Chief Clerk Treasury Department.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., September 3, 1870.

Now the act of Congress of July, 1870, or at least that important portion which relates to the leasing of the islands and the tax on the fur-seal skins, is comprised in section 6 of the act, and is as follows, viz:

“SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted,* That the annual rental to be reserved by said lease shall be not less than fifty thousand dollars per annum, to be secured by deposit of United States bonds to that amount, and in addition hereto a revenue-tax or duty of two dollars is hereby laid upon each fur-seal skin taken and shipped from said islands during the continuance of such lease, to be paid into the Treasury of the United States; and the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby empowered and authorized to make all needful rules and regulations for the collection and payment of the same, for the comfort, maintenance, education, and protection of the natives of said islands, and also for carrying into full effect all the provisions of this act: *Provided further,* That the Secretary of the Treasury may terminate any lease given to any person,



company, or corporation on full and satisfactory proof of the violation of any of the provisions of this act or the rules and regulations established by him."

This act differs from the lease, or rather the lease differs from the act, inasmuch as it increases the rent by \$5,000, the tax on each skin by sixty-two and one-half cents, and imposes fifty-five cents per gallon on oil taken and shipped; this latter source, viz, oil, being not even mentioned in the act of Congress. Nor is the supply of 25,000 dried salmon, sixty cords of fire-wood to the natives, salt, &c., mentioned in the act of Congress, which forms part of the lease.

The reason for all this liberality was that notwithstanding the claim of the present lessees, that they were the veritable traders heretofore engaged, Mr. Boutwell, the then Secretary of the Treasury, submitted the lease to the highest bidders, and it was in this competition that the sixty-two and one-half cents extra per skin, fifty-five cents per gallon for oil, the supply of salmon and fire-wood, and other acts favorable to the Aleuts, as seen in the lease, were secured, and the contract was made with the Alaska Commercial Company, who, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Treasury, were the most eligible parties to carry out this important lease.

This contract or lease began in August, 1870, and terminates after twenty years. After the lapse of nearly five years, during which time the lease has been in full force, you instructed me, as I have said, to gather exact and useful information, whether the lessees have in every respect honestly and faithfully performed their obligations to the Treasury Department.

First in order is to report my investigation as to the number of fur-seals killed on the two islands of Saint Paul and Saint George. I have compared the custom-house entries and the certificates of tax paid with the shipping-books of the Alaska Commercial Company. These I found differed, during a term of five active tax-paying years, and in number of 404,638 skins, by exactly 1,427 skins.

This discrepancy, however, as will be seen in the appended statement taken from the company's books, is reduced by the actual account of sales of Messrs. Lampson & Co., in London, to a discrepancy of 559 skins only, and this latter I have no doubt is correct. The significance I attach to this small discrepancy is rather favorable than otherwise, as the very difficulty of a correct count by ignorant packers, who salt, prepare, and pack the skins in casks for shipment, easily warrants a difference in the numbers, and I should have felt more suspicious had there been not a single discrepancy in five years and in a number of 403,761 skins. The next test was to compare the Alaska commercial shipping account with the return of account of sales from Messrs. Lampson & Co., in London. As the company very readily placed their books and correspondence at my disposal, I availed myself of the privilege, and with their full consent transcribed from their books an account of sales—the whole transaction of fur-seals taken, shipped, and sold—which I herewith append.

## Statement of fur-seal skins from Saint Paul and Saint George Islands.

Tax paid.		Shipment to London as per our count.			Lampson's account sales from London.		
Date of entry in our books.	Skins.	Date of entry.	Casks.	Skins.	Date of account rendered.	Casks.	Skins.
June 12, 1871.....	3, 448	June 13, 1871....	69	3, 450	Dec. 14, 1871....	69	3, 474
Sept. 5, 1871.....	60, 665	Sept. 6, 1871....	1, 232	61, 161	.....	711	33, 968
May 28, 1872.....	39, 176	May 29, 1872....	681	40, 155	Feb. 15, 1873....	521	27, 099
Oct. 16, 1872.....	61, 313	Oct. 5, 1872....	1, 026	61, 318	Aug. 23, 1873....	681	40, 058
	34, 756	Oct. 17, 1872....	524	34, 721	Jan. 12, 1873....	939	56, 227
Aug. 5, 1873.....	3, 906	Aug. 12, 1873....	826	41, 222	May 6, 1873.....	611	39, 813
	37, 262	Sept. 8, 1873....	1, 020	57, 213	Jan. 8, 1874.....	1, 226	63, 511
Aug. 14, 1873.....	57, 390	Oct. 18, 1873....	72	4, 559	April 2, 1874....	705	40, 213
Oct. 14, 1873.....	5, 092	Nov. 17, 1873....	11	701	Oct. 1, 1874.....	4	254
June 11, 1874.....	256	July 8, 1874.....	4	256	Dec. 17, 1874....	1, 112	59, 809
Aug. 27, 1874.....	45, 086	Sept. 11, 1874....	1, 844	99, 779	April 3, 1875....	732	39, 341
Sept. 7, 1874.....	54, 858						
	403, 208		7, 311	404, 635		3, 311	403, 767

The first column headed "skins," represents the number of fur-seals on which the tax was paid. The second column headed "skins," represents the number shipped by the company to London. The third column headed "skins," represents the number of skins Messrs. Lampson & Co., of London, actually received and rendered account of sales for.

I am perfectly satisfied that these figures are correct, unless not only the company, but the customs officers on the islands, the officers of the ships that bring the skins, the custom officials in San Francisco, and the great house of Messrs. Lampson & Company, in London, are one and all in collusion and conspiracy to defraud the Treasury of the United States. There would, besides, be another difficulty to overcome, as it would be necessary to keep false books and false entries, while in fact nothing is so easily detected as false book-keeping.

We may therefore take it for granted that the true number of skins taken from the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George is correctly given in the last column of the foregoing statement, which is the receipt and return of account of sales of Lampson & Company.

I have, besides all these proofs, a copy of letter and specifications from the company's shipping-books to Messrs. Lampson & Company, which being very voluminous will be found in Appendix B; the details of which, agreeing perfectly with the stipulated numbers, may be taken as very satisfactory proof of the correctness of the books and accounts of the company.

It is now necessary to state that the lease having been signed and delivered August 3, 1870, and that year counting for one full year in the lease, the company would have been entitled to 500,000 skins from 1870 to 1874, inclusive, while the actual seal-skins taken on which tax was paid was 403,208.

I find, however, that the number of skins sold by Messrs. Lampson & Company on account of the Alaska Commercial Company was 403,767, which, as stated, is a discrepancy of 559 skins on which no tax was paid.

It would therefore seem evident that a tax of \$2.62½ per skin, or a total of \$1,467.37, is due to the Treasury by the Alaska Commercial Company. With the adjustment of these 559 skins from which a tax is due to the Treasury, that portion of my instructions which requires me to ascertain the correctness of taxes paid on skins, and actual skins taken from the islands during 1870-'74, inclusive, will no doubt prove as satisfactory to the Department as it is to me to be able to record it.

## THE TAX ON OIL.

It is less satisfactory to state that that portion of the lease which refers to a payment of 55 cents on every gallon of oil taken from said seals for sale on said islands or elsewhere, and sold by said company, is a dead letter, and has been a dead letter from the very first.

Indeed, so clear was it made to the Department that no tax could be collected on oil, that your immediate predecessor, on the 16th of February, 1874, released the Alaska Commercial Company from all further payment of tax on fur-seal oil, which the following copy of Secretary Richardson's letter will fully explain.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Washington, D. C., February 16, 1874.

SIR: Referring to your letter of the 15th ultimo, relative to the taking of seal-oil on the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, by the Alaska Commercial Company, upon which oil a tax of fifty-five cents per gallon was agreed to be paid by the lease entered into between the United States and said company, I have to say that, upon due consideration, I have decided to waive the collection of tax upon such seal-oil as may be taken by said company and shipped from said islands; such waiver to stand in full force until otherwise ordered by the Department.

I am, very respectfully,  
(Signed)

WM. A. RICHARDSON,  
Secretary.

H. M. HUTCHINSON, Esq.,  
Of Alaska Commercial Company,  
Washington, D. C.

This authority is, of course, so long as it is in force, sufficient to stop any investigation. I have, nevertheless, ascertained the following facts:

First, a fur-seal, when in its best condition, only gives one gallon of oil, but the average would hardly be more than half a gallon, owing to their being killed in June and July.

Second, the commercial value of fur-seal oil is almost nominal—from 30 to 35 cents per gallon.

Third, that the Alaska Commercial Company had the tax removed February 16, 1874, yet it did not pay them to render the seals killed in 1874, into oil; the fact is, the operation does not pay.

It is nevertheless to be regretted that such a perfect sham bid as 55 cents per gallon for fur-seal oil should have found a place in the lease, and have been seriously agreed upon.

The Alaska Commercial Company claim that this bid on oil was not made by them at all, but was forced upon them by competitive bidders. Be that as it may, no revenue has been collected from fur-seal oil.

The very wording on the clause makes it optional with the lessees to take, sell, and ship oil. The Treasury cannot compel them to do so.

SHIPPING THE FUR-SEAL SKINS FROM THE ISLANDS OF SAINT PAUL AND  
SAINT GEORGE TO SAN FRANCISCO.

The Alaska Commercial Company have two vessels employed in shipping stores to Alaska and the islands, and bringing the fur-seals from the islands to San Francisco. One, the Alexander, is a steamer, and the other, the Cyane, is a sailing-vessel of same capacity.

The chief *entrepôt* for stores of the company is in Annalaska, a port of delivery on that island. It is the habit of the company to store supplies in this port, and the steamer Alexander plys from Annalaska to the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, carrying stores to the islands and bringing fur-seal skins to Annalaska, from which steamer a

portion are transshipped on the sailing-vessel *Cyane*, and the balance brought by the *Alexander* to San Francisco direct, without further breaking the voyage, which the ship's logs will testify to.

These transshipments are made under the supervision of the Annalaska custom-house officials. It would, nevertheless, be advisable that a Government official be detailed, to whom the authorities in Saint Paul and Saint George should deliver over the amount of seal-skins, which should remain under his care and custody during the transshipment in Annalaska, and during the voyage, until they are delivered over to the collector of the port of San Francisco.

In other words, as the Treasury clearly has a lien on the product, of \$2.62½ per skin, the goods should be treated as any other bonded goods, and never be out of the custody of the Government until the tax is paid.

This could be effected with little cost to the Treasury, be a great check, and prove satisfactory even to the lessees, who seem willing to give the authorities all the supervision that is required.

THE ADVISABILITY OF KILLING MORE SEALS THAN PRESCRIBED BY  
THE ACT OF JULY 1, 1870.

I have made some careful inquiry as to the condition and numbers of seals on the two islands of Saint Paul and Saint George. It has been stated in corroboration of Mr. Elliott's report, by very trustworthy and respectable authority, that there are at least from three million to three and a half million seals of all kinds and ages on Saint Paul, and from three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand on Saint George.

That the act of Congress prescribing the killing of only 75,000 on Saint Paul is much less than the great flock there every year warrants, while the number of 25,000 to be killed in Saint George, prescribed in the act, is rather more than a flock of from three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand should, in proportion to the vast number on Saint Paul, bear. There seems to be no doubt that more seals than prescribed by the act could conveniently, and without detriment to the animals, be killed in Saint Paul.

It is, however, my duty to report that the lessees are rather adverse to obtaining the privilege of killing more seals than the stipulated number of 100,000 now agreed to in the contract.

It seems that the 100,000 fur-seals from our own islands, together with the 30,000 obtained by them from the Asiatic islands, besides the scattering fur-seals killed in the south seas, are all the market of the world can conveniently take. In fact it is pretty evident that the very restriction of the numbers killed is about the most valuable part of the franchise of the Alaska Commercial Company, and is only another proof of the absurdity of the frequent charges made against them that they surreptitiously take from our islands twenty or thirty thousand more seals than they are entitled to take.

As these islands are now leased for a period of fifteen years longer, and a contract for increasing the number to be killed could in point of fact only be made with the present lessees, their present refusal to entertain the mere proposition makes the increased catch on the islands impracticable. The present restriction, valuable as it undoubtedly is to the lessees, will, however, have the undoubted advantage of preserving the fur-seals on the islands, which in the end may be worth much more than twenty or thirty thousand dollars more revenue per annum.

## ALTERATION IN THE LEASE IN THE NUMBERS KILLED ON EACH ISLAND.

In the original lease, dated August 3, 1870, it was agreed and stipulated that the number of fur seals to be killed in Saint Paul should not exceed 75,000, and the number in Saint George should not exceed 25,000. Experience has proved that the killing of 25,000 in Saint George would be detrimental to the number of seals on the island. Hence an appeal was made to your immediate predecessor to modify the number of seals to be killed in Saint George and transfer the killing of more seals to Saint Paul.

The modification signed by Secretary Richardson, and found in Appendix C, will explain the change. It stipulates that from and after the 25th of March, 1874, the Alaska Commercial Company shall be allowed to kill not more than 90,000 seals, instead of 75,000, in Saint Paul, and not more than 10,000 in Saint George, instead of 25,000. In other words, there are 15,000 less killed in Saint George and 15,000 more in Saint Paul. This change in the numbers of seals killed on the islands, beneficial to the preservation of the breed of seals of Saint George, is authorized by an act of Congress, approved March 24, 1874, and entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870.

Whether any further modification in determining the quota to be killed on each island is necessary, should have the careful consideration of the Secretary of the Treasury, who, by the aid of experts, collecting reliable data as to the number and condition of fur-seals on each island, would be enabled to prescribe either from year to year, or once in every three years, the quantity to be killed on each island.

## IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF THE LEASE AND ITS FRANCHISE.

There does not exist any doubt, nor indeed is it denied by the Alaska Commercial Company, that the lease of the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George is highly lucrative. The great success of this franchise is, however, owing, as far as I could ascertain, to three principal causes: First, the Alaska Commercial Company, owing to the fact that they have the sole control of the three Asiatic islands on which fur-seals are found, as well as on our own islands at Saint Paul and Saint George, virtually manage the sale of eighty per cent. of all the fur-seals killed annually in the world. Secondly, the arbitrary and somewhat eccentric law of fashion has raised the price of fur-seals in the markets of the world, during the last four years, fully 100 per cent. in value. Thirdly, time and experience have given this controlling company most valuable advantages. For instance, in the island of Saint Paul, where a reputed number of from three to three and a half million seals congregate, the comparatively small quantity only of formerly 75,000, and now 90,000 are killed. The company employ experts in selecting easily the kind that are most valuable in the market, and have no difficulty in getting 90,000 out of a flock of three to three and a half millions, which are the select of the select; and it is owing to this cause and to the care taken in avoiding cuts in the skins, as also in properly preparing them for the market, that the high prices are obtained. Indeed the fact is that a fur-seal skin selling now in London for £2.10s. or £3, is, owing to its superior quality and excellent condition, cheaper than the fur-seal which five years ago fetched 30s. sterling. The former mode of the indiscriminate killing of the fur-seals was as detrimental to the value of the skins as it was to the existence of the breed. With such a val-

uable franchise, secured by a contract that has still fifteen years to run, but which could without notice be terminated by the Secretary of the Treasury for cause, it would indeed be a suicidal policy on the part of the company to infringe on the stipulations of the contract.

#### PERIODICAL EXAMINATIONS.

It would nevertheless be in my judgment advisable, if a periodical examination of the fulfillment of the lease by the company is made.

A competent person, enjoying the confidence of the Department, should be sent to San Francisco once at least in every three years, whose duty should be to thoroughly examine the books, correspondence, account of sales, shipping-documents, entries, and tax-receipts of the company, relating to the number of seals killed, skins shipped and sold, on which tax was collected. These documents should be carefully verified, and the result reported to the Secretary of the Treasury.

The regulation I have no doubt will be found wholesome both to the Treasury and the lessees.

#### POLICY OF LEASING THE ISLANDS.

It was not signified by your letter of instructions that I should in any way investigate the wisdom or unwisdom of the policy of Congress in leasing the islands; thus, as it were, establish a powerful control in favor of a single corporation. I have nevertheless gathered the following information on this important subject:

#### OPPOSITION TO THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY.

It is no doubt as well known to the Department as to Congress, that there exists a strong opposition to the lease of the fur-seal islands. The headquarters of the opposition is naturally in San Francisco. Having made a thorough investigation of the Alaska Commercial Company, I felt it my duty to gather all the information on the seal-fisheries from these parties who so bitterly oppose the lease. In December, 1874, a set of resolutions were printed in San Francisco, by the so-called Anti-Monopoly Association of the Pacific Coast, an association, however, that only appears to be in a primitive state widely circulated, setting forth reasons and arguments why the act of 1870 should never have been passed into law, and why it should now be repealed.

Having one of these circulars in my possession, on the 25th of June I called on one of the signers, Mr. I. Shirpser, 105 Montgomery street, who is a furrier, and has fur stations in Alaska. Having made known my business to Mr. Shirpser, he declared that he knew nothing positive against the Alaska Commercial Company; that he believed that the company would be foolish to endanger a highly valuable franchise for the sake of \$50,000 or even \$200,000 surreptitiously obtained; his complaint was against the act of Congress for granting a lease at all to anybody. However, he sent me to Messrs. Fuerstein & Co., California street, as persons who could give me valuable information. I found their representatives, Messrs. Roeding and Douzel, two highly respectable and intelligent merchants, who very frankly informed me that owing to some settlement with the Alaska Commercial Company, they were bound not to work against their interest. They, Messrs. Roeding and Douzel, nevertheless unofficially assured me that while they fully believed that the company would not be stupid enough to endanger the lease by infringing on its provisions, they

felt constrained to say that the act of 1870 was a mistake. Mr. Roeding said further that he was one of the Goldstone contract party, to whom the lease ought to have been awarded, and that he had no doubt that he would have carried on the trade the same as the Alaska Commercial Company, but still he would have thought the act wrong. These gentlemen further informed me that if I wanted to get at the bottom of it, they would send for Mr. Bernard Bendel, who would give me all the information I desired. Next day I saw Mr. Bendel, who professed himself the author of a recent published pamphlet against the Alaska seal monopoly. With this gentleman, and a Mr. Ennis, and an ex-priest of the Greek church, Mr. Houchoraneo, who was an editor of the Alaska Herald, I had interviews, and as these were the most outspoken opponents to the lease that I could find, I preferred to gather information from them. All my endeavors, however, to find out anything positive and reliable wherein the lessees had violated the contract, were quite fruitless. Mr. Bendel, even in the memorial, refuses seriously to charge the company with any breach of contract, and it is only fair to say that the opposition to the Alaska Commercial Company invariably vent their indignation on the act of 1870. This alone is its grievance. As my mission to San Francisco was to investigate any facts relating to the carrying out of the lease, and not the act of Congress, and as all the numerous opposing parties I met absolutely refused to charge the company under oath with any actual violation of the lease, I really felt powerless in the matter. I nevertheless herewith transmit, in Appendix D, a memorial signed by the opposition to the Alaska Commercial Company in San Francisco, and I call your attention to the fact, while this memorial condemns the act of 1870, it does not conflict with my investigations as to the fulfillment of the provisions of the lease.

#### THE NATIVES OF SAINT PAUL AND SAINT GEORGE.

The cession of the two fur-seal islands by Russia made it incumbent on the United States Government to prevent, not only the extermination of the fur-seals, but also the extermination of the natives. The two islands of Saint Paul and Saint George contained, early in 1875, the following population:

Saint Paul—males .....	110
females .....	118
Total .....	228
Saint George—males .....	57
females .....	63
Total .....	120

The total native population of the two islands, therefore, is 348. In Saint Paul there are 50 working-men out of the whole population; in Saint George, the number is said to be about 18. The women and children, no doubt, do a good deal of hard work on both islands. These natives are a mixed breed of Japanese and Russians, and have been on the islands more or less since the occupation of Alaska by the Russians. As I have not been on the islands myself, I can only give such information about them as I was able to gather from trustworthy sources. All information about the Aleuts agrees in the following: The natives are represented as exceedingly docile, exceedingly dirty in their habits, exceedingly religious, or, rather, superstitious, and exceedingly fond of

whisky. It is alleged that there is nothing valuable that an Aleut would not exchange or barter for whisky. Of this assertion there can be little doubt, if the evidence of the most respectable men who have been on the islands can be believed. Congress seems to have been aware of this fact before the act of 1870 was passed, as one of the chief features of the act is a total prohibition of the traffic in spirits on the islands.

There is no doubt on the subject, that *free trade* in seal-skins and whisky would, in less than three years, exterminate both the fur-seals and the Aleuts on the islands, and the most ardent *free-trader* has reluctantly to acknowledge that this is an instance where the benefits of free trade is an exception to the general rule, as it will be seen by the lease of the islands. Congress has especially reserved for these natives general good treatment, and any infringement on the stipulations would be a grievous breach of contract.

As all my information respecting the lease and its execution was obtained from the company's books, I was only able to judge of the social condition of the islanders by the amount of ready money they have saved during the last four years, and which is in the keeping of the Alaska Commercial Company. This statement of accounts due the natives will be found in Appendix E, which also contains the retail prices of goods sold on the islands by the company to the natives. From this it appears that in Saint Paul eighty natives are credited by the company with ..... \$34,715 24  
and the church with ..... 7,969 17

Total..... 42,681 41

In Saint George, twenty-four natives are credited with.... \$6,623 96  
and the church with..... 2,006 91

Total..... 8,630 87

which bears interest at 8 per cent. This gives a per-capita saving of \$122.30, exclusive of the church property. These statistics are in so far interesting that they show a general state of at least *material prosperity*, judged by savings-banks' statistics. It also proves the wisdom of Congress in restricting the liquor-traffic on the islands, as there can be no doubt that all these savings would immediately be exchanged for whisky. I deemed it advisable, however, to address the following letter to the president of the company, and received the accompanying reply, which will explain themselves.

#### LETTER AND REPLY.

SAN FRANCISCO, July 14, 1875.

DEAR SIR: As I intend to lay before the Secretary of the Treasury the amounts of savings in your company's possession, belonging to the natives of Saint Paul and Saint George, I would like to have your reply to the following specific questions:

1. Are the savings deposited by the natives of Saint Paul and Saint George with your company entirely voluntary, or does your company detain part of their wages, and compel them to leave money in your hands?

2. Are the depositors allowed to withdraw their money when and as they please, or are they expected to receive their dues in goods or wares?

3. I would also feel obliged if you will inform me whether the natives of Saint Paul and Saint George are at perfect liberty to leave the islands, and the means at their disposal to accomplish it.

I remain, most respectfully,

J. S. MOORE.

The PRESIDENT OF THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY.



ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
 No. 310 SANSOME STREET,  
 San Francisco, July 15, 1875.

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, and for reply to your questions, I beg to state:

1st. That the savings of the native people of Saint Paul and Saint George Islands deposited with this company are the results of the voluntary action of each individual depositor, without compulsion on the part of the company, or any of its agents or employes. The company has, however, recommended to the people the system of savings which is practiced in civilized communities, and has explained to them the character of savings-banks, and advised them that they could with perfect safety deposit their earnings with the savings-banks of San Francisco, but they have hitherto preferred to deposit with the company, it being more convenient for them. Upon all these deposits the company pays the regular rate of interest on term-deposits which rules in San Francisco.

2d. The company holds itself responsible and ready at all times to pay the depositors, on demand, the full amount of their deposits, with accrued interest, in United States gold coin. No depositor is required or expected to take goods for any part of his deposit or for interest thereon. In this connection, I beg to state that this system of savings has been instituted and fostered for the purpose of cultivating habits of economy and thrift among the native people, and in pursuance of the general policy of the company toward their civilization and enlightenment. The motive of the company in this proceeding is to benefit the people, it being no advantage whatever to the company to take these deposits and pay interest thereon, when it has ample funds of its own for all its purposes.

3d. All the people of these islands can leave of their own free will. The company has never made pretense of any power to detain any person upon the islands for any cause or purpose, and has never attempted or practiced any restraint upon the liberty of any native or other person in any manner whatever.

All natives who desire to leave the islands are allowed free passage to Ounalaska on the company's vessels, which make frequent trips between that port and the islands of Saint Paul and Saint George. The opportunities for transit from Ounalaska to many parts of the Territory are frequent and ample, and the natives, like all other people, go where they please.

The desire to quit the islands is by no means prevalent among the native people, for they are a happy and prosperous people, and more than satisfied to remain. Some, on account of family connections or other private reasons, have, however, availed themselves of the favor of the company, and have been carried on the company's vessels to Ounalaska and other places, and some of these have again returned to the islands. No one has been refused by the company the right to quit the islands at his pleasure. The inhabitants of Saint Paul and Saint George Islands are as free in all respects as any people on the globe.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

JNO. F. MILLER,  
 President Alaska Commercial Company.

MOORE, Esq.,  
 Agent United States Treasury Department, San Francisco.

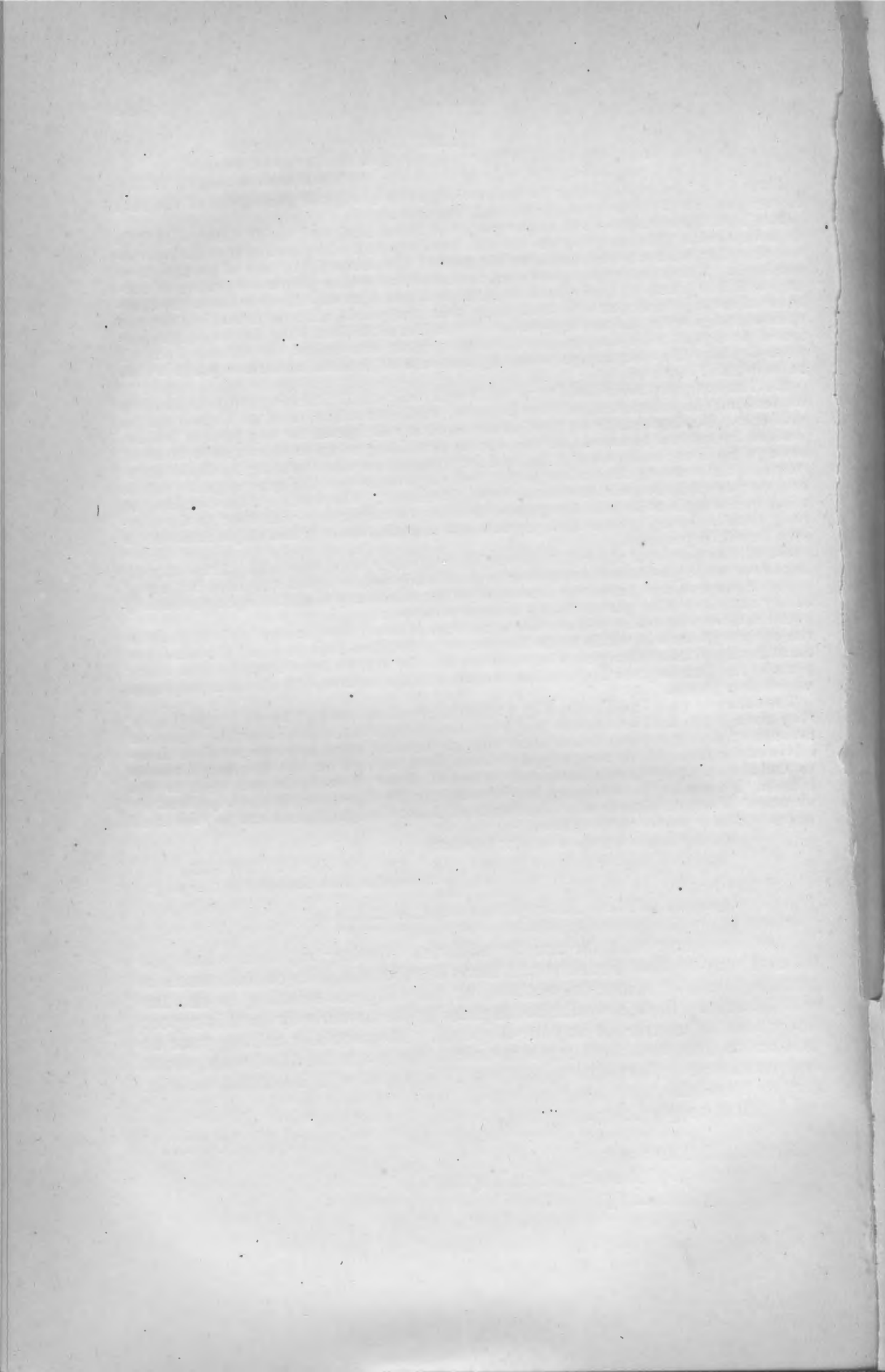
It remains now only for me to add, that during my somewhat protracted stay in San Francisco, I have been enabled to collect much interesting data of minor importance on all subjects relating to the fur-seal fisheries which it would be impracticable to embody in this report, but which, of course, is at your disposal. Respectfully calling your attention to the fact that my statements made are fortified with proofs and vouchers, I therefore hope that this report will be found satisfactory and useful.

Most respectfully,

J. S. MOORE.

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,  
 Secretary of Treasury, Washington, D. C.

H. Ex. 83—14



A REPORT

UPON THE

CONDITION OF AFFAIRS

IN THE

TERRITORY OF ALASKA.

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BY

HENRY W. ELLIOTT,

SPECIAL AGENT TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

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WASHINGTON:  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.  
1875.

A REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE

LAND

OFFICE OF ALASKA

IN THE

YEAR 1900

WASHINGTON

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

## LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *November 16, 1874.*

SIR: In compliance with the provisions of the act of Congress approved April 22, 1874, I have the honor to submit the following report upon the condition and importance of the fur-trade in the Territory of Alaska; "the present condition of the seal-fisheries of Alaska; the haunts and habits of the seal; the preservation and extension of the fisheries as a source of revenue to the United States, with like information respecting the fur-bearing animals of Alaska generally; the statistics of the fur-trade; and the condition of the people or natives, especially those upon whom the successful prosecution of the fisheries and fur-trade is dependent:"

The first measure suggested by my investigations this season is one of reform in the present government of the Territory. It is supposed that a useless outlay of money and labor is not intended to be persisted in, when the same annual expenditure will give prompt and effective supervision over interests in that region which seem now to be sadly neglected. The present mismanagement of affairs in Alaska is not attributable to any other cause than that of the universal ignorance prevailing in the United States, at the time of the transfer, in regard to the form of government needed, and since then no one seems to have taken any intelligent or active interest in the matter. In the following report, herewith submitted, I desire to draw your attention to the statements and suggestions contained in the chapter devoted to this subject, and I trust that you may be pleased to give them your approval.

The pecuniary value of the fur-seal interests of the Government renders it highly important that the Treasury Department, now intrusted with its care and supervision, should possess definite and authoritative information as to its proper management—for its perpetuation in its original integrity, at least. I, therefore, take great pleasure in calling your attention especially to the accompanying report upon the subject, which embodies the results of three seasons' (1872, 1873, and 1874) close per-

sonal observation and research on the ground, with maps and illustrations.

In connection with the condition of the natives of the Territory, on whom the successful prosecution of the fur-trade is dependent, I have been led into a very careful study of the history and habits of the sea-otter in this country, to the successful hunting of which between four and five thousand Christian Aleutians and Kodiakers look for a means of livelihood. Since the transfer, fire-arms, formerly proscribed, have been introduced among the sea-otter hunters. This, in combination with the keenest rivalry of opposition traders, makes it only a question of a very short time ere these valuable and interesting animals are exterminated, on the existence of which so many christianized natives are totally dependent for all of the comforts, and many even of the necessities, of a semi-civilized life. The remedy for this is a very simple and effective one, and I beg leave to refer to my discussion of the subject in this report under the head of the sea-otter and its hunters.

In my report it will be seen that I have given the Yukon, Aleutian, and Sitkan sections close attention, having yet to more fully examine the Kodiak, Cook's Inlet, and Copper River districts; that I have, in connection with Lieut. Washburn Maynard, United States Navy, my associate during the past season, carefully resurveyed the area and position of the breeding-grounds of the fur-seal on the Prybilov Islands. We surveyed Saint Matthew's Island, which is contiguous and was entirely unknown and uninhabited, in order to settle the question, so frequently asked, and to which no definite reply could be given, as to whether or not it was suitable ground for fur-seals to land upon and breed, should these animals ever become dissatisfied with their present locality; and that I have compiled, from Russian and other authorities, facts and statistics as to the extent of the fur-trade in the early days of the Territory, so as to compare with the condition of this business at the present, as I get it from traders and agents in the country generally. Of necessity, I have been obliged to use my judgment in selecting and taking these figures, both from the written as well as the verbal authorities. These I submit as being very nearly correct, to the best of my knowledge and belief. The remarkable increase in the catch of fur-bearing animals since the change of ownership of the country is most striking, but in perfect harmony with the strong contrast between the indo-

lent, make-shift management of the Russian-American Fur Company in later times and that of our energetic, economical traders.

The extravagant statements which have been made in regard to the resources of this Territory, which, on the one hand, were they true, would fit it for the future reception of a highly-civilized population, while, on the other, it would be made a land of utter desolation, worthlessness, and an entire loss of seven millions of purchase-money; besides being a burden to the General Government, these announcements, so often made and reiterated throughout our country, have caused me to pay great attention to the subject, and in this report I have endeavored to give a concise description of the agricultural character of the Territory as I have seen it, which thus far might be truthfully summed up in saying that there are more acres of better land lying now as wilderness and jungle in sight on the mountain-tops of the Alleghanies from the car-windows of the Pennsylvania road than can be found in all Alaska; and when it is remembered that this land, wild, in the heart of one of our oldest and most thickly-populated States, will remain as it now is, cheap, and undisturbed for an indefinite time to come, notwithstanding its close proximity to the homes of millions of energetic and enterprising men, it is not difficult to estimate the value of the Alaskan acres, remote as they are, and barred out by a most disagreeable sea-coast climate, leaving out altogether the great West and vast agricultural regions of British America; but then, directly to the contrary, it would be wrong to hint by this statement, true as it is, that the country is worthless, for on the Seal Islands alone the Government possesses property which would not remain in the market many days unsold were it offered for seven millions, and from which the annual revenue is doubly sufficient to meet all expenditures for the proper government of the whole Territory, if the matter was correctly adjusted. Again, it should be understood that, beyond a few outcrops of Tertiary coal and small leads near Sitka of gold and silver, with reports of native copper *in situ*, nothing is known whatever of the mineral wealth of the Territory at the present writing, as far as I can learn, but which I have reason to think will develop into some value.

My opinion with reference to the fishing interests in the Territory has been almost entirely formed by the accounts of old, experienced fishermen whom I have met in the country person-

ally engaged in fishing in these waters. The value and probable yield of the cod-banks of Alaska have been greatly overrated, but it may be reasonably anticipated that the success attending the *canning* of salmon on the Columbia River will stimulate the prosecution of this industry at the mouths of all the large streams and rivers of the Territory.

In connection with my survey of affairs in the Territory, the Seal Islands in especial, I have been most fortunate in being associated with a gentleman so efficient and conscientious as Lieut. Washburn Maynard, the officer selected by the Secretary of the Navy, in compliance with the act of Congress, to accompany me on this tour of investigation, and to report independently.

It is also fitting that I should speak in flattering terms of the high character of the service rendered us this season by Capt. J. G. Baker, commanding the United States revenue-cutter *Reliance*, who carried us with all care and expedition to such points as we saw fit to designate, and which it was possible to visit in a sailing-vessel, with the time allotted.

The several subjects within the scope of my report I have arranged, and herewith respectfully present in the following order, viz :

CHAPTER I. THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY.

- II. THE NATIVES OR PEOPLE OF ALASKA; THEIR CONDITION, &C.
- III. THE DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE TERRITORY OF ALASKA.
- IV. TRADE IN THE TERRITORY AND THE TRADERS, STATIONS, &C.
- V. THE SEA-OTTER AND ITS HUNTING.
- VI. THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS ON THE SEAL ISLANDS; PRYBILOV GROUP.
- VII. THE HABITS OF THE FUR SEAL.
- VIII. FISH AND FISHERIES.
- IX. ORNITHOLOGY OF THE PRYBILOV ISLANDS.

APPENDIX.

I have endeavored in the preparation of this report to be as concise as possible, perhaps so to a fault, but the enumeration of the thousand and one little things that have combined to form opinion, and indirectly influence one's judgment, can interest no one but the writer.



ALASKA.

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On the subject of Alaska, it is safe to assert that no other unexplored section of the world was ever brought into notice suddenly, about which so much has been emphatically and positively written, based entirely upon the whims and caprices of the writers, and, therefore, it will not be at all surprising if the truth in regard to the Territory does frequently come into conflict with many erroneous popular opinions respecting it.

With the hope that the results of my labor as presented in the following report will meet with your approval and support,

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY W. ELLIOTT,

*Special Agent Treasury Department.*

Hon. B. H. BRISTOW,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

In the report of the Committee on the  
Education of the Blind, it is stated that  
the work of the Bureau of Education for  
the Blind has been very successful and  
that the progress of the blind has  
been very rapid. It is also stated  
that the work of the Bureau has been  
very successful and that the progress  
of the blind has been very rapid.

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF THE BUREAU OF EDUCATION  
FOR THE BLIND

## CHAPTER I.

### THE CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY.

#### THE TERRITORY OF ALASKA.

So much has been said *pro* and *con* as to the natural wealth and advantages of our new acquisition, the Territory of Alaska, that the widest possible divergence of opinion has arisen upon this subject; on the one hand, we hear that here is a country no more rugged or uninviting than is Sweden or Norway, where a high civilization exists, with just as much natural adaptation for the home of advancing humanity, with vast forests of the finest ship-timber, with iron, copper, coal, and possibly rich gold and silver mines, with valleys and plains upon which sheep and cattle can be bred and raised without more than ordinary care, so abundant is the grass and other vegetation; that the climate is extremely mild on the seaboard, no more damp and foggy than on the coast of Oregon, &c.; while, on the other hand, we are as gravely told that it is an area of total desolation; that it is locked up in the grasp of winter's frosts for eight or nine months in the year; that icebergs and snow fill the sea and drift in fathomless rifts; that it is bare and barren, only moss and swale grass; that even the inhabitants there drag out a miserable existence on seal-meat, oil, and like food; and that it will never become the home of white men, because there is no object in the land that will draw them there save the small fur-trading interests.

There is truth in both declarations, but no such thing as a happy medium can be struck between the two views; a fair, dispassionate statement in regard to this matter, however, at the time of the transfer of the Territory, could hardly have been made, no citizen of the United States having the means or the opportunity to form a proper judgment. The Russians did not live here as a people, but as a company of fur-traders only, with a single eye to the getting of skins; and the matter of their subsistence while so doing was comparatively of little importance; but it should be said that at all of their posts throughout the Territory they fully tested the capabilities of soil and climate for garden-products, and at many of them

gave hogs and cattle a trial, with a deep interest in the success of their experiments. The Russian American Company in retiring from the country gave us a generally correct map of the Territory, accurate figures as to the numbers and distribution of the natives; but upon other points the most vague or else conflicting data, and in this condition of knowledge we took possession of the country. Its true status, therefore, and real importance were simply unknown to our people.

Since that time, however, quite a number of adventurers, traders, miners, fishermen, and the like have had their attention and interest centered here, and the resources of the country in small sections have been keenly scrutinized with a view to what the country could or could not yield in supply of human wants.

#### THE DIVERSIFIED CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY.

Everybody is familiar with the geographical position of Alaska, with its extended area of coast-line, stretching from a trifle south of the 55th parallel of north latitude, above Fort Simpson, on the British Columbian Territory, far to the northward and westward away into the Arctic Ocean and above the arctic circle; and, in describing the character of this vast trend of land, it should be divided into several natural districts, by reason of the local difference between them.

*The Sitkan district.*—Starting from Portland Canal and running north to Cross Sound and the head of Lynn Canal, the eye glances over a range of country made up of hundreds of islands, large and small, and a bold, mountainous coast, all everywhere rugged and abrupt in contour, and, with exception of highest summits, the hills, mountains, and valleys, the last always narrow and winding, are covered with a dense jungle of spruce and fir, cedar and shrubbery, so thick, dark, and damp, that it is traversed only by the expenditure of great physical energy, and a clear spot, either on islands or mainland; where an acre of grass might grow by itself, as it does in the little "parks" far in the interior, cannot be found. In these forest-jungles, especially on the lowlands and always by the water-courses, will be found a fair proportion of ordinary timber of the character above designated. The spruce and fir, however, are so heavily charged with resin, that they can be used for nothing but the roughest work; the cedar is, however, an excellent article. But back from the Coast Range here, on which our bound-

ary-line is dotted, springs up quite a different country again, higher everywhere from the sea-level by thousands of feet, dry, with not one-tenth part of the rain-fall, vast rolling plains or table-lands and rounded mountain-tops, over which fire has swept not many years ago, for the last time, as it has frequently done before, utterly destroying the pine-forests, leaving nothing but the blackened and bleached trunks piled upon and across one another at the sport of fierce gales ; and springing up from beneath this desolation and shutting over it is a new forest of young pine and poplars, with a large number of service-berry and salal bushes interspersed. The valleys here widen out, and contain large tracts of excellent ground for cultivation, with the significant objection, however, of being subject to frosts so late in the spring as June 10, and so early in the summer as the 20th of August. This, of course, excludes the question of agricultural utility ; and although the grass grows everywhere here in the valleys in the most luxuriant manner, yet cattle cannot run out through the winters, which are here bitterly cold ; widely different from those a hundred miles only to the westward across the Coast Range. Here, under the powerful influence of the great Pacific, winter is never anything but wet and chilly, seldom ever giving the people a week's skating on the small lake back of Sitka. Day after day there are high winds and drizzling rains, with breaks in the leaden sky showing gleams of clear blue and sunlight ; and here the agriculturist or gardener has like cause for discouragement, for nothing will ripen ; whatever he plants grows and enters on its stages of decay without perfecting. It must, moreover, be remarked that there is but very little land fit even for this unsatisfactory and most unprofitable agriculture, *i. e.*, properly-drained and warm soil enough for the very hardiest cereals. There is not one acre of such tillable land to every ten thousand of the objectionable character throughout the larger portion of this area, and certainly not more than one acre to a thousand in the best regions. Grass grows in small localities or areas, wherever it is not smothered by forests and thickets, in the valleys over this whole Sitkan district ; its presence, however, is not the rule, but the exception, so vigorous is the growth of shrubbery and timber ; and even did it grow in large amount, the curing of hay is simply impracticable. Although the winters are mild, still there is not enough ranging-ground

to support herds of cattle throughout the year and have them within control.

*Mount Saint Elias district.*—Reaching from Cross Sound to Prince William's Sound is a second and clearly-defined region, exhibiting a bald, bare sea-front, with scarcely an island or a rock in its long stretch of over three hundred miles; little belts of spruce timber skirt the lowlands by the sea, while that which is hilly and mountainous is almost bare; grass and berries grow, however, in great abundance. It is the most cheerless, but at the same time the most interesting, portion of the Territory, not from any other point of view, however, than that of the tourist or geologist, who will find Mount Saint Elias the highest peak in North America, and the superb mountains of Fairweather and Cillon, and the country about them, covered, for miles and miles, with mighty glaciers, a field of most instructive interest. An immense mass of ice comes down into the head of Lynn Canal, which, the Indians say, originates and travels from Mount Fairweather over fifty miles away. This glacier is some eight miles wide where it faces the sea in the channel, and many hundred feet in thickness, perfectly magnificent, and should be visited, for, as yet, this region, like the most of our new Territory, has not been trodden by the foot of white man, and seldom even by the savage. Its exceptional presentation of timber, its long reaches of rounded, low, barren hills, and relative scarcity of both birds and animals, make this section about as uninviting, on economic grounds, as any in the Territory, and the paucity of Indian life within its limits speaks definitely for its poverty as to game and fish.

*Cook's Inlet district.*—I refrain from giving the reports which I received from this section, inasmuch as they are very contradictory in many leading features; though, in a general way, the ideas given me are undoubtedly correct. They represent the country similar to Kodiak, with more timber.

*The Peninsular and Kodiak Island.*—This region, lying between Iliamna Lake and the False Pass, between the head of the Peninsula of Alaska and contiguous islands, is the most valuable section of the entire Territory, possessing the most equable climate, especially so at Kodiak, growing the best garden-supplies of potatoes, turnips, &c., the only place where hay can be made, enough for a few head of stock, with anything like a certainty, from season to season; but the country comprised in this district, which forms the southern and western half of the Peninsula,

does not possess any of the above-mentioned qualifications in the same degree by any means. The island of Kodiak and the whole district is, however, rugged and mountainous, with numerous small lakes and tiny rivers or streams, up which a considerable number of salmon run every year. Timber, of spruce and fir, grows in fair quantity in the northern and eastern end of Kodiak, all the islands to the eastward, and down the Peninsula as far as Chignik Bay; it is not large, but in size for fuel, rough building, &c. Grass grows most luxuriantly, especially on Kodiak, but the area suitable for its support is limited, there being no plains or dry and accessible valleys in which to cut and cure it. There are many winters here in which cattle might be kept in small numbers without exceptional care and expense, *i. e.*, enough to afford milk and beef for a small settlement, and also sheep and hogs. Little patches of land can be found where a small garden will thrive consisting of potatoes, turnips, &c.; but reaching down to the Aleutian Islands, and over them, is a region bare entirely of timber and nearly so of shrubbery, rugged, abrupt, and extremely mountainous, the surface broken into patches set, as it were, on end; this is no country adapted for agriculture, for the prevalence of foggy, dark weather would render even the limited area that could be utilized with sunlight unserviceable for the production of fruits and vegetables. Soil there is sufficiently rich and deep, but it is too cold to mature or ripen garden-products, except in very favored localities where, as at Ounalashka, a few potatoes of inferior quality, good turnips, and lettuce, are in the favorable seasons raised. The Western Islands are all essentially volcanic, with scarcely a trace of sedimentary rock to be found; consisting of high, steep ridges and peaks of porphyries and volcanic tufa, with here and there syenitic granites. The vegetation, such as it is, principally *Empetrum nigrum*, grows most rank and luxuriant on the flanks and even the summits of many of these high places, and the light, frail stems of this plant, which are of about the size of strawberry-vines, the natives gather and bring down from the hills in large bundles for fire-wood. The only shrub that lifts its head above the earth, of value as wood, is a willow, (*Salix reticulata*), which grows in scattered clumps along the little water-courses, twisted and contorted, yet of sufficient size to furnish in early days strong and serviceable frames for native skin-boats or "baidars." Scattered over the Aleutian Islands and on the Peninsula are many small lakes, some of them quite

large. The Peninsular country is more rolling and level, on the north shore especially so; for from Port Moller on up to the head of Bristol Bay extensive flats make out from the highlands and stretch between them and the sea in width varying from ten to sixty miles.

There are a number of volcanoes in this district, such as that of Makooshin, on Ounalashka Island, Akootan and Shishaldin, on Oonimak, which, however, do not eject lava, but emit smoke, steam, and ashes, although in times past and within the memory of man large stones have been thrown out by many of them, and still earlier lava has been poured out on Oonimak in immense streams. The seared, rugged courses of the once liquid rock make traveling on that island excessively fatiguing. Akootan, on Akootan Island, and Makooshin are, perhaps, the most active, or as lively as any in the Territory to-day. There has been no disturbance on their account in the country for the last thirty years to mention, but previous to that time many severe earthquake shocks have been recorded, and the growth of a new island, *Bogaslov*, twenty miles north of Oomnak, in Bering Sea, has been witnessed by the present generation, and I think that the phenomena attending the appearance of this island far out at sea and alone must have been coincident with the whole history of the formation of the Aleutian Chain, and therefore I may be excused for giving the substance of the story as told by several of the Russian writers.

In the fall of 1796 the residents of Oonimak and Ounalashka were surprised by a series of loud reports and tremblings of the earth, followed by the appearance of a dense dark cloud, full of gas and ashes, which came down upon them from the sea to the northward, and, after a week or ten days, during which time the cloud hung steadily over them, accompanied with earthquakes and subterranean thunder, it cleared away somewhat, so that they saw distinctly to the northward a bright light burning above the sea, and, upon closer inspection in their boats, the people found that a small island, elevated about 100 feet above sea-level, had been forced up and was still in the process of elevation and enlargement, formed of lava and scorix. The volcanic action did not cease on this island until 1825, when it left above the water an oval peak, almost inaccessible, 400 to 500 feet high, and four or five miles in circumference. It was soon after this occupied by sea-lions and resorted to by sea-fowl,



which were found here in 1825, when the Russians landed for the first time, and the rocks were still warm.

In this way and recently, geologically speaking, were the Aleutian Islands formed from the Peninsula westward, including the Prybilov Group and Saint Matthew's, their appearance marking the course of a line of least resistance in the earth's crust.

*The Yukon District.*—In this division may be placed all that country above the head of Bristol Bay and north and west of the Peninsular Range of mountains as they extend far into the interior, reaching to the arctic and far beyond, an immense area of desolate sameness, almost unknown, and likely to be so for an indefinite time, the banks of the Yukon River being the only track traversed as yet by white men into the interior. This great range of country may properly be divided into two sections, the hills or timber-lands and the plains or tundra. The former seldom approach the waters of Bering or the Arctic Sea nearer than fifty or sixty miles, and generally trend some two to three hundred miles back. The general contour of the interior is a vast undulating plain, with high, rounded granitic hills and ridges scattered here and there, on the flanks of which, and by the countless lakes and water-courses, grow in tolerable abundance spruce, fir, hemlock, birch, and poplar, with a large number of hardy shrubs indigenous all the world over to these latitudes. The summers short, but warm and pleasant; the winters long, and bitterly cold and inclement.

The tundra, however, which fronts the whole coast-line of this, the most extensive section of the Territory, is, indeed, cheerless and repellant at any season; in the summer it is a great flat swale, full of bog-holes, slimy, decayed peat, innumerable lakes, shallow, stagnant, and from all places swarm mosquitoes of the most malignant type, while in winter it is a wide snow plain, over which fierce gales of wind, at zero temperature, sweep in constant succession, making travel as painful and dangerous as can be well imagined. In this season all approach to the coast is barred by a great system of shoals and banks, which extend so far out to sea that a vessel drawing 10 feet of water will be hard aground, out of sight of land, off the mouth of the Yukon.

There is a vast area of this district between the head of Cook's Inlet and the Arctic, and far back into the interior, that is entirely unknown, but as traders are extending their routes in all directions, this interior may in time be explored and noted.

*The Ounalashka District.*—Under this head may be placed the Aleutian Islands; and as Illolook or Ounalashka Village is the most important place among them, both with regard to population and trade, and the best position as a port, its name may be fitly applied to the whole region.

This great chain of rugged islands, enveloped during the greater part of the year in fogs, and swept over by frequent gales, that, in combination with the mists and currents, make it a region dreaded by the mariner, abounds in sharp hills, and hilly or bluff mountainous masses. Nearly every island—and there are many, small and large—is as it were set up on end, with small patches of bottom-land here and there, in rare intervals, at the base of the hills and mountains.

The appearance of any of these islands from a ship approaching them during the summer, on a clear sunny day—and such days are occasionally known—is most attractive: a rich, dark coat of vivid green clothes the valleys, hills, and mountains, quite to the snow-line. In these narrow defiles and bottom-land patches, the grass is most luxuriant, growing waist-high, with low, stunted willow-bushes here and there in small quantity; and it is at first not apparent, when one strolls about the country on such a day, that it is utterly worthless as an agricultural or stock-raising country. The mountains principally consist of syenitic granites and porphyries, with sharp summits and abrupt slopes, and present numerous small water-courses, with little or no valley-ground. The vegetation is rank and luxuriant, and, in favorable seasons, the grasses ripen their seeds well. Quite a variety of berries abound; for example, salmon, huckle, crow, and blue berries. The only timber is a slight willow, nowhere larger than a man's wrist, and not over 7 or 8 feet high, growing in small, scattered clumps, with stunted specimens climbing way up the hill-sides. The thick, dense carpet of crow-berry plants, into which one sinks at every step ankle-deep, covers the entire country, and makes traveling very tedious for a pedestrian. Several species of grass grow everywhere in patches, and if more sunlight were to fall upon these cold, moist places, where vegetation now springs up every year in such quantities, but of such inferior quality, hay might be cured, and it might be called a fair grazing-country; but although the islands would amply support herds of cattle and flocks of sheep during the summer-months, these animals would generally need shelter and feed for three to five months

as winter comes on, and far into the spring during late seasons, when high winds rage and keep the snow in drifts. Bailey might also be grown with a little more sunlight; and potatoes might also be matured year after year in fair quantity, and a good kitchen-garden established in the most favored sections; but perpetual fogs and mists hang like palls over the land and render it of no agricultural importance.

The summers are mild, foggy, and humid, with an average temperature of 50° Fahrenheit, with winters also mild, foggy, and humid, and an average temperature of 30°. Minimum thermometer here seldom or never falls lower than 10°; there never has been recorded four consecutive weeks of temperature lower than 3° or 5°. The weather begins to grow colder in October, and does not become milder until April. The natives here think that 12° to 15° is pleasant weather, but if it goes down to 3° or 5°, it is to them, horribly cold. There are, however, exceptional seasons. For instance, the summer of 1831, in July and August the thermometer did not rise above 35°, and evenings were not uncommon with as low a temperature as 12°.

Rain falls at all times and with all winds, but mostly in the autumn, with southeast and easterly winds, and less with southwest winds in winter.

Snow begins to fall in September, (and even in August,) and does not cease earlier than May, although it frequently melts as fast as it falls far into December. It is seen on the higher mountains all the year round. The average snow-fall is from 2 to 5 feet; the high, driving winds make the snow intensely disagreeable and impede traveling.

The cloudiness of the district is remarkable; there are not a dozen cloudless days in the whole year; about thirty to fifty fine days; and Veniaminov says, after living there ten years, "that the sun *may be seen* in a hundred to a hundred and sixty days during the year."

Thunder is seldom ever heard, and lightning never seen; although the clouds seem to constantly suggest it. Auroras are also almost unknown, and when seen are very faint.

The old Aleuts here say that in early times the snow was deeper and the cold greater than it has been for some time past, while, on the other hand, they assert that the winds are getting stronger and harsher as time rolls on with them. Veni-

aminov\* says, "In all the time of my living here there was not one day from morning to evening that was entirely without wind, or was a perfect calm." The winds blow here strong from all quarters, strongest in October, November, December, and March. The gales do not usually last more than three days at a time, but they follow in quick succession in the seasons above mentioned.

There are a multitude of little lakes of fresh water on the islands, and in nearly all of the small streams (for there are no large ones) are found brook-trout of good quality.

In view of the foregoing, what shall we say of the resources of Alaska, viewed as regards its agricultural or horticultural capabilities?

It would seem undeniable that owing to the unfavorable climatic conditions which prevail on the coast and in the interior, the gloomy fogs and dampness of the former, and the intense, protracted severity of the winters, characteristic of the latter, unfit the Territory for the proper support of any considerable civilization.

Men may, and undoubtedly will, soon live here, in comparative comfort, as they labor in mining-camps, lumber and ship-timber mills, and salmon-factories, but they will bring with them everything they want except fish and game, and when they leave the country it will be as desolate as they found it.

Can a country be permanently and prosperously settled that will not in its whole extent allow the successful growth and ripening of a single crop of corn, wheat, or potatoes, and where the most needful of any domestic animals cannot be kept by poor people?

The Russians, who have subdued a rougher country, and settled in large communities under severer conditions than have been submitted to by any body of our own people as yet, were in this Territory, after some twenty years at least of patient, *intelligent* trial, obliged to send a colony to California to raise their potatoes, grain, and beef; the history of their settlement there, and forced abandonment in 1842, is well known.

We may with pride refer to the rugged work of settlement so successfully made by our ancestors in New England, but it is idle to talk of the subjugation of Alaska as a task simply requiring a similar expenditure of persistence, energy, and ability.

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\* Zapieskie, &c., vol. 1, p. 98.

In Massachusetts\* our forefathers had a land *in which all the necessaries of life, and many of the luxuries, could be produced from the soil with certainty from year to year*; in Alaska their lot would have been quite the reverse, and they could have maintained themselves there with no better success than the present inhabitants. Attention should be directed to the development of its mineral wealth, which I have reason to think will yet prove to be considerable, and effort should be made to stimulate and protect the present available industries of the fur-trade, the canning of salmon, &c.

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\* "I have seen with surprise and regret, that men whose forefathers wielded the ax in the forests of Maine, or gathered scanty crops on the hill-sides of Massachusetts, have seen fit to throw contempt and derision on the acquisition of a great territory naturally far richer than that in which they themselves originated, (!) principally on the ground that it is a 'cold' country." (W. H. Dall, *Alaska and its Resources*, p. 242, Boston, Lee & Shepard, 1870.)

## CHAPTER II.

### THE NATIVES OR PEOPLE OF ALASKA—THEIR CONDITION.

#### THEIR LIFE IN THE PAST, IN THE PRESENT, AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE.

In taking the subject of the condition of the people of Alaska into consideration, the character of the country in which they live should always be kept in mind, for the life of any people is insensibly but surely molded by the climate and land in which they are found: under favorable and genial influences of soil and climate, a rude race may be raised from barbarism, pass into civilization, and be sustained by these favoring supports.

The inhabitants of the Territory are divided into two decidedly distinct races, widely different in habits and disposition; one of these two classes consists of the Christian Aleuts, who live upon the Aleutian Islands, the Seal Islands, the Peninsula of Alaska, the adjacent Islands, and Kodiak; the Indians, occupying all the rest of the inhabited country, constitute the other. It will be seen by a Russian table which I submit in connection with this subject that quite a large number, in 1863, of the natives, outside of the district above specified, are claimed as Christians, but I cannot recognize the claim to-day; they have worn off what little Christianity they may have possessed ten years ago, and there is no Christian influence, properly speaking, in the Territory, outside of the Aleutians and the people of Kodiak; these people are naturally fitted for the reception of the principles of Christianity, or otherwise they would have remained Indians, as the others, who are savages, have done. The Russian Greek Catholic priests spared no effort in their attempts to convert the Koloshians of Sitka and those of kindred stock elsewhere in the Territory, but met with partial failure in every instance.

The fact that among all the savage races found on the north-west coast by Christian pioneers and teachers the Aleutians are the only practical converts to Christianity, goes far, in my

opinion, to set them apart as very differently constituted in mind and disposition from our aborigines, to whom, however, they are intimately allied. They adopted the Christian faith with very little opposition, readily exchanging their barbarous customs and wild superstitions for the agreeable rites of the Greek Catholic Church and its more refined myths and legends. At the time of their first discovery they were living as savages in every sense of the word, bold and hardy; but now, to all outward signs and professions of Christianity they respond as sincerely as our own church-going people.

The question as to the derivation of these people is still a mooted one among ethnologists; in all points of personal bearing, intelligence, character, as well as physical structure, they seem to form a link of perfect gradation between the Japanese and Eskimo, although their traditions and language are entirely distinct and peculiar to themselves; they, however, claim to have come first to the Aleutian Islands from a "big land to the westward," and that when they came here first they found the land uninhabited, and that they did not meet with any people until their ancestors had pushed on to the eastward as far as the Peninsular and Kodiak.

The Aleuts, as they appear to-day, have been so mixed with Russian, Koloshian, and Kamschadale blood, &c., that they present characteristics in one way or another of the various races of men from the negro up to the Caucasian. The predominant features among them are small, wide-set, dark eyes, broad and high cheek-bones, causing the jaw, which is full and square, to often appear peaked; coarse, straight black hair, small, neatly-shaped feet and hands, together with brownish-yellow complexion. The men will average in stature five feet four or five inches; the women less in proportion, although there are exceptions among them, some being over six feet in height, and others dwarfs.

The number of these people, including those of Kodiak, who resemble the Aleutians only as Christians, having no other natural or blood affinity, is about 5,000, but when first discovered by the Russians they were four and five times as many; at least 20,000 were living on the Aleutian Islands and the Peninsular in 1760; and from that time, in obedience to that natural law which causes an inferior class to succumb to its superior when brought into opposition, the Aleuts were quickly diminished in number until it became an object of care and solicitude on the

part of the Russians to save them for the prosecution of the fur-trade. In 1834 they numbered only about 4,000, Kodiak included, and therefore they have not diminished nor increased to any noteworthy degree during the last forty years. There has been a slight increase, if any, up to the present time.

When first discovered they were living in large "*yourts*" or "*oo-laga-muh*" houses partially underground, which resemble very much such a structure as our farmers put up for a root-cellar, with the difference only of having the entrance through a hole in the top, going in and out on a rude ladder or notched timber post. Some of these *yourts* were very large, as shown by the ruins to-day; one on Oonimak Island, north side, is over 500 feet in length, with corresponding width, and one at Koshegan, Ounalashka Island, the foundations still standing, shows that it was 87 yards long and 40 wide; and an old woman who was living only two years ago, remembered when her people lived there, and called it "a handsome house." In these *yourts* they lived by forties, fifties, and hundreds as a single family, with the double object of protection and warmth, where fuel was so scarce and precious.

For a full account of them as they existed when first visited by the Russian priests I can do no better than call attention to the history of their lives and condition, as published by Father Veniaminov,\* a noble missionary, and who made good use of his time in recording faithfully the custom of a people which has been entirely changed by Christianity in less than one hundred years. As an illustration, showing how exceedingly superstitious they were in these early days, I may mention that there is a small stream running into the northwest head of Beaver Bay, Ounalashka Island, forming a very pretty little waterfall, and near by it is a large mass of dark basaltic rock; the water of this creek the Aleuts never dared to drink for fear of instant death, and to the stone they paid homage, and revered it as a devil petrified.

As they are living at this time, nearly every family is in possession of a hut or "*barrabkie*," built partly underground, walled up on the sides, and roofed over with dirt and sod; a small window placed at one end, and a low door at the other, which opens into a low, dark alley, which in turn communicates with the living-room by another small door. This living-

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\* A translation is published in Alaska and its Resources, W. H. Dall: Lee & Shepard, 1870.



room is not large, seldom over ten feet square, and often not more than seven or eight, with a hard earthen or wooden floor; the walls are neatly boarded up and sometimes papered and embellished with pictures of church saints. In this room the Aleut spends most of his time when not hunting; shuts himself up in it with his family, builds a hot fire, lasting only a few minutes, in the little stove or Russian oven, and either drinks cup after cup of tea, or stupefies himself with "*quass*" or native beer, and lies for hours, and days even, in dull, stupid enjoyment on his pallet. I have looked into a barrabkie where there were twenty men, women, and children packed into a living-room not more than ten feet square, all drinking tea, with the perspiration rolling down in beady streams from every face. Many of these huts are damp and exceedingly filthy, while others are dry and cleanly; but the temper and disposition of the Aleuts is that of improvidence and shiftlessness, and all exist, with a few exceptions, as a matter of course, in a state of ignorance, though a great many read and write, in consequence of their relationship to the church, the services of which are recited in the Russian tongue, and as most of the subpriests, deacons, &c., are recruited from the ranks of the people themselves, (the boys only being educated for this purpose,) a large proportion of them speak and read Russian well enough for all ordinary use.

The manners and customs of these people, to-day, possess in themselves nothing of a barbarous or remarkable character, aside from that which belongs to a state of advanced semi-civilization. They are exceedingly polite and civil, not only to their trading agents, but among themselves, and visit one with another freely and pleasantly, the women being great gossips; but, on the whole, their intercourse is very quiet indeed, for the topics of conversation are few, and, judging from their silent but unconstrained meetings, they seem to have a mutual knowledge, as if by sympathy, as to what may be occupying each other's minds, rendering speech superfluous. It is only when under the influence of beer or liquor that they lose their naturally quiet and amiable disposition and fall into drunken orgies.

Having been so long under the control and influence of the Russians, they have adopted many of the customs of the latter, in giving birth-day dinners, naming their children, &c. They are great tea-drinkers, but seldom use coffee. On account

of scarcity of fuel, they use a great amount of hard bread, soda and sweet crackers, instead of buying flour and baking it.

They are remarkably attached to their church, which is well adapted to them, and no other form of religion could be better or have a firmer hold upon the sensibilities of the people. Their chastity and sobriety cannot be commended.

As parents, they are very indulgent while their children are infants or under the age of eight or nine years, but when this age is attained by their offspring they become harsh disciplinarians and task-masters, putting burdens upon young shoulders that are heavy enough for adults, always exacting implicit obedience. Though many children are born, the mothers are not successful in rearing them, for they are extremely negligent in regard to air and diet, irregular in their meals and slumbers, shiftless and unclean, and they frequently indulge in intoxication while nursing their infants. These vices cause an excessive mortality among the children. The Aleuts are dependent entirely upon themselves, except at the Seal Islands, for relief and aid in case of illness, yielding themselves to such treatment as they can get with the utmost patience and resignation. They believe generally in a mild form of Shamanism, or in the laying on of hands, which is practiced usually by old women.

The average Aleut is a bold, hardy trapper, as he must be to be successful as a sea-otter hunter, and this is the only profession or calling that his country can offer him. He is a patient, steady workman, and supplies as good manual labor as could be desired, and such as is required in the country. The Russians made sailors, navigators, carpenters, blacksmiths, store-keepers, &c., of this race; but since the transfer of the Territory there are too many of our own people of that class idle for the Aleuts to compete with, and who come directly into the country in response to any demand for such labor, so that he falls back upon the sea-otter as his sole support against a relapse into barbarism. Competition in this business he has no occasion to fear from the white man, who would never consent to spend the same amount of skill and energy for the returns which satisfy the Aleutian hunter.

It will therefore be evident that the good condition of the native hunters of this Territory is a matter of great importance to the traders who have any deep interest in the fur-trade; and it is not remarkable, in view of the clearness of the case, as above stated, that the Aleuts to-day are existing in greater comfort,

in better houses, with greater facilities for hunting, and receive better pay than they ever realized before for their skins. Of this I am confident, by personal observation of the present, and from a knowledge of the past derived from the archives of the Russian company, and the history, meager but true, of the early traders in the country. The enlightened and true business policy adopted by the agents of the Alaska Commercial Company with regard to the improvement of the condition of the hunters of the Aleutian Islands has already begun to bear its golden fruit in an immensely-increased yield of sea-otters every year. This statement is fully corroborated by a person of all men in the whole country best qualified to pass an independent and correct opinion, Father Innocent Shiesnekov, an intelligent and pious Greek Catholic priest, in charge of the Aleutians, who was born and raised on the ground, and with whom I have had several interviews bearing upon the subject of this chapter.

There is one general evil, not confined to this section of the Territory, but more injurious to the people here than elsewhere, and that is the curse of beer drinking and the disorders which arise constantly from its effects. These people have an inordinate fondness for spirituous liquors, and as this is not permitted to be made, vended, or brought into the Territory, the traders among these natives keep such a sharp lookout for whisky-schooners, that the traffic is thoroughly suppressed among the Aleutians; and the people, therefore, determined to have some means of ministering to their craving appetites for strong drink, brew a thick, sour, alcoholic beer, by fermenting sugar, hops, flour, dried apples, &c., together, in certain proportions, with water, and many of them manage to keep intoxicated and stupefied for weeks, and even months, at a time; beating their wives and children, destroying their houses, and recently, on several occasions, committing murder. This practice makes every one of the settlements at frequent intervals, and always after the return of a successful hunting-party, a scene of lamentable debauchery, which can only be stopped either by prohibiting the sale or importation of sugar into the Territory, or by empowering Government agents to inflict summary punishment for the least criminal offenses growing out of intoxication. No great severity in the punishment would be required, for it must be said, to their credit, that they are naturally a law-abiding

people, and the mere presence of an officer is, with few exceptions, enough to secure obedience.

For the present demoralization among the natives of the Territory in this respect (and it is a vital one) the Government alone is responsible. The people, during the last four or five years, have indulged in all manner of excesses while under the influence of beer, and have observed that, do what they will, from beating their wives up to cold-blooded murder, there is no authority in the land to punish them; and this knowledge tends to continue this unhappy state of affairs. This laxity is an injustice toward the orderly and more soberly-inclined portion of the communities, subjecting them to the control of the leaders of drunken revels and to an immense amount of unnecessary suffering. The sea-otter traders would gladly pay, in the form of a slight tax on the skins of that animal, more than enough to afford a liberal salary twice over for the services of some man armed with authority to suppress this demoralization and attend to other urgent matters neglected on the part of the Government.

From the Aleuts we pass to the consideration of the rest of the people (Indians) of the Territory, who, by far the most numerous, are living now as they were when first discovered, over a hundred years ago; those of the north, belonging to the Eskimo race and immediate derivatives, are quite amiable in their barbarism when compared with the Koloshes and other tribes of Indians proper in their neighborhood. Any steps that may be taken for the elevation and improvement of the condition of these Indians in the Territory of Alaska, however well intended, would be entirely abortive. If they work, and they frequently do, on the coasters as seamen, and about the sound and Victoria as laborers, wood-cutters, &c., the money necessary for a debauch or a gambling game is the incentive. The condition of any savage people is one that arouses the sympathy of benevolent minds, and for its amelioration has absorbed the best energies and resources of hundreds of brave, devoted men who have labored in our country, but the result of such labor can only be successful under certain conditions of life and mental constitution of a savage race not found in Alaska. The Russian priests energetically struggled with these Indians of Alaska, from Bering's Straits down to Queen Charlotte's Island, backed up and cordially aided by the Russian-American Company, which hoped to gain more control over the natives,

(and would have done so had the missionaries succeeded,) but the result was most unsatisfactory. A thin varnish of decency, honesty, morality, &c., was put on, but the subject had to be revarnished every day or his evil nature would continue to shine out.

From what we are led to plainly understand by the history of well-directed and persistent efforts in the past, we can only consider the present condition of the Indians of Alaska as that of savages, and beyond the power of the Government or of the church to change for the better. If they were a people living in a country favorable to exertion and were merely lazy and ignorant, then there would be hope with some assurance of success in effecting a change for the better, but the case is worse, for the obstacles are insuperable.

They are living in the manner customary with all Indians who have an abundance of fish and game, and when they suffer in any section of the Territory, as they frequently do, for want of food, it is on account of the indolence and improvidence during the seasons of plenty, for all of these people on the mainland who, at regular periods of the year, have access to a most lavish profusion of fish and the flesh of deer, are never caught by a severe winter with a full supply of provisions on hand, and exist through the long, cold spring-months most miserably, often living upon their skin-garments, offal, &c. As an instance of this improvidence, Captain Hennig, an old trader, cites the following case: At the mouth of the Koishak River, which empties into Bristol Bay between the Peninsula and the mainland, the reindeer pass by swimming in large herds across in September as they go in feeding to and from the peninsula; the natives at this season run along the bank as the deer rise from the water and spear them with great ease and in any number that fancy or want may dictate. At one time Captain Hennig counted here seven hundred deer carcasses as they lay rotting and untouched save by the removal of the hides; not a pound of meat of the thousands putrefying had been saved by the natives, who would be living perhaps in less than five months in a state of starvation.

These Indians are not steady, persistent hunters like the Aleuts; they are fickle, and have far less to gain by trade in their estimation than the Aleutians, who, on the contrary, are not satisfied with a small amount of tobacco and a few beads, which are the staple commodities with the Indians, together

with a little powder and ball. The Aleuts want good clothes ; they desire to dress their women and children well ; they crave tea, sugar, flour, &c., all of which are simply despised by the savage, and, consequently, a little hunting will obtain all he wants in return from the trader, and exertion beyond this, on his part, appears to him simply absurd or ridiculous.

While the sea-otter trade in Alaska, therefore, is well developed, the fur-trade on the mainland is by no means of the importance it might be made to assume were the hunting as energetically followed up as is that prosecuted by the people of Kodiak and the Aleutian Islands ; the industry and energy, however, of our traders will undoubtedly add largely every succeeding year to the yield, in creating desire among the Indians, and thus stimulating exertion on their part in hunting so as to insure its gratification.

I shall not enter into a description of these Indians. Their treacherous, indolent lives have been most accurately and fully described by a score of writers ; one of the earliest, that of Portlock and Dixon, in 1786, 1787, and 1788, reads as if it had been written from my own notes taken this season, so little have they changed in the main of habit and disposition. Of course, when the Russians were obliged, in 1832,\* to commence the liquor-trade with them in self-defense against American adventurers and the Hudson Bay Company, and the small-pox in 1835 swept like wild-fire through all the villages on the north-west coast, destroying nearly one-third of them, the combination of two such terrible evils, whisky and the plague, demoralized and diminished them to such an extent that they never have recovered their former strength, nor is it now probable that they will recover it.

The number of Indians now living in the Territory is, according to best authority and my judgment, between eighteen and twenty thousand. Of this number, between ten and twelve thousand belong to that district bounded on the north by Cook's Inlet and south by Fort Simpson ; the remainder inhabit that stretch of country reaching from Bristol Bay to Kotzebue Sound, and back into the far interior, where there are several tribes, supposed to be quite numerous, about which very little is known even by the traders.

On this coast-line of Alaska, between Bering's Straits and

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\*This was stopped in 1842. A treaty was made between them and the Hudson Bay Company.

Fort Simpson, are found six distinct tongues through which their relations of affinity may be traced, viz: the *Aleutian*; the *Kodiak*; the *Kenai*, or *Cook's Inlet*; the *Yahkootat*, or *Mount Saint Elias country*; the *Sitkan*; and the *Kahgan*, or *Prince of Wales Island*.

The ALEUTIAN TONGUE is the language of the inhabitants of the Aleutian Islands and part of the Peninsula; it is divided into two dialects, one spoken by the Aleuts of Atka, and the other by those of Ounalashka.

The KODIAK TONGUE is the root of all the dialects spoken on the shores of Bering Sea, and still farther north and to the east; it is the tongue spoken by the *Choochkie* of the Asiatic side, and is divided into six distinct dialects, and these again subdivided, so that the Kodiak root is the language of the following tribes:

The *Malemutes*, of Kotzebue Sound, Norton Sound, Port Clarence, the Diomedes, King, Sledge, and Saint Lawrence Islands.

The *Aziagmutes*, of Saint Michael's, part of the Pastol Bay and as far north as Norton's Sound.

The *Agoolmutes*, of the mouth of the Yukon River.

The *Magmutes*, between Cape Romanzov and Cape Avinov.

The *Koskoquims*, of Koskoquim Bay and River.

The *Aglahmutes*, of the Nushagak country, and part of the Peninsula.

The *Nunivaks*, of Nunivak Island, who use a dialect almost like the pure Kodiak, which is spoken on that island.

The *Koyoukons*, of the Middle Yukon River.

The *Ingaleeks*, of the Lower Yukon River.

The *Choogaks*, between Cape Elizabeth and the mouth of Copper River, (taking all the south shore of the Kenai Peninsula and Prince William's Sound.)

The KENAI TONGUE can hardly be called of Kodiak derivation; it is divided into four dialects:

The *Kenai*, of the Gulf of Kenai, or Cook's Inlet.

The *Maidnorskie*, or people on Copper River.

The *Kolchans*, or people of the Upper Koskoquim River—quite a large tribe, estimated at six or seven thousand.

The *Kahvichpaks*, a people on the Upper Yukon. In this dialect are many words of *Kodiak* and *Yahkutat*.

The Kenai language is the most difficult of all the Indian tongues, so abounding in a profusion of harsh, guttural sounds that their own savage neighbors frequently try in vain to acquire them when it is for their interest to do so.

The YAHKUTAT TONGUE is spoken only by the people of Yahkutat, or that belt of coast between Lituya Bay and Copper River; it is divided into two dialects, viz :

The *Yahkutats*, from Icy Bay to Cross Sound.

The *Oogalenskie*, from mouth of Copper River to Icy Bay.

The SITKA, or KOLOSH TONGUE, is spoken by all the Indians from Lituya Bay to Prince of Wales Island, the Stickeen, and without any dialects, although there are eight or ten tribes, and they are relatively numerous.

The KAHEGAN, or PRINCE OF WALES, is spoken on that island and Queen Charlotte's, and completes the list of languages in the Territory, as far as I can intelligently compile and arrange them.

From the tables which I give at the close of this chapter, the relative population of these different tribes can be recognized, and by them it will be seen that, save where the Aleutians and Kodiakers are living, together with a number of Russian half-breeds or creoles, there are no organized or fixed settlements in the Territory; the Indians roaming at will in the mountains and over the plains during the summer, fishing and berrying principally, until the severity of approaching winter drives them back to underground houses in the north, and wooden huts and large barracoons by the sea at the south, where, reeking in filth, four and five months are passed in perfect comfort to them, provided that they have food—passed in sloth and sleep, with the exception of a small proportion of them who are marten, mink, and fox trappers. These men frequently perform an astonishing amount of labor, enduring incredible hardships, should they happen to be ambitious, but this is a very rare quality.

The two leading stations in the Territory, (excepting the Prybilov Islands,) both with regard to trade and population, are the villages of Ounalashka and Kodiak, each with an Aleut and creole population of four hundred, more than double the number occupying any other settlement, save that of Belcovskie, which has two hundred and forty-eight, with a sea-otter trade fully equal or superior to either Ounalashka or Kodiak. Then following in order of trade and population, we have the villages of Unga, of one hundred and sixty-two souls; Atka, of one hundred and thirty-one souls; Oomnak, of one hundred and nineteen souls; then comes Sitka, with a population to-day, principally Russian half-breeds, of one hundred and eighty-six,\*

\* Not counting the troops, Government employés, or Indians.



and no trade whatever to mention, and commercially of less importance than any one of the following points, in addition to the list above, viz: Koskoquim, Nushagak, and Saint Michael's. Even should trade ever be re-established in Sitka, it would consist principally of the fur of marten, mink, and beaver, with air-dried deer-skins; but as matters now stand in the Territory, there is no future for Sitka; a change only in the supervision of the interest of the Government in that district can benefit it, or make it worth the attention of a small trader to live there. On this point I speak at length in my chapter on the duty of the Government in this respect.

The sum and substance of my investigations with reference to the condition of the people of Alaska during the past season may be given briefly as follows: That the Indians are living as usual, in nearly the same number and in the same condition as when under Russian rule, with the marked and significant exception that they have been under no restraint whatever by government for the past five years, such as they were accustomed to have imposed upon them by the old *régime*, and that this is rapidly making it troublesome and dangerous for small traders to go in among them on the northwest coast. Those in the vicinity of Sitka have become familiar with the process of distillation of whisky from molasses, and make a large amount of it openly, in addition to what they get by illicit trading.

The Christian Aleuts and Kodiakers are in, if anything, a better condition than at the time of the transfer; some sections, as at Ounalashka, in a greatly improved state, which is, by the way, promised to all the rest in the course of a few years, if proper, prompt steps are taken by Government. But the condition of the small population of creoles, chiefly at Sitka, is changed very much for the worse; they were store-keepers, clerks, sailors, traders, artisans, &c., of the old company, and there is no longer any great demand for that labor in the country, and not likely to be during their lives, at least; they are unfortunate in not having the training or the energy to make good hunters, for this is the only industry the Territory holds out for them. To say that they are now in spirit and purse poor, is true, but still they are not in any physical misery, the abundance of fish and game preventing such a result. From my observation and knowledge of them, I can truly state that they are now in a better condition in the Territory,

living as they do, than they would be anywhere else in our country, with an exceptional case, of course, here and there, for they are not distinguished by either energy or industry, as a class.

I have been assured by the Russian bishop having the spiritual direction of affairs in the Greek Catholic Church, now established in the Territory, that there is no intention on the part of the home church to neglect its interest there; that he is at the present time busily engaged in fitting a class of young Russians for the work of priests and teachers in Alaska, by giving them a thorough knowledge of the English language in addition to the regular course of discipline usually necessary for his church.

If *we*, on the part of the Government, attempt to teach them, we shall soon have to feed some eight or ten thousand paupers. All they need is to be sustained and protected in their hunting industries, as is indicated in the following chapter, and they will take care of themselves.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE DUTY OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO THE TERRITORY AND ITS PEOPLE.

The measures which are now in force for the support of law and order in the Territory are entirely inadequate and costing much more than a correct and efficient system would. The case is a plain one, and the facts in regard to it are as follows:

The Territory of Alaska was received from the hands of a powerful fur-trading organization which held absolute sway over the entire domain, even to the life and death of the people, and which had governed the land despotically for more than sixty years. It was fully prepared at any moment to carry out its orders, and was supported by a small fleet of sail and steam vessels, and a regularly-organized troop of employes and retainers, over two thousand in number, placed here and there throughout the country, the headquarters being at Sitka, for political reasons.

War and revenue-marine vessels, with duly-authorized officers and agents, were sent to the principal stations, villages, and ports, where they ran up our flag and loudly proclaimed the fact to the people, or natives, that they were now free and independent; that no person or parties had the power to control or direct their trade in furs, or any other matter to which they might turn their attention; that crime of all description, theft, murder, &c., would be promptly dealt with, and that the agents of the American Government would visit them at irregular though frequent intervals, or upon call, with these vessels fully prepared to enforce and execute the law. This was done in 1868 and 1869. This is all that has been done, and to-day, as matters are conducted, the country is as far from control by our Government as though it were a foreign land, the agents of the Government, both military and civil, being unable to exercise any effectual supervision over the affairs of the Territory, or to enforce the laws.

The propriety of quartering troops in this Territory may be seriously questioned; for where any considerable body of natives exist they will be found upon the seaboard and estuaries,

and the only way by which their villages can be reached is by water. Traveling by land is simply impossible, so that to-day the two companies of artillery at Sitka are entirely unable to correct the most wanton outrage which the Indians might see fit to perpetrate but a mile from their sentry-lines.

The practical result of quartering troops among people like these in Alaska is bad. The communities thus visited were not remarkable for sobriety, morality, or industry before the coming of our troops, but after their arrival the change for the worse, wherever the natives were brought in contact with them, was very marked. Honorable officers find it sufficiently difficult to restrain their subordinates in camps and posts remote from demoralizing temptation, but when their men are surrounded by simple natives who will sell themselves for rum and tobacco, the inevitable result follows of debauchery and intemperance. The history of the military occupation of this Territory by our Government, although brief, reflects no honor upon the troops, and is a most unfortunate one for the natives with whom they came in contact, so much so that all the posts throughout the Territory have been discontinued except that of Sitka, of which the law, I believe, compels a continuance, and which, I trust, will be soon repealed for the relief of the troops, the credit of the Government, and also a saving of unnecessary expense to the public Treasury in moving the soldiers to and from the Territory and of subsidizing a mail-steamer to carry their letters, &c.

The present statute, which provides ostensibly for the government of the Territory, authorizes the appointment of a collector of customs and four or five deputies there, the former located at Sitka, the others at Ounalashka, Kodiak, and Wrangel, where they are able only to *conjecture* as to the condition of revenue details in their respective districts, for they are unable to leave their posts. The collector of customs can exercise no adequate vigilance against the illicit manufacture and trade in whisky, smuggling, &c., with the sailing-cutter which is allotted to this district. A small steam-vessel alone can follow these traders and smugglers through the innumerable narrow and intricate channels and fjords of the Aleutian and Alexander Archipelagoes.

With the present sailing-cutter, no calculation can be made with reference to her movements; she is at the mercy of wind and tide; how long will be her trip to a given place, and when

she will return, no satisfactory conjecture can be made; she may be absent but a few days, and the absence may be protracted a month. If the natives were to seize a trader's schooner a hundred, or even fifty, miles away from Sitka, and were the collector to get instant word of it, weeks might elapse before the sailing-cutter could get upon the ground of the outrage, and would even then be utterly unable to follow the outlaws. There is no trading done at Sitka; the eight or ten thousand Indians between Cross Sound and Fort Simpson trade entirely in the inshore passages and channels with all sorts of men and craft; what is going on no one knows, and, as matters now stand, the collector and his deputies are certainly not to blame if they never know.

As matters now stand, the town-site of Sitka is the only place in the Territory where the merest shadow of ability exists on the part of the Government to sustain law and order, protect property, &c. The troops there stationed are utterly helpless to do anything outside of their station, and what is more, the Indians know it and laugh at them when they are reproached and warned for misdemeanors. The collector of customs has a sailing-cutter, which is of no earthly use, for she cannot be used in the intricate inside passages, where the principal body of natives live, and can at the best make a wide, shy visit to Kodiak or Ounalashka, or some such outside sea port, and then is at the mercy of the most fickle and uncertain weather for sailing, so that no calculation can be made upon her going or coming.

The natives of the Territory have been living since the transfer under no effectual government restraint—a sudden and pernicious change from the strict Russian *régime*; for now everywhere in the Aleutian Islands and at Kodiak the natives are in the habit of drinking “quass,” or home-brewed beer, to such an extent that it bids fair to ruin them unless checked. The leaders in drunken orgies are getting perfectly reckless, for they have noted the fact that during the past five years there has been no punishment or notice taken by proper authority of crime, including theft, wife-beating, and murder; that there is no such thing as the shadow, even, of suspicion or power on the part of the Government, of which they have only heard and know nothing.

That these people have not behaved worse during the last two or three years in their present life of unchecked license is

a strong evidence of their naturally amiable and law-abiding disposition, and it is manifestly wrong on the part of the Government to allow the disorderly element in the Aleutian and Indian communities to gather such strength by continued inattention; for it is leading to the rapid demoralization of the Aleutians, and is making it unsafe for white traders to venture singly among the Indians. I therefore most earnestly call attention to a plan for reform in the Territory, which will not annually draw from the Treasury more than half of what is received every year from the tax netted from the Seal Islands alone.

The annual revenue derived by the Government from the Territory, about \$300,000 net, is sufficient to support the proposed system of government, and afford an unexpended balance, every year, of from \$100,000 to \$150,000; and it would also result, in a very few years, in adding greatly to the receipts.

The following is the plan, after much deliberation, which I venture to propose: \*

1. Withdrawal of the troops from the Territory.
2. The placing of the collector of customs at Kodiak where he can live without the slightest danger of injury from savages, although if left alone at Sitka he would be subjected to no actual risk. There is no reason why the central point for the action of the revenue-officers should be at Sitka in preference to either Kodiak or Ounalashka; both of the latter being better situated, with ten times the amount of trade, and double the law-abiding population; but the deputy, now at Kodiak, might be transferred to Sitka.
3. A small revenue-steamer should be provided, with a single gun, and having compound engines, so that she will use but three or four tons of coal per diem, and steam seven to eight knots per hour, and fitted with spars to take advantage of favoring winds. Such a vessel could move to any point on brief notice. She should cruise steadily throughout the year, for she would move in good, sheltered channels. The appearance of this vessel, at frequent intervals, would be all that is necessary to guarantee security of life and property to traders throughout the entire district. Her cruising-trips would establish a prompt means of communication between posts; and she could visit Tongass or Fort Simpson every two or three

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\*Always excepting the Prybilov Group of Seal Islands, which are well provided for by special acts of Congress, approved July 1, 1870, and March 5, 1872

months and obtain the mail for the Territory, which the revenue-cutter stationed on Puget Sound should be detailed to bring at preconcerted intervals of two or three months, and, by so doing, give the Territory a mail-system.

4. The abolition of the present subsidized mail-steamer which runs between Portland and Sitka. The handful of white citizens there, only two of them citizens of the United States, have no more right to claim the privilege of a mail-steamer, *which now runs for their benefit exclusively*, than have the inhabitants of Kodiak, Ounalashka, or Saint Michael's, or half a dozen other villages of greater population or of more importance in this Territory.

5. The appointment of an agent, a man of character and education, who will have an opportunity to keep the Government well informed of the exact condition of the people in the Territory and its resources, by reason of the facilities for travel afforded by the revenue-steamer.

6. The extension of the jurisdiction of the courts of Oregon or Washington Territory over this Territory, so that when persons belonging to the Territory, guilty of murder, arson, &c., are arrested and sent down for trial, they can be punished, and not permitted to escape, as they have been in more than one case already, for want of this jurisdiction.

7. The laws relating to our mining-lands might be so extended as to include the Territory of Alaska. Gold and silver, copper, iron, and coal exist here, and there is no predicting what the future may bring forth, for prospectors are constantly at work.

By placing matters in the Territory on such a footing as I have described, at least some definite approach to a system of law and order would be initiated. There would be a steady and prompt means of communication between all the stations where life and property exist. No whisky-smuggling or oppression of the natives could be carried on without its speedy apprehension and suppression, and the petty crimes which are so aggravating and demoralizing at present throughout the Territory would quickly cease. The annual revenue now derived from the Territory is more than sufficient to support the whole system recommended.

Beyond the adoption of this plan, in my judgment, on the part of the Government, nothing more is required by the Territory and its people. Any scheme of establishing Indian

reservations or agencies in this country, with an idle and mischievous retinue of superintendents, chaplains, and school-teachers, seems to me entirely uncalled for. The people here are keen hunters and quick-witted traders, and need no help or care beyond that I have indicated. Such of them as are christianized have long ago embraced the Greek Catholic faith, and adhere to it with devotion. The rest, or Indians, as they are called, are just as far from being in a Christian state of mind as they were when first approached by the Russian priests, over a hundred years ago.

With regard to the education of the children of the better class of the natives, that is, the Christian Aleuts, there appears to be one invincible obstacle. The children, speaking a strange tongue, will not attend school, and their parents, as a body, will either prevent or discourage them by positive command, or by utter indifference. If they are to be educated, their church alone can do it. It now controls them perfectly in this matter of education.

That the children will not attend school has been most thoroughly tested already, not only by the Russians, but by ourselves during the past four years on the Seal Islands. In 1835 a school was opened at Ounalashka, and presided over by one of the most indomitable and excellent of men, Veniaminov, who tells us that in this settlement of over 275 souls then, only "twelve boys could be brought together." When more than this is wanted by Alaska in the way of legislation by Government, it will suggest itself in due time, and in reason.



## CHAPTER IV.

### TRADE IN THE TERRITORY, AND THE TRADERS, STATIONS, STATISTICS, ETC.

Trade is devoted chiefly to furs, with occasional dealings in oil and ivory; it is divided among a few parties, the Alaska Commercial Company having a large preponderance, by virtue of greater resources and greater energy, than any or all of its competitors combined; the sagacity of its traders, and the kindness with which they treat the natives, have resulted in even more than quadrupling the yield of furs in the Yukon and Ounalashka districts, as reported by the Russian American Fur Company at the time of the transfer. The operation of this company is confined to the country west from Kodiak, embracing the Aleutian Islands, where they at the present time have but little competition; on the Yukon, Koskoquim, and Ounalashka they are opposed by Charles Jansen, and by David Shirpser at Belcovskie and Kodiak, and a number of small traders and whalers in Kotzebue Sound. The trade east of Kodiak, up Cook's Inlet, down the coast back of Sitka, to Fort Simpson, is, so far as is known—for I was unable to examine this district—given up to small traders who ply in and out in light schooners, canoes, &c., and, doubtless, is quite extensive and largely illicit, for the natives will not trade at Sitka for money; so the inference plainly is that they dispose of their furs for whisky, &c., in the inshore passages, where smuggling can be carried on.

When the Russian traders first opened up the country the natives were everywhere found engaged in fierce intestine wars, and not prosecuting the chase of fur-bearing animals more than enough to supply themselves with skins for manufacture into garments; depending on the sea for their principal means of subsistence.

They used the skin of the sea-otter and beaver generally for cloaks, employing usually three sea-otters for one cloak; one of these skins was cut into two pieces and afterward sewed together, so as to form a square, and were loosely tied about the shoulders with small leather strings, fastened on each side; it

was the sight of these sea-otter cloaks that excited the greed and cupidity, and stimulated the adventurous trips made by the first Russian traders in the Aleutian Islands, and the wearisome voyages of the English and French to the coast of Vancouver's Island, and to the northward as far as Cook's Inlet, so early as 1785-'86. The beauty and value of the skin of the sea-otter alone drew men, who, in spite of all danger, visited every mile of the rugged coast of this Territory, nearly a hundred years ago, in rude, clumsy ships and shallops, and depended upon ruder nautical instruments, without charts, &c.

The hardships endured and perils encountered by these hardy, indomitable adventurers can be appreciated only by the seaman of to-day, who may sail in their tracks, provided with a generally correct chart of a coast then absolutely unknown, in the best sailing-vessels, fully equipped with perfect nautical instruments, and yet this modern sailor cannot sleep day or night with safety while he is on the coast or among the islands, so severe is the trial.

The first great demand by the natives in the Territory, as an equivalent for their furs, was iron; the English traders used to make it up into thick wrought bands, about eighteen inches to two feet in length, with a breadth of two inches, called "toes;" for one of these, at first, they readily procured a fine sea-otter or two, and a hatchet would obtain two or three; tobacco, the present great staple of trade, was then scarcely in demand, but soon became so; flour, when given by the Russians to some Aleuts at Ounalashka, in 1788, was taken by them up to a hill-top and thrown by handfuls to the wind, the natives enjoying the sight of the mock snow-storm spectacle much more than the use of the material for food; over on the mainland, when crackers and sugar were given to some natives, at Nushagak, they spit it from their mouths with disgust, wearing an expression of exceeding dislike for the strange food; lead pleased the Aleutians at first very much, it could be cut and fashioned so readily, but the most determined trials on their part failed, of course, to make it retain a cutting-edge, and they finally gave it up.

By degrees, however, and quite rapidly, iron with form of spear heads, axes, knives, kettles, &c., became a drug among the people generally, and a taste for the wearing of cotton and woolen goods, the use of tea and tobacco, caused the natives of the Aleutian Islands to strain every nerve in hunting the sea-

otter, and so effectually did they do so that the animals diminished in a very short time to but a fraction of their former number; but the natives of the mainland, a very different class of people, and incapable of living in as advanced a civilization as the Aleutians, were never aroused, and never will be, to any such activity by any legitimate effort to trade; they only covet tobacco and rum, and a little of either, used as an Indian uses them, goes a long way.

Therefore, while we may say that the fur-trade of the Aleutian Islands and the Peninsula, as far as Kodiak, has been and is to-day developed to its full importance, it is very evident that, with regard to the rest of the Territory, the annual yield can be and will be greatly augmented by the exertions of our energetic and industrious traders who are now scattered in keen rivalry over the ground.

By the very nature of the business, character of country, and climate of Alaska, white men will never themselves do any sea-otter hunting or mainland trapping; it rests solely with the natives, and the annual yield depends entirely upon the exertions which these people may be inclined to make as a means of procuring coveted articles in the hands of the traders. The hardship and privation to which the fox and marten trappers, and especially the sea-otter hunters, are subjected while in pursuit of their quarry are very great, yet not so great but that white men could endure and would endure them did it pay well enough; but it will be seen by reference to the tables giving the fur yield of the Territory that in proportion to the number of hunters, all of whom are more or less skillful, the return is a small one, and would not equal the earnings of the ordinary mechanic or day-laborer in our country, with the marked exception of the wages of the inhabitants of the Seal Islands, who live better and receive more pay than a majority of our people who are dependent upon manual labor for support.

The life and labor of the trader on the mainland and islands is one of much discomfort, and at certain seasons of the year of incessant activity. A chief trader, though burdened with much responsibility, lives quietly and comfortably at the redoubt or station where he is posted, the headquarters usually of a very large district; but the trading is all done by deputy traders, who are under the control of this head officer. These men start out from the post alone, perhaps accompanied by an Indian, with a dog-team and sled, which is loaded with several

hundred-weight of goods, such as are likely to be most prized by the tribes they intend to visit for the purposes of trade, usually tobacco, calico, beads, and powder and ball, caps, &c.; but the great bulk is generally tobacco. These men start in the dead of winter, provided with nothing but a blanket, a tent, a few pounds of dried meat or fish, and tea, and go in this way from tribe to tribe, from settlement to settlement, until the intended circuit is made or the goods disposed of.

When the trader reaches a settlement he inquires if the Indians there have any furs; if so, he pitches his tent and unpacks his goods under it, seats himself in the middle, near an aperture in the tent, so that the natives may approach and look in upon his assortment. Their skins are then passed through the opening with an intimation of what is desired from the trader's stock in exchange. The trader examines the skins, tosses them over into a common heap, and tears off the cloth or passes out the tobacco as the Indians require; and this continues till the business is concluded.

If the trader finds at the close of his trading at any one or more settlements that the bulk or weight of his furs is too great for removal on his sled, he gives the surplus into the care of some one of the people, counting over to him in the presence of the whole village all the skins. This man takes charge and honestly guards them until the trader comes in person or sends for them, and the whole community seems to feel as if their reputation were at stake, for they will neither molest the trader's *cache* nor permit others to do so. This is certainly a strange and most noteworthy characteristic of the Indians of the great interior of Alaska, designated in this report as the Yukon district.

The trading on the northwest coast, however, from Puget Sound up to Prince William's Sound, was and is conducted in a very different manner from that of the Yukon district. Here the traders, large and small, employed vessels varying from steamers of considerable size to sloops. Since, however, the withdrawal of the Russian American Company from the Territory, and the steamer *Labouchere* of the Hudson Bay Company, but one trading-steamer remains upon this coast, viz, the old *Otter*, the property of the last-named corporation. Sailing-vessels, small schooners principally, monopolize the trade, and of these there are eight or ten at least.

The practice of these trading-vessels is to cruise along the

coast, running into the numerous canals, channels, and harbors so characteristic of the region, where they come to an anchor, within easy reach of the shore, and wait for the natives to come off to them in their canoes laden with whatever they may possess fit for barter. The trading itself is tedious beyond all measure. The natives will sit in their canoes around the vessel for hours before showing the least attention or desire for business; then when it does begin the haggling baffles description; each Indian after the other trying to get a little more than his predecessor, no matter how slight or insignificant it may be. The traders of course dare not, even to gain precious time, deviate from an invariable rule or tariff in barter, and so the slow exchange goes on. The Indians throughout this whole section are shrewd and artful traders, and do not scruple to adopt any means by which they can outwit or deceive the white trader, so that it is unfortunately a case of diamond cut diamond wherever traders meet the natives of the northwest coast to-day.

With the Indians of the Territory trade is carried on without the use of coin, but on the Aleutian Islands, among the Christian Aleuts, the people take cash for their furs and pay over the counters of the different stores for their goods; and this necessitates the keeping of accounts, since the traders often find it to their advantage to give credit to a penniless hunter. These accounts the Aleuts keep in very good shape, and they are seldom in error over their reckoning.

The Russians pursued a different course from our people in conducting their trade in this region, where they were free from the competition of rival traders. Baranov, the real founder and maker of the Russian American Company, was a man of indomitable energy and foresight, and gave the affairs of the company his vigilant personal supervision everywhere and at all times, but his successors were unlike him, and made no exertion to pay dividends to the stockholders, or to pay debts. All of these gentlemen, with one exception, General Vivia-tovskie, were officers of the imperial fleet, and lived in official rotation at Sitka, which was selected in preference to Kodiak as a better position in which to menace and repel the advances of the Hudson's Bay people along the coast belonging to Alaska. They were surrounded by a troop of subordinates, living without regard to cost or expenditure of time or labor; a fleet of fourteen or fifteen vessels, steam and sail. Indeed,

no better commentary on the management can be made than a reference to their archives, where in almost any one year, look, for instance, January, 1863, (Techmainov, vol. ii, p. 224,) at this table showing the number and distribution of the employés and dependents:

Districts.	Russians, Fins, and foreigners.		Russian creoles.		Aleutes and Kuriles.		Total.	
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.
District of Sitka.....	418	50	210	300	36	31	664	381
District of Kodiak....	129	1	480	489	1,010	983	1,619	1,473
District of Ounalashka	4	.....	131	125	749	835	884	960
District of Atka.....	2	.....	94	106	367	342	463	448
District of Yukon....	32	.....	25	21	14	11	71	33
District of Kuriles...	1	.....	4	5	126	108	131	113
Total.....	586	51	944	1,046	2,302	2,310	3,822	2,406

Or a grand total of 6,977 dependents of all classes, and of this number over 1,200 were paid regular salaries, from the governor down to the serf.

And yet, with this small army of servants and dependents, the Russians, for the last forty years of their possession, did not get one-half of the furs annually that our traders now secure every year since their establishment in the Territory, while there are not over two hundred men engaged in the whole business at present.

Take the sea-otter trade for instance. The Russians called it a fair season when they secured in the course of the year, throughout the whole Territory, 350 to 400 sea-otters; many years occurred in which less than 200 were taken; but during the last two years 2,500 to 3,000 have been captured each season in the Aleutian and Kodiak districts alone; and I estimate that not less than 500 have been taken from Cook's Inlet down to Fort Simpson. This great increase in the development of the business is simply due to the active personal supervision of the present agents and traders.

In connection with this view of the trade and traders in the Territory, it is proper to mention the operations of the Alaska Commercial Company, as it has been the subject of comment by the press. The whole matter appears to amount to this, that the fur-trade of Alaska, (always excepting the Seal Islands,) placed, as it is, in a fair field for competition, will sooner or later be controlled by those who invest the most money in the undertaking and send the best men for the work, who make their stations more attractive to the natives, and

render communication between their wide-scattered posts more frequent and regular. It will be more difficult every year for small or inexperienced traders to do anything at the fur-trade in this Territory, and the trade does not appear extensive enough to support the operations of two companies, each with as much capital invested as the one in question. The result would be that one would have to withdraw. As far, however, as the Government is concerned, the field for trade in Alaska is free and open to all; a practical illustration of which is shown in the following statement of affairs existing at Ounalashka:

Ounalashka is an Aleutian village of some four hundred souls, men, women, and children; of these sixty are first-class sea-otter hunters, and this is their profession. The Alaska Commercial Company have erected three large warehouses fronting a wharf, where their vessels unload and load; a large store-house, filled with a most extensive selection of goods; a very large dwelling-house for their traders; with office, court-yard, stables for cattle and sheep, a blacksmith-shop, &c., all finished in first-class style, and furnished thoroughly throughout. The company have also erected and are building snug cottages for their best hunters to live in; and there is a school-house, where the native children are invited to attend, which some do. In opposition to this, a young man is placed in a small, weather-worn, rickety shanty, which is made to serve as warehouse, store, and living-room for the agent; a most meager stock of goods, no assortment whatever; and yet this young man, who has not got one dollar to back him, came to me and complained of the almost total loss of his trade, and said in explanation that it was due to the fact that though the natives wanted to trade with him, yet they were living under the influence of fear to such an extent that they dared not do it, and hence transferred their trade. I told him, after looking about the place and talking with the natives and their priest for three or four days, that the only fear that these people of Ounalashka had in the matter was a most wholesome one; it was the fear, coupled with an absolute certainty, that, as he was situated for trade, they would not do as well at his establishment as they could at his opponent's, and the dullest of them could readily appreciate it; therefore, if any successful opposition to the Alaska Commercial Company is to be made in the Territory where it is established, money must, be freely

expended in buildings and upon the people, who will go with wonderful promptness and unanimity wherever they can make the most in trade and are best treated, for they are keen and shrewd.

I now pass to the consideration of the several trading districts, and the character and quality of the furs obtained from them respectively.

#### THE YUKON DISTRICT.

##### KOTZEBUE SOUND :

The trade at this place with the natives is principally by whaling-vessels, which are supplied with liquors; they fit out and clear from the Sandwich Islands for the arctic, and take advantage of the impunity with which they can visit this port and profit by this illicit occupation; for the natives here, as everywhere else, are passionately fond of liquor, and a large proportion of the best furs from the Lower Yukon, the region south of Saint Michael's, is picked out by Indian traders and carried to this place, where they can be exchanged for whisky. The trade, however, that belongs to the sound itself is not extensive; only a small number of Eskimo live here, in scattered settlements along the coast, at the mouths of debouching creeks, &c. The catch of fur-bearing animals is not large; the people themselves live more by trading than by hunting, *i. e.*, trading between the people living far to the southward and eastward on the one hand, and the whalers and others, making profits as middlemen.

##### NORTON'S SOUND :

A few Eskimo traders live here; the catch and yield of fur-bearing animals unimportant. These people assist the Kotzebue traders in getting their furs carried up and over to that place, and many of them go over to Port Clarence with an assortment of furs, beaver principally, where they meet the people from the Asiatic side, who cross Bering's Straits in the winter on the ice by way of the Diomed Islands, with dog-sleds, loaded with tame reindeer-skins, tanned, which are in great demand by the natives of this district for manufacture into cloaks, coats, *parkies*, &c., while the Asiatics are equally desirous of getting any and all kinds of fur, such as mink, marten, land-otter, beaver, &c., but desire beaver especially.



THE DIOMEDES, KING'S ISLAND, SLEDGE ISLAND, AND SAINT LAWRENCE—

Are inhabited by a few Eskimo, but there is no trade with them worth mentioning; they have a little walrus-oil and ivory, and a few red foxes, and occasionally get some whalebone.

SAINT MICHAEL'S:

This is a shipping-point only for the accumulated furs gathered by the traders from the Lower and Upper Yukon, at Nulato, Fort Yukon, and the Tannanah. The present annual yield from these points is the largest and most valuable from the mainland of Alaska. A vessel coming to Saint Michael's in the summer will find from one hundred to one hundred and fifty Indians; they have come in from long distances to the northwest, eastward, and southward; but the fur-trading on the Yukon River and its many tributaries is very irregular as to time and place year after year, the traders constantly moving from settlement to settlement. This year they may only get a thousand skins where they got five thousand last season, and *vice versa*. It is impossible to say where the best place for trade will be, the catch in different sections varying every winter with the depth of snow, the severity of climate, &c.

NUNIVAK:

Trade here is small and unimportant, principally walrus-oil, some ivory, and a few red foxes.

CAPE ROMANZOV:

Traders come up from the Koskoquim and down from the Yukon to this point, where they get some very good furs, mink, marten, and foxes. At Cape Avinova, the district there is quite celebrated for its marten catch, both in quantity and quality, a large number of brown bear range here, where they subsist upon berries, roots, reindeer, &c. The Indians live in small huts and settlements scattered all along the coast down from Saint Michael's.

KOSKOQUIM:

The trade is extensive, and done principally at Kolmakov Redoubt, about one hundred and fifty miles up the river from its mouth, and at a station some sixty miles below it. The traders come down the river in June with their cargoes and meet the ships. The principal trade is beaver, red foxes, mink,

(plenty,) marten, land-otter, (abundant,) bears, brown and black. The people of this district keep traveling all the year round.

**NUSHAGAK :**

About the same as at Koskoquim, but the quality of sable or marten deteriorates very much and rapidly as the trader goes south from this region. The people are also great travelers, always on the move. This section closes the Yukon district, which forms the western boundary of that of the Peninsula and Kodiak. In this country, between Kotzebue and its southern boundary back into the interior as far as a thousand miles, furs are gathered as follows :

*Beaver* are taken of the very best quality and in the greatest quantity, and an immense number of *musk-rat* skins, for the trader must buy everything, (these musk-rat skins are principally shipped to France and Germany, for poor people wear them;) of *red foxes*, quite a large number are taken. *Black foxes* are seldom obtained, perhaps three or four on an average during the year. *Silver-gray foxes*, a small number annually. *Mink* and *marten* of very fine quality from Koskoquim to the northward, but from this point to the southward this fur deteriorates rapidly. *Land-otter*, quite a large number of the best quality. *Black and brown bear*, a few ; a small trade in *swans'-down*. *Eider-down*, with profit, cannot be sold in San Francisco, but it is valuable in Russia. (German goose-down is used by our upholsterers in preference, as it is much cheaper and just as good.) *Reindeer-skins* are dried ; quite a large number of these which go east are tanned, and make a very superior leather.

Figures to show the number of skins taken out of the country might easily be obtained were it under the control of a single corporation, as it was under the Russian rule, but as it is now, with ten or a dozen independent traders, large and small, all studiously concealing or purposely exaggerating their transactions in order to draw or divert trade, the figures, were they furnished, would be quite unreliable. The following table, however, showing the yield of this district during a period of twenty years, between 1842 and 1861, as given by Russian authority, may be deemed correct; and I was assured by Father Shiesneekov, of Ounalashka, a Russian priest, born and raised in this country, that the present yield of furs is at least four

times as great every year, compared with the table, owing to the greater activity and energy of our traders :

Table showing the number of skins taken by the Russian American Company from the Yukon district, during the period between 1842 and 1861, twenty years.

	Beaver.	Land-otter.	Marten.	Mink.	Musk-rat.	Fox, red.	Fox, blue.	Wolverine.	Lynx.	Bear.
Koskoquim ...	32, 396	1, 165	2, 098	.....	.....	3, 590	320	.....	327	93
Saint Michael's	49, 398	4, 954	8, 853	330	4, 668	10, 216	.....	52	1, 007	183
Total ...	81, 794	6, 119	10, 951	330	4, 668	13, 806	320	52	1, 334	276

Guided by this exhibit, if I could rely on what has been affirmed by the traders whom I have met in the Territory, the catch in the Yukon district during the last three years has averaged six times as much as the Russian annual average.

#### THE PENINSULAR AND KODIAK.

##### OAGASHIK :

This is the only trading-station on the north shore of the Peninsula, and it is in itself inconsiderable ; the people have a few red foxes, a few beaver, but quite a fair number of reindeer-skins, the country being fairly alive with these animals ; they also are adjacent to the large walrus hauling-grounds in Bristol Bay, and some ivory is secured by them ; they have a few brown bears, an occasional wolf-skin, and a little swans'-down.

##### BELCOVSKIE :

A sea-otter post : the natives bring in the skins of these animals, which they obtain at Saanach and the Chernobour Rocks ; the trade otherwise is unimportant—a few red foxes and brown bears.

*Saanach.* A sea-otter post recently established : nearly two-thirds of the sea-otters captured in the whole Alaskan district are taken around this island.

*Unga.* A sea-otter post, with small trade in red foxes, black and brown bears, &c.

*Kodiak, or Saint Paul's.*—Once the headquarters of the old Russian American Company, but since 1825 it has been a mere trading-post ; a large number of sea-otter hunters make it their home, and bring in their quarry for trade there ; all the trade of Kenai and Cook's Inlet came in here under the old

*régime*, but it is now confined principally to the sea-otter trade; the Cook's Inlet and Katmai trade is mostly engrossed by trading-schooners plying between these places and Puget Sound; the yield of this district under the Russian control is given for twenty years, 1842-1861, inclusive, as follows: Sea-otters, 5,809; beaver, 85,381; marten, 14,295; minks, 1,175; musk-rats, 14,313; wolverines, 1,276; marmots, 712; wolves, 58.

In the COOK'S INLET DISTRICT, the MOUNT SAINT ELIAS and SITKAN DISTRICTS, there are no well-established trading-posts, the business being conducted on shipboard everywhere, the natives coming off to the trading-schooners in their canoes. At the time of the Russian occupation there was considerable trading done at Sitka, but now it has fallen off entirely, the natives of that place and vicinity going back into the inside passages, where they can trade with whisky-schooners in perfect security, as affairs are now conducted in the Territory.

A large variety of furs are brought in from the dense forests and high mountains of this region—such as red, black, and silver foxes, brown and black bears, mink, marten, porcupines, beaver, land and sea otter, fur-seal, hair-seal, deer, rabbits, squirrels, mountain-goats, ermines, and the hoary marmot or whistler.

#### THE OUNALASHKA DISTRICT:

This embraces the whole of the Aleutian Archipelago, and is given entirely to the sea-otters; there is nothing else in this section fit for trade save a few red and black foxes, and in it are established six stations, viz: *Ounalaska*, the largest and principal one, *Akootan*, *Chernovskie*, *Oomnak*, *Atka*, and *Attou*, which are the homes of the sea-otter hunters, and where they trade.

The stations enumerated in the foregoing districts comprise all that are established in the Alaskan Territory.

#### THE VALUE OF THE FUR-TRADE.

With the exception of the Sitkan and Cook's Inlet districts, the gross value of the annual fur-production of Alaska can be closely ascertained. I append to this head several tables from Russian authorities in reference to the subject, and call attention to the fact that for the last ninety years or more, up to the present date, the prices of the leading furs in our market to-day are very much what they were then, with the exception of the

fur-seal, which has been greatly enhanced in value by reason of improvement in dressing, but the marten and the sea-otter stand to-day at almost the same figures at which they were bought and sold a hundred years ago in China, where the value of money has remained the same; the native hunters, however, receive now three, four, and five times as much as they were paid by the Russian American Company for their skins. The following list may be taken as very nearly correct, and shows the gross value of the fur-trade of the Territory to the traders for the year 1873:

100,000 fur-seal skins, at an average of \$7.....	\$700,000
3,000 sea-otter skins, at an average of \$75.....	225,000
50,000 skins from the Yukon district, assorted, at an average of \$2.	100,000
30,000 skins from all the rest of the Territory, (this is a very unsatisfactory estimate,) at an average of \$2.....	60,000
	<hr/>
A grand total of.....	1,085,000

Which is more than double the annual receipts of any one of the best of the last twenty years of the Russian American Company, so far as can be judged by reference to their statements, as is shown in the table at the close of this article.

It seems that the Seal Islands represent two-thirds of the whole value of the fur-trade of Alaska, and that with the sea-otter interest combined there is scarcely anything left.

Matters are now so arranged on the Seal Islands that the Government nets a revenue of \$300,000 per annum, with the preservation of its interest there in all of its original integrity. With reference to the sea-otter trade, I think I clearly show the necessity for protection from the Government in my discussion of the subject in this report, and, in regard to the remaining interests, the country itself protects them.

Table showing the yield of the different stations in the Territory of Alaska, from the archives of the Russian American Fur Company, for a period of twenty years, between 1842 and 1861.

	Seal Islands.	Saint Mich- ael's.	Koskoquim.	Attou.	Atka.	Oumalashka.	Shoomagins.	Kodiak.
Beaver .....		49,398	32,396					85,831
Land-otter .....		4,954	1,165			329	979	
Sea-otter .....				2,242	1,188	5,686	3,611	5,809
Fur-seal .....	309,701							
Foxes, black .....								
Foxes, silver .....								
Foxes, red .....		10,216	3,590			19,671	5,731	
Foxes, blue .....	34,794		320	2,503	1,685			
Foxes, white .....								
Martens' .....		8,853	2,098					14,295
Minks .....		330						1,173
Wolverines .....		52						1,276
Lynx .....		1,007	327					
Wolves .....								58
Bears .....		183	93					
Sea-lions .....								
Musk-rats .....		4,668						14,313
Marmots .....								713
Walrus-teeth .....	4,160 lbs	116 lbs.	1,040 lbs.			21,640 lbs		51,840 lbs
Castorum .....		3,315 prs.	6,836 prs.					

Table showing the exportation of furs by the Russian-American Company.

Variety of fur.	Period of 1797 - 1821, (24 years.)	Period of 1821 - 1842, (21 years.)	Period of 1842 - 1861, (19 years.)
Sea-otter, adult and 1-year old skins .....	72,894	25,416	25,899
Sea-otter tails .....	34,546	23,506	25,797
Land-otters .....	14,969	29,442	70,473
Fur-seals .....	1,232,374	458,502	372,694
Beavers .....	34,546	162,034	157,484
Foxes, black .....	13,702	17,913	
Foxes, cross or silver .....	21,890	26,402	77,847
Foxes, red .....	30,950	45,947	
Foxes, blue .....	36,362	55,714	54,134
Foxes, white .....	4,234	13,638	
Martens' .....	17,289	15,666	12,782
Minks .....	4,802	15,481	872
Wolverines .....	1,151	1,564	10
Lynx .....	1,389	4,253	6,927
Wolves .....	121	201	24
Bears .....	1,602	5,355	1,893
Sea-lions, young .....	27		
Musk-rats .....		4,491	6,570
Walrus-teeth .....	64,640 lbs.		260,040 lbs.
Castorum .....	20 lbs.		4,960 lbs.
Whale-bone .....	47,040 lbs.		138,200 lbs.

The following shows the amount of food-supplies required, independent of tea, tobacco, and liquor, for the annual subsistence of the employés of the Russian-American Company, (1863;) a year's supply or more was always kept in advance in case of an emergency, (from Techmainov:)

Wheat, 14,000 poods, at 3 rubles and 26 kopecks a pood, (or 36 pounds.)

Flour, 498 poods, at 6 rubles and 31 kopecks a pood.

Peas, 404 poods, at 4 rubles and 90 kopecks a pood.

Split wheat, 404 poods, at 4 rubles and 90 kopecks a pood.

Salt, 922 poods, at 3 rubles and 78 kopecks a pood.

Butter, 498 poods, at 20 rubles and 20 kopecks a pood.

Hams, 92 poods, at 59 kopecks a pound.

The rubles are *paper*, equal to 20 cents each. A *pood* is 36 pounds English, or 40 Russian pounds.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SEA-OTTER AND ITS HUNTING.

The sea-otter, like the fur-seal, is another illustration of an animal long known and highly prized in the commercial world, yet respecting the habits and life of which nothing definite has been ascertained or published. The reason for this is obvious, for, save the natives who hunt them, no one properly qualified has ever had an opportunity of seeing the sea-otter so as to study it in a state of nature, for, of all the shy, sensitive beasts, upon the capture of which man sets any value, this creature is the most keenly on the alert and difficult to obtain; and, like the fur-seal in this Territory, it possesses the enhancing value of being principally confined to our country. A truthful account of the strange, vigilant life of the sea-otter, and of the hardships and perils encountered by its hunters, would surpass in novelty and interest the most attractive work of fiction.

When the Russian traders opened up the Aleutian Islands they found the natives commonly wearing sea-otter cloaks, which they parted with at first for a trifle, not placing any especial value on the animal, as they did the hair-seal and the sea-lion, the flesh and skins of which were vastly more palatable and serviceable to them; but the offers of the greedy traders soon set the natives after them. During the first few years the numbers of these animals taken all along the Aleutian Chain, and down the whole northwest coast as far as Oregon, were very great, and compared with what are now captured seem perfectly fabulous; for instance, when the Prybilov Islands were first discovered, two sailors, Lukannon and Kaiekov, killed at Saint Paul's Island, in the first year of occupation, *five thousand*; the next year they got less than a *thousand*, and in six years after not a single sea-otter appeared, and none have appeared since. When Shellikov's party first visited Cook's Inlet, they secured three thousand; during the second year, two thousand; in the third, only eight hundred; the season following they obtained six hundred; and finally, in 1812, less than a hundred, and since then not a tenth of that number. The first visit made by the Russians to the Gulf of Yakutat,



in 1794, two thousand sea-otters were taken, but they diminished so rapidly that in 1799 less than three hundred were taken. In 1798 a large party of Russians and Aleuts captured in Sitka Sound and neighborhood twelve hundred skins, besides those for which they traded with the natives there, fully as many more; and in the spring of 1800 a few American and English vessels came into Sitka Sound, anchored off the small Russian settlement there, and traded with the natives for over two thousand skins, getting the trade of the Indians by giving firearms and powder, ball, &c., which the Russians did not dare to do, living then, as they were, in the country. In one of the early years of the Russian American Company, 1804, Baranov went to the Okotsk from Alaska with fifteen thousand sea-otter skins, that were worth as much then as they are now, viz, fully \$1,000,000.

The result of this warfare upon the sea-otters, with ten hunters then where there is one to-day, was not long delayed. Everywhere throughout the whole coast-line frequented by them the diminution set in, and it became difficult to get to places where a thousand had once been as easily obtained as twenty-five or thirty. A Russian chronicler says: "The numbers of several kinds of animals are growing very much less in the present as compared with past times; for instance, the company here (Ounalashka) regularly killed more than a thousand sea-otters annually; now (1835) from seventy to a hundred and fifty are taken; and there was a time, in 1826, when the returns from the whole Ounalashkan district (the Aleutian Islands) were only *fifteen* skins."

It is also a fact coincident with this diminution of the sea-otters, that the population of the Aleutian Islands fell off almost in the same proportion. The Russians regarded the lives of these people as they did those of dogs, and treated them accordingly; they took, under Baranov and his subordinates, hunting-parties of five hundred to a thousand picked Aleuts, eleven or twelve hundred miles to the eastward of their homes, in skin-baidars and bidarkies, or kyacks, traversing one of the wildest and roughest of coasts, and used them not only for the severe drudgery of otter-hunting, but to fight the Koloshians and other savages all the way up and down the coast; this soon destroyed them, and few ever got back alive.

When the Territory came into our possession the Russians were taking between four and five hundred sea-otters from the

Aleutian Islands and south of the peninsula of Alaska, with perhaps a hundred and fifty more from Kenai, Yakutat, and the Sitkan district; the Hudson's Bay Company and other traders getting about two hundred more from the coast of Queen Charlotte's and Vancouver's Islands, and off Gray's Harbor, Washington Territory.

Now, during the last season, 1873, instead of less than seven hundred skins, as obtained by the Russians, our traders secured not much less than *four thousand* skins. This immense difference is not due to the fact of there being a proportionate increase of sea-otters, but to the organization of hunting-parties in the same spirit and fashion as in the early days above mentioned. The keen competition of our traders will ruin the business in a comparatively short time if some action is not taken by the Government; and to the credit of these traders let it be said, that while they cannot desist, for if they do others will step in and profit at their expense, yet they are anxious that some prohibition should be laid upon the business. This can be easily done, and in such a manner as to perpetuate the sea-otter, not only for themselves, but for the natives, who are dependent upon its hunting for a living which makes them superior to savages.

Over two-thirds of all the sea-otters taken in Alaska are secured in two small areas of water, little rocky islets and reefs around the island of Saanach and the Chernobours, which proves that these animals, in spite of the incessant hunting all the year round on this ground, seem to have some particular preference for it to the practical exclusion of nearly all the rest of the coast in the Territory. This may be due to its better adaptation as a breeding-ground. It is also noteworthy that all the sea-otters taken below the Straits of Fuca are shot by the Indians and white hunters off the beach in the surf at Gray's Harbor, a stretch of less than twenty miles; here some fifty to a hundred are taken every year; while not half that number can be obtained from all the rest of the Oregon and Washington coast-line; there is nothing in the external appearance of this reach to cause its selection by the sea-otters, except perhaps that it may be a little less rocky.

As matters are now conducted by the hunting parties, the sea-otters at Saanach and the Chernobours do not have a day's rest during the whole year. Parties relieve each other in succession, and a continual warfare is maintained. This persistence,

is stimulated by the traders, and is rendered still more deadly to the sea-otter by the use of rifles of the best make, which, in the hands of the young and ambitious natives, in spite of the warnings of the old men, must result in the extermination of these animals, as no authority exists in the land to prevent it. These same old men, in order to successfully compete with their rivals, have to drop their bone spears and arrows and take up fire-arms in self-defense. So the bad work goes on rapidly, though a majority of the natives and the traders deprecate it.

With a view to check this evil and to perpetuate the life of the sea-otter in the Territory, I offer the following suggestions to the Department:

1st. Prohibit the use of fire-arms of any description in the hunting of the sea-otter in the Territory of Alaska.

2d. Make it unlawful for any party or parties to hunt this animal during the months of June, July, and August, fixing a suitable penalty, fine, or punishment.

The first proposition gives the sea-otter a chance to live; and, with the second, may possibly promote an increase in the number of this valuable animal.

The enforcement by the Government of this prohibition will not be difficult, as it is desired by a great majority of the natives and all the traders having any real interest in the perpetuation of the business. A good deputy attached to the customs, whose salary and expenses might be more than paid by a trifling tax upon each otter-skin, say \$1, could, if provided with a sound whale-boat, make his headquarters at Saanach and Belcovski and carry the law into effect. The trade of the Kodiak district centers at the village of that name, and the presence of the collector or his deputy will exert authority, and cause the old native hunters and many of the younger who have reflection to comply with his demands. The collector then being provided with the small revenue-steamér spoken of in my chapter upon the duty of the Government toward the Territory, can insure compliance with the instructions given him, and punish violations.

This proposed action on the part of the Government is urgent and humane, for upon the successful hunting of the sea-otter some five thousand Christianized natives are entirely dependent for the means to live in a condition superior to barbarism.

THE HABITS OF THE SEA-OTTER, (*Enhydra marina*.)

I have had a number of interesting interviews with several very intelligent traders, and an English hunter who had spent an entire winter on Saanach Island, shooting sea-otters, and enduring, while there, bitter privation and hardship; and chiefly from their accounts, aided by my own observation, I submit the following:

*Saanach Island, Islets, and Reefs*, is the great sea-otter ground of this country. The island itself is small, with a coast-line circuit of about eighteen miles. Spots of sand-beach are found here and there, but the major portion of it is composed of enormous water-worn bowlders piled up by the surf. The interior is low and rolling, with a ridge rising into three hills, the middle one some 800 feet in height. There is no timber on it, but abundant grass, moss, &c., with a score of little fresh-water lakes, in which multitudes of ducks and geese are found every spring and fall. The natives do not live upon the island, because the making of fires and scattering of food-refuse alarms the otters, driving them off to sea; so that it is only camped upon, and fires are never built unless the wind is from the southward, for no sea-otters are ever found to the north of the island. The sufferings to which the native hunters subject themselves every winter on this island, going for many weeks without fires, even for cooking, with the thermometer down to zero, in a northerly gale of wind, is better imagined than described.

To the southward and westward, and stretching directly out to sea, some five to eight miles from Saanach Island, is a succession of small islets, bare, most of them, at low water, but with numerous reefs and rocky shoals, beds of kelp, &c. This is the great sea-otter ground of Alaska, together with the Cherrobour Islets, to the eastward about thirty miles, which are similar to it.

The sea-otter rarely lands upon the main island, but it is found just out of water on the reef-rocks and islets above mentioned, in certain seasons, and at a little distance at sea during calm and pleasant weather.

The adult sea-otter is an animal that will measure from three and a half to four feet at most, from nose to tip of tail, which is short and stumpy. The general contour of the body is closely like that of the beaver, with the skin lying in loose folds, so that when taken hold of in lifting the body out from the water,

it is as slack and draws up like the hide on the nape of a young dog. This skin, which is taken from the body with but one cut made in it at the posteriors, is turned inside out, and air-dried, and stretched, so that it then gives the erroneous impression of an animal at least six feet in length, with girth and shape of a weasel or mink.

There is no sexual dissimilarity in color or size, and both manifest the same intense shyness and aversion to man, coupled with the greatest solicitude for their young, which they bring into existence at all seasons of the year, for the natives get young pups every month in the year. As the natives have never caught the mothers bringing forth their offspring on the rocks, they are disposed to believe that the birth takes place on kelp-beds, in pleasant or not over-rough weather. The female has a single pup, born about 15 inches in length, and provided during the first month or two with a coat of coarse, brownish, grizzled fur, head and nape grizzled, grayish, rufous white, with the roots of the hair growing darker toward the skin. The feet, as in the adult, are very short, webbed, with nails like a dog, fore-paws exceedingly feeble and small, all covered with a short, fine, dark, bister-brown hair or fur. From this poor condition of fur they improve as they grow older, shading darker, finer, thicker, and softer, and by the time they are two years of age they are "prime," though the animal is not full-grown until its fourth or fifth year. The white nose and mustache of the pup are not changed in the adult. The whiskers are white, short, and fine.

The female has two teats, resembling those of a cat, placed between the hind limbs on the abdomen, and no signs of more; the pup sucks a year at least, and longer if its mother has no other; the mother lies upon her back in the water or upon the rocks, as the case may be, and when she is surprised she protects her young by clasping it in her fore-paws and turning her back to the danger; they shed their fur just as the hair of man grows and falls out; the reason is evident, for they must be ready for the water at all times.

The sea-otter mother sleeps in the water on her back, with her young clasped between her fore-paws. The pup cannot live without its mother, though frequent attempts have been made by the natives to raise them, as they often capture them alive, but, like some other species of wild animals, it seems to

be so deeply imbued with fear of man that it invariably dies from self-imposed starvation.

Their food, as might be inferred from the flat molars of dentition, is almost entirely composed of clams, muscles, and sea-urchins, of which they are very fond, and which they break by striking the shells together, held in each fore paw, sucking out the contents as they are fractured by these efforts; they also undoubtedly eat crabs, and the juicy, tender fronds of kelp or sea-weed, and fish.

They are not polygamous, and more than an individual is seldom seen at a time when out at sea. The flesh is very unpalatable, highly charged with a rank smell and flavor.

They are playful, it would seem, for I am assured by several old hunters that they have watched the sea-otter for a half an hour as it lay upon its back in the water and tossed a piece of sea-weed up in the air from paw to paw, apparently taking great delight in catching it before it could fall into the water. It will also play with its young for hours.

The quick hearing and acute smell possessed by the sea-otter are not equaled by any other creatures in the Territory. They will take alarm and leave from the effects of a small fire, four or five miles to the windward of them; and the footstep of man must be washed by many tides before its trace ceases to alarm the animal and drive it from landing there should it approach for that purpose.

There are four principal methods of capturing the sea-otter, viz, by *surf-shooting*, by *spearing-surrounds*, by *clubbing*, and by *nets*.

The *surf-shooting* is the common method, but has only been in vogue among the natives a short time. The young men have nearly all been supplied with rifles, with which they patrol the shores of the island and inlets, and whenever a sea-otter's head is seen in the surf, a thousand yards out even, they fire, the great distance and the noise of the surf preventing the sea-otter from taking alarm until it is hit; and, in nine times out of ten, when it is hit, in the head, which is all that is exposed, the shot is fatal, and the hunter waits until the surf brings his quarry in, if it is too rough for him to venture out in his "bidarkie." This shooting is kept up now the whole year round.

The *spearing-surround* is the orthodox native system of capture, and reflects the highest credit upon them as bold, hardy

watermen. A party of fifteen or twenty bidarkies, with two men in each, as a rule, all under the control of a chief elected by common consent, start out in pleasant weather, or when it is not too rough, and spread themselves out in a long line, slowly paddling over the waters where sea-otters are most usually found. When any one of them discovers an otter, asleep, most likely, in the water, he makes a quiet signal, and there is not a word spoken or a paddle splashed while they are on the hunt. He darts toward the animal, but generally the alarm is taken by the sensitive object, which instantly dives before the Aleut can get near enough to throw his spear. The hunter, however, keeps right on, and stops his canoe directly over the spot where the otter disappeared. The others, taking note of the position, all deploy, and scatter in a circle of half a mile wide around the mark of departure thus made, and patiently wait for the re-appearance of the otter, which must take place within fifteen or thirty minutes for breath; and as soon as this happens the nearest one to it darts forward in the same manner as his predecessor, when all hands shout and throw their spears; to make the animal dive again as quickly as possible, thus giving it scarcely an instant to recover itself. A sentry is placed over its second diving-wake as before, and the circle is drawn anew; and the surprise is often repeated, sometimes for two or three hours, until the sea-otter, from interrupted respiration, becomes so filled with air or gases that he cannot sink, and becomes at once an easy victim.

The coolness with which these Aleuts will go far out to sea in their cockle-shell kyacks, and risk the approach of gales that are as apt to be against them as not, with a mere handful of food and less water, is remarkable. They are certainly as hardy a set of hunters, patient and energetic, as can be found in the world.

The clubbing is only done in the winter-season, and then at infrequent intervals, which occur when tremendous gales of wind from the northward, sweeping down over Saanach, have about blown themselves out. The natives, the very boldest of them, set out from Saanach, and scud down on the tail of the gale to the far outlying rocks, just sticking out above surf-wash, where they creep up from the leeward to the sea-otters found there at such times, with their heads stuck into the beds of kelp to avoid the wind. The noise of the gale is greater than that made by the stealthy movements of the hunters, who, armed

each with a short, heavy, wooden club, dispatch the animals, one after another, without alarming the whole body, and in this way two Aleuts, brothers, were known to have slain seventy-eight in less than an hour and a half.

There is no driving these animals out upon land. They are fierce and courageous, and, when surprised by a man between themselves and the water, they will make for the sea, straight without any regard for the hunter, their progress, by a succession of short leaps, being very rapid for a small distance. The greatest care is taken by the sea-otter hunters on Saanach. They have lived in the dead of a severe winter six weeks at a time without kindling a fire, and with certain winds they never light one. They do not smoke, nor do they scatter or empty food-refuse on the beaches. Of all this I am assured by one who is perhaps the first white eye-witness of this winter-hunting, as he lived on the island through that of 1872-'73, and could not be induced to repeat it.

The hunting by use of nets calls up the strange dissimilarity existing now, as it has in all time past, between the practice of the Atka and Attou Aleuts and that of those of Ounalashka and the eastward, as given above. These people capture the sea-otter in nets, from 16 to 18 feet long and 6 to 10 feet wide, with coarse meshes, made nowadays of twine, but formerly of sinew.

On the kelp-beds these nets are spread out, and the natives withdraw and watch. The otters come to sleep or rest on these places, and get entangled in the meshes of the nets, seeming to make little or no effort to escape, paralyzed as it were by fear, and fall in this way easily into the hands of the trappers, who tell me that they have caught as many as six at one time in one of these small nets, and frequently get three. They also watch for surf-holes or caves in the bluffs, and, when one is found to which a sea-otter is in the habit of resorting, they set this net by spreading it over the entrance, and usually capture the animal.

No injury whatever is done to these frail nets by the sea-otters, strong animals as they are; only stray sea-lions destroy them. The Atka people have never been known to hunt sea-otters without nets, while the people of Ounalashka and the eastward have never been known to use them. The salt-water and kelp seem to act as a disinfectant to the net, so that the smell of it does not repel or alarm the shy animal.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CONDITION OF AFFAIRS ON THE SEAL ISLANDS, PRYBILOV GROUP.

#### THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLANDS.

When the Russians first came into the country, in 1760-'65, the abundance of sea-otter skins and their immensely-greater value than that of any others found, caused very little attention to be paid to the skins of fur-seals or those of other animals; but the great diminution of otter-skins toward the end of 1777-'78 raised anew the question, often asked the natives but in vain, as to where the fur-seal bred, such numbers of them were seen every year in the spring passing north and in the autumn going south through the narrow channels, straits, &c., between the Aleutian Islands. This regular routine of travel followed by these animals every year pointed to some unknown breeding-ground in Bering Sea, and search was made for it, resulting in the discovery of the group under discussion, in 1786-'87, by Gehrman Prybilov, commanding a small schooner, and serving one of the twenty-eight different trading-companies and traders then about the Aleutian Archipelago. The islands were without population, or the traces even of human habitation.

The island of Saint George was first discovered and named after the little vessel commanded by Prybilov,\* and in the following year, July, 1787, the island of Saint Paul was noticed by the men stationed at Saint George looming on the northwest horizon, twenty-seven miles distant.

Prybilov endeavored to keep the discovery to himself, but in less than a month after his return to Ounalashka it was well known. The competition there was so lively, that as many as six companies established themselves at once on the Seal Islands, and a number of irregular visitors now and then appeared. The rapacity and shiftlessness of their management is well described by a Russian historian, from whom I have translated extracts bearing upon this subject, and which will be found in its proper

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\*Prybilov died at Sitka while in command of the ship "Three Saints," March, 1796.

place. In 1799 the Russian American Company received the monopoly of all Alaska, and it at once organized a colony of "one hundred and thirty-seven souls" at Sitka and Unalashka, principally natives of the latter place, and planted the settlements which still exist on the islands, and after many years of most faulty management of the sealing business they came to regard it with so good an eye to its preservation and perpetuation, that their rules and regulations in regard to these points are still in force, no subsequent observation having suggested an improvement on them until the date of the writer's arrival on the islands, April, 1872.

Too much credit cannot be given to certain agents of the old Russian company, and a countryman of ours, in 1868-'69,\* who have by their attention and action saved this most interesting and valuable exhibition of animal life from the wanton, improvident destruction which has been visited upon the great fur-seal rookeries of the Southern Ocean.

The fact that the fur-seals frequent these islands, and those of Bering and Copper, on the Russian side, to the exclusion of all other land, is at first a little singular; but when we come to examine the subject we find that these animals, when they come out to lie two or three months on the land, as they must do by their habit during the breeding-season, require a cool, moist atmosphere; also, firm and dry land, or dry rock, upon which to take their positions and remain for the season; if the rookery-ground is hard and flat, puddles are formed, making a slime, which very quickly takes the hair off the animals; hence they carefully avoid any such landing. If they occupy a sandy shore, the rain beats the sand into their large, sensitive eyes, and into their fur, so that they are obliged from irritation to leave. The Seal Islands now under discussion offer very remarkable advantages for landing, especially Saint Paul, where the ground of basaltic rock and of volcanic tufa or cement slopes up gradually from the sea, making a suitable resting-place for millions of these intelligent animals, which lie out here two and three months every year in perfect peace and contentment.

There is no ground of this character offered elsewhere in the country, on the Aleutians, on the mainland, or on Saint Matthew's, or Saint Lawrence; the latter islands were surveyed during the past season to settle this question, and the notes will be found in the appendix.

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\* H. M. Hutchinson.

## I. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLANDS.

The Prybilov group of fur-seal islands occupy the most isolated portion of any land in Bering Sea, the three nearest land-points to them being nearly equidistant; Saint Matthew's and Nunivok Islands, Cape Newenham, on the mainland, and Ounalashka Island, all about one hundred and eighty miles off; and in this location ocean-currents from the great Pacific, to the southward, warmer than the normal temperature of their latitude, ebb and flow around them on their way to the Arctic and elsewhere, and give rise in this way during the summer months and early autumn to constant thick, humid fogs and drizzling mists which hang in heavy banks over the islands and sea, seldom breaking away to indicate a pleasant day.

By the middle or end of October, high, cold winds carry off the moisture and clear up the air, and by the end of January or early in February, usually bring down from the north and northwest great fields of broken ice, not very heavy or thick, but still covering the whole surface of the sea, shutting in the land completely, and hushing the wonted roar of the surf for a month or six weeks at a time. In exceptionally cold seasons, for three and even four months the coast will be ice-bound; and winters, on the other hand, occur, like the last one, (1873-'74,) in which not even the sight of an ice-floe was recorded, and there was very little skating on the little lakes, but this is not often the case. The breaking up of winter-weather usually commences about the first week in April, the ice beginning to leave or dissolve at that time or a little later, so that by the 1st or the 5th of May generally, the beaches and rocky sea-margins are clear and free from ice and snow; although snow occasionally lies in gullies and leeward hill-slopes, where it has drifted during the winter, until the end of July and middle of August. Fog, damp, thick, and heavy, closes in about the end of May, and this, the usual sign of summer, holds on steadily until the middle or end of October.

The periods of change are exceedingly irregular in autumn and spring, but in summer the uniformity of the weather, with cool, moist, shady, gray fog, is constant, and to this certainty of favorable climate, coupled with the perfect isolation and exceeding fitness of the ground, is due, without doubt, the preference for it manifested by the warm-blooded animals which come here every year, to the practical exclusion of all other ground, in thousands and hundreds of thousands, to breed.

The climate of these islands has received careful attention, as will be seen by reference to the report of Mr. Charles P. Fish, of the United States Signal-Service, to which reference may be made for more detailed information upon the subject. I simply remark here that the winter of 1872-'73 was one of great severity, and, according to the natives, such as is very seldom experienced; but cold as it was, however, the lowest marking by thermometer was but  $12^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit below zero, and that for a few hours only during a day in February, while the mean of the month was  $18^{\circ}$  above. The coldest month, March, gave a mean of  $12^{\circ}$  above, while the mean of a usual winter is no lower than  $22^{\circ}$  or  $26^{\circ}$ ; but the high north winds which I experienced during that winter were blowing more than three-fourths of the time, and made all outdoor exercise impracticable. On a day in March, for example, its velocity was at the rate of eighty-eight miles per hour, with as low a temperature as  $-4^{\circ}$ ! With a wind blowing but twenty or twenty-five miles an hour, at a much higher temperature, as at  $15^{\circ}$  or  $16^{\circ}$  above zero, it is necessary to be most thoroughly wrapped up to guard against freezing, if any journey is to be made on foot.

There are here, virtually, but two seasons, winter and summer. To the former belong November and the following months up to the end of April, with a mean of  $20^{\circ}$  to  $28^{\circ}$ , while the transition to summer is but a slight elevation in temperature, only  $15^{\circ}$  to  $20^{\circ}$ ; of the summer months July is perhaps the warmest, usually with a mean of  $46^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$  in ordinary seasons.

It is astonishing how rapidly snow melts here at a single degree above freezing, and after several consecutive days in April or May at  $34^{\circ}$  and  $36^{\circ}$ , grass begins to grow, even if it be under melting drifts and the frost is many feet in depth under it. In the appendix I have placed a table, compiled from the report of Mr. Fish, above referred to, as interesting in showing the character of a very severe winter on the Seal Islands.

The formation of these islands was recent, geologically speaking, and due to direct volcanic agency, which lifted them abruptly though gradually from the sea-bed, building upon them below the water's-level as they rose, and subsequently above, by spout-holes or craters, from which water-puddled breccia and volcanic ashes and tufa were thrown. Soon after the elevation and deposition of the igneous matter, all volcanic action must have ceased, though the clearly blown-out throat and smooth, sharp-cut, funnel-like walls of a crater on Otter Island (one of

the group, six miles south of Saint Paul's) would seem to indicate quite recent action, and this is the only place on the Prybilov Islands where anything has been discharged from a crater at so late a date.

Since the period of the upheaval of the group under discussion the sea has done much to modify and enlarge the most important island, Saint Paul's, while the others, Saint George and Otter, being lifted abruptly above the power of water and ice to carry and deposit sand, soil, and bowlders, are but little changed.

SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND is the largest and far the most important and valuable of the whole group. Upon my first arrival there in April, 1872, I was surprised to find that no steps had been taken to obtain an accurate or even approximately correct idea of the size and shape of it. I at once set to work upon it, and give herewith as the result of this labor the first definite figures as to its dimension and area, together with a map showing the outline and topography, with special sketches of the area and position of each fur-seal "rookery" or breeding-ground.

The Reef Point of the island stands in latitude  $57^{\circ} 8'$  north, and west longitude  $170^{\circ} 12'$ , being the most southerly land. The island is in its greatest length, between northeast and southwest points, 13 miles air-line, and in greatest width a little less than six. It has a superficial area of about 33 square miles, or 21,120 acres, of diversified, rough, and rocky uplands, small, rounded hills, which either set down boldly to the sea, or fade into wet, mossy flats and dry drifting sand-dune tracts. It has 42 miles of shore-line,  $16\frac{1}{2}$  of which are used by the fur-seals *en masse*.

At the time of its first upheaval above the sea it must have presented the appearance of ten or twelve little rocky-bluff islets or points, upon some of which were craters, vomiting breccia and cinders, but with little or no lava overflowing; the plutonic power after this ceased to act, and the sea commenced the work of building on to the skeleton thus created, and to-day so thorough and successful has it been in its labor of sand-shifting, together with the aid of ice-floes, in their action of grinding, lifting, and shoving, that nearly all of the scattered islets, within the present area of the island, are completely bound together by bars of sand and bowlders, which are raised above the highest tides by winds that whirl the sand up

as it drives out from the wash of surf, and rocks lifted and pushed up by ice-fields.

The sand which plays so important a part in the formation of Saint Paul's Island, and which is almost entirely wanting on and around the others in this group, is largely composed of *Foraminifera*, together with *Diatomacea* mixed in with the volcanic base. It changes color like a chameleon as it passes from wet to dry, being a rich steely-black at the surf-margin, then drying out to a soft purplish brown and gray, succeeding to tints most delicate, of reddish and pale gray when warmed by the sun and drifting with the wind. The sand-dune tracts on this island are really attractive in the summer at certain times when the weather is pleasant; the most luxuriant grass and a variety of beautiful flowers exist in profusion on them.

As these sand and boulder bars were forming on Saint Paul's Island, in making across from inlet to inlet, they inclosed small collections of sea-water, thus giving rise to a number of lakes, which nearly all become fresh; in them are no reptiles or fish, but a great number of minute *Rotifera* sport about in all of them whenever the water is examined; several water-plants and algæ flourish, especially so in the large lake, which is very shallow.

The total absence of a harbor in the group is much to be regretted. The village of Saint Paul, as will be seen by reference to the map, is located so as to command the best landings that can be made from vessels during the prevalence of any winds other than southerly; from these there is no shelter for vessels, unless they run around to the north side, where they are unable to hold communication or to discharge. At Saint George matters are still worse, for all northerly, westerly, and easterly winds drive the shipping away from the village roadstead, and weeks often pass at either island before a cargo is landed at its destination. The approach to Saint Paul during thick weather is very hazardous, for the land is mostly low, and does not loom up like Saint George through the fog; there are, besides, numerous reefs making out, which are not found around the other island. Captain Baker carefully sounded out these localities last summer, while waiting for us, and I have placed the result of this valuable work on my chart, so that the next captain of a revenue-vessel coming here will be able to feel his way in with some degree of security.

SAINT GEORGE'S ISLAND is next in order of importance and

size, and in regard to its size, shape, &c., I found the same want of knowledge experienced at Saint Paul's; a survey, which I immediately made on my first arrival, June, 1873, gives to the island a length of not quite ten and a half miles by four and a quarter between points of the greatest width. It has an area of about twenty-seven square miles; has twenty-nine miles of coast-line, of which only two and a quarter are visited by the fur-seals, and which is in fact all the eligible landing-ground afforded them by the structure of the island, which rises everywhere else, save at the village-front, abruptly from the water, which breaks boldly at the bases of the lofty cliffs all around. Nearly half of the shore-line of Saint Paul is a sand-beach, while on Saint George there is less than a mile of it all put together, viz, a few hundred yards in front of the village, the same extent at the Garden Cove, southeast side, and less than half a mile at Zapadnie, on the south side. Several thousand sea-lions hold exclusive though shy possession of half a mile of good landing on the east side.

"*Tolstoi Mees,*" or East Cape, lies in north latitude  $56^{\circ} 37' 1''$ ,\* and the west end, or "*Dalnoi Mees,*"  $56^{\circ} 38' 3''$ ,\* with west longitudes of  $169^{\circ} 27'$ \* and  $169^{\circ} 44'$ \*, respectively, while the village, on the north shore, is in  $56^{\circ} 39' 16''.6$ ,  $169^{\circ} 19' 6''$ .

On the north shore of the island, three miles west from the village, a grand bluff wall of basalt and tufa intercalated rises abruptly from the sea to a height of 920 feet at the reach of greatest elevation, and runs clear around the island to Zapadnie, a distance of some ten miles, without affording a single passage-way up from or down to the sea. Upon the innumerable ledges and in countless chinks and crannies millions of water-fowl breed during the summer-months.

The general elevation of Saint George, while not great, is on an average three times as great as that of Saint Paul, which is quite low, and slopes gently to the sea east and north. But Saint George rises abruptly, with exceptional spots for landing. The highest land on Saint George is 930 feet, and the summit of the high bluffs before mentioned; that on Saint Paul is *Boga Slov Hill*, 600 feet. All elevations on either island 10 or 12 feet above sea-level are rough and hummocky, with

\* These observations are taken from Russian authority, and are several miles out of the way, but the only ones available. That of the village was determined by Lieutenant Maynard last summer, July 10, and may be considered accurate.

the exception of the summits of a few cinder-hills. The supply of water is abundant and good. The only living stream of water on the Seal Islands is found on Saint George, a small clear brook that empties into the Garden Cove; but the area covered by fresh-water lakes on this island is very much less than that of Saint Paul.

Weathered out or washed from the basalt and pockets of olivine on the islands are aggregates of augite, seen most abundant on the summit slopes of Ahlucheyeh Hill, Saint George. Specimens from the stratified bands of old, friable, gray lavas, so conspicuous on the bluffs of the north shore of this island, show the existence of hornblende and vitreous feldspar in considerable quantity, while on the south shore, near the Garden Cove, is a large dike of a bluish and greenish-gray phonolitic rock, in which numerous small crystals of spinel are found. A dike with well-defined walls of old, close-grained clay-colored lava is close by the village of Saint George, about a quarter of a mile east from the landing, in the face of breccia bluffs that rise from the sea. It is the only example of its kind on these islands.

The foundations of the islands, all of them, are basalt, some compact, grayish-white, but most of them exceedingly porous and ferruginous; and upon this solid floor are many hills of brown and red basaltic tufas, cinder-heaps, &c. "Polovina Sopka," the second point in elevation on Saint Paul's, (550 feet,) is almost entirely built up of red scorixæ and breccia. The bluffs at the shore, "Polovina Point," show the hard basaltic underpinning upon which the hill rests. The tufas on both islands decompose and weather into fertile soil, which the severe climate renders useless. There is not a trace of a granitic or gneissic rock found *in situ*. Several metamorphic boulders have been collected, which were dropped upon the beaches by ice-floes, brought down by the strong northwesterners from the Asiatic coast.

The black-brown tufa and breccia bluffs at the East Landing, Saint Paul's Island, rise abruptly from the sea there 60 to 80 feet, with stratified horizontal bands of a light-gray calcareous conglomerate or cement, in which are imbedded sundry fossils characteristic of the Tertiary age, such as *Cardium groenlandicum*, *decoratum*, *Astarte pectuncula*, &c. This is the only locality in the Prybilov Islands where any paleontological evidence of their age can be found.



OTTER ISLAND ranks third in the group, and lies six miles south-southwest from the "Reef Point" of Saint Paul's Island. It is about a mile and a quarter in greatest length by less than half a mile in extreme width. The east, south, and west shores are bold and bluff, not to be approached by men, and hardly by seals, during rough weather; but the north shore, for most of its extent, rises quite gradually from the surf; the beach is, however, broken and rocky, with no sand. The highest point is the summit of the bluffs on the west end, some 300 feet. A small shallow lake lies near the north shore and landing; water impure and uncertain.

On this island there is no breeding-ground occupied by the fur-seals, but the non-breeding seals lie out here in large numbers off and on during the season.

WALRUS ISLAND, fourth and last, is of little or no commercial importance, but a very interesting spot—a mere table-rock, elevated but slightly above surf-wash, a quarter of a mile in length and a hundred yards in width, and, like Otter Island, has bold water all around, and, better still, entirely free from reefs or sunken rocks. It lies six miles south-southeast from northeast point of Saint Paul's. There is no fresh water on it.

It is not resorted to by the fur-seals, but several hundred male walrus (*Rosmarus*) are found here most of the year, and a few sea-lions breed there. On account of rough weather, fogs, &c., the island is seldom visited by the natives of Saint Paul, and then only during the egg-season, in June and July, when the island is literally swarming with breeding water-fowl.

The opportunity afforded here of seeing the strange walrus-herds to the very best advantage is not equaled by any other place in the Territory. Here can also be plainly seen the movements and habits of myriads of nesting water-fowl.

Vegetation on these islands, with the exception of the last named, such as it is, is fresh and luxuriant during the growing season of June and July and early August, but the beauty and economic value of trees and shrubbery seem to be denied to them by climatic conditions, though I am strongly inclined to believe that any of the hardy shrubs and trees indigenous at Sitka and Kodiak would grow here if transplanted properly on some of the southern hill-slopes most favored by soil, drainage, and position for shelter; but they would never mature their seed, owing to the want of sunlight to ripen, so that reproduc-

tion of their kind would not follow. There are, however, ten or twelve species of grasses growing in every variety, from close, curly, compact tufts on the seal-grounds, to tall stalks, standing in favorable seasons waist-high; the "wheat" of the north, (*Elymus*,) together with over a hundred varieties of annuals, perennials, sphagnum, cryptogamic plants, &c., all flourishing in their respective positions, and covering nearly every point upon which plants can grow with a living coat of the greenest of all greens, as there is not sunlight enough to ripen any deep tinge of yellow into it—so green that it gives a deep-blue tint to gray noonday shadows, contrasting pleasantly with the varied russets, reds, yellows, and grays of the lichen-covered rocks and the bronzed purple of the wild wheat on the sand-dune tracts in autumn, and the innumerable blue, yellow, pink, and white blossoms everywhere interspersed. Occasionally by looking closely into the thickest masses of verdure our common wild violet will be found. The floral display predominates greatly on Saint Paul, owing to the absence of the same extent of warm sand-dune country on the other islands.

By the end of August and first week in September of normal seasons, the small edible berries (*Empetrum nigrum* and *Rubus chamaemorus*) are ripe, which are found in considerable quantities, the former being small, watery, and black, about the size of an English or black currant, and the other resembling an unripe and partly-decayed raspberry. They are the only fruit afforded by the islands, and are of course keenly relished by the natives.

There are very few insects on the Seal Islands. A large flesh-fly appears during the summer in a striking manner, and settles upon the long grass-blades which flourish on the killing-grounds especially, settling by tens of millions, causing the vegetation over the whole slaughtering-field and vicinity to fairly droop to the earth as though beaten down by a tornado of wind and rain. Our common house-fly is not present, and those just mentioned never come into the dwellings unless by accident. It does not annoy man or beast. There are no mosquitoes. A small gnat flits about, inoffensive, taking shelter in the grass.

Aside from the seal-life on the Prybilov Islands, there are no indigenous mammalia with the exception of blue and white foxes, and the lemming, (*Myodes obensis*,) which latter is restricted, singularly enough, to the island of Saint George, where

it is exceedingly abundant. Its burrows and paths under and among the grassy hummocks and mossy flats literally checker every square rod of land there covered with this vegetation; and although Saint Paul's Island lies but twenty-nine miles to the northwest, not a single one of these active, curious little animals is found there.

The foxes (*Vulpes lagopus*) are also, of their kind, restricted to these islands, not being found elsewhere, except stray examples, which get cast away on the ice at Attou or Saint Matthew's, and find here among the countless chinks and crevices in the basaltic formation comfortable holes for their accommodation and retreat, feeding fat upon sick and pup seals, waterfowl, and eggs during the summer, and living through the winter upon the bodies of seals left upon the breeding-grounds and the carcasses upon the killing-fields.

The islands are as yet free from rats, but mice have been brought long ago in ships' cargoes, and are a great pest in the winter.

As might be inferred from their formation, these islands possess no mineral wealth of economic value whatever.

Stock cannot be profitably raised here; the proportion of severe winter is too great, as from three, at least, to perhaps six months of the year they would require feeding and watering, with good shelter. To furnish animals with hay and grain is a costly matter, and the dampness of the growing or summer season on both islands renders hay-curing impracticable.

Perhaps a few head of hardy Siberian cattle might pick up a living through a rough winter on the north shore of Saint Paul among the grassy sand-dunes there, with nothing more than shelter and water given them, but the care of them would hardly return expenses, as the winter-grazing ground would not support any great number of animals, it being less than two square miles in extent, and half of this area being unproductive.

I am strongly inclined to think that reindeer would make a successful issue with any struggle here that they might have for existence, and be the source of an excellent supply, summer and winter, of fresh meat for the agents of the Government and the company who may be living upon the islands. The Russians, as well as the present occupants of the place, were in the habit of keeping, and still do keep, a few head of cattle, and a number of hogs and chickens throughout winters for table use,

but it is without profit, except as a luxury. The natives take their poultry into their houses, and relish their pork after the hogs have fed fat upon seal-carrion, and therefore it is profitable to them.

In the appendix will be found a detailed chapter upon the ornithology of these islands, but the great exhibition of pinnipedia preponderates over every other form of animal life. Still the spectacle of birds nesting and breeding, as they do on Saint George's Island, to the number of millions, flocking the high basaltic bluffs, (a shore-line of that character twenty miles in length,) black, brown, and white, as they perch or cling to the cliffs in the labor of incubation, is a sight of exceeding interest and constant novelty, affording the naturalist opportunity for investigation into the most minute details of the reproduction of these vast flocks of circumboreal water-fowl. Saint Paul's Island, owing to the low character of its shore-line, a large portion of which is but slightly elevated above the sea and is sandy, is not visited by such myriads of birds as are seen at Saint George; but the small rock, Walrus Island, is fairly covered with sea-fowls, and the Otter Island bluffs are crowded to their utmost. The variety in these millions of breeding-birds is not great, since it consists of only ten or twelve names, and the whole list belonging to the Prybilov Islands, stragglers and migratory, contains but forty species. Conspicuous among the last-named class is the robin, which was brought from the mainland, evidently against its own will, by a storm or gale of wind, as must also be the case with the solitary hawks and owls occasionally noticed here.

After the dead silence of a long ice-bound winter, the arrival in the spring of large, noisy flocks of "choochkies" (*Phalaris microceros*) is most cheerful and interesting. These are bright, fearless little birds, with bodies generally plump and fat, and come usually in chattering flocks by the 1st to the 5th of May. They are caught by the people, to any number required, in hand scoop-nets, as they fly to and from their nests, made in the cliffs and among boulders. They are succeeded about the 20th July by large flocks of fat, red-legged turn-stones, likewise edible, (*Streptilas interpres*), which come in suddenly from the west or north, where they have been breeding, and stop on the islands for a month or six weeks, to feed fat upon the flesh-flies and their eggs, which swarm over the killing-grounds; these handsome, red-legged birds go familiarly among the seals,

chasing flies, gnats, &c. They are followed, as they leave in September, by several species of jacksnipe, (*Eringa* and *Charadrius*,) which, however, depart by the end of October and early in November, and when winter fairly closes in upon the islands, the loud roaring, incessant seal-din, together with the screams and darkening flight of innumerable water-fowl, are replaced by absolute silence, marking out, as it were, in lines of sharp and vivid contrast, summer's life and winter's death.

I have been unable to discover a single representative of the reptiles on the islands, and a small list only of the fishes and molluscans rewarded the most careful search. The presence of such great numbers of seals in the water about the islands during five and six months of every year renders all fishing abortive, unless expeditions are made seven or eight miles, at least, from the land, with the exception of halibut, which the natives capture within two or three miles of the reef-point and south shore during July and August; but the weather is usually, after this season, too stormy and cold for the fishermen to venture in their bidarkies during the fall or spring.

## II. THE NUMBERS OF FUR-SEALS WHICH ANNUALLY VISIT THE ISLANDS.

Until my arrival on the Seal Islands, April, 1872, no steps had been taken toward ascertaining the extent or the importance of these interests of the Government by either the Treasury agent in charge, or the agent of the company leasing the islands. This was a matter of no especial concern to the latter, but was of the first importance to the Government. It had, however, failed to obtain a definite knowledge upon the subject, on account of the inaccurate mode of ascertaining the number of the seals which had been adopted by its agent, who relied upon an assumption of the area of the breeding "rookeries," but who never took the trouble to ascertain the area and position of these great seal-grounds intrusted to his care.

After a careful study of the subject during two whole seasons, and a thorough review of it during this season of 1874, in company with my associate, Lieutenant Maynard, I propose to show plainly and in sequence the steps which have led me to a solution of the question as to the number of fur-seals on the Prybilov Islands, together with the determination of means by which the agent of the Government will be able to correctly report upon the condition of the seal-life from year to year.

At the close of my investigation for the season of 1872, the fact became evident that the breeding-seals obeyed implicitly a fine, instinctive *law of distribution*, so that the breeding-ground occupied by them was always covered by seals in an exact ratio, greater or less, to the area to be held; that they always covered the ground evenly, never crowding in at one place and scattering at another; that the seals lay just as thickly together where the rookery was a small one of only a few thousand, as at Naspeel, near the village, as they did where a million of them came together, as at Northeast Point.

This fact being determined, it is at once plain *that just as the breeding-grounds of the fur-seal on these islands expand or contract in area from their present dimensions, so the seals will have increased or diminished.*

Impressed, therefore, with the necessity and the importance of obtaining the exact area and position of these breeding-grounds, I surveyed them in 1872-'73 for that purpose, and resurveyed them this season of 1874; the result has been carefully drawn and plotted out, as presented in the accompanying maps.

The time for taking these boundaries of the rookeries is during the week of their greatest expansion, or when they are as full as they are to be for the season, *and before the regular system of compact, even organization breaks up*, the seals then scattering out in pods or clusters, straying far back, the same number covering then twice as much ground in places as they did before, when marshaled on the rookery-ground proper; the breeding-seals remain on the rookery perfectly quiet and *en masse* for a week or ten days during the period of greatest expansion, which is between the 10th and 20th of July, giving ample time for the agent to correctly note the exact boundaries of the area covered by them; this step on the part of the Government officer puts him in possession every year of exact data upon which to base a report as to the condition of the seal-life, as compared with the year or years previous. In this way my record of the precise area and position of the fur-seal breeding-grounds on Saint Paul's Island in the season of 1872, and that of Saint George in the season of 1873, correctly serves as a definite basis for all time to come upon which to found authoritative reports from year to year as to any change, increase, or diminution of the seal-life. It is, therefore, very important that the Government should have an agent in charge of these novel and valuable interests who is capable, by virtue of education

and energy, to correctly observe and report the area and position of the rookeries year by year.

With a knowledge of the superficial area of these breeding-grounds, the way is opened to a very interesting calculation as to the number of the fur-seals upon them. For an estimate based apparently upon good foundations, the following is the plan by which I have been guided :

When the adult males and females (fifteen of the latter to every one of the former) all arrive upon the rookery, I think a space a little less than two feet square to each female is a large one for that required by each animal, in obedience to its habit, and may safely be said to be under the mark ; now, *every female* or "*cow*" on its two feet square doubles herself, that is, *brings forth her young*, and in a few days, or about a week after its birth, she visits the water, and is not one-quarter of the time on land again during the season. In this way it is clear that the female seals *almost double their number* on the rookery-grounds without causing the expansion of the same beyond the limits that would be required by the adults alone ; for every 100,000 breeding-seals will be found to consist of more than 85,000 females and less than 15,000 males, and in a few weeks after the landing of the females, they will show about 180,000 males, females, and *young*, on the same area of ground occupied previous to the birth of the "*pups*."

Now the males, being treble and quadruple the size of the females, require about four feet square for their use on this same ground, but as they are less than one-fifteenth the number of the females, they therefore occupy only one-eighth of the breeding-ground of the 100,000 supposed, and this surplus area of the males is more than balanced by the 15,000 to 20,000 virgin females which come on to this breeding-ground for the first time to meet the males ; they come, rest a few days or a week, and retire, leaving no young to show their presence on the island. Taking all these points into consideration, I quite safely calculate upon two square feet to every animal, big and little, on the breeding-grounds. Without following this system of computation, a person may look over these swarming myriads of seals, guessing vaguely and wildly at any number, from one million up to six or seven.

Below are the figures made from my survey of the area and position of the breeding-grounds of the fur-seal on Saint Paul's

Island, July 10-18, 1872. It is the first survey ever made on the island :

	Seals—♂ ♀ ◦
“Novastoshnah,” or Northeast Point, has 15,840 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for .....	1, 200, 000
“Polavina” Rookery has 4,000 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for .....	300, 000
“Lukannon” Rookery has 2,270 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for.	170, 000
“Keetavie” Rookery has 2,200 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for.....	165, 000
“Reef” Rookery has 4,016 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for....	301, 000
“Garbutch” Rookery has 3,660 feet of sea-margin, with 100 feet of average depth, making ground for.	183, 000
“Nahspeel” or Village Rookery has 400 feet of sea-margin, with 40 feet average depth, making ground for .....	8, 000
“Lagoon” Rookery has 750 feet of sea-margin, with 100 feet of average depth, making ground for....	37,000
“Tolstoi” Rookery has 3,000 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for .....	225, 000
“Zapadnie” Rookery has 5,880 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for .....	441, 000

A grand total for Saint Paul's Island of males, females, and young, of..... 3, 030, 250

The breeding-grounds on Saint George's Island, surveyed July 12-15, 1873, gave the following figures; also the first survey ever made here :

“Eastern” Rookery has 900 feet of sea-margin, with 60 feet of average depth, making ground for ....	25, 000
“Little Eastern” Rookery has 750 feet of sea-margin, with 40 feet of average depth, making ground for .....	13, 000
“North” Rookery has 2,000 feet of sea-margin, with 25 feet of average depth, making ground for ....	25, 000



“North” Rookery has 750 feet of sea-margin, with 150 feet of average depth, making ground for.....	52, 000
“Starry Ateel” Rookery has 500 feet of sea-margin, with 125 feet of average depth, making ground for.....	30, 420
“Zapadnië” Rookery has 600 feet of sea-margin, with 60 feet of average depth, making ground for.....	18, 000

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A grand total for Saint George’s Island of males, females, and young, of..... 163, 420

These figures show a grand total of 3,193,670 breeding-seals and their young, and *this aggregate is entirely exclusive of the great numbers of the non-breeding seals*, which are never permitted to come upon the same ground with the females by the males in charge. This class of seals, to which the killing is confined, come up on the land and sea-beach between the rookeries, going to and from the sea at irregular intervals during the season. It has no systematic, definite method, like the breeding-class, of filling up to certain bounds and keeping so for several weeks at a time, and is, therefore, beyond reach for ground upon which to found calculation, and I can only give an estimate based upon my close observation with especial reference to this subject, and this is my conclusion :

The *non-breeding seals*, consisting of all the yearlings and all the males under six or seven years, seem nearly equal in number to the breeding-seals, and I put them down at 1,500,000 as a fair estimate, and make the sum of the seal-life on the Prybilov Islands over *four million seven hundred thousand*.

The seals after leaving these islands in the autumn and early winter do not visit land again until the time of return, next April, May, and June, to the grounds here, or those of the Russian “Copper” and “Bering” Islands. They spread themselves out over the vast North Pacific, following schools of fish, or frequenting shoals and banks where an abundance of fishy food is found. They can sleep with the greatest comfort and soundness on the surface of the water, and in this state they are often surprised by the natives of the northwest coast, all the way up and down, from the Columbia River to Bering Sea. On the killing-grounds at Saint George, June, 1873, the natives would frequently call my attention to seals that they were skinning, in which buck-shot were imbedded and encysted just under the

hide in the blubber. From one animal fifteen shot were taken, and the holes which they must have made in the skin were entirely healed so as not to leave a scar. These bullets were undoubtedly received from the natives of the northwest coast, anywhere between the Straits of Fuca and the Aleutian Islands, used by them in attempting the capture of the animals some season or seasons previously. A small number of seals, not definitely known, however, are taken by the Indians every year along the coasts above mentioned, who surprise them while soundly asleep in the water, either by shooting or spearing. The number taken in this way every year will not average 5,000; some seasons more, some seasons less.

That these animals are preyed upon extensively by killer-whales, (*Orca gladiator*), sharks, and other foes now unknown, is at once evident; for were they not held in check by some such cause, they would quickly multiply to so great an extent that Bering Sea itself could not contain them, and the present annual killing of one hundred thousand out of a yearly surplus of over a million males does not, in an appreciable degree, diminish the seal-life, or interfere in the slightest with its regular perpetuation on the breeding-grounds every year. We may properly look upon this number of four and five millions of fur-seals, as we see them here every year on these islands, as the maximum limit of increase assigned by natural laws. I think I make this clear in my chapter upon the habits of these valuable and interesting animals, without a knowledge of which it is not possible for any one to fully appreciate the truth of these generalizations. Before, however, the subject of the possible increase or diminution of the seal-life is taken up for discussion, it is best to consider the—

### III. MANNER IN WHICH THE SEALS ARE ANNUALLY TAKEN.

*Taking the seals.*—By reference to the habits of the fur-seal, it is plain that two-thirds of all the males that are born (and they are equal in number to the females born) are never permitted by the remaining third, strongest by natural selection, to land upon the same ground with the females, which always herd together *en masse*. Therefore, this great band of bachelor seals, or “holluschickie,” is compelled, when it visits land, to live apart entirely, miles away frequently, from the breeding-grounds, and in this admirably perfect manner of nature are those seals which can be properly killed without injury

to the rookeries selected and held aside, so that the natives can visit and take them as they would so many hogs, without disturbing in the slightest degree the peace and quiet of the breeding-grounds where the stock is perpetuated.

The manner in which the natives capture and drive the holuschickie up from the hauling-grounds to the slaughtering-fields near the villages and elsewhere, cannot be improved upon, and is most satisfactory.

In the early part of the season large bodies of the young bachelor seals do not haul up on land very far from the water, a few rods at the most, and the men are obliged to approach slyly and run quickly between the dozing seals and the surf, before they take alarm and bolt into the sea, and in this way a dozen Aleuts, running down the long sand-beach of English Bay, some driving-morning early in June, will turn back from the water thousands of seals, just as the mold-board of a plow lays over and back a furrow of earth. As the sleeping seals are first startled they arise, and seeing men between them and the water, immediately turn, lope and scramble rapidly back over the land; the natives then leisurely walk on the flanks and in the rear of the drove thus secured, and direct and drive them over to the killing-grounds.

A drove of seals on hard or firm grassy ground, in cool and moist weather, may with safety be driven at the rate of half a mile an hour; they can be urged along with the expenditure of a great many lives in the drove, at the speed of a mile or a mile and a quarter even per hour, but this is highly injudicious and is seldom ever done. A bull-seal, fat and unwieldy, cannot travel with the younger ones, but it can lope or gallop as it were over the ground as fast as an ordinary man can run for a hundred yards, but then it falls to the earth supine, utterly exhausted, hot and gasping for breath.

The seals, when driven thus to the killing-grounds, require but little urging; they are permitted to frequently halt and cool off, as heating them injures their fur; they never show fight any more than a flock of sheep would do, unless a few old seals are mixed in, which usually get so weary that they prefer to come to a stand-still and fight rather than to move; this action on their part is of great advantage to all parties concerned, and the old fellows are always permitted to drop behind and remain, for the fur on them is of little or no value, the pelage very much shorter, coarser, and more scant than in the

younger, especially so on the parts posteriorly. This change in the condition of the fur seems to set in at the time of their shedding, in the fifth year as a rule.

As the drove progresses the seals all move in about the same way, a kind of a walking-step and a sliding, shambling gallop, and the progression of the whole body is a succession of starts, made every few minutes, spasmodic and irregular. Every now and then a seal will get weak in the lumbar region, and drag his posterior after it for a short distance, but finally drops breathless and exhausted, not to revive for hours, days perhaps, and often never. Quite a large number of the weaker ones, on the driest driving-days, are thus laid out and left on the road; if one is not too much heated at the time, the native driver usually taps the beast over the head and removes its skin. This will happen, no matter how carefully they are driven, and the death-loss is quite large, as much as 3 or 4 per cent. on the longer drives, such as three and four miles, from Zapadni or Polavina to the village on Saint Paul's, and I feel satisfied that a considerable number of those rejected from the drove and permitted to return to the water die subsequently from internal injuries sustained on the drive from overexertion. I therefore think it improper to extend drives of seals over any distance exceeding a mile or a mile and a half. It is better for all parties concerned to erect salt-houses and establish killing-grounds adjacent to all of the great hauling-grounds on Saint Paul's Island should the business ever be developed above the present limit. As matters now are, the ninety thousand seals belonging to the quota of Saint Paul last summer were taken and skinned in less than forty days within one mile from either the village, or salt-house on North-east Point.

*Killing the seals.*—The seals when brought up to the killing-grounds are herded there until cool and rested; then squads or "pods" of fifty to two hundred are driven out from the body of the drove, surrounded and huddled up one against and over the other, by the natives, who carry each a long, heavy club of hard wood, with which they strike the seals down by blows upon the head; a single stroke of a heavy oak bludgeon, well and fairly delivered, will crush in at once the slight, thin bones of a seal's skull, laying the creature out lifeless; these strokes are usually repeated several times with each animal, but are very quickly done.

The killing-gang, consisting usually of fifteen or twenty men at a time, are under the supervision of a chief of their own selection, and have, before going into action, a common understanding as to what grades to kill, sparing the others which are unfit, under age, &c., permitting them to escape and return to the water as soon as the marked ones are knocked down; the natives then drag the slain out from the heap in which they have fallen, and spread the bodies out over the ground just free from touching one another so that they will not be hastened in "heating" or blasting, finishing the work of death by thrusting into the chest of each stunned and senseless seal a long, sharp knife, which touches the vitals and bleeds it thoroughly; and if a cool day, another "pod" is started out and disposed of in the same way, and so on until a thousand or two are laid out, or the drove is finished; then they turn to and skin; but if it is a warm day, every "pod" is skinned as soon as it is knocked down.

This work of killing as well as skinning is performed very rapidly; for example, forty-five men or natives on Saint Paul's during June and July, 1872, in less than four working-weeks drove, killed, skinned, and salted the pelts of 72,000 seals.

The labor of skinning is exceedingly severe, and is trying to an expert, requiring long practice before the muscles of the back and thighs are so developed as to permit a man to bend down to and finish well a fair day's work.

The body of the seal, preparatory to skinning, is rolled over or put upon its back, and the native makes a single swift cut through the skin down along the neck, chest, and belly, from the lower jaw to the root of the tail, using for this purpose a large, sharp knife. The fore and hind flippers are then successively lifted, and a sweeping circular incision is made through the skin on them just at the point where the body-fur ends; then, seizing a flap of the hide on either one side or the other of the abdomen, the man proceeds to rapidly cut the skin clean and free from the body and blubber, which he rolls over and out from the skin by hauling up on it as he advances with his work, standing all the time stooping over the carcass so that his hands are but slightly above it or the ground. This operation of skinning a fair-sized seal takes the best men only a minute and a half, but the average time on the ground is about four minutes.

Nothing is left of the skin upon the carcass save a small

patch of each upper lip, on which the coarse mustache grows, the skin on the tip of the lower jaw, the insignificant tail, together with the bare hide of the flippers.

The blubber of the fur-seal is of a faint yellowish white, and lies entirely between the skin and the flesh, none being deposited in between the muscles. Around the small and large intestines a moderate quantity of hard, firm fat is found. The blubber possesses an extremely offensive, sickening odor, difficult to wash from the hands. It makes, however, a very fair oil for lubricating, burning, &c.

The flesh of the fur-seal, when carefully cleaned from fat or blubber, can be cooked, and by most people eaten, who, did they not know what it was, might consider it some poor, tough, dry beef, rather dark in color and overdone. That of the pup, however, while on the land and milk-fed, is tender and juicy but insipid.

The skins are taken from the field to the salt-house, where they are laid out open, one upon another, "hair to fat," like so many sheets of paper, with salt profusely spread upon the fleshy sides, in "kenches" or bins. After lying a week or two salted in this style they are ready for bundling and shipping, two skins to the bundle, the fur outside, tightly rolled up and strongly corded, having an average weight of twelve, fifteen, and twenty-two pounds when made up of two, three, and four year old skins respectively.

The company leasing the islands are permitted by law to take one hundred thousand, and no more, annually; this they do in June and July; after that season the skins rapidly grow worthless by shedding, and do not pay for transportation and tax. The natives are paid forty cents a skin for the catch, and keep a close account of the progress of the work every day, as it is all done by them, and they know within fifty skins, one way or the other, when the whole number have been secured each season. This is the only occupation of some three hundred and fifty people here, and they naturally look well after it. The interest and close attention paid by these Aleuts on both islands to this business was both gratifying and instructive to me while stationed there.

The common or popular notion regarding seal-skins is that they are worn by those animals just as they appear when offered for sale. This is a very great mistake; few skins are less attractive than the seal-skin as it is taken from the creature. The fur is not visible, concealed entirely by a coat of stiff over-

hair, dull gray, brown, and grizzled. The best of these raw skins are worth only \$5 to \$10, but after dressing they bring from \$25 to \$40; and it takes three of them to make a lady's sack and boa. In order that it may be apparent that there is reason for this great advance in price over the raw quotation, I take great pleasure in submitting a description of the process, kindly furnished me by a leading furrier practically and skillfully conversant with the subject, probably the only person in the country long familiar with it. His communication is as follows:

"ALBANY, *October 22, 1874.*

"SIR: The Alaska Commercial Company sold in London, December, 1873, about sixty thousand skins taken from the islands leased by our Government of the catch of 1873. The remainder of the catch, about forty thousand, were sold in March. This company have made the collection of seal from these islands much more valuable than they were before their lease, by the care used by them in curing the skins, and taking them only when in season. We have worked this class of seal for several years—when they were owned by the Russian American Fur Company, and during the first year they were owned by our Government.

"When the skins are received by us in the salt, we wash off the salt, placing them upon a beam somewhat like a tanner's beam, removing the fat from the flesh-side with a beaming-knife, care being required that no cuts or uneven places are made in the pelt. The skins are next washed in water and placed upon the beam with the fur up, and the grease and water removed by the knife. The skins are then dried by moderate heat, being tacked out on frames to keep them smooth. After being fully dried, they are soaked in water and thoroughly cleansed with soap and water. In some cases they can be un-haired without this drying-process, and cleansed before drying. After the cleansing-process they pass to the picker, who dries the fur by stove-heat, the pelt being kept moist. When the fur is dry he places the skin on a beam, and while it is warm he removes the main coat of hair with a dull shoe-knife, grasping the hair with his thumb and knife, the thumb being protected by a rubber cob. The hair must be pulled out, not broken. After a portion is removed the skin must be again warmed at the stove, the pelt being kept moist. When the outer hairs have been mostly removed, he uses a beaming-knife to work out the finer hairs, (which are shorter,) and the

remaining coarser hairs. It will be seen that great care must be used, as the skin is in that soft state that too much pressure of the knife would take the fur also; indeed, bare spots are made; carelessly-cured skins are sometimes worthless on this account. The skins are next dried, afterward dampened on the pelt side, and shaved to a fine, even surface. They are then stretched, worked, and dried; afterward softened in a fulling-mill, or by treading them with the bare feet in a hogshead, one head being removed and the cask placed nearly upright, into which the workman gets with a few skins and some fine, hard-wood sawdust, to absorb the grease while he dances upon them to break them into leather. If the skins have been shaved thin, as required when finished, any defective spots or holes must now be mended, the skin smoothed and pasted with paper on the pelt-side, or two pasted together to protect the pelt in dyeing. The usual process in the United States is to leave the pelt sufficiently thick to protect them without pasting.

"In dyeing, the liquid dye is put on with a brush, carefully covering the points of the standing fur. After lying folded, with the points touching each other, for some little time, the skins are hung up and dried. The dry dye is then removed, another coat applied, dried, and removed, and so on until the required shade is obtained. One or two of these coats of dye are put on much heavier and pressed down to the roots of the fur, making what is called the ground. From eight to twelve coats are required to produce a good color. The skins are then washed clean, the fur dried, the pelt moist. They are shaved down to the required thickness, dried, working them some while drying, then softened in a hogshead, and sometimes run in a revolving-cylinder with fine sawdust to clean them. The English process does not have the washing after dyeing.

"I should perhaps say that, with all the care used, many skins are greatly injured in the working. Quite a quantity of English dyed seal were sold last season for \$17, damaged in the dye.

"The above is a general process, but we are obliged to vary for different skins; those from various parts of the world require different treatment, and there is quite a difference in the skins from the Seal Islands of our country—I sometimes think about as much as in the human race.

"Yours, with respect,

"GEO. C. TREADWELL & CO.

"H. W. ELLIOTT, Esq."



From this subject of the manner in which the sealing-business is conducted on the islands and elsewhere, we naturally turn to the—

#### IV. PRESENT CONDITION OF THE SEAL-LIFE AND ITS VALUE.

A question frequently asked in regard to these islands is this: "At the present rate of killing the seals, it will not be long before they are exterminated; how much longer will they last?" The answer is, that as long as matters are conducted on the Seal Islands as they now are, one hundred thousand male seals, under the age of five years and over one, may be safely taken every year without the slightest injury to the regular birth-rate or natural increase, provided the animals are not visited by any plague or pestilence, or any such abnormal cause for their destruction, beyond the control of man, and to which, like any other great body of animal life, they must ever be subject.

From my calculations already given it will be seen that a million "pups," or young seals, are born upon these islands every year. Of this million, one-half are males. These 500,000 young males leave the islands for sea, when they are between five and six months old, very fat and hearty, having suffered but a trifling loss in number (about 1 per cent.) while on and about the islands, about which there are no enemies whatever; but after they get well down into the Pacific in quest of food, they form the most helpless of their kind to resist or elude sharks, killers, &c., and they are so diminished in number by these natural enemies, that when they return to the Prybilov Islands in the following year, July, they will not present more than one-half of the number with which they left the ground of their birth the previous season; that is, 250,000. By this time these survivors of last year's birth have become strong, active swimmers, and when they leave again, as before, in the fall, they are as able as any others of their older classes to take care of themselves, and at least 225,000 of them safely return in the second season after birth, and are very slightly diminished after that during their natural lives of fifteen to twenty years each; and the same will hold good with the females.

Now, the number of bulls required for the annual stock of 225,000 virgin cows, to be saved for this service every year, is by their law and habit *only one-fifteenth of the number of cows*, as on all the breeding-grounds one male will have on an average

fifteen cows; but to make sure that we save two-year-old bulls enough every season, we will more than double this proportion and set aside *one-fifth* of the young males in question, and that will leave 180,000 seals in good condition that can be safely killed every year without the slightest injury to the perpetuation of the stock itself.

In the above showing I have put the largest estimate upon the loss sustained at sea by the youngest seals, too large I am morally certain, but I wish to place the matter in the very worst light in which it can be put, and to give the seals the full benefit of every doubt.

With regard to the *increase* of the seal-life, I do not think it within the power of human management to promote this end to the slightest appreciable degree beyond its present extent and condition in a state of nature; for it cannot fail to be evident, from my detailed description of the habits and life of the fur-seal on these islands during a great part of the year, that could man have the same supervision and control over this animal during the *whole* season which he has at his command while they visit the land, he might cause them to multiply and increase, as he would so many cattle, to an indefinite number, only limited by time and means; but the case in question, unfortunately, takes the fur-seal six months out of every year far beyond the reach, or even cognizance, of any one, where it is exposed to known powerful and destructive natural enemies, and many others probably unknown, which prey upon it, and; in accordance with a well-recognized law of nature, keep it at about a certain number which has been for ages, and will be for the future, as affairs now are, *its maximum limit of increase*. This law holds good everywhere throughout the animal kingdom, regulating and preserving the equilibrium of life in a state of nature. Did it not hold good, these Seal Islands and all Bering Sea would have been literally covered, and have swarmed with them long before the Russians discovered them; but there were no more seals when first seen here by human eyes in 1786-'87 than there are now, in 1874, as far as all evidence goes.

With reference to the amount of ground covered by the seals when first discovered by the Russians, I have examined every foot of the shore-line of both islands, where the bones, &c., might be lying on any deserted ground since then, and, after carefully surveying the new ground now occupied by the seals,

and comparing this area with that which they have deserted, I feel justified in stating that, for the last twelve or fifteen years at least, the fur-seals on these islands have not diminished, nor have they increased as a body to any noteworthy degree; and during all this time the breeding-grounds have never been disturbed, and they have been living in a perfectly quiet and natural condition. Without some natural check upon this life, with a million of young born every year, during the last ten at least, the annual taking of a hundred thousand males would not in the slightest degree retard the increase which would set in at once were it not for this check aforesaid.

What can be done to promote their increase? We cannot cause a greater number of females to be born every year; we do not touch or disturb these females as they grow up and live, and we save more than enough males to serve them. Nothing more can be done, for it is impossible to protect them from deadly enemies in their wanderings for food.

This great body of four and five millions of hearty, active animals must consume an enormous amount of food every year. They cannot average less than five pounds of fish each per diem, (this is not half enough for an adult male,) which gives the consumption of over *three million tons* of fish every year!

To get this immense food-supply the seals are compelled to disperse over a very large area of the North Pacific and fish. This brings them into contact more and more with their enemies as they advance south, until they reach a point where their annual destruction from natural foes is equal to their increase, and at this point their number will remain fixed. About the Seal Islands I have failed to notice the least disturbance among these animals by anything in the water or out, and from my observation I am led to believe that it is not until they descend well to the south in the North Pacific that they meet with sharks and voracious killer-whales.\*

In view, therefore, of all these facts, I have no hesitation in saying quite confidently that, under the present rules and regulations governing the sealing interests on these islands, the increase or diminution of the life will amount to nothing; that the seals will continue for all time in about the same number and condition.

To test this theory of mine, I have put the Government in

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\*"In the stomach of one of these animals (year before last) *fourteen* small harp-seals were found."—*Michael Carroll's Report, Canadian Fisheries, 1872.*

possession of data which will serve as a correct guide from year to year.

As the seals come to land boldly first and last, and are not wild or wary, the breeding-grounds may and should be inspected throughout, every few days, by the agent in charge, from the time of the early arrivals in May until the period of general departure in the autumn, in order that he may map down and fix in black and white the precise boundaries assumed by the breeding-seals for the season, giving the result at the close of his labors of an accurate survey of the *area* and *position* of the ground covered during the season by the cows, bulls, and pups on the rookeries, so that he can at once detect any change that may and is likely to occur in their hauling and numbers for the next season.

This is the only way in which an agent of the Government can correctly report, year after year, as to the condition of the seal-life on these grounds, detecting any increase or diminution of the same as season succeeds season. This is a step imperatively necessary for a Government agent to take, and should not be neglected.

During the first week of inspection some of those arriving earliest will frequently take flight to the water when approached, but these runaways soon return. By the end of May, however, they will hardly move to the right or left when you attempt to pass through them. At this time, about two weeks before the females begin to come in a body, they become entirely indifferent to man or anything else save their own kind, and so continue the rest of the season.

The seals upon the rookeries and hauling-grounds are not affected by the smell of blood and carrion arising from the killing-grounds or from the stench of blubber-fires which burn in the native villages. This trait is well illustrated by the attitude of the two rookeries near the village of Saint Paul's. The breeding-ground on the spit at the head of the lagoon is not more than forty yards from the great killing-grounds, being separated only from the seventy or eighty thousand rotting carcasses by a slough less than ten yards wide. The seals can smell the blood and carrion upon this field from near the time they land in the spring until they leave in the autumn; while the general southerly summer-winds waft to them the odor and sounds of a native village not over two hundred rods south of them. All this has no effect upon the seals, for the rookery, as

the natives declare, has been slightly but steadily increasing. The seals everywhere on the breeding-grounds will become speedily habituated to close observation when it is quiet and undemonstrative, and take little notice of the approach of the observer.

The seals will be found to change a little every year from rookery to rookery, but the aggregate number will be steadily about the same. The condition of the seal-life this season of 1874 compares very favorably with that of 1872, as will be seen from extracts from my notes taken on the ground :

“NORTHEAST POINT, *July 18, 1874.*

“Quite a strip of ground near Webster’s house has been deserted this season, but a small expansion is observed on Sea Lion Hill. The rest of the ground is as mapped in 1872, with no noteworthy increase in any direction. The condition of the animals and their young, excellent; small irregularities in the massing of the families due to rain; sea-lions about the same; none on the west shore of the point.”

“The aggregate of life on this great rookery is about the same as in 1872, the ‘holluschickie,’ or killable seals, hauling as well and as numerous as before. The proportions of the different ages among them, of two, three, and four year olds, pretty well represented.”

“POLAVINA, *July 18, 1874.*

“Stands as it did in 1872; breeding and hauling grounds in excellent condition; the latter, on Upper Polavina, are changing down upon Polavina sand-beach, trending for three miles toward Northeast Point. The numbers of the ‘holluschickie’ on this ground of Polavina, where they have not been disturbed now for some five years to mention in the way of taking, do not seem to be any greater than they are on the hauling-grounds adjacent to Northeast Point and the village, from which they are driven almost every day during this season of killing.”

“LUKANNON AND KETAVIE, *July 19, 1874.*

“Not materially changed in any respect from its condition at this time in 1872.”

“GORBOTCH, *July 19, 1874.*

“Just the same. Condition excellent.”

“REEF, *July 19, 1874.*

“A slight contraction on the south sea-margin of this ground, compensated for by expansion under the bluffs on the north-west side. Condition excellent.”

"NASPEEL, July 20, 1874.

"A diminution of one-half at least. Very few here this year. It is no place for a rookery; not a pistol-shot from the natives' houses."

"LAGOON, July 20, 1874.

"No noteworthy change; if any, a trifling increase. Condition good."

"TOLSTOI, July 21, 1874.

"No perceptible change in this rookery from its good shape of 1872. The condition excellent."

"ZAPADNIE, July 22, 1874.

"An extension or increase of 2,000 feet of shore-line, with an average depth of 50 feet of breeding-ground, has been built on to Upper Zapadnie toward Tolstoi; the upper rookery proper has not altered its bearings or proportions; the sand-beach belt between it and Lower Zapadnie deserted by the breeding-seals almost entirely, and a fair track for the holluschickie left clear, over which they have traveled quite extensively this season, some 20,000 to 25,000 lying out to-day. Lower Zapadnie has lost in a noteworthy degree about an average of 20 feet of its depth, which, however, is much more than compensated for by the great increase to the upper rookery.

"A small beginning had been made for a rookery on the shore just southwest from Zapadnie Lake, in 1872, but this year it has been entirely abandoned."

On Saint George a survey gives for this season the following in comparison with that of 1873:

"ZAPADNIE, July 8, 1874.

"This rookery shows a slight increase upon the figures of last year, about 5,000. Fine condition."

"STARRY ATEEL, July 6, 1874.

"No noteworthy change from last year."

"NORTH ROOKERY, July 6, 1874.

"No essential change from last year; condition very good."

"LITTLE EASTERN, July 6, 1874.

"A slight diminution of some 2,000 or so. Condition excellent."

"EASTERN ROOKERY, July 7, 1874.

"A small increase over last year of about 2,000, making the aggregate seal-life similar to that of last season, with the certainty of a small increase.

"The unusually early season, this year, brought the rookery-bulls on to the ground very much in advance of the general time; they landed as early as the 10th of April, but the arrival of the cows was as late as usual, corresponding to my observations during the past two seasons.

"The general condition of the animals of all classes is most excellent—they are sleek, fat, and free from any taint of disease."

In this way it must be plain that the exact condition of these animals can be noted every season, and should a diminution be noticed, due to any cause known or unknown, the killing can be promptly stopped. Four years have passed, with the end of this season, in which 100,000 young males have been annually taken, and the effect on the seal-life cannot be seen; it has not injured it, to a certainty, and it has not promoted an increase. Two years more will make the matter conclusive, for then, if the breeding-grounds are as well supplied with males as they now are, then it will be evident that enough are saved every year for that service.

We know pretty well now how many we can take without injury, but we do not know how many more than 100,000 can be. This problem of developing these interests to their full importance should not be taken in hand for a few years yet, not until the present system which I have drawn up for the watching of the rookeries has been in operation for three or four years; then, if it is advisable, on account of the superabundance of male seal-life, and the market will stand the increase of raw material, the killing may be very gradually increased from year to year, but not over *five thousand* each season. The rookeries, like a barometer, will show a falling off of necessary bulls when the killing has reached a point where the increase is detrimental. This can be seen at once by the proper persons and the killing checked without delay, in ample time to prevent harm.

In this chapter I have given a translation of Bishop Veniaminov's history, the only one written, and very valuable as illustrative of the manner in which the Russians conducted affairs on the Prybilov Islands; but it is at once apparent that much of it was written necessarily from hearsay and not based upon fact or personal observation, hence many grave errors are contained in it.

## THE PROPRIETY OF LEASING THE ISLANDS.

It will be remembered that at the time this question was before Congress much opposition to the principle of leasing was made, on the ground that the Government would realize more by taking the whole management of the business into its own hands. As to what arguments were used on either side of the question I am ignorant, but after a careful and impartial survey of the subject on the ground itself, and in the trade, I am satisfied that those members of the House and Senate who, by their votes June, 1870, directed the Secretary of the Treasury to lease the Seal Islands of Alaska to the highest bidder, did the only correct and profitable thing that could be done in the matter, both with regard to the preservation of the seal-life in its original integrity, and its own pecuniary gain; and to make this statement of mine perfectly evident, the following facts may be presented:

First. When the Government took possession of these interests in 1868-'69, *the gross value of a seal-skin then in the best market, London, was less than the present tax and royalty paid upon it by the lessees!*

Second. By the action of the intelligent business men who took the lease, in stimulating and encouraging the dressers of the raw material, and in combining with leaders of fashion abroad, the demand for the fur has been greatly increased, and the price of the raw material has doubled, so that while the Government gets and nets nearly half of the gross sales, yet the lessees have a good margin of 15 to 20 per cent. at least on their capital, sustained entirely by their business capacity and energy.

Third. The Government, should it attempt to manage this business, could not secure the services of such men as those who compose the business management of the Alaska Commercial Company without paying salaries to four and five agents as large or larger than that given to the President of the United States. This, however, the Government might cheerfully do, did it guarantee the selection and appointment of such men as those above mentioned, but it does not follow under our system of government, or any other that I know of, that a large salary indicates a corresponding amount of ability on the part of its recipient; an imbecile or a very common man is just as apt



to secure it as not. Ordinary men cannot conduct this business successfully.\*

Fourth. As matters now stand, the greatest and best interests of the lessees are identical with those of the Government; that is, the preservation and, if possible, the increase of the seal-life; and if these lessees had it in their power, which they certainly have not, to ruin these interests by a few seasons of rapacity, they are too prudent to do so.

Fifth. The frequent changes made in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, who now, very properly, has the control of the business as it stands, do not guarantee on his part the close, careful scrutiny likely to be exercised by the lessees, who have but one purpose to carry out; and the character of the leading men among them is enough to assure the public that the business is in responsible hands, and in the care of persons who will use every effort for the preservation of the seal-life, as it is their interest to do.

It is frequently urged with great persistency by misinformed

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\*Another great obstacle to the success of the business, if controlled entirely by the Government, would arise in the disposal of the skins after they have been brought down from the islands. The Government would need to offer them at public auction in this country, and would be at the mercy of any well-organized combination of buyers; the Government agents conducting the sale could not counteract the efforts of such a combination as successfully as the agents of a private corporation, who can look after their interests in all the markets of the world and are supplied with money to use in manipulation of the market.

On this ground I feel quite confident that the Treasury of the United States receives more money, net, under the system now in operation than it would by taking the exclusive control of the business; were any Government officer supplied with, say, \$100,000, to expend in "working the market," and intrusted with the disposal of 100,000 seal-skins, whenever he could so do to the best advantage of the Government, and were this agent a man of first-class business energy and ability, I think it quite likely the same success might attend his labor in the London market that distinguishes the management of the Alaska Commercial Company; but the usual cry of fraud and robbery that would be raised against him, however honest he might be, would be such as to bring the whole business into positive disrepute or constant suspicion. The Government officer in this matter is placed at a great disadvantage should any such line of action be adopted, and the most profitable course is for the Government not to offer in the markets through agents, but to pursue its present policy, levy a tax, and watch carefully the condition of the seal-life from year to year, as the killing is increased and the business developed to its full extent.

In this way Alaska may be made to yield, by a tax laid on its Seal Islands alone, a very handsome rate of interest upon the money paid for the entire Territory.

or jealous authority that the lessees can and do take thousands of skins in excess of the limit of law, and that this catch in excess is slyly shipped to China and Japan from the islands, &c.

To show the folly of any such move as this on the part of the company, if even it were possible, I will briefly recapitulate the conditions under which the skins are taken. The natives do all the driving and skinning for the company; no others are permitted or asked to land upon the islands to do this work as long as the inhabitants of the islands are equal to it. Every skin taken by the natives is counted by themselves, as they get forty cents per pelt for the labor; and at the expiration of every day's labor in the field the natives know exactly how many skins have been taken by them, how many of these skins have been rejected by the company's agent because they were carelessly cut and damaged in skinning, (usually about three-fourths of 1 per cent. of the whole catch,) and they have it recorded every evening by those among themselves who are specially charged with the duty. Thus, were 150,000 skins taken, or 200,000, the natives would know it as quickly as it was done, and would demand their compensation for the labor; and were any ship to approach the islands at any hour of the day or night, these people would know it at once, and would be aware of any shipment of skins that might be attempted. It would be common talk among the three hundred and seventy inhabitants, and thus leave it an open affair to any person who might come upon the ground charged with investigation. These people are constantly going to and from Ounalashka, where they have intimate intercourse with bitter enemies of the company, to whom they would not hesitate to tell the whole state of affairs on the islands. Should anything, therefore, be done contrary to the law, the act would be promptly reported by these people, even if the Treasury agents were in collusion with the company, which, however, is simply out of the question.

The Treasury agents count these skins into the ship, and one at least of their number goes down to San Francisco upon the vessel, where they are all counted out again by the custom-house officers of that port. Of the one hundred thousand skins annually taken, the company's steamer "Alexander" usually carries down between sixty and seventy thousand, while the balance of the catch are put into the hold of a sailing-vessel

at Unalaska, and counted again and certified to by the Treasury agent.

It will at once be seen by examining the state of affairs and the conditions upon which the lease is granted, that the most scrupulous care in fulfilling the terms of the contract is the best and most profitable course for the lessees to pursue; that it would be downright folly in them to deviate in the slightest degree from the letter of the law, and thus lay themselves open at any time to discovery and the loss of their contract; their action can be investigated at any time by Congress, of which they are aware. They cannot bribe these three hundred and seventy-odd people on the islands to secrecy any more than they can conceal their action from them on the sealing-fields; and any man of average ability can go among these people and inform himself as to the most minute details of the sealing-catch from the time the lease was granted, should he have reason to suspect the honesty of the Treasury agents.

I therefore have no hesitation in stating that as far as the relationship existing between the Alaska Commercial Company and the Government is concerned, the best interests of the latter are honestly and faithfully served, simply because it is the very best policy for the former so to do; that all the conditions of the lease are most scrupulously complied with and observed, and that the lessees hold themselves ready at any moment to comply with any just and proper modification of the regulations that time may develop.

With regard to the profits of this company upon their yearly catch of one hundred thousand seals, the agents of the Government have no concern whatever; after they have observed the faithful fulfillment of the terms of the contract existing between the company and the Government, the amount of their profit is a pure matter of business over which the lessees have entire control, and in regard to which they should not be subjected to impertinent inquisition.

#### THE CONDITION OF THE NATIVES ON THE SEAL ISLANDS.

This has been wonderfully improved by the action of the lessees during the short time they have had control of affairs there. The truth of this will be realized by any one who may take the trouble to contrast the present condition of the people on these islands with what it was previous to the granting of the lease, and with that also of the people of their class who are now

living upon the Aleutian Islands and the mainland. The inquirer will learn that these people, now so well and comfortably clad, fed, and housed, were at the time of the transfer of the Territory so poor and ill-provided for that they could not in many instances cover their nakedness; that they existed in absolute squalor; whereas they are now living in snug houses, such as our laboring classes occupy in the United States; that they earn and receive in coin, in less than two working-months every year, more than the same number of our common workmen receive on an average for a whole year's service; and also that for all extra work other than of seal-skinning, such as loading and unloading the company's vessels, building, grading, &c., these people are paid by the day from fifty cents to one dollar, according to the character of service rendered.

The agents of the company here do not pay the least attention to or interfere with the private life and personal relations of the people among themselves; and let me here state, to the credit of these people, that the peaceful and harmonious manner in which they live together as a rule, during nine idle months at least every year, would contrast most favorably with the lives of an equal number of our own working classes were they suddenly brought to these islands and put on the same footing. I will only hint at the insubordination and utter worthlessness of such a community after six or eight months of torpidity and isolation.

It is true that the natives here have an inordinate fondness for liquor, and would destroy themselves were they not restrained in this propensity by the difficulty of obtaining this demoralizing beverage, and hence the importance of the liquor prohibition, which should be rigorously enforced.

Only a small proportion of the present population are descendants of the pioneers who were brought by the several Russian companies in 1787-'88—a colony of 137 souls—recruited principally from the Aleuts at Ounalashka and Atka. Their early life here was one of much hardship, and on several occasions they were in actual need. They lived in a co-operative manner at first, in large barracoons or barrabkies, partly underground, economizing in this way their limited supply of firewood, being dependent upon the sea for such drift-timber as might chance to lodge as the currents, deflected from the Yukon and elsewhere, sweep around the islands; but during the

past twenty-five or thirty years they have all come into the general ownership and occupation of a hut to a family.

The Russian Fur Company, controlling the islands, maintained on Saint Paul and Saint George a store and an agent, the people supporting a priest and building a church upon each island, and living in this manner very dirty, poor, and miserable, they were brought into contact with the Americans at the time of the transfer of the Territory.

The people are now supplied without charge with a physician and medical stores on each island, and also a school; but the school is not well attended except by the very young children, principally the little girls, although every winter fifteen or twenty of the boys and young men are taught the Russian alphabet and church-service by three or four of the elder persons. The non-attendance at school is not to be ascribed merely to indisposition on the part of the children and parents to attend the English schools established by the Alaska Commercial Company on both islands. The view expressed to the writer by one of the oldest and most intelligent of the people may be explanatory of their feeling and consequent action.

"I do not," said old Philip Vollkov, "have any objection to the attendance of my children, nor have my neighbors to that of theirs, on your (English) school; but if our boys and young men neglect their Russian lessons, who is going to take our places when we die, in our church, at our christenings, and at our burials?" To any one familiar with the teachings of the Greek Catholic faith the objection of Vollkov is well taken; but it is to be hoped that in the course of time, however, the Russian church-service may be conducted in English, for until then no satisfactory work can be done by an English school-teacher among them in the way of education.

Up to the time of the transfer of the islands to the Alaska Commercial Company the inhabitants all lived in huts or sod-walled and dirt-roofed houses or barrabkies, partly underground. Most of these huts were, and are, damp, dark, and exceedingly filthy. Under the Russian *régime* the people generally here had some excuse for such squalor; but as the case now stands it is due to the improvidence or shiftlessness of the natives themselves if they are living in this unclean condition and wear an appearance of discomfort. The use of seal-fat for fuel causes the deposit upon everything within doors of a thick coating of greasy, black soot, strongly impregnated with a rank,

moldy, and indescribably offensive odor. In early times they were obliged to burn blubber very largely, having no other fuel at command than the precarious supply of drift-wood that the ocean-currents might bring them; but by the terms of the lease they are now supplied with a sufficient quantity of coal to make them quite comfortable during the winter.

Since the Alaska Commercial Company have taken possession of the islands, the natives are being quite rapidly put into neat and habitable houses, and plenty of lumber is distributed among those who have not as yet been removed to patch and make comfortable their old huts, and at the expiration of three more seasons the whole population of above eighty families will be occupants of as many suitable houses, where they will live more healthily.

The example of the agents of the company on both islands and the assistant agent of the Treasury on Saint George during the last three years, who have maintained perfect order, neatness, and industry about their buildings and business, has been a silent but powerful one for the better among the people. The intercourse of these gentlemen with the natives is always courteous, pleasant, and often generous, when deserved; giving the simple inhabitants a slow but steady elevation toward morality, sobriety, and industry, such as they never have had before, having been treated like so many animals by the Russians; and the conduct of most of the United States revenue and military officers and men stationed here between the transfer of the Territory and the granting of the lease cannot be described as other than disgraceful, their behavior being marked by drunkenness, debauchery, and brawls, their habits soon rendering the name *American* offensive to even these simple people.

The population of Saint Paul is, at the present writing, 220 men, women, and children; that of Saint George, 138. It has neither much increased nor diminished during the last fifty years, but would have fallen off had not recruits been regularly drawn from the mainland and other islands, the births not being equal to the deaths. In view of the great improvement in their condition, it may be reasonably anticipated that these people will at least hold their own, even though they do not increase to any remarkable degree.

As an incentive and encouragement for their good behavior, they have been assured that as long as they are capable and willing to perform the labor of skinning the seal-catch, so long

will they enjoy the exclusive privilege of participating in this labor and its reward. As to the especial fitness of these people for the labor connected with the sealing business, no comment is needed; nothing better in the way of manual service, skilled and rapid, could be rendered by any other body of men equal in numbers. They appear to shake off the periodic lethargy of winter, and rush with enthusiasm into the severe exercise and duty of capturing, killing, and skinning the seals.

Seal-meat is their staple food, and the village of Saint Paul, 220 souls, consumes about 400 pounds per diem, and they are permitted every fall to kill about 5,000 pups, or an average of 22 or 23 to each man, woman, and child. The pups will dress 10 pounds. This shows an average consumption of 515 pounds of seal-meat to each person during the year. In addition, the natives eat a great deal of butter and sweet crackers. If these people could get all they desire, they would consume about 500 pounds of butter and 450 pounds sweet crackers per week, and indefinite quantities of sugar. Of this article, 150 pounds a week is allowed them in this village. If unable to get sweet crackers, they consume about 300 pounds of hard or pilot bread; and, in addition to this, about 600 pounds of flour per week; of tobacco, 50 pounds; candles, 75 pounds; rice, 50 pounds each per week; they burn over 600 gallons of kerosene oil during the year; vinegar is used in limited quantities, about 50 gallons per season; mustard and pepper,  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds per week for the whole village; beans they reject; split pease, a few; salt meats they will take reluctantly if given to them, but will never buy them; they use a little coffee during the year, about 100 pounds; canned fruit they will purchase to any quantity, and would bankrupt themselves to obtain it, if the opportunity were afforded; potatoes they sometimes demand, as well as onions, but these vegetables cannot be brought here to advantage.

The question will naturally be asked, How do these people employ themselves throughout the long nine months in which they have little or nothing to do? It may be answered that they are entirely idle during most of this period. Some of the men are, however, disagreeable exceptions, as they are enthusiastic gamblers, passing whole nights at their sittings, even during the sealing-season, playing games at cards taught them by the Russians and persons who have been on the islands since the transfer of the Territory. But the majority of the men, women, and children, being compelled to make no exertion to

obtain the necessaries of life—such as seal-meat, hard bread, tea, &c.—sleep most of the time when unoccupied in cooking, eating, and the daily observance of the routine of the Greek Catholic Church. Their religious duties alone preserve them from absolute stagnation; for, in obedience to its teachings, they attend church quite regularly, make and receive calls on their saints' days, which are very numerous, and their birthdays are generally enlivened with home-brewed beer, or "quass," upon which all classes become more or less intoxicated. They add to these entertainments of the *emannimik* the music of the accordeon, an instrument of which they are very fond; and a great number of the women in particular can play indifferently a limited selection of airs, many of which are the old battle-songs and ballads so popular during the rebellion, and which the soldiers quartered here in 1869 taught them. From the soldiers, also, they learned to dance various figures, and to waltz. These dances, however, the old folks do not enjoy, and they seldom indulge in them, unless under the influence of beer.

From the following statement it will be seen that these people are doing better work every succeeding season; for example, 90,000 seals were taken this year in sixteen days less time than it took to get 75,000 in 1871, viz:

In Saint Paul's Island, 1871, 55 days' work of 66 men secured 75,000 seals.

In 1872, 50 days' work of 71 men secured 75,000 seals.

In 1873, 40 days' work of 71 men secured 75,000 seals.

In 1874, 39 days' work of 84 men secured 90,000 seals.\*

This shows plainly that they are in better physical condition than at first; it furnishes also *undeniable proof of the undiminished supply of killable seals.*

INHABITANTS OF SAINT PAUL, JULY 1, 1870, TAKEN FROM  
PHILIP VOLKOV'S LISTS, AUGUST 8, 1873.

[The names in *italics* are either dead or absent from the island at the present writing.]

- |                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Philip Keemackneek.</i>     | 6. <i>Mareena, his wife.</i>   |
| 2. <i>Effroseeenia, his wife.</i> | 7. <i>Alexsander, his son.</i> |
| 3. <i>Ivan, his son.</i>          | 8. <i>Sylvester, his son.</i>  |
| 4. <i>Danelo, his son.</i>        | 9. <i>Eefeem Anoolanak.</i>    |
| 5. <i>Vasseele Seedoolee.</i>     | 10. <i>Matroona, his wife.</i> |

\* This increase of 15,000 on Saint Paul was made this season with a similar reduction on Saint George; the proportion of seal-life being small on the latter compared with the former.



11. *Simgeon, adopted son.*
12. *Marka Aveelyah.*
13. *Feeleechat, his wife.*
14. Peter Peeshenkov.
15. Matroona, his wife.
16. Ivan Eemanov.
17. Anna, his wife.
18. Yçagor, his son.
19. Loobov, his step-daughter.
20. Maxseem, his step-son.
21. Maria, his niece.
22. Nickolai Krukov.
23. Peter Krukov.
24. Agrafeena, his wife.
25. Ivan Korchooten.
26. Ooleeana, his wife.
27. Yahkov Koochootin.
28. Lookahria, his sister.
29. *Natalia Makooleena.*
30. Maria Paranchina.
31. Keesar Shabbylean.
32. Agrafeena, his wife.
33. Neckon, his son.
34. *Ripsimia Plottnikova.*
35. Avdotia, her daughter.
36. Prokoopee\*Meeseekin.
37. Eveduxsia, his wife.
38. Avdotia Meeseekina, his step-mother.
39. Anna, daughter of Meeseekin.
40. Deemeetree Veatkin.
41. Evelampia Veatkin.
42. Balakshin, (Benedict.)
43. Matroona, his wife.
44. Meexhae, his son.
45. Balakshin, 2d, (Benedict.)
46. Stepan Krukov.
47. Natalia, his wife.
48. Avdokia Seeribneekova, (widow.)
49. Timofay, her son.
50. Olga, her daughter.
51. Paraskeevie, her daughter.
52. Akooleena, her daughter.
53. Michael Barrhov.
54. Malania, his wife.
55. Agnes, his daughter.
56. Daniel, his nephew.
57. Avdotia Schepeteenah, (widow.)
58. Tahreentee, her son.
59. Elarie, her son.
60. Hee-unc-iah, her daughter.
61. Kerick Booterin, 1st chief.
62. Seeg-lee-teekiah, his wife.
63. *Patalamon, his son.*
64. Kerick, his son.
65. Salomayee, his daughter.
66. Ooleeta, his daughter.
67. George Booterin, his son.
68. Carp Booterin.
69. Lookariah Booterin.
70. Alexander Pancov.
71. Porfeerie, his son.
72. Avdotia, his step-daughter.
73. Paraskeevie, his step-daughter.
74. Yakov Sootyahgin.
75. Eeroadea, his wife.
76. Feedosayee Saydeek.
77. Anesia, his wife.
78. Anna, his daughter.
79. Feoktista, his god-mother.
80. Dayneese Saydeek.
81. *Baiz yahzeekov, (Evlampia.)*
82. *Anna, his wife.*
83. *Maria, his daughter.*
84. Maroon Nakock.
85. Paraskeevie, his wife.
86. Zachar, his step-son.
87. ———, nephew.
88. Paraskeevie, niece.

89. Natalia Habaroova.  
 90. Pavel Habarov, her son.  
 91. *Paul Shies-neckov, (priest.)*  
 92. *Meeh-ah-elo, his son.*  
 93. Meeloveedova, Alessandra,  
     (widow.)  
 94. Simeon, her son.  
 95. *Alexsandra, her daughter.*  
 96. Antone, her son.  
 97. Marcia, her daughter.  
 98. Kerick Artamanov.  
 99. Olga, his wife.  
 100. Melania, his daughter.  
 101. Vasselesee, his daughter.  
 102. Kah-sayn-yah, his  
     daughter.  
 103. Gearman Artamanov.  
 104. Anna Tarantayvah,  
     (widow.)  
 105. Anna, her daughter.  
 106. Stepan Bayloglazov.  
 107. Yealeena, his wife.  
 108. *Sayrgee, his son.*  
 109. Anna, his daughter.  
 110. Paraskeevie, his adopted  
     girl.  
 111. Ermolie Cushing.  
 112. Faokla, his wife.  
 113. Faokla, his daughter.  
 114. Oolyahnah, his daughter.  
 115. Aggie Cushing, his son.  
 116. Antone Sootyahgen.  
 117. Oolyahnah, his wife.  
 118. Meetrofan, his son.  
 119. *Meehaie, his son.*  
 120. Yakhov Mandrigan.  
 121. Afanashia, his wife.  
 122. *Lookayleean, his son.*  
 123. Maria, his daughter.  
 124. Oseep Pahomov.  
 125. Varvarah, his wife.  
 126. Maria Seedova, (widow.)  
 127. Ahkakee, her son.  
 128. ———, daughter.  
 129. ———, daughter.  
 130. ———, daughter.  
 131. ———, daughter.  
 132. Alexsayee Neederazov.  
 133. Akooleena, his wife.  
 134. Christeena, his daughter.  
 135. Agrafeena, his daughter.  
 136. Keer Saydeek.  
 137. Yealeena, his wife.  
 138. *Maria, his daughter.*  
 139. Ivan Mandrigan.  
 140. Tatahyahn, his wife.  
 141. Vasseelee, his son.  
 142. Marfa, his daughter.  
 143. Feelat Teetov.  
 144. Peter, his son.  
 145. Yeaon, his son.  
 146. Yeagor Arkashav.  
 147. Alessandra, his wife.  
 148. Martin, his step-son.  
 149. Nikolaie, his step-son.  
 150. Stepan, his step son.  
 151. Kereek, his son.  
 152. Arsaynee, his son.  
 153. Tatayahnah, his daughter.  
 154. Timofay Evanov.  
 155. Fevronia, his daughter.  
 156. Paymen Kooznitzov.  
 157. Oseep Baizyahzeekov.  
 158. Alessandra, his wife.  
 159. Paul, his son.  
 160. Kahsaynyah, his step-  
     daughter.  
 161. Avdokia, his step-daugh-  
     ter.  
 162. *Kahsaymyah, his daughter.*  
 163. *Ivan Paranchin.*  
 164. Zaharrov Evemainov.  
 165. Keereenayah, his wife.  
 166. Fevronia, his daughter.

167. Ivan Hapov.  
 168. Anna, sister-in-law.  
 169. *Aleksandra, his daughter.*  
 170. Ivan, his son.  
 171. Yeagor Korchootin.  
 172. Zachar Saydeek.  
 173. Oosteenia, his wife.  
 174. Vasseelee, his son.  
 175. Marvra, his daughter.  
 176. *Nekon, his nephew.*  
 177. Feelip Saydeek.  
 178. Stepan Skahvortsov.  
 179. Philip Vollkov.  
 180. Ellen, his daughter.  
 181. Matroona, his daughter.  
 182. Markiel Vollkov, his son.  
 183. Gavreelo Korchurgin.  
 184. Lukaylean, his son.  
 185. *Ivan Sootyahgen.*  
 186. Heeyoniah, his wife.  
 187. Anesia, his daughter.  
 188. Emelian Sootyahgen.  
 189. Marko Korchootin.  
 190. Dareyah, his wife.  
 191. Ivan, his son.  
 192. Zeenovia, his daughter.  
 193. Timofay Glottov.  
 194. Maria, his wife.  
 195. ———, *his son.*  
 196. Ivan, his son.  
 197. Yeafeemia, his daughter.  
 198. Iraklin Mandrigan.  
 199. Oosteenie, his wife.  
 200. Beon, his son.  
 201. Paul Soovorrov.  
 202. Vassa, his wife.  
 203. ———, *his son.*  
 204. Akyleena, his mother.
205. *Agrafeena, his adopted girl.*  
 206. Eefeem Korchootin.  
 207. Palahgayee, his wife.  
 208. *Peter, his son.*  
 209. Luka Mandrigan.  
 210. Eereena, his wife.  
 211. Neekeeta Yitchmainov.  
 212. Christeena, his daughter.  
 213. Domenah, his daughter.  
 214. Tahesah, his daughter.  
 215. Ivan Yitchmamov.  
 216. Michael Korzerov.  
 217. *Aleksandra, his wife.*  
 218. Stepan Korzerov.  
 219. Paul Korzerov.  
 220. *Ivan Kozlov.*  
 221. Palahgayah, his mother.  
 222. Feodor, her son.  
 223. *Eveducksia, her daughter.*  
 224. Platone Tarakanov.  
 225. Marfa, his wife.  
 226. *Akoolena, his mother.*  
 227. Kerick Tarakanov.  
 228. Domian M. Kok, (John Frater.)  
 229. Oolyahnah, his wife.  
 230. Anna, his daughter.  
 231. Salomayah, Artomanov's daughter.  
*White men in charge.*
1. Dr. McIntyre.
  2. H. W. McIntyre.
  3. Dr. Cramer.
  4. *John M. Morton.*
  5. Chas. Bryant.
  6. D. Webster.
  7. ———, *a cooper.*
  8. ———, *a carpenter.*

*Annual division or cash settlement made by the natives on Saint Paul's Island, among themselves, the proceeds of their work in taking and skinning 75,000 seals, at 40 cents per skin, \$30,000, with extra work connected with it, making \$30,637.37.*

Seventy-four shares, proportioned as follows :

December 31, 1872.—37 first-class shares, at...	\$451 22 each.
23 second-class shares, at .	406 99 each.
4 third-class shares, at...	360 97 each.
10 fourth-class shares, at..	315 85 each.

The shares do not represent more than forty-five able-bodied men.

*Annual division or cash settlement made by the people on Saint George's Island, among themselves, the proceeds of their work in taking and skinning 25,000 seals, at 40 cents per skin, \$10,000.*

Aug. 1, 1873.—17 shares, each 961 skins, or \$384.40.	\$6, 294 80
2 shares, each 935 skins, or \$374...	748 00
3 shares, each 821 skins, or \$328.40.	985 20
1 share, 820 skins, or \$328... ..	328 00
3 shares, each 770 skins, or \$308...	924 00
3 shares, each 400 skins, or \$160...	480 00

Twenty-nine shares, or the twenty-nine laboring sealers ; of this number two are women. Only twenty-five of them are able-bodied men.

The divisions above are the result of their own choice. They make this apportionment among themselves without advice or suggestion from the agents of the company. These people have \$3,320.00 on interest in the office of the Alaska Commercial Company at this date, and have credit on the books for \$31,800 ; and when the division is made up on Saint Paul at the regular annual time of settlement in December, \$30,000 will be added to the above exhibit.

The people here are occupying, rent-free at the present time, thirty frame houses built by and belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company on the Seal Islands. Twenty of these houses are new frame, 11 by 20 feet.

These people have their misers and spendthrifts, but it will be seen that very few of them care much for saving their money, inasmuch as only four or five of them have as yet taken any steps toward such action. One man on Saint Paul has over \$1,800 saved, and drawing interest at 9 per cent. to-day.

THE HISTORY OF THE BUSINESS AS CONDUCTED BY THE  
RUSSIANS.

[Translated by the writer from Veniaminov's *Zapieskie, &c.*, Saint Petersburg 1842, vol. ii, pp. 568. \*]

From the time of the discovery of the Prybilov Islands, up to 1805, (or that is, until the time of the arrival in America of General Resanov,) the taking of fur-seals on both islands progressed without count or lists, and without responsible heads or chiefs, because then (1787 to 1805 inclusive) there were a number of companies represented by as many agents or leaders, and all of them vied with each other in taking as many as they could before the killing was stopped. After this, in 1806 and 1807, there were no seals taken, and nearly all the people were removed to Ounalashka.

In 1808 killing was again commenced, but the people in this year were allowed to kill only on Saint George; on Saint Paul hunters were not permitted this year or the next: it was not until the fourth year after this that as many as half the number previously taken were annually killed. From this time (Saint George, 1808, and Saint Paul, 1810) up to 1822, taking fur-seals progressed on both islands without any economy and with slight circumspection, as if there were a race in killing for the most skins. *Cows were taken in the drives and killed*, and were also driven from the rookeries to places where they were slaughtered.

It was only in 1822 that G. Moorayvev (governor) ordered that young seals should be spared every year for breeding, and from that time there were taken from the Prybilov Islands, instead of 40,000 to 50,000, which Moorayvev ordered to be spared in four successive years, no more than 8,000 to 10,000. Since this, G. Chestyahkov, chief ruler after Moorayvev, estimated that from the increase resulting from the legislation of Moorayvev, which was so honestly carried out on the Prybilov Islands that in these four years the seals on Saint Paul increased to double their previous number, he could give an order which increased the number to be annually slain to 40,000, and this last order or course directed for these islands demanded as many seals as could be got, but with all possible exertion hardly 28,000 were obtained.

After this, when it was most plainly seen that the seals were, on account of this wicked killing, steadily growing less and less

\* The italics are mine, and the translation is nearly literal, as might be inferred by the idiom here and there.—H. W. E.

in number, the directions were observed for greater caution in killing the grown seals and young females which came in with the droves of killing-seals, and to endeavor to separate, if possible, these from those which should be slain.

But all this hardly served to do more than keep the seals at one figure or number, and hence did not cause an increase. Finally, in 1834, the governor of the company, upon the clear (or "handsome") argument of Baron Wrangel, which was placed before him, resolved to make new regulations respecting them, to take effect in the same year, (1834,) and, following this, on the island of Saint Paul only 4,000 were killed instead of 12,000.

On the island of Saint George the seals were allowed to rest in 1826 and 1827, and since that time greater caution and care have been observed, and head-men or foremen have kept a careful count of the killing.

From this it will be seen that no anxiety or care as to the preservation of the seal-life began until 1805, (*i. e.*, with the united companies.)

It is further evident that all half-measures, seen or not seen, were useful no longer, as they only served to preserve a small portion of the seal-life, and only the last step (1834) with the present people or inhabitants has proved of benefit. And if such regulations of the company continue for fifteen years, (*i. e.*, until 1849,) it may be truly said that then the seal-life will be attracted quite rapidly under the careful direction of head-men, so that in quite a short time a handsome yield may be taken every year. In connection with this subject, if the company are moderate and these regulations are carried out, the seal-life will serve them and be depended upon as shown in this volume, Table No. 2.

Nearly all the old men think and assert that the seals which are spared every year, ("zapooskat kotov,") *i. e.*, those which have not been killed for several years, are truly of little use for breeding, lying about as if they were outcasts or disfranchised always. About these seals, they show that after the seals were spared, they were always less than they should be, as, for instance, on the island of Saint George, after two years of saving or sparing of 5,500 seals, in the first year they got, instead of 10,000 or 8,000, as expected, only 4,778.

But this diminution, which is shown in the most convincing manner, (1,) is due to wrong and injustice, because it would not

have been otherwise with any kind of animals—even cattle would have been exterminated; because a great many here think and count that the seal-mother brings forth her young in her third year, *i. e.*, the next two years after her own birth. As it is well shown here, the spared seals (“zapooskie”) were not more than three years old, and therefore it was not possible to discern the correct or true numbers as they really were. Taking the females killed by the people, together with all the seals which were purposely spared, it was seen that the seal-mothers did not begin to bear earlier *than the fifth year* of their lives. Illustrative of this is the following:

(a) On the island of Saint George, after the first “zapooska,” in 1828, the killing of five-year-old seals was continued gradually up to five times as many as at first; with those of five years old, the killing stopped; then next year twelve times as many six-year-olds were observed on the islands as compared with their number of the last years, and with or in the seventh year came seven times as many. This shows that females born in 1828 did not begin to bear young until their fifth year, and become with young accordingly; that the large ones did not appear or come in six years, (from 1828,) as is evident, for in the fifth year all the females did not bring forth.

b. It is known that the male seals cannot become “seecatchies” (adult bulls) earlier than their fifth or sixth year; following this, it may be said that the female bears earlier than the fourth year.

c. If the male seal cannot become a bull (“seecatchie”) earlier than the fifth year, then, as Buffon remarks, “animals can live seven times the length of the period required for their maturity;” therefore a *seecatch* cannot live less than thirty years, and a female not less than twenty-eight.\*

Taking the opinion of Buffon for ground in saying that animals do not come to their full maturity until one-seventh

\* “This remark is sustained by the observation of old men, and especially by one of the best creoles, Shiesneekov, who was on the island of Saint Paul in 1817, and who knows of one “seecatch,” (known by a bald head,) which in that time had already a large herd of cows or females, surrounded and hunted by a like number of males and strong, savage old bulls; therefore it may be safely thought that this bull did not get his growth until his fifth year, and at this time he could not have been less than ten years old; and this same bull came every year to the island and the same place for fifteen years in succession, up to 1832, and it was only in the later years that his harem grew smaller and smaller in number.”

of their lives has passed, it goes also to prove that the female seal cannot bear young before her fourth year.

It is without doubt a fact that female seals do not begin to bear young before their fifth year, *i. e.*, the next four years after the one of their birth, and not in the third or fourth. Certainly we can allow that some females bear in their fourth year; that, however, is not the rule, but the exception. To make it more apparent that females cannot bear young in their third year, consider the two-year-old females, and compare them with "see-catchie" (adult bulls) and cows, (adult females,) and it will be evident to all that this is impossible.

Do the females bear young every year; and how often in their lives do they bring forth?

To settle this question is very difficult, for it is impossible to make any observations upon their movements; but I think that the females in their younger years (or prime) bring forth every year, and as they get older, every other year; thus (according to people accustomed to them) they may each bring forth in their whole lives from ten to fifteen young, and even more. This opinion is founded on the fact that never (except in one year, 1832) have an excessive number of females been seen without young; that cows not pregnant hardly ever come to the Prybilov Islands; that such females cannot be seen every year. As to how large a number of females do not bear, according to the opinions and personal observations of the old people, the following may be depended upon with confidence: not more than one-fifth of the mature or "effective" females are without young; but to avoid erroneous impressions or conflicting statements between others and myself, I have had but one season, ("trayt") in which to personally observe and consider the multiplication of seals.

There is one more very important question in the consideration of the breeding or the increase of seals, and that is, *of the number of young seals born in one year, how many are males; and is the number of males always the same in proportion to the females?*

Judging from the holluschickie accumulated from the "zapooska" in 1822-'24 on the island of Saint Paul, and in 1826-'27 on the island of Saint George, the number of young males was very variable; for example, on the island of Saint Paul, in three years 11,000 seals were spared, and in the following three years there were killed 7,000, *i. e.*, about two-thirds of the number



saved; opposed to this, on the island of Saint George, from 8,500 spared seals in two years, less than 3,000 were taken, hardly one-third.

Why this irregularity? Why should more young males be born at one time, and at another less? Or why should there be years in which many cows do not bear young?

According to the belief of the people here, I think that of the number of seals born every year, half are males, and as many females.

To demonstrate the above-mentioned conditions of seal-life, the table, No. 1, has been formed of the number of seals annually killed on the Prybitov Islands from 1817 to 1838, (when this work was ended.)

From this it will be seen that—

1. No single successive year presents a good number of seals killed as compared with the previous year; the number is always less.

2. The annual number of seals killed was not in a constant ratio.

3. And, therefore, in the regular hunting-season there is less need or occasion during the next fifteen years to demand the whole seal kind.

4. Fewer seals were killed in those years generally following a previous year in which there were larger numbers of the "holluschickie;" that is, when the young males were not completely destroyed, and more were killed when the number of "holluschickie" was less.

5. The number of "holluschickie" is a true register or showing of the numbers of seals; *i. e.*, if the "holluschickie" increase and exist like the young females, and conversely.

6. Holluschickie break from the (common) herd and gather by themselves no earlier than the third year, as seen in the case of the spared seals on the islands of Saint George and Saint Paul, the latter from 1822-'24, 1835-'37, inclusive; the former from 1826-'27.

7. The number of seals killed on the island of Saint George after two years ("zapoooska") was resumed and gradually increased to five times as many.

8. In the fifth year from the first "zapoooskie" (or saving) it became possible to count or reckon on the number remaining, and six-year-olds began to appear twelve times as numerous, and seven-year-olds came in numbers sevenfold greater than

their previous small number; and, therefore, the number of three-year-old seals was quite constant.

9. If on the island of Saint George, in 1826-'27, the seals had not had this rest, ("zapooska,") and the killing had been continued, even at the diminished ratio of one-eighth, in 1840 or 1842 there would not have been a single seal left, as appears by the following table:

	Seals.		Seals.
1825.....	5,500	1833.....	1,360
1826.....	4,400	1834.....	1,190
1827.....	3,520	1835.....	1,040
1828.....	2,816	1836.....	850
1829.....	2,468	1837.....	700
1830.....	2,160	1838.....	580
1831.....	1,890	1839.....	500
1832.....	1,554	1840.....	400

10. Following two years of "zapooska," (saving,) the seal-life is enhanced for more than ten years, and the loss sustained by the company in the time of "zapooskov" (about 8,500) is made good in the long run. The case may be thus stated: If the company had not spared the seals in 1826-'27, they would have received, from 1826 to 1838, (twelve years,) no more than 24,000, but by making this zapooska regulation for two years they got in ten years 31,576, and, beyond this, they can yet take 15,000 without another, or any, zapooska.

11. And in this case, where such an insignificant number of seals was spared on Saint George, (about 8,500,) and in such a short time, (two years,) the result was at once significant every year; that is, three times more appeared than the number spared. The result, therefore, must be large annually on the island of Saint Paul, where, in consequence of the last orders or directions of the governor, already four years of saving have been in force, in which time over 30,000 seals have been left for breeding.

On this account, and in conformity with the above, I here present a table, a prophesy of the seals that are to come in the next fifteen years from 7,060 seals saved on the island of Saint Paul in 1835.

On the island of Saint Paul, at the direction of the governor, a "zapoosk" or saving was made of 12,700 seals; that is, before the year 1834 there were killed 12,700 seals, and on the following year, if this saving had not been made, according to the testimony of the inhabitants, no more than 12,200 seals would or

could have been taken from the islands, it being thought that this number (12,200) was only one twenty-fifth of the whole; but instead of killing 12,200, only 4,052 were taken, leaving in 1835, for breeding, 8,148 fresh young seals, males and females, together.

In making this hypothetical table of seals that are to come, I take the average killing, that is, one-eighth part, and proceed on the supposition that the number of saved seals will not be less than 7,060.

In the number of 7,060 seals we can calculate upon 3,600 females; that is, a slight majority of males. With the new females born under this "zapooska" I place half of those born the first year, and so on.

Females, in the twelve or eighteen years next after their birth, must become less in number from natural causes, and by the twenty-second year of their lives they must be quite useless for breeding.

Of the number of seals which may be born during the next four years of "zapooska," or longer, we may take half for females. This number is included in the table, and the males, or "holluschickie," make up the total.

From the II Table, observe that—

1. Old females, that is, those which in 1835 were capable of bearing young, in 1850 must be canceled, (minus.) They probably die in proportion of one-eighth of the whole number every year.

2. For the first four years of zapooska, until the new females begin to bear, their number will be generally less.

3. A constant number of seals will continue during the first six years of their zapooska; in twelve years these seals will double, in fourteen years they will have increased threefold; and after fifteen years of this zapooska or saving of 7,060, in the first year 24,000 may be taken from them, in the second 28,000, in the third 32,000, in the fourth 36,000, in the fifth 41,000; thus in five years more that 160,000 can be taken. Then, under the supervision of persons who will see that one-fifth of the seals be steadily spared, 32,000 may be taken every year for a long time.

4. Moreover, from the production of fifteen years "zapooska" there can be taken from 60,000 to 70,000 holluschickie, which, together with 160,000 seals, makes 230,000.

5. If this "zapooska" for the next fifteen years is not made

for the seal-life, diminution will certainly ensue, and all this time, with all possible effort, no more than 50,000 seals will be taken.

Here it should be said that this hypothetical table of the probable increase of seals is made on the supposition of the decrease of females, and an average is taken accordingly. Furthermore, on the island of Saint Paul, in 1836-'37, instead of 7,900 seals being killed, but 4,860 were taken. Hence it follows that these 1,500 females thus saved in two years, and which are omitted from the table, will also make a very significant addition to the incoming seals.\*

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\* I give this chapter of Veniaminov's without abridgment, although it is full of errors, to show that while the Russians gave this matter evidently much thought at headquarters, yet they failed to send some one on to the ground, who, by first making himself acquainted with the habits of the seals from close observation of their lives, should then be fitted to prepare rules and regulations founded upon this knowledge. These suggestions of Veniaminov were, however, a vast improvement on the work as it was conducted, and they were adopted at once, but it was not until 1845 that the great importance of never disturbing the breeding-seals was recognized.

H. W. E.

TABLE II.—Showing the number of seals that will visit the island in the next twenty-two years, a prophecy made by Veniaminov in 1834.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
	1835.	1836.	1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.	1841.	1842.	1843.	1844.	1845.	1846.	1847.	1848.	1849.	1850.	1851.	1852.	1853.	1854.	1855.	1856.	
1 1835.	3,600	0	0	0	0	900	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,000	800	400	200	.....	.....	.....	
2 1836.	0	3,150	0	.....	.....	.....	785	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,000	700	300	100	.....	.....	
3 1837.	.....	0	2,755	.....	.....	.....	.....	680	918	918	918	918	918	918	918	918	918	900	600	300	100	.....	
4 1838.	.....	.....	.....	2,410	.....	.....	.....	.....	600	805	805	805	805	805	805	805	805	805	805	805	750	500	300
5 1839.	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,110	.....	.....	.....	.....	450	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	700	600	400	300
6 1840.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,845	.....	.....	From old ar	.....	450	615	615	615	615	615	615	615	615	615	615	600	500
	.....	.....	.....	.....	New	900	.....	.....	From new	comers	152	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
7 1841.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,580	.....	.....	.....	.....	315	525	525	525	525	525	525	525	525	525	500	400
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	1,985	.....	From new	ones..	.....	420	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	500	
8 1842.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,355	.....	.....	.....	.....	325	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451	451
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	2,930	.....	From new	ones..	.....	650	909	909	909	909	909	909	909	909	909	909	
9 1843.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,130	.....	.....	.....	258	376	376	376	376	376	376	376	376	376
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	3,768	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	880	1,188	1,188	1,188	1,188	1,188	1,188	1,188	1,188	
10 1844.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	900	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	4,423	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,020	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440	1,440	
11 1845.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	725	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	5,275	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,240	1,687	1,687	1,687	1,687	1,687	1,687	
12 1846.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	550	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	6,225	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
13 1847.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	430	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	7,560	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
14 1848.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	9,083	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
15 1849.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
	.....	.....	.....	.....	Total	new	10,654	.....	From new	ones..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Total ♀	3,600	3,150	2,755	2,410	2,110	2,745	3,565	4,285	4,898	5,323	6,000	6,805	7,990	9,333	10,754	12,369	14,153	16,148	18,216	20,820	20,105	19,358	
Total ♂	3,660	3,150	2,755	2,410	2,110	2,745	3,435	4,215	4,102	5,378	6,000	6,795	8,010	9,267	10,746	12,331	14,147	16,102	18,184	20,824	20,095	19,342	
All ...	7,060	6,300	5,500	4,820	4,220	5,490	7,000	8,500	9,700	10,700	12,000	13,600	16,000	18,600	21,500	24,700	28,300	32,250	36,400	41,640	40,200	38,700	

ALASKA.

From this table behold that—

a. Every fifteen years, from 3,600 females, there can be received in sixteen years 24,700 seals; in sixteen years still more; and in twenty years 41,640.

b. In the twenty-first year the incomers begin to diminish, provided that if in the mean time, or the following sixteen years, a certain number of young seals are not left to breed; and if every year a known number are left to breed, then in all following years the yield will never be less than 20,000 every year.

TABLE III.—*Calculation as to the coming of the seals on the island of Saint George, made up from two years, and based upon that experience, (1827-'28.)*

Year.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	Grand total.
	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.	
1 1826 .....	2,200	.....	.....	.....	.....	450	700	700	700	700	700	700	.....
2 1827 .....	Breeding	2,050	.....	.....	.....	.....	360	600	600	600	600	600	.....
3 1828 .....	Light	.....	1,700	1,500	1,200	1,000	700	550	400	250	100	50	.....
Females .....	2,200	2,050	1,700	1,500	1,200	1,450	1,760	1,850	1,700	1,550	1,400	1,350	.....
Holluschickie .....	2,200	2,050	1,600	1,500	1,200	1,450	1,760	1,800	1,700	1,500	1,500	1,400	.....
Total .....	4,400	4,100	3,300	3,000	2,400	2,900	3,520	3,650	3,400	3,050	2,900	2,750	30,870

The actual taking of seals was as follows :

In 1828 .....	4,778
In 1829 .....	3,661
In 1830 .....	2,834
In 1831 .....	3,084
In 1832 .....	3,296
In 1833 .....	3,212
In 1834 .....	3,051
In 1835 .....	2,528
In 1836 .....	2,550
In 1837 .....	2,582
Total .....	31,476

From this table it will be seen that up to 1838 my calculation makes a yield of .....	30,870
While the actual result was .....	31,476

Difference of .....	606
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The difference determines that the hypothesis upon which the table is based is correct.

A CONFERENCE WITH THE NATIVES OF THE SEAL ISLANDS,  
JULY 25-26, 1874.

For the purpose of learning what these people might have to say in regard to the seal business as it is now conducted, Lieutenant Maynard and myself asked the chiefs to select those men among themselves who knew most in regard to the matter, especially those who had been most in the habit of noting the rookeries, and have them meet us privately to hear what they might feel disposed to do if they had anything to say in the matter; and accordingly some fifteen of them, oldest and wisest, including all the chiefs of Saint Paul and one that belongs to Saint George, met us. We had a smart Russian creole for interpreter, a sailor from our own vessel, and sat for two long evenings with them in conference. The result may be summed up as follows:

In regard to the condition of the seal-life, the natives are both watchful and solicitous, but do not present any argument against the annual killing of 100,000 young males over one year and under five, as is now conducted; that is, 90,000 on Saint Paul and 10,000 on Saint George; but the Saint Paul people have a very natural and strong feeling that they should *alone* reap the benefit that arises from the increase in the number killed on their island; that the \$6,000, which is represented by the additional 15,000 killed last summer on this island, should be shared among themselves, and feel a little sore about having the Saint George people come over here to do this work and take the proceeds, which they did on their own island (Saint George) last year. They do not think 90,000 any too many on Saint Paul, if they *alone* shall kill the animals and take the reward; but suddenly, when it is found that they are to be paid only for the original erroneous *pro rata*, 75,000, they become very fearful of the result of killing 90,000, with as many five-year-old bulls as have been killed this summer. As this solicitude is due to no other reason than this very perceptible anxiety, its expression must be taken with some reservation. But this constant anticipation of injurious results, even if there exist no grounds for apprehension, is of great advantage to both the agents of Government and the company; for the public may rest assured that the first evidence of any decrease of seal-life on these rookeries of Saint Paul will be at once observed by the jealous eyes of their many native keepers, even were there no agents of

either party now in control capable of discerning it, which is not likely, however, to be the case.

We explained to them, in return, that the law which limited the killing on Saint George to 25,000, and on Saint Paul to 75,000, was based upon the imperfect information furnished by the agents of the Government sent to the islands, and that killing 25,000 out of 100,000 on an island where there was not one-twentieth of the number of seals that were on the ground where the remaining 75,000 were taken, was entirely wrong, and must be corrected, for the best interests of all parties concerned; and that they had no right to profit at the expense of their brethren on Saint George, who were expected, at the time the law was made, to share equally with them the proceeds of this labor, and in this spirit the defective law was framed. This explanation appeared to relieve their minds.

They spoke to us with great satisfaction of the bettered condition in which they are living as compared with the state in which they lived but a short time since. A very perceptible shade of gloom settled on the countenances of all when we assured them that the Government could not permit any more "quass" or beer drunkenness among them. We set forth the propriety of this course on the part of the Secretary of the Treasury as justified by the following reasons:

1. They are at present living without the restraint of policemen and prisons, fines, &c., which we employ for the suppression of such disorder in our own land, and it was best for them to live sober and avoid the necessity of having such institutions.

2. That they were, by the great generosity of the Government and the company, allowed to enjoy the sole privilege of participation in the sealing-labor and its good reward, by which they were enabled to live in such comfort and ease; that if they indulged in drinking they would drop out from the skinning-gangs, and be unable in a few years to attend properly to their duty on the killing-grounds; that then the company would have the power and would be justified in procuring others to do this work, and that then but a short time would elapse before the labor of persons not addicted to drink would crowd them and their children out of their comfortable possession.

In the course of our conversation with them in regard to the events of early days on the island, they gave the following as facts, relying on the "vivid imaginations and faithful memories"



with which they are credited by the man who, of all men, best knew them, Veniaminov:

"In 1835, on the 'Lagoon' rookery, there were only two bulls; the cows were, however, in number excessive; about as many as are on 'Na Speel' to-day, (2,000.) On 'Zapadnie' about one thousand cows, bulls, and pups; at Southwest Point there was nothing; two small rookeries were on the north shore of Saint Paul, near a place called 'Maroonitch;' they have been deserted, however, by the seals for a long time; the oldest man on the island, Zachar Seedick, aged 57, has never seen them there; has only heard of it.

"On Northeast Point there were seven small rookeries running around the point; only fifteen hundred cows, pups, and bulls, all told; this number includes the 'holluschickie,' which in those days lay in among the breeding-seals, there being so few bulls that they were permitted to do so. On 'Polavina' there were about five hundred cows, bulls, pups, and 'holluschickie;' on 'Lukannon' and 'Ketavie,' about three hundred; only ten bulls on 'Ketavie,' so few young males lying in all together that they took no note of them on these rookeries; on the 'Reef' and 'Gorbotch,' about one thousand only; of these some eight hundred, 'holluschickie' included, lying in with the breeding-seals; there were about twenty old bulls only on Gorbotch, and but ten on the Reef; on 'Nau Speel' there were about a hundred. The village was here then as now.

"In 1845 we took the young males alone, respecting the sexes for the first time; took only about twenty a day on Northeast Point; on the Reef, all the way from one hundred and fifty to two hundred a day.

"In 1857 the breeding-rookeries were nearly as large as they are now; *but have been rather gradually increasing* ever since. Prior to 1835 the village was up at the little fresh-water lake, and the seals are reported, previous to this date, many years, to have run all over the present village ground, very much as they do at Zapadnie to-day."

In regard to the numbers of the fur-seal when the Russians first took possession of the ground, in 1787, the present generation, descendants of these pioneers, have only a general vague impression that the seals were somewhat more numerous in the first days of Russian occupation than they are now.

With regard to the probable truth of the foregoing statement of the natives to us, I can only call attention to the fact that

the entire sum of seal-life, as given by them, is 4,100 of all classes; now, Bishop Veniaminov publishes an authentic record of the killing on these islands from 1817 to 1837, (the time in which he finished his work,) by which it will be seen that in this year of 1835, 4,052 seals were killed and taken; and if the account of the natives was true, that would leave on the island only 50 for 1836, in which year, however, 4,040 were killed, and in 1837 4,220, and there was a steady increase in the killing by the Russians up to 1850, when they governed their catch by the market alone.

This great diminution of the seal-life, setting in at 1817 and running on steadily in decline until 1834, when it began to mend, is well accounted for by Veniaminov's account. From this it will be seen that after greedy Russian companies on these islands had killed seals for over fifteen years in unknown numbers without causing any great change in the ratio of numbers, a diminution began gradually to set in, which became obvious in 1817, and attained its maximum in 1834-'35, when hardly a tithe of the former numbers appeared on the ground; but from that year change in the management, &c., promoted an increase, and they steadily augmented up to their former great numbers, by 1855-'57 reaching a maximum at which they have remained, as far as my investigations throw light on the subject; a few years more of proper observation on the ground here will settle the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned.

A variety of reasons have been given for this diminution, but the case is clear that as the animals to be slain were selected at random on the breeding-grounds from males and females, they gradually, in consequence of this incessant molestation, began to shun the islands, seeking some other land, and there breeding, in spite of many natural difficulties; but as soon, however, as the Russians began to respect the principle of never driving or killing the females, the seals gradually regained their confidence, and finally returned to these islands, the most convenient and best adapted for their occupation in the northern hemisphere. This was the reason for their disappearance at that time, or they were suffering from the ravages of some unknown distemper.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE HABITS OF THE FUR-SEAL, ETC.

THE SEAL-LIFE ON THE PRYBILOV ISLANDS may be classed under four heads, as follows, viz :

The FUR-SEAL, (*Callorhinus ursinus*), Kautickie of the Russians.

The SEA-LION, (*Eumetopias stellerii*.) See vitchie of the Russians.

The HAIR-SEAL, (*Phoca vitulina*.) Nearhpah of the Russians.

The WALRUS, (*Rosmarus arcticus*.) Morsjee of the Russians.

Of the above, the hair-seal is the animal upon which popular and, indeed, scientific opinion is founded as to what a seal appears like, and has in this way given to the people a false idea of its relatives, above enumerated, and has made it exceedingly difficult for the naturalist to correctly discriminate between them; for, although it belongs to the same family, it does not even have a generic affinity to those seals with which it has been persistently confounded, viz, the fur-seal and sea-lion, no more so than has the raccoon to the black or grizzly bear, both being as nearly related to each other.

A detailed description of this seal, *Phoca vitulina*, is quite unnecessary, as species of the genus are common pets all over the world where zoölogical gardens are established, and its grotesquely stuffed skin is still more frequently to be met with.

It differs, however, so completely in shape and habit from its congeners on these islands, that it may be well, so as to preserve a sharp line of distinction, to state that it seldom comes up from the water more than a few rods, at the most, generally resting at the margin of the surf-wash; it takes up no position on land to hold and protect a harem, preferring the detached water-worn rocks which occasionally project out a little above the sea-level and are only wet entirely over by heavy storms; and the animal when it is disturbed immediately goes to sea. Upon these small spots of rocky, wet isolation from the main island, and some secluded places on the north shore, the "nearhpah," as the natives call it, brings forth its young, which is a

single pup, perfectly white, weighing about three or four pounds. This pup grows rapidly, and weighs, in three to four months, forty or fifty pounds, and at that time has a coat of soft, steel-gray hair on the head, limbs, and abdomen, with the back most richly mottled and barred lengthwise with dark-brown and brown-black. When they appear in the spring, following, this gray tone to their color has become a dingy ocher, and the mottling appears well over the head and on the upper side or back of the flippers, or feet, correspondingly dim.

There is no appreciable difference as to color or size between the sexes.

They are not polygamous, as far as I have observed.

They are exceedingly timid and wary at all times, and in this way they are diametrically opposed, not by shape alone, but by habit and disposition, to the fur-seal and sea-lion.

Their skin is of little value compared with that of the fur-seal, and their chief merit is the relative greater juiciness and sweetness of their flesh to those who are in any way partial to seal-meat.

I desire also to correct a common error, made in comparing *Phocidæ* with *Otaridæ*, where it is stated that, in consequence of the peculiar structure of their limbs, their progression on land is "*mainly accomplished* by a wriggling, serpentine motion of the body, slightly assisted by the extremities." This is not so; for, when excited to run or exert themselves to reach the water suddenly, they strike out quickly with *both fore feet*, simultaneously lift and drag the whole body, without any wriggling whatever, from 6 inches to a foot ahead and slightly from the earth, according to the violence of the effort and the character of the ground; the body then falls flat, and the fore-flippers are free for another similar action, and this is done so earnestly and rapidly that in attempting to head off a young nearhpah from the water I was obliged to leave a brisk walk and take to a dog-trot to do it. The hind feet are not used when exerted in rapid movement at all, and are dragged along in the wake of the body, perfectly limp. They do use their posterior parts, however, when leisurely climbing up and over rocks, or playing one with another, but it is always a weak effort, and clumsy. These remarks of mine, it should be borne in mind, apply only to the *Phoca vitulina*, that is found around these islands at all seasons of the year, but in very small numbers. I have never seen more than twenty-five or thirty at any

one time, but I think its principle of locomotion will be found to apply on land to all the rest of its genera.

The scarcity of this species and of all its generic allies is notable in the waters of the North Pacific as compared with those of the circumpolar Atlantic, where the hair-seals are found in immense numbers, giving employment every year to a fleet of sailing and steam vessels which go forth from St. John's, Halifax, and elsewhere, fitted for seal-fishing, taking over three hundred thousand of these animals each season, the principal object being the oil rendered from them, the skins having but small commercial value.\*

THE FUR-SEAL, (CALLORHINUS URSINUS,)

Which repairs to these islands to breed, &c., in numbers that seem almost fabulous, is by far the highest organized of all the Pinnipedia, and, indeed, for that matter, when land and water are fully taken into account, there is no other animal superior to it from a purely physical point of view; and few creatures that can be said to exhibit a higher order of instinct, approaching even intelligence, belonging to the animal kingdom. .

Regarding a male six to seven years old, and full grown, when he comes up from the sea in the spring on to his station for the breeding-season, we have an animal that will measure  $6\frac{1}{2}$  to  $7\frac{1}{4}$  feet in length, from tip of nose to end of tail, and weighing at least 400 pounds, and sometimes as much, perhaps, as 600. (?) The head, which in comparison with the immense thick neck and shoulders, seems to be disproportionately small; but as we come to examine it we will find that it is mostly all occupied by the brain; the light frame-work of the skull supports an expressive pair of large bluish-hazel eyes, and a muzzle and jaws of nearly the same size and form observed in any full-blooded Newfoundland dog, with the difference of having no flabby, hanging lips; the upper lips support a white and yellowish-gray mustache, long, and, when not torn in combat, luxuriant, composed of heavy stiff bristles.

Observe it as it comes leisurely swimming on toward the land; how high above the water it carries its head, and how deliberately it surveys the beach, after having *stepped* up on it;

\* An excellent and, I have every reason to believe, correct description of this seal-fishery in the North Atlantic has been published by Michael Carroll, who writes in a manner indicative of great familiarity with the business.

it may be truly said to step with its fore flippers, for they regularly alternate as it moves up, carrying the head well above them, at least three feet from the ground, with a perfectly erect neck.

The fore feet, or hands, are a pair of dark bluish-black flippers, about 8 or 10 inches broad at their junction with the body, running out to an ovate point some 15 to 18 inches from this union, which is at the carpal joint, corresponding to our wrist; all the rest of the fore-arm, the ulna, radius, and humerus, being concealed under the skin and thick blubber folds of the main body and neck, concealed entirely at this season when it is so fat; but later, when flesh or fat has been consumed by absorption, they come quite plainly into view.

On the upper side of these flippers, the hair straggles down finer and fainter, as it comes down to a point close to and slightly beyond where the phalanges and the metacarpal bones are jointed, similar to the spot where our knuckles are placed, and there ends, leaving the skin bare and wrinkled in places at the margin of the inner side, showing five small pits containing abortive nails, which are situated immediately over the union of the phalanges with their cartilaginous continuations to the end of the flipper.

On the under side of the flipper the skin is entirely bare from the end up to the body connection, deeply and regularly wrinkled with seams and furrows, which cross one another, so as to leave a kind of sharp diamond-pattern.

But we observe as the seal moves along that, though it handles its fore limbs in a most creditable manner, it brings up its rear in quite a different style; for after every second step ahead with the fore feet it arches its spine, and with it drags and lifts together the hinder limbs to a fit position under its body for another movement forward, by which the spine is again straightened out so as to take a fresh hitch up on the posteriors. This is the leisurely and natural movement on land when not disturbed, the body being carried clear of the ground.

The radical difference in the form and action of the hinder feet cannot fail to strike the eye at once. They are one-seventh longer and very much lighter and more slender; they, too, are merged in the body like those anterior; nothing can be seen of the leg above the tarsal joint.

The shape of this hind flipper is strikingly like a human foot, provided the latter were drawn out to a length of 20 or 22

inches, the instep flattened down and the toes run out into thin, membraneous, oval-tipped points, only skin-thick, leaving three strong cylindrical grayish horn-colored nails, half an inch long, back six inches from these skinny toe-ends, without any nails to mention on the big and little toes.

On the upper side of this foot the hair comes down to the point where the metatarsus and phalangeal bones joint and fades out; from this junction the phalanges, about six inches down to the nails, are entirely bare and stand ribbed up in bold relief on the membrane which unites them as a web; the nails mark the ends of the phalangeal bones and their union in turn with the cartilaginous processes, which run rapidly tapering and flattening, out to the ends of the thin toe-flaps.

Now, as we look at this fur-seal's progression, that which seems most odd is the gingerly manner (if I may be allowed to use the expression) in which it carries these hind-flippers; they are held out at right angles from the body directly opposite the pelvis, the toe-ends and flaps slightly waving and curling or drooping over, supported daintily, as it were, above the earth, only suffering its weight behind to fall upon the heels, which are opposed to each other scarcely five inches apart.

We shall, as we see him again later in the season, have to notice a different mode of progression, both when lording it over his harem or when he grows shy and restless at the end of the breeding-season, and now proceed to notice him in the order of his arrival and that of his family, his behavior during the long period of fasting and unceasing activity and vigilance and other cares which devolve upon him, as the most eminent of all polygamists in the brute world; and to fully comprehend this exceedingly interesting animal, it will be necessary to refer to my drawings and paintings made from it and its haunts.

The adult males are first to arrive in the spring on the ground deserted by all classes the preceding year.

Between the 1st and 5th of May, usually, a few bulls will be found scattered over the rookeries pretty close to the water. They are at this time quite shy and sensitive, not yet being satisfied with the land, and a great many spend day after day before coming ashore idly swimming out among the breakers a little distance from the land, to which they seem somewhat reluctant at first to repair. The first arrivals are not always the oldest bulls, but may be said to be the finest and most ambitious of their class; they are full-grown and able to hold their

stations on the rocks, which they immediately take up after coming ashore.

I am not able to say authoritatively that these animals come back and take up the same position on the breeding-grounds occupied by them during the preceding season; from my knowledge of their action and habit, and from what I have learned of the natives, I should say that very few, if any of them, make such a selection and keep these places year after year. One old bull was pointed out to me on the Reef Garbutch Rookery as being known to the natives as a regular visitor at, close by, or on the same rock every season during the past three years, but he failed to re-appear on the fourth; but if these animals came each to a certain place and occupied it regularly, season after season, I think the natives here would know it definitely; as it is, they do not. I think it very likely, however, that the older bulls come back to the same rookery-ground where they spent the previous season, but take up their positions on it just as the circumstances attending their arrival will permit, such as fighting other seals which have arrived before them, &c.

With the object of testing this matter, the Russians, during the early part of their possession, cut off the ears from a given number of young male seals driven up for that purpose from one of the rookeries, and the result was that cropped seals were found on nearly all the different rookeries or "hauling-grounds" on the islands after. The same experiment was made by agents two years ago, who had the left ears taken off from a hundred young males which were found on Lukannon Rookery, Saint Paul's Island; of these the natives last year found two on Novashtosh-nah Rookery, ten miles north of Lukannon, and two or three from English Bay and Tolstoi Rookery, six miles west by water; one or two were taken on Saint George's Island, thirty-six miles to the southeast, and not one from Lukannon was found among those that were driven from there; and, probably, had all the young males on the two islands been driven up and examined, the rest would have been found distributed quite equally all around, although the natives say that they think the cutting off of the animal's ear gives the water such access to its head as to cause its death; this, however, I think requires confirmation. These experiments would tend to prove that when the seals approach the islands in the spring, they have nothing but a general instinctive appreciation of the fit-



ness of the land as a *whole*, and no especial fondness for any *particular spot*.

The landing of the seals upon the respective rookeries is influenced greatly by the direction of the wind at the time of approach to the islands. The prevailing winds, coming from the northeast, north, and northwest, carry far out to sea the odor or scent of the pioneer bulls, which have located themselves on different breeding-grounds three or four weeks usually in advance of the masses; and hence it will be seen that the rookeries on the south and southeastern shores of Saint Paul's Island receive nearly all the seal-life, although there are miles of eligible ground on the north shore.

To settle this question, however, is an exceedingly difficult matter; for the identification of individuals, from one season to another, among the hundreds of thousands, and even millions, that come under the eye on a single one of these great rookeries, is really impossible.

From the time of the first arrivals in May up to the 1st of June, or as late as the middle of this month, if the weather be clear, is an interval in which everything seems quiet; very few seals are added to the pioneers. By the 1st of June, however, or thereabouts, the foggy, humid weather of summer sets in, and with it the bull-seals come up by hundreds and thousands, and locate themselves in advantageous positions for the reception of the females, which are generally three weeks or a month later, as a rule.

The labor of locating and maintaining a position in the rookery is really a serious business for those bulls which come in last, and for those that occupy the water-line, frequently resulting in death from severe wounds in combat sustained.

It appears to be a well-understood principle among the able-bodied bulls that each one shall remain undisturbed on his ground, which is usually about ten feet square, provided he is strong enough to hold it against all comers; for the crowding in of fresh bulls often causes the removal of many of those who, though equally able-bodied at first, have exhausted themselves by fighting earlier, and are driven by the fresher animals back farther and higher up on the rookery.

Some of these bulls show wonderful strength and courage. I have marked one veteran, who was among the first to take up his position, and that one on the water-line, where at least fifty or sixty desperate battles were fought victoriously by him

with nearly as many different seals, who coveted his position, and when the fighting-season was over, (after the cows have mostly all hauled up,) I saw him, covered with scars and gashes raw and bloody, an eye gouged out, but lording it bravely over his harem of fifteen or twenty cows, all huddled together on the same spot he had first chosen.

The fighting is mostly or entirely done with the mouth, the opponents seizing each other with the teeth and clenching the jaws; nothing but sheer strength can shake them loose, and that effort almost always leaves an ugly wound, the sharp canines tearing out deep gutters in the skin and blubber or shredding the flippers into ribbon-strips.

They usually approach each other with averted heads and a great many false passes before either one or the other takes the initiative by griping; the heads are darted out and back as quick as flash, their hoarse roaring and shrill, piping whistle never ceases, while their fat bodies writhe and swell with exertion and rage, fur flying in air and blood streaming down—all combined make a picture fierce and savage enough, and, from its great novelty, exceedingly strange at first sight.

In these battles the parties are always distinct, the offensive and the defensive; if the latter proves the weaker he withdraws from the position occupied, and is never followed by his conqueror, who complacently throws up one of his hind flippers, fans himself as it were, to cool himself from the heat of the conflict, utters a peculiar chuckle of satisfaction or contempt, with a sharp eye open for the next covetous bull or "see-catch."\*

The period occupied by the males in taking and holding their positions on the rookery offers a favorable opportunity in which to study them in the thousand and one different attitudes and postures assumed between the two extremes of desperate conflict and deep sleep—sleep so sound that one can, by keeping to the leeward, approach close enough, stepping softly, to pull the whiskers of any one taking a nap on a clear place; but after the first touch to these whiskers the trifier must jump back with great celerity, if he has any regard for the sharp teeth and tremendous shaking which will surely overtake him if he does not.

The neck, chest, and shoulders of a fur-seal bull comprise

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\* "See-catch," native name for the bulls on the rookeries, especially those which are able to maintain their position.

more than two-thirds of his whole weight, and in this long thick neck and fore limbs is embodied the larger portion of his strength; when on land, with the fore feet he does all climbing over rocks, over the grassy hummocks back of the rookery, the hind flippers being gathered up after every second step forward, as described in the manner of walking; these fore feet are the propelling power when in water, almost exclusively, the hinder ones being used as rudders chiefly.

The covering to the body is composed of two coats, one being of short, crisp, glistening over-hair, and the other a close, soft, elastic pelage, or fur, which gives distinctive value to the pelt.

At this season of first "hauling up" in the spring, the prevailing color of the bulls, after they dry off and have been exposed to the weather, is a dark, dull brown, with a sprinkling of lighter brown-black, and a number of hoary or frosted-gray coats; on the shoulders the over-hair is either a gray or rufous-ocher, called the "wig;" these colors are most intense upon the back of the head, neck, and spine, being lighter underneath. The skin of the muzzle and flippers, a dark bluish black, fading to a reddish and purplish tint in some. The ears and tail are also similar in tint to the body, being in the case of the former a trifle lighter; the ears on a bull fur-seal are from an inch to an inch and a half in length; the *pavilions* tightly rolled up on themselves so that they are similar in shape and size to the little finger on the human hand, cut off at the second (phalangeal) joint, a shade more cone-shaped, for they are greater in diameter at the base than at the tip.

I think it probable that the animal has and exerts the power of compressing or dilating this scroll-like *pavilion* to its ear, accordingly as it dives deep or rises in the water; and also, I am quite sure that the hair-seal has this control over the *meatus externus*, from what I have seen of it; but I have not been able to verify it in either case by observation; but such opportunity as I have had, gives me undoubted proof of the greatest keenness in hearing; for it is impossible to approach one, even when sound asleep; if you make any noise, frequently no matter how slight, the alarm will be given instantly by the insignificant-looking auditors, and the animal, rising up with a single motion erect, gives you a stare of astonishment, and at this season of defiance, together with incessant surly roaring, growling, and "spitting."

This spitting, as I call it, is by no means a fair or full expres-

sion of the most characteristic sound and action, peculiar, so far as I have observed, to the fur-seals, the bulls in particular. It is the usual prelude to their combats, and follows somewhat in this way: when the two disputants are nearly within reaching or striking distance, they make a number of feints or false passes at one another, with the mouth wide open and lifting the lips or snarling, so as to exhibit the glistening teeth, and with each pass they expel the air so violently through the larynx as to make a rapid choo-choo-choo sound, like the steam-puffs in the smoke-stack of a locomotive when it starts a heavy train, and especially when the driving-wheels slip on the rail.

All the bulls now have the power and frequent inclination to utter four entirely distinct calls or notes—a hoarse, resonant roar, loud and long; a low gurgling growl; a chuckling, sibilant, piping whistle, of which it is impossible to convey an adequate idea, for it must be heard to be understood; and this spitting, just described. The cows\* have but one note—a hollow, prolonged, *bla-a-ting* call, addressed only to their pups; on all other occasions they are usually silent. It is something like the cry of a calf or sheep. They also make a spitting sound, and snort, when suddenly disturbed. The pups "*bla-at*" also, with little or no variation, the sound being somewhat weaker and hoarser than that of their mothers for the first two or three weeks after birth; they, too, spit and cough when aroused suddenly from a nap or driven into a corner. A number of pups crying at a short distance off bring to mind very strongly the idea of a flock of sheep "*baa-aa-ing*."

Indeed, so similar is the sound that a number of sheep brought up from San Francisco to Saint George's Island during the summer of 1873 were constantly attracted to the rookeries,

\*Without explanation I may be considered as making use of misapplied terms in describing these animals, for the inconsistency of coupling "pups" with "cows" and "bulls," and "rookeries" with the breeding-grounds of the same, cannot fail to be noticed; but this nomenclature has been given and used by the English and American whalers and sealing-parties for many years, and the characteristic features of the seals suit the odd naming exactly, so much so that I have felt satisfied to retain the style throughout as rendering my description more intelligible, especially so to those who are engaged in the business or may be hereafter. The Russians are more consistent, but not so "pat." The bull is called "see-catch," a term implying strength, vigor, &c.; the cow, "matkah," or mother; the pups, "kotickie," or little seals; the non-breeding males, under six and seven years, "holluschickie," or bachelors. The name applied collectively to the fur-seal by them is "morskje-kot," or sea-cat.

running in among the seals, and had to be driven away to a good feeding-ground by a small boy detailed for the purpose.

The sound arising from these great breeding-grounds of the fur-seal, where thousands upon thousands of angry, vigilant bulls are roaring, chuckling, piping, and multitudes of seal-mothers are calling in hollow, bla-ating tones to their young, which in turn respond incessantly, is simply indescribable. It is, at a slight distance, softened into a deep booming, as of a cataract, and can be heard a long distance off at sea, under favorable circumstances as far as five or six miles, and frequently warns vessels that may be approaching the islands in thick, foggy weather, of the positive, though unseen, proximity of land. Night and day, throughout the season, the din of the rookeries is steady and constant.

The seals seem to suffer great inconvenience from a comparatively low degree of heat; for, with a temperature of 46° and 48° on land, during the summer, they show signs of distress from heat whenever they make any exertion, pant, raise their hind flippers, and use them incessantly as fans. With the thermometer at 55°-60°, they seem to suffer even when at rest, and at such times the eye is struck by the kaleidoscopic appearance of a rookery, on which a million seals are spread out in every imaginable position their bodies can assume, all industriously fanning themselves, using sometimes the fore flippers as ventilators, as it were, by holding them aloft motionless, at the same moment fanning briskly with the hind flipper, or flippers, according as they sit or lie. This wavy motion of flapping and fanning gives a peculiar shade of hazy indistinctness to the whole scene, which is difficult to express in language; but one of the most prominent characteristics of the fur-seal is this fanning manner in which they use their flippers, when seen on the breeding-grounds in season. They also, when idling, as it were, off shore at sea, lie on their sides, with only a partial exposure of the body, the head submerged, and hoist up a fore or hind flipper clear of the water, while scratching themselves or enjoying a nap; but in this position there is no fanning. I say "scratching," because the seal, in common with all animals, is preyed upon by vermin, a species of louse and a tick, peculiar to itself.

All the bulls, from the very first, that have been able to hold their positions, have not left them for an instant, night or day, nor do they do so until the end of the rutting-season, which

subsides entirely between the 1st and 10th of August, beginning shortly after the coming of the cows in June. Of necessity, therefore, this causes them to fast, to abstain entirely from food of any kind, or water, for three months, at least, and a few of them stay four months before going into the water for the first time after hauling up in May.

This alone is remarkable enough, but it is simply wonderful when we come to associate the condition with the unceasing activity, restlessness, and duty devolved upon the bulls as heads and fathers of large families. They do not stagnate, like bears in caves; it is evidently accomplished or due to the absorption of their own fat, with which they are so liberally supplied when they take their positions on the breeding-ground, and which gradually diminishes while they remain on it. But still some most remarkable provision must be made for the entire torpidity of the stomach and bowels, consequent upon their being empty and unsupplied during this long period, which, however, in spite of the violation of a supposed physiological law, does not seem to affect them, for they come back just as sleek, fat, and ambitious as ever in the following season.

I have examined the stomachs of a number which were driven up and killed immediately after their arrival in the spring, and natives here have seen hundreds, even thousands, of them during the killing-season in June and July, but in no case has anything been found other than the bile and ordinary secretions of healthy organs of this class, with the exception only of finding in *every* one a snarl or cluster of worms,\* from the size of a walnut to that of one's fist, the fast apparently having no effect on them, for when three or four hundred old bulls were slaughtered late in the fall, to supply the natives with "bidarkee" or canoe skins, I found these worms in a lively condition in every paunch cut open, and their presence, I think, gives some reason for the habit which these old bulls have of swallowing small bowlders, the stones in some of the stomachs weighing half a pound or so, and in one paunch I found about five pounds in the aggregate of larger pebbles, which in grinding against one another must destroy, in a great measure, these intestinal pests. The sea-lion is also troubled in the same way by a similar species of worm, and I have preserved a stomach of one of these animals in which are more than ten pounds of bowlders, some of them alone quite large. The greater size of this animal enables

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\*Nematoda.

it to swallow stones which weigh two and three pounds. I can ascribe no other cause for this habit among these animals than that given, as they are of the highest type of the carnivora, eating fish as a regular means of subsistence; varying the monotony of this diet with occasional juicy fronds of sea-weed, or kelp, and perhaps a crab, or such, once in a while, provided it is small and tender, or soft-shelled.

Between the 12th and 14th of June the first of the cow-seals come up from the sea, and the bulls signalize it by a universal, spasmodic, desperate fighting among themselves.

The strong contrast between the males and females in size and shape is heightened by the air of exceeding peace and amiability which the latter class exhibit.

The cows are from 4 to 4½ feet in length from head to tail, and much more shapely in their proportions than the bulls, the neck and shoulders being not near so fat and heavy in proportion to the posteriors.

When they come up, wet and dripping, they are of a dull, dirty-gray color, darker on the back and upper parts, but in a few hours the transformation made by drying is wonderful; you would hardly believe they could be the same animals, for they now fairly glisten with a rich steel and maltese-gray luster on the back of the head, neck, and spine, which blends into an almost pure white on the chest and abdomen. But this beautiful coloring in turn is altered by exposure to the weather, for in two or three days it will gradually change to a dull, rufous ocher below, and a cinereous-brown and gray-mixed above; this color they retain throughout the breeding-season up to the time of shedding the coat in August.

The head and eye of the female are really attractive; the expression is exceedingly gentle and intelligent; the large, lustrous eyes, in the small, well-formed head, apparently gleam with benignity and satisfaction when she is perched up on some convenient rock and has an opportunity to quietly fan herself.

The cows appear to be driven on to the rookeries by an accurate instinctive appreciation of the time in which their period of gestation ends; for in all cases marked by myself, the pups are born soon after landing, some in a few hours after, but most usually a day or two elapses before delivery.

They are noticed and received by the bulls on the water-line stations with much attention; they are alternately coaxed and urged up on to the rocks, and are immediately under the most

jealous supervision; but owing to the covetous and ambitious nature of the bulls, which occupy the stations reaching way back from the water-line, the little cows have a rough-and-tumble time of it when they begin to arrive in small numbers at first; for no sooner is the pretty animal fairly established on the station of bull number one, who has installed her there, he perhaps sees another one of her style down in the water from which she has just come, and in obedience to his polygamous feeling, he devotes himself anew to coaxing the later arrival in the same winning manner so successful in her case, when bull number two, seeing bull number one off his guard, reaches out with his long strong neck and picks the unhappy but passive creature up by the scruff of hers, just as a cat does a kitten, and deposits her on his seraglio-ground; then bulls number three, four, and so on, in the vicinity, seeing this high-handed operation, all assail one another, and especially bull number two, and have a tremendous fight, perhaps for half a minute or so, and during this commotion the cow generally is moved or moves farther back from the water, two or three stations more, where, when all gets quiet, she usually remains in peace. Her last lord and master, not having the exposure to such diverting temptation as had her first, he gives her such care that she not only is unable to leave did she wish, but no other bull can seize upon her. This is only one instance of the many different trials and tribulations which both parties on the rookery subject themselves to before the harems are filled. Far back, fifteen or twenty stations deep from the water-line sometimes, but generally not more on an average than ten or fifteen, the cows crowd in at the close of the season for arriving, July 10 to 14, and then they are able to go about pretty much as they please, for the bulls have become greatly enfeebled by this constant fighting and excitement during the past two months, and are quite content with even only one or two partners.

The cows seem to haul in compact bodies from the water up to the rear of the rookeries, never scattering about over the ground; and they will not lie quiet in any position outside of the great mass of their kind. This is due to their intensely gregarious nature, and for the sake of protection. They also select land with special reference to the drainage, having a great dislike to water-puddled ground. This is well shown on Saint Paul.

I have found it difficult to ascertain the average number of



cows to one bull on the rookery, but I think it will be nearly correct to assign to each male from twelve to fifteen females, occupying the stations nearest the water, and those back in the rear from five to nine. I have counted forty-five cows all under the charge of one bull, which had them penned up on a flat table-rock, near *Keetavie Point*; the bull was enabled to do this quite easily, as there was but one way to go to or come from this seraglio, and on this path the old Turk took his stand and guarded it well.

At the rear of all these rookeries there is always a large number of able-bodied bulls, who wait patiently, but in vain, for families, most of them having had to fight as desperately for the privilege of being there as any of their more fortunately-located neighbors, who are nearer the water than themselves; but the cows do not like to be in any outside position, where they are not in close company, lying most quiet and content in the largest harems, and these large families pack the surface of the ground so thickly, that there is hardly moving or turning room until the females cease to come up from the sea; but the inaction on the part of the bulls in the rear during the rutting-season only serves to qualify them to move into the places vacated by those males who are obliged to leave from exhaustion, and to take the positions of jealous and fearless protectors for the young pups in the fall.

The courage with which the fur-seal holds his position, as the head and guardian of a family, is of the very highest order, compared with that of other animals. I have repeatedly tried to drive them when they have fairly established themselves, and have almost always failed, using every stone at my command, making all the noise I could, and, finally, to put their courage to the full test, I walked up to within 20 feet of a bull at the rear and extreme end of Tolstoi Rookery, who had four cows in charge, and commenced with my double-barreled breech-loading shot-gun to pepper him all over with mustard-seed or dust shot. His bearing, in spite of the noise, smell of powder, and pain, did not change in the least from the usual attitude of determined defense which nearly all the bulls assume when attacked with showers of stones and noise; he would dart out right and left and catch the cows, which timidly attempted to run after each report, and fling and drag them back to their places; then, stretching up to his full height, look me directly and defiantly in the face, roaring and spitting

most vehemently. The cows, however, soon got away from him; but he still stood his ground, making little charges on me of 10 or 15 feet in a succession of gallops or lunges, spitting furiously, and then retreating to the old position, back of which he would not go, fully resolved to hold his own or die in the attempt.

This courage is all the more noteworthy from the fact that, in regard to man, it is invariably of a defensive character. The seal, if it makes you turn when you attack it, never follows you much farther than the boundary of its station, and no aggravation will compel it to become offensive, as far as I have been able to observe.

The cows, during the whole season, do great credit to their amiable expression by their manner and behavior on the rookery; never fight or quarrel one with another, and never or seldom utter a cry of pain or rage when they are roughly handled by the bulls, who frequently get a cow between them and tear the skin from her back, cutting deep gashes into it, as they snatch her from mouth to mouth. These wounds, however, heal rapidly, and exhibit no traces the next year.

The cows, like the bulls, vary much in weight. Two were taken from the rookery nearest Saint Paul's Village, after they had been delivered of their young, and the respective weights were 56 and 101 pounds, the former being about three or four years old, and the latter over six. They both were fat and in excellent condition.

It is quite out of the question to give a fair idea of the positions in which the seals rest when on land. They may be said to assume every possible attitude which a flexible body can be put into. One favorite position, especially with the cows, is to perch upon a point or top of some rock and throw their heads back upon their shoulders, with the nose held aloft, then, closing their eyes, take short naps without changing, now and then gently fanning with one or the other of the long, slender hind flippers; another, and the most common, is to curl themselves up, just as a dog does on a hearth-rug, bringing the tail and the nose close together. They also stretch out, laying the head straight with the body, and sleep for an hour or two without moving, holding one of the hinder flippers up all the time, now and then gently waving it, the eyes being tightly closed.

The sleep of the fur-seal, from the old bull to the young pup, is always accompanied by a nervous, muscular twitching and

slight shifting of the flippers; quivering and uneasy rolling of the body, accompanied by a quick folding anew of the fore flippers, which are signs, as it were, of their having nightmares, or sporting, perhaps, in a visionary way, far off in some dream-land sea; or disturbed, perhaps more probably, by their intestinal parasites. I have studied hundreds of all classes, stealing softly up so closely that I could lay my hand on them, and have always found the sleep to be of this nervous description. The respiration is short and rapid, but with no breathing (unless your ear is brought very close) or snoring sound; the heaving of the flanks only indicates the action. I have frequently thought that I had succeeded in finding a snoring seal, especially among the pups, but a close examination always gave some abnormal reason for it, generally a slight distemper, by which the nostrils were stopped up to a greater or less degree.

As I have said before, the cows, soon after landing, are delivered of their young.

Immediately after the birth of the pup, (twins are rare, if ever,) it finds its voice, a weak, husky *blaat*, and begins to paddle about, with eyes wide open, in a confused sort of way for a few minutes until the mother is ready to give it attention, and, still later, suckle it; and for this purpose she is provided with four small, brown nipples, placed about eight inches apart, lengthwise with the body, on the abdomen, between the fore and hinder flippers, with some four inches of space between them transversely. The nipples are not usually visible; only seen through the hair and fur. The milk is abundant, rich, and creamy. The pups nurse very heartily, gorging themselves.

The pup at birth, and for the next three months, is of a jet-black color, hair, eyes, and flippers, save a tiny white patch just back of each fore foot, and weighs from 3 to 4 pounds, and 12 to 14 inches long; it does not seem to nurse more than once every two or three days, but in this I am most likely mistaken, for they may have received attention from the mother in the night or other times in the day when I was unable to watch them.

The apathy with which the young are treated by the old on the breeding-grounds is somewhat strange. I have never seen a cow caress or fondle her offspring, and should it stray but a short distance from the harem, it can be picked up and killed

before the mother's eyes without causing her to show the slightest concern. The same indifference is exhibited by the bull to all that takes place outside of the boundary of his seraglio. While the pups are, however, within the limits of his harem-ground, he is a jealous and fearless protector; but if the little animals pass beyond this boundary, then they may be carried off without the slightest attention in their behalf from their guardian.

It is surprising to me how few of the pups get crushed to death while the ponderous bulls are floundering over them when engaged in fighting. I have seen two bulls dash at each other with all the energy of furious rage, meeting right in the midst of a small "pod" of forty or fifty pups, trampling over them with their crushing weights, and bowling them out right and left in every direction, without injuring a single one. I do not think more than 1 per cent. of the pups born each season are lost in this manner on the rookeries.

To test the vitality of these little animals, I kept one in the house to ascertain how long it could live without nursing, having taken it immediately after birth and before it could get any taste of its mother's milk; it lived nine days, and in the whole time half of every day was spent in floundering about over the floor, accompanying the movement with a persistent hoarse blaating. This experiment certainly shows wonderful vitality, and is worthy of an animal that can live four months without food or water and preserve enough of its latent strength and vigor at the end of that time to go far off to sea, and return as fat and hearty as ever during the next season.

In the pup, the head is the only disproportionate feature when it is compared with the proportion of the adult form, the neck being also relatively shorter and thicker. I shall have to speak again of it, as it grows and changes, when I finish with the breeding-season now under consideration.

The cows appear to go to and come from the water quite frequently, and usually return to the spot, or its neighborhood, where they leave their pups, crying out for them, and recognizing the individual replies, though ten thousand around, all together, should blaate at once. They quickly single out their own and attend them. It would be a very unfortunate matter if the mothers could not identify their young by sound, since their pups get together like a great swarm of bees, spread out upon the ground in "pods" or groups, while they are young.

and not very large, but by the middle and end of September, until they leave in November, they cluster together, sleeping and frolicking by tens of thousands. A mother comes up from the water, where she has been to wash, and perhaps to feed, for the last day or two, to about where she thinks her pup should be, but misses it, and finds instead a swarm of pups in which it has been incorporated, owing to its great fondness for society. The mother, without at first entering into the crowd of thousands, calls out, just as a sheep does for her lamb, listens, and out of all the din she—if not at first, at the end of a few trials—recognizes the voice of her offspring, and then advances, striking out right and left, and over the crowd, toward the position from which it replies; but if the pup at this time happens to be asleep she hears nothing from it, even though it were close by, and in this case the cow, after calling for a time without being answered, curls herself up and takes a nap, or lazily basks, and is most likely more successful when she calls again.

The pups themselves do not know their mothers, but they are so constituted that they incessantly cry out at short intervals during the whole time they are awake, and in this way a mother can pick, out of the monotonous bleating of thousands of pups, her own, and she will not permit any other to suckle.

Between the end of July and the 5th or 8th of August the rookeries are completely changed in appearance; the systematic and regular disposition of the families, or harems, over the whole extent of ground has disappeared; all order heretofore existing seems to be broken up. The rutting-season over, those bulls which held positions now leave, most of them very thin in flesh and weak, and I think a large proportion of them do not come out again on the land during the season; and such as do come, appear, not fat, but in good flesh, and in a new coat of rich dark and gray-brown hair and fur, with gray and grayish-ocher "wigs" or over-hair on the shoulders, forming a strong contrast to the dull, rusty-brown and umber dress in which they appeared during the summer, and which they had begun to shed about the 15th of August, in common with the cows and bachelor seals. After these bulls leave, at the close of their season's work, those of them that do return to the land do not come back until the end of September, and do not haul up on the rookery-grounds as a rule, preferring to herd together, as do the young males, on the sand-beaches and other rocky

points close to the water. The cows, pups, and those bulls which have been in retirement, now take possession, in a very disorderly manner, of the rookeries; also, come a large number of young, three, four, and five year old males, who have not been permitted to land among the cows, during the rutting-season, by the older, stronger bulls, who have savagely fought them off whenever they made (as they constantly do) an attempt to land.

Three-fourths, at least, of the cows are now off in the water, only coming ashore to nurse and look after their pups a short time. They lie idly out in the rollers, ever and anon turning over and over, scratching their backs and sides with their fore and hind flippers. Nothing is more suggestive of immense comfort and enjoyment than is this action of these animals. They appear to get very lousy on the breeding-ground, and the frequent winds and showers drive and spatter sand into their fur and eyes, making the latter quite sore in many cases. They also pack the soil under foot so hard and solid that it holds water in the surface depressions, just like so many rock basins, on the rookery; out and into these puddles they flounder and patter incessantly, until evaporation slowly abates the nuisance.

The pups sometimes get so thoroughly plastered in these muddy, slimy puddles, that their hair falls off in patches, giving them the appearance of being troubled with scrofula or some other plague, at first sight, but they are not, from my observation, permanently injured.

Early in August (8th) the pups that are nearest the water on the rookeries essay swimming, but make slow and clumsy progress, floundering about, when over head in depth, in the most awkward manner, thrashing the water with their fore flippers, not using the hinder ones. In a few seconds, or a minute at the most, the youngster is so weary that he crawls out upon the rocks or beach, and immediately takes a recuperative nap, repeating the lesson as quick as he awakes and is rested. They soon get familiar with the water, and delight in it, swimming in endless evolutions, twisting, turning, diving, and when exhausted, they draw up on the beach again, shake themselves as young dogs do, either going to sleep on the spot, or having a lazy frolic among themselves.

In this matter of learning to swim, I have not seen any "driving" of the young pups into the water by the old in order

to teach them this process, as has been affirmed by writers on the subject of seal-life.

The pups are constantly shifting, at the close of the rutting-season, back and forth over the rookery in large squads, sometimes numbering thousands. In the course of these changes of position they all come sooner or later in contact with the sea; the pup blunders into the water for the first time in a most awkward manner, and gets out again as quick as it can, but so far from showing any fear or dislike of this, its most natural element, as soon as it rests from its exertion, is immediately ready for a new trial, and keeps at it, if the sea is not too stormy or rough at the time, until it becomes quite familiar with the water, and during all this period of self-tuition it seems to thoroughly enjoy the exercise.

By the 15th of September all the pups have become familiar with the water, have nearly all deserted the background of the rookeries and are down by the water's edge, and skirt the rocks and beaches for long distances on ground previously unoccupied by seals of any class.

They are now about five or six times their original weight, and are beginning to shed their black hair and take on their second coat, which does not vary at this age between the sexes. They do this very slowly, and cannot be called out of molting or shedding until the middle of October, as a rule.

The pup's second coat, or sea-going jacket, is a uniform, dense, light pelage, or under-fur, grayish in some, light-brown in others, the fine, close, soft, and elastic hairs which compose it being about one-half of an inch in length, and over-hair, two-thirds of an inch long, quite coarse, giving the color by which you recognize the condition. This over-hair, on the back, neck, and head, is a dark chinchilla-gray, blending into a white, just tinged with a grayish tone on the abdomen and chest. The upper lip, where the whiskers or mustache takes root, is of a lighter-gray tone than that which surrounds. This mustache consists of fifteen or twenty longer or shorter whitish-gray bristles (one-half to three inches) on each side and back of the nostrils, which are, as I have before said, similar to that of a dog.

The most attractive feature about the fur-seal pup, and upward as it grows, is the eye, which is exceedingly large, dark, and liquid, with which, for beauty and amiability, together with

intelligence of expression, those of no other animal can be compared. The lids are well supplied with eyelashes.

I do not think that their range of vision on land, or out of the water, is very great. I have had them (the adults) catch sight of my person, so as to distinguish it as a foreign character, three and four hundred paces off, with the wind blowing strongly from them toward myself, but generally they will allow you to approach very close indeed, before recognizing your strangeness, and the pups will scarcely notice the form of a human being until it is fairly on them, whereupon they make a lively noise, a medley of coughing, spitting, snorting, blaating, and get away from its immediate vicinity, but instantly resume, however, their previous occupation of either sleeping or playing, as though nothing had happened.

But the power of scent is (together with their hearing, before mentioned) exceedingly keen, for I have found that I would most invariably awake them from soundest sleep if I got to the windward, even when standing a considerable distance off.

To recapitulate and sum up the system of reproduction on the rookeries as the seals seem to have arranged it, I would say, that—

First. The earliest bulls appear to land in a negligent, indolent way, shortly after the rocks at the water's edge are free from ice, frozen snow, &c. This is generally about the 1st to the 5th of May. They land first and last in perfect confidence and without fear, very fat, and of an average weight of five hundred pounds; some staying at the water's edge, some going away back, in fact all over the rookery.

Second. That by the 10th or 12th of June, all the stations on the rookeries have been mapped out, fought for, and held in waiting for the cows by the strongest and most enduring bulls, who are, as a rule, never under six years of age, and sometimes three, and even occasionally four times as old.

Third. That the cows make their first appearance, as a class, by the 12th or 15th of June, in rather small numbers, but by the 23d and 25th of this month they begin to flock up so as to fill the harems very perceptibly, and by the 8th or 10th of July they have most all come, stragglers excepted; average weight eighty pounds.

Fourth. That the rutting-season is at its height from the 10th to the 15th of July, and that it subsides entirely at the end of



this month and early in August, and that it is confined entirely to the land.

Fifth. That the cows bear their first young when three years of age.

Sixth. That the cows are limited to a single pup each, as a rule, in bearing, and this is born soon after landing; no exception has thus far been witnessed.

Seventh. That the bulls who have held the harems leave for the water in a straggling manner at the close of the rutting-season, greatly emaciated, not returning, if at all, until six or seven weeks have elapsed, and that the regular systematic distribution of families over the rookeries is at an end for the season, a general medley of young bulls now free to come up from the water, old males who have not been on seraglio duty, cows, and an immense majority of pups, since only about 25 per cent. of their mothers are out of the water at a time.

The rookeries lose their compactness and definite boundaries by the 25th to 28th July, when the pups begin to haul back and to the right and left in small squads at first, but as the season goes on, by the 18th August, they swarm over three and four times the area occupied by them when born on the rookeries. The system of family arrangement and definite compactness of the breeding-classes begins at this date to break up.

Eighth. That by the 8th or 10th of August the pups born nearest the water begin to learn to swim, and by the 15th or 20th of September they are all familiar more or less with it.

Ninth. That by the middle of September the rookeries are entirely broken up, only confused, straggling bands of cows, young bachelors, pups, and small squads of old bulls, crossing and recrossing the ground in an aimless, listless manner; the season is over, but many of these seals do not leave these grounds until driven off by snow and ice, as late as the end of December and 12th of January.

This recapitulation is the sum and substance of my observations on the rookeries, and I will now turn to the consideration of the

#### HAULING-GROUNDS,

upon which the yearlings and almost all the males under six years come out from the sea in squads from a hundred to a thousand, and, later in the season, by hundreds of thousands,

to sleep and frolic, going from a quarter to half a mile back from the sea, as at English Bay.

This class of seals are termed "holluschukie" (or "bachelor seals") by the natives. It is with the seals of this division that these people are most familiar, since they are, together with a few thousand pups and some old bulls, the only ones driven up to the killing-grounds for their skins, for reasons which are excellent, and which shall be given further on.

Since the "holluschukie" are not permitted by their own kind to land on the rookeries and rest there, they have the choice of two methods of landing and locating.

One of these opportunities, and least used, is to pass up from and down to the water, through a rookery on a pathway left by common consent between the harems. On these lines of passage they are unmolested by the old and jealous bulls, who guard the seraglios on either side as they go and come; generally there is a continual file of them on the way, traveling up or down.

As the two and three year old holluschukie come up in small squads with the first bulls in the spring, or a few days later, these common highways between the rear of the rookery-ground and the sea get well defined and traveled over before the arrival of the cows; for just as the bulls crowd up for their stations, so do the bachelors, young and old, increase. These roadways may be termed the lines of least resistance in a big rookery; they are not constant; they are splendidly shown on the large rookeries of Saint Paul's, one of them (Tolstoi) exhibiting this feature finely, for the hauling-ground lies up back of the rookery, on a flat and rolling summit, 100 to 120 feet above the sea-level. The young males and yearlings of both sexes come through the rookery on these narrow pathways, and, before reaching the resting-ground above, are obliged to climb up an almost abrupt bluff, by following and struggling in the little water-runs and washes which are worn in its face. As this is a large hauling-ground, on which fifteen or twenty thousand commonly lie every day during the season, the sight always, at all times, to be seen, in the way of seal climbing and crawling, was exceedingly novel and interesting. They climb over and up to places here where a clumsy man might at first sight say he would be unable to ascend.

The other method by which the "holluschukie" enjoy themselves on land is the one most followed and favored. They, in

this case, repair to the beaches unoccupied between the rookeries, and there extend themselves out all the way back from the water as far, in some cases, as a quarter of a mile, and even farther. I have had under my eye, in one straightforward sweep, from Zapad-nie to Tolstoi, (three miles,) a million and a half of seals, at least, (about the middle of July.) Of these I estimated fully one-half were pups, yearlings, and "holluschukie." The great majority of the two latter classes were hauled out and packed thickly over the two miles of sand-beach and flat which lay between the rookeries; many large herds were back as far from the water as a quarter of a mile.

A small flock of the younger ones, from one to three years old, will frequently stray away back from the hauling-ground lines, out and up onto the fresh moss and grass, and there sport and play, one with another, just as puppy-dogs do; and when weary of this gamboling, a general disposition to sleep is suddenly manifested, and they stretch themselves out and curl up in all the positions and all the postures that their flexible spines and ball-and-socket joints will permit. One will lie upon his back, holding up his hind flippers, lazily waving them in the air, while he scratches or rather rubs his ribs with the fore hands alternately, the eyes being tightly closed; and the breath, indicated by the heaving of his flanks, drawn quickly but regularly, as though in heavy sleep; another will be flat upon his stomach, his hind flippers drawn under and concealed, while he tightly folds his fore feet back against his sides, just as a fish will sometimes hold its pectoral fins; and so on, without end of variety, according to the ground and disposition of the animals.

While the young seals undoubtedly have the power of going without food, they certainly do not sustain any long fasting periods on land, for their coming and going is frequent and irregular; for instance, three or four thick, foggy days will sometimes call them out by hundreds of thousands, a million or two, on the different hauling-grounds, where, in some cases, they lie so closely together that scarcely a foot of ground, over acres in extent, is bare; then a clearer and warmer day will ensue, and the ground, before so thickly packed with animal-life, will be almost deserted, comparatively, to be filled again immediately on the recurrence of favorable weather. They are in just as good condition of flesh at the end of the season as at the first of it.

These bachelor-seals are, I am sure, without exception, the most restless animals in the whole brute creation; they frolic and lope about over the grounds for hours, without a moment's cessation, and their sleep after this is short, and is accompanied with nervous twitchings and uneasy movements; they seem to be fairly brimful and overrunning with warm life. I have never observed anything like ill-humor grow out of their playing together; invariably well pleased one with another in all their frolicsome struggles.

The pups and yearlings have an especial fondness for sporting on the rocks which are just at the water's level, so as to be alternately covered and uncovered by the sea-rollers. On the bare summit of these water-worn spots they struggle and clamber, a dozen or two at a time, occasionally, for a single rock; the strongest or luckiest one pushing the others all off, which, however, simply redouble their efforts and try to dislodge him, who thus has, for a few moments only, the advantage; for with the next roller and the other pressure, he generally is ousted, and the game is repeated. Sometimes, as well as I could see, the same squad of "holluschukie" played around a rock thus situated, off "Nah Spee" rookery, during the whole of one day; but, of course, they cannot be told apart.

The "holluschukie," too, are the champion swimmers; at least they do about all the fancy tumbling and turning that is done by the fur-seals when in the water around the islands. The grave old bulls and their matronly companions seldom indulge in any extravagant display, such as jumping out of the water like so many dolphins, describing, as these youngsters do, beautiful elliptic curves, rising three and even four feet from the sea, with the back slightly arched, the fore flippers folded back against the sides, and the hinder ones extended and pressed together straight out behind, plunging in head first, re-appearing in the same manner after an interval of a few seconds.

All classes will invariably make these dolphin-jumps when they are suddenly surprised or are driven into the water, turning their heads, while sailing in the air, between the "rises" and "plumps," to take a look at the cause of their disturbance. They all swim with great rapidity, and may be fairly said to dart with the velocity of a bird on the wing along under the water; and in all their swimming I have not been able yet to satisfy myself how they use their long, flexible, hind feet, other

than as steering mediums. The propelling motion, if they have any, is so rapid, that my eye is not quick enough to catch it; the fore feet, however, can be very distinctly seen to work, feathering forward and sweeping back flatly, opposed to the water, with great rapidity and energy, and are evidently the sole propulsive power.

All their movements in the water, when in traveling or sport, are quick and joyous, and nothing is more suggestive of intense satisfaction and great comfort than is the spectacle of a few thousand old bulls and cows, off and from a rookery in August, idly rolling over, side by side, rubbing and scratching with the fore and hind flippers, which are here and there stuck up out of the water like lateen-sails, or "cat-o'-nine tails," in either case, as it may be.

When the "holluschukie" are up on land they can be readily separated into two classes by the color of their coats and size, viz, the yearlings, and the two, three, four, and five year old bulls.

The first class is dressed just as they were after they shed their pup-coats and took on the second the previous year, in September and October, and now, as they come out in the spring and summer, the males and females cannot be distinguished apart, either by color or size; both yearling sexes having the same gray backs and white bellies, and are the same in behavior, action, weight, and shape.

About the 15th and 20th of August they begin to grow "stagey," or shed, in common with all the other classes, the pups excepted. The over-hair requires about six weeks from the commencement of the dropping or falling out of the old to its full renewal.

The pelage, or fur, which is concealed externally by the hair, is also shed, and renewed slowly in the same manner; but, being so much finer than the hair, it is not so apparent. It was to me a great surprise to "learn," from a man who has been heading a seal-killing party on these islands during the past three years, and the Government agent in charge of these interests, that the seal never shed its fur; that the over-hair only was cast off and replaced. To prove that it does, however, is a very simple matter, and does not require the aid of a microscope. For example, take up a prime spring or fall skin, after every single over-hair on it has been plucked out, and you will have difficulty, either to so blow upon the thick, fine fur, or

to part it with the fingers, as to show the hide from which it has grown; then take a "stagey" skin, by the end of August and early in September, when *all the over-hair is present, about one-third to one-half grown*, and the first puff you expend upon it easily shows the hide below, sometimes quite a broad welt. This under-fur, or pelage, is so fine and delicate, and so much concealed and shaded by the course over-hair, that a careless eye may be pardoned for any such blunder, but only a very casual observer could make it.

The yearling cows retain the colors of the old coat in the new, and from this time on shed, year after year, just so, for the young and the old cows look alike, as far as color goes, when they haul up on the rookeries in the summer.

The yearling males, however, make a radical change, coming out from their "staginess" in a uniform dark-gray and gray-black mixed and lighter, and dark ocher, on the under and upper parts, respectively. This coat, next year, when they come up on the hauling-grounds, is very dark, and is so for the third, fourth, and fifth years, when, after this, they begin to grow more gray and brown, year by year, with rufous-ocher and whitish-gray tipped over-hair on the shoulders. Some of the very old bulls become changed to uniform dull grayish-ocher all over.

The female does not get her full growth and weight until the end of her fourth year, so far as I have observed, but does the most of her growing in the first two.

The male does not get his full growth and weight until the close of his seventh year, but realizes most of it by the end of the fifth, osteologically, and from this it may be, perhaps, truly inferred that the bulls live to an average age of eighteen or twenty years, if undisturbed in a normal condition, and that the cows attain ten or twelve under the same circumstances. Their respective weights, when fully mature and fat in the spring, will, I think, strike an average of four to five hundred pounds for the male and from seventy to eighty for the female.

From the fact that all the young seals do not change much in weight, from the time of their first coming out in the spring till that of their leaving in the fall and early winter, I feel safe in saying, since they, too, are constantly changing from land to water and from water to land, that they feed at irregular but not long intervals during the time they are here under observation. I do not think the young males fast longer than a week or ten days at a time, as a class.

The leave evidences of their being on these great reproductive fields, chiefly on the rookeries, such as hundreds of the dead carcasses of those of them that have been infirm, sick, killed, or which have crawled off to die from death-wounds received in some struggle for a harem; and over these decaying, putrid bodies, the living, old and young, clamber and patter, and by this constant stirring up of putrescent matter give rise to an exceedingly disagreeable and far-reaching "funk," which has been, by all the writers who have spoken on the subject, referred to as the smell which these animals have in rutting. If these creatures have any such odor peculiar to them when in this condition, I will frankly confess that I am unable to distinguish it from the fumes which are constantly being stirred up and rising out from these decaying carcasses of old seals and the many pups which have been killed accidentally by the old bulls while fighting with and charging back and forth against one another.

They, however, have a peculiar smell when they are driven and get heated; their steaming breath-exhalations possess a disagreeable, faint, sickly tone, but it can by no means be confounded with what is universally understood to be the rutting-odor among animals. The finger rubbed on a little fur-seal blubber will smell very much like that which is appreciated in their breath coming from them when driven, only stronger. Both the young and old fur-seals have this same breath-smell at all seasons.

By the end of October and the 10th of November the great mass of the "holluschukie" have taken their departure; the few that remain from now until as late as the snow and ice will permit them to do, in and after December, are all down by the water's edge, and hauled up almost entirely on the rocky beaches only, deserting the sand. The first snow falling makes them uneasy, as also does rain-fall. I have seen a large hauling-ground entirely deserted after a rainy day and night by its hundreds of thousands of occupants. The falling drops slobber and beat the sand into their eyes, fur, &c., I presume, and in this way make it uncomfortable for them.

The weather in which the fur-seal delights is cool, moist, foggy, and thick enough to keep the sun always obscured so as to cast no shadows. Such weather, continued for a few weeks in June and July, brings them up from the sea by millions; but, as I have before said, a little sunlight and the temperature as high as 50° to 55°, will send them back from the hauling-

grounds almost as quickly as they came. These sunny, warm days are, however, on Saint Paul's Island, very rare indeed, and so the seals can have but little ground of complaint, if we may presume that they have any at all.

I saw but three albino pups among the hundreds of thousands on Saint Paul's and none on Saint George. They did not differ in any respect from the other (normal) pups in size and shape. Their hair, in the first coat, was, all over, a dull ochre; the flippers and muzzle were a flesh-tone, and the iris of the eye sky-blue. The second coat gives them a dirty yellowish-white color, but it makes them exceedingly conspicuous when in among the black pups, gray yearlings, and "holluschukie."

I have also never seen any malformations or "monsters" among the pups and other classes of the fur-seal; nor have the natives recorded anything of the kind, so far as I could ascertain from them.

Another curious fact may be recorded, that, with the exception of those animals which have received wounds in combat, no sick or dying seals are seen upon the islands. Out of the great numbers, thousands upon thousands of seals that must die every year from old age alone, not one have I ever seen here. They evidently give up their lives at sea.

*Table showing the weight, size, and growth of the fur-seal, (Callorhinus ursinus,) from the pup to the adult, male and female.*

[The weights and measurements were taken by Mr. Samuel Falconer and the writer on the killing-grounds at Saint George's Island, in 1873.]

Age.	Length.	Girth.	Gross weight of body.	Weight of skin.	Remarks.
	<i>Inches.</i>	<i>Inches.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>	
One week.....	12 to 14	10 to 10½	6 to 7½	1½	A male and female, being the only one of this class handled.
Six months.....	24	25	39	3	A mean of ten examples, males and females alike in size.
One year.....	38	25	39	4½	A mean of six examples, males and females alike in size.
Two years.....	45	30	58	5½	A mean of thirty examples, all males, July 24, 1873.
Three years.....	52	36	87	7	A mean of thirty-two examples, all males, July 24, 1873.
Four years.....	58	42	135	12	A mean of ten examples, all males, July 24, 1873.
Five years.....	65	52	200	16	A mean of five examples, all males, July 24, 1873.
Six years.....	72	64	280	25	A mean of three examples, all males, July 24, 1873.
Eight to twenty years.	75 to 80	70 to 75	400 to 500	45 to 50	An estimate only, calculating on their weight when fat, and early in the season.



The females, adults, will correspond with the three-year-old males in the above table, the younger cows weighing frequently only 75 pounds, and many of the older ones going as high as 120, but an average of 80 to 85 pounds is the rule.

The five and six year old males, when they first make their appearance in May and June, are very much heavier than at the time I weighed them in July; they are then, perhaps, when fat and fresh, fully one-third heavier than the exhibit on the table, but the cows and other classes do not sustain protracted fasts, and do not vary much through the season.

THE SEA-LION, (EUMETOPIAS STELLERI,) "SEE-VITCHIE" OF  
THE RUSSIANS.

This animal, although much below the fur-seal with reference to intelligence and physical organization, ranks next in natural order, and can, as well as its more sagacious and valuable relative, be seen to better advantage on these islands than elsewhere, perhaps, in the world.

By looking at the plate, a glance will show at once the marked difference between this animal and the *Callorhinus*. It has a really leonine appearance and bearing, greatly enhanced by the rich, golden-rufous of its coat, ferocity of expression, and bull-dog-like muzzle and cast of eye, not round and full, but showing the white, or sclerotic coat, with a light, bright-brown iris.

Although provided with flippers to all external view as the fur-seal, he cannot, however, make use of them in the same free manner. While the fur-seal can be driven five or six miles in twenty-four hours, the sea-lion can barely go two, the conditions of weather and roadway being the same. The sea-lions balance and swing their long, heavy necks to and fro, with every hitch up behind of their posteriors, which they seldom raise from the ground, drawing them up after the fore feet with a slide over the grass or sand, rocks, &c., as the case may be, and pausing frequently to take a sullen and ferocious survey of the field and the drivers.

The sea-lion bull of Bering Sea, when full-grown and in good condition, will measure off in length 11 to 12.5 feet from nose to tip of tail, (which is seldom over 3 or 4 inches long,) and girth 10. Unfortunately, I was not able to weigh one of these big bulls, and can, therefore, only estimate this weight at a thousand pounds, while, perhaps, some of the largest and finest old fellows will touch twelve to thirteen hundred; but I doubt it.

The sea-lion is polygamous, but does not maintain any such regular system and method in preparing for and attention to its harem like that so finely illustrated on the breeding-grounds of the fur-seal. It is not numerous, comparatively speaking, and does not "haul" more than a few rods back from the sea. It cannot be visited and inspected by man, being so shy and

wary that on the slightest approach a stampede into the water is the certain result. The males come out and locate on the narrow belts of rookery-ground, preferred and selected by them; the cows make their appearance three or four weeks after them, (1st to 6th June,) and are not subjected to that intense jealous supervision so characteristic of the fur-seal harem. The bulls fight savagely among themselves, and turn off from the breeding-ground all the younger and weak males.

The cow sea-lion is not quite half the size of the male, and will measure from 8 to 9 feet in length, with a weight of four and five hundred pounds. She has the same general cast of countenance and build of the bull, but as she does not sustain any fasting period of over a week or ten days, she never comes out so grossly fat as the male or "see-catch."

The sea-lion rookery will be found to consist of about ten to fifteen cows to the bull. The cow seems at all times to have the utmost freedom in moving from place to place, and to start with its young, picked up sometimes by the nape, into the water, and play together for spells in the surf-wash, a movement on the part of the mother never made by the fur-seal, and showing, in this respect, much more attention to its offspring.

They are divided up into classes, which sustain, in a general manner, but very imperfectly, nearly the same relation one to the other as do those of the fur-seal, of which I have already spoken at length and in detail; but they cannot be approached, inspected, and managed like the other, by reason of their wild and timid nature. They visit the islands in numbers comparatively small, (I can only estimate,) not over twenty or twenty-five thousand on Saint Paul's and contiguous islets, and not more than seven or eight thousand at Saint George. On Saint Paul's Island they occupy a small portion of the breeding-ground at Northeast Point, in common with the *Callorhinus*, always close to the water, and taking to it at the slightest disturbance or alarm.

The sea-lion rookery on Saint George's Island is the best place upon the Seal Islands for close observation of these animals, and the following note was made upon the occasion of one of my visits, (June 15, 1873:)

"At the base of cliffs, over 400 feet in height, on the east shore of the island, on a beach 50 or 60 feet in width at low water, and not over 30 or 40 at flood-tide, lies the only sea-lion

rookery on Saint George's Island—some three or four thousand cows and bulls. The entire circuit of this rookery-belt was passed over by us, the big, timorous bulls rushing off into the water as quickly as the cows, all leaving their young. Many of the females, perhaps half of them, had only just given birth to their young. These pups will weigh at least twenty to twenty-five pounds on an average when born, are of a dark, chocolate-brown, with the eye as large as the adult, only being a suffused, watery, gray-blue, where the sclerotic coat is well and sharply defined in its maturity. They are about 2 feet in length, some longer and some smaller. As all the pups seen to-day were very young, some at this instant only born, they were dull and apathetic, not seeming to notice us much. There are, I should say, about one-sixth of the sea-lions in number on this island, when compared with Saint Paul's. As these animals lie here under the cliffs, they cannot be approached and driven; but should they haul a few hundred rods up to the south, then they can be easily captured. They have hauled in this manner always until disturbed in 1868, and will undoubtedly do so again if not molested.

"These sea-lions, when they took to the water, swam out to a distance of fifty yards or so, and huddled all up together in two or three packs or squads of about five hundred each, holding their heads and necks up high out of water, all roaring in concert and incessantly, making such a deafening noise that we could scarcely hear ourselves in conversation at a distance from them of over a hundred yards. This roaring of sea-lions, thus disturbed, can only be compared to the hoarse sound of a tempest as it howls through the rigging of a ship, or the playing of a living gale upon the bare branches, limbs, and trunks of a forest-grove." They commenced to return as soon as we left the ground.

The voice of the sea-lion is a deep, grand roar, and does not have the flexibility of the *Callorhinus*, being confined to a low, muttering growl or this bass roar. The pups are very playful, but are almost always silent. When they do utter sound, it is a sharp, short, querulous growling.

#### THE DRIVE OF THE SEA-LIONS ON SAINT PAUL'S ISLAND.

The natives have a very high appreciation of the sea-lion, or *see-vitchie*, as they call it, and base this regard upon the superior quality of the flesh, fat, and hide, (for making covers for

their skin boats, *bidarkies* and *bidarrahs*,) sinews, intestines &c.

As I have before said, the sea-lion seldom hauls back far from the water, generally very close to the surf-margin, and in this position it becomes quite a difficult task for the natives to approach and get in between it and the sea unobserved, for, unless this silent approach is made, the beast will at once take the alarm and bolt into the water.

By reference to my map of Saint Paul's, a small point, near the head of the northeast neck of the island, will be seen, upon which quite a large number of sea-lions are always to be found, as it is never disturbed except on the occasion of this annual driving. The natives step down on to the beach, in the little bight just above it, and begin to crawl on all fours flat on the sand down to the end of the neck and in between the dozing sea-lion herd and the water, always selecting a semi-bright moonlight night. If the wind is favorable, and none of the men meet with an accident, the natives will almost always succeed in reaching the point unobserved, when, at a given signal, they all jump up on their feet at once, yell, brandish their arms, and give a sudden start, or alarm, to the herd above them, for, just as the sea-lions move, upon the first impulse of surprise, so they keep on. For instance, if the animals on starting up are sleeping with their heads pointed in the direction of the water, they keep straight on toward it; but if they jump up looking over the land, they follow that course just as desperately, and nothing turns them, *at first*, either one way or the other. Those that go for the water are, of course, lost, but the natives follow the land-leaders and keep urging them on, and soon have them in their control, driving them back into a small pen, which they extemporize by means of little stakes, with flags, set around a circuit of a few hundred square feet, and where they keep them until three or four hundred, at least, are captured, before they commence their drive of ten miles overland down south to the village.

The natives, latterly, in getting this annual herd of sea-lions, have postponed it until late in the fall, and when the animals are scant in number and the old bulls poor. This they were obliged to do, on account of the pressure of their sealing-business in the spring, and the warmth of the season in August and September, which makes the driving very tedious. In this way I have not been permitted to behold the best-conditioned drives, *i. e.*, those in which a majority of the herd is made up

of fine, enormously fat, and heavy bulls, some four or five hundred in number.

The natives are compelled to go to the northeast point of the island for these animals, inasmuch as it is the only place with natural advantages where they can be approached for the purpose of capturing alive. Here they congregate in greatest number, although they can be found, two or three thousand of them, on the southwest point, and as many more on "Seevitchie Cammin" and Otter Island.

Capturing the sea-lion drive is really the only serious business these people on the islands have, and when they set out for the task the picked men only leave the village. At Northeast Point they have a barrabkie, in which they sleep and eat while gathering the drove, the time of getting which depends upon the weather, wind, &c. As the squads are captured, night after night, they are driven up close by the barrabkie, where the natives mount constant guard over them, until several hundred animals shall have been secured, and all is ready for the drive down overland to the village.

The drove is started and conducted in the same general manner as that which I have detailed in speaking of the fur-seal, only the sea-lion soon becomes very sullen and unwilling to move, requiring spells of frequent rest. It cannot pick itself up from the ground and shamle off on a loping gallop for a few hundred yards, like the *Callorhinus*, and is not near so free and agile in its movements on land, or in the water for that matter, for I have never seen the *Eumetopias* leap from the water like a dolphin, or indulge in the thousand and one submarine acrobatic displays made constantly by the fur-seal.

This ground, over which the sea-lions are driven, is mostly a rolling level, thickly grassed and mossed over, with here and there a fresh-water pond into which the animals plunge with great apparent satisfaction, seeming to cool themselves, and out of which the natives have no trouble in driving them. The distance between the sea-lion pen at Northeast Point and the village is about ten miles, as the sea-lions are driven, and occupies over five or six days under the most favorable circumstances, such as wet, cold weather; and when a little warmer, or as in July or August, a few seasons ago, they were some three weeks coming down with a drove, and even then left a hundred or so along on the road.

After the drove has been brought into the village on the kill-

ing-grounds, the natives shoot down the bulls and then surround and huddle up the cows, spearing them just behind the fore-flippers. The killing of the sea-lions is quite an exciting spectacle, a strange and unparalleled exhibition of its kind; and I cannot do better than to refer directly and silently to my illustrations of it. The bodies are at once stripped of their hides and much of the flesh, sinews, intestines, (with which the native water-proof coats, &c., are made,) in conjunction with the throat-linings, (*oesophagus*,) and the skin of the flippers, which is exceedingly tough and elastic, and used for soles to their boots or "*tarbosars*."

As the sea-lion is without fur, the skin has little or no commercial value; the hair is short, and longest over the nape of the neck, straight, and somewhat coarse, varying in color greatly as the seasons come and go. For instance, when the *Eumetopias* makes his first appearance in the spring, and dries out upon the land, he has a light-brownish, rufous tint, darker shades back and under the fore flippers and on the abdomen; by the expiration of a month or six week, 15th June, he will be a bright golden-rufous or ocher, and this is just before shedding, which sets in by the middle of August, or a little earlier. After the new coat has fairly grown, and just before he leaves the island for the season, in November, it will be a light sepia, or vandyke-brown, with deeper shades, almost dark upon the belly; the cows, after shedding, do not color up so dark as the bulls, but when they come back to the land next year they are identically the same in color, so that the eye in glancing over a sea-lion rookery in June and July cannot discern any noted dissimilarity of coloring between the bulls and the cows; and also the young males and yearlings appear in the same golden-brown and ocher, with here and there an animal spotted somewhat like a leopard, the yellow, rufous ground predominating, with patches of dark-brown irregularly interspersed. I have never seen any of the old bulls or cows thus mottled, and think very likely it is due to some irregularity in the younger animals during the season of shedding, for I have not noticed it early in the season, and failed to observe it at the close. Many of the old bulls have a grizzled or slightly brindled look during the shedding-period, or, that is, from the 10th August up to the 10th or 20th of November; the pups, when born, are of a rich, dark chestnut-brown; this coat they shed in October, and take one much lighter, but still darker than their parents', but not a great deal.

Although, as I have already indicated, the sea-lion, in its habit and disposition, approximates the fur-seal, yet in no respect does it maintain and enforce the system and regularity found on the breeding-grounds of the *Collorhinus*. The time of arrival at, stay on, and departure from the island is about the same; but if the winter is an open, mild one, the sea-lion will be seen frequently all through it, and the natives occasionally shoot them around the island long after the fur-seals have entirely disappeared for the year. It also does not confine its landing to these Prybilov Islands alone, as the fur-seal unquestionably does, with reference to our continent; for it has been and is often shot upon the Aleutian Islands and many rocky islets of the northwest coast.

The sea-lion in no respect whatever manifests the intelligence and sagacity exhibited by the fur-seal, and must be rated far below, although next, in natural order. I have no hesitation in putting this *Eumetopias* of the Prybilov Islands, apart from the sea-lion common at San Francisco and Santa Barbara, as a distinct animal; and I call attention to the excellent description of the California sea-lion, made public in the April number for 1872 of the *Overland Monthly*, by Capt. C. M. Scammon, in which the distinguishing characters, externally, of this animal are well defined, and by which the difference between the *Eumetopias* of Bering Sea and that of the coast of California can at once be seen; and also I notice one more point in which the dissimilarity is marked—the northern sea-lion never barks or howls like the animal at the Farralones or Santa Barbara. Young and old, both sexes, from one year and upward, have *only* a deep *bass growl*, and *prolonged, steady roar*; while at San Francisco sea-lions break out incessantly with a “honking” bark or howl, and *never roar*.

I am not to be understood as saying that *all* the sea-lions met with on the Californian coast are different from *E. stelleri* of Bering Sea. I am well satisfied that stragglers from the north are down on the Farralones, but they are not migrating back and forth every season; and I am furthermore certain that not a single animal of the species most common at San Francisco was present among those breeding on the Prybilov Islands in 1872-73.

According to the natives of Saint George, some fifty or sixty years ago the *Eumetopias* held almost exclusive possession of the island, being there in great numbers, some two or three



hundred thousand; and that, as the fur-seals were barely permitted to land by these animals, and in no great number, the Russians directed them (the natives) to hunt and worry the sea-lions off from the island, and the result was that as the sea-lions left, the fur-seals came, so that to-day they occupy nearly the same ground covered by the *Eumetopias alone* sixty years ago. This statement is, or seems to be, corroborated by Choris, in his description of the Iles S.-George's et S.-Paul's, visited by him fifty years ago;\* but the account given by Bishop Veniaminov,† and placed in the Appendix, differs entirely from the above, for by it almost as many fur-seals were taken on Saint George, during the first years of occupation, as on Saint Paul, and never have been less than one-sixth of the number on the larger island. For this the natives claim to have, on the one hand, proof as to the truth of their statement, and Father Veniaminov, on the other, publishes upon the credit of reliable lists and manuscripts in his possession at the time of writing. I am strongly inclined to believe that the island of Saint George never was resorted to in any great numbers by the fur-seal, and that the sea-lion was the dominant animal there until disturbed and driven from its breeding-grounds by the people, who sought to encourage the coming of its more valuable relative by so doing, and making room in this way for it.

The sea-lion has but little value save to the natives, and is more prized on account of its flesh and skin, by the people living upon the islands and similar positions, than it would be elsewhere. The matter of its preservation and perpetuation should be left entirely to them, and it will be well looked after. It is singular that the fat of the sea-lion should be so different in characters of taste and smell from that of the fur-seal, being free from any taint of disagreeable flavor or odor, while the blubber of the latter, although so closely related, is most repugnant. The flesh of the sea-lion cub is tender, juicy, light-colored, and slightly like veal; in my opinion, quite good. As the animal grows older, the meat is dry, tough, and without flavor.

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\* Voyage Pittoresque autour du Monde.

† Zapeeskie ob Ostrovah Oonahlashkenskaho Otdayla, St. Petersburg, 1840.

## THE WALRUS OF BERING SEA, (ROSMARUS ARCTICUS.)

I write "the walrus of *Bering Sea*," because this animal is quite distinct from the walrus of the North Atlantic and Greenland, differing from it specifically in a very striking manner, by its greater size and semi-hairless skin.

These clumsy beasts are, at the present time, only to be seen on Walrus Island, being so shy and timid that they have deserted the other islands as they were populated by man. In early days, or when the Russians first took possession, a great many walruses were found at Northeast Point and along the south shore of Saint Paul's Island, but with the landing of the traders and sea-hunters the walrus abruptly took its departure, and Walrus Island alone is now frequented by it, being isolated and seldom visited during the year by the natives.

It is of small commercial importance; the ivory is of poor quality, mostly porous, pithy, and yellow, while the oil is of a low grade, and the hide is quite valueless. But it is the main support of the Esquimaux far to the north, where it breeds upon the ice, the females never coming down to the Prybilov Group;—only males are to be seen on Walrus Island.

On this little island I have enjoyed a fine opportunity of studying and painting these uncouth animals from life, being able to easily approach to within a slight distance from the flanks of a herd of over five hundred walrus-bulls, which lay closely packed upon a low series of basaltic tables, elevated but little from the surf-wash. I sat upon a small rocky ledge only a few feet above and from four or five heavy bulls, being, however, on the leeward side.

I was surprised to observe the raw, naked appearance of the hide, a skin covered with a multitude of pustular-looking warts and pimples, without hair or fur, deeply wrinkled with dark red venous lines, showing out in bold contrast through the thick, yellowish-brown cuticle, which seemed to be scaling off in places, as if with leprosy. They struck my eye at first in a most unpleasant manner, for they looked like bloated, mortifying, shapeless masses of flesh; the clusters of swollen, warty pimples, of a yellow parboiled flesh-color, over the shoulders and around the neck suggested unwholesomeness forcibly.

This walrus is sluggish and clumsy in the water, and is almost

helpless on the rocks out of it, and can no more move on land, like even the lowest of the seals, *Phoca*, than can the hippopotamus run with the antelope; the immense bulk and weight compared with the size and strength of its limbs renders it quite impotent for terrestrial movement. Like the seal, it swims entirely under water when traveling, not rising, however, quite so frequently to breathe; then it "blows" not unlike a whale. On a cool, quiet morning in May, I watched a herd off the east coast of the island, tracing its progress by the tiny jets of vapor thrown off as the animals rose to respire.

The adult male is about 12 feet in length from nostrils to tip of tail and has 10 or 12 feet of girth, and one bull, shot by the natives on Walrus Island, July 5, 1872, was nearly 13 feet long, with the enormous girth of 14 feet. The immense mass of blubber on the shoulders and around the neck makes the head and posteriors look small in proportion and attenuated.

The strange flattened appearance of the head will be better understood by reference to the plate, where the nostrils, eyes, and ear-spots seem to be nearly placed on top of the head, the nasal apertures especially so, opening directly over the muzzle, oval, and about an inch in their greatest diameter.

The tusks, or canines, are set firmly under the nostril-apertures, in a deep, massive, bony pocket, giving a broad, square-cut front to the muzzle. They grow down, varying in size and weight from 8 or 10 inches in length to over 2 feet, and from five pounds to fifteen, usually bowed out somewhat in the middle, the ends approaching quite closely. The larger tushes have a diameter at the heel of a little more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, tapering down to less than half an inch at the tip.

The upper lips are thick and gristly, full of short, stubbed, gray-white bristles, from one-half to three inches long. There are a few bristles set, also, on the chin of the lower jaw.

The eyes are small, but prominent, placed nearly on top of the head, protruding from their sockets like those of the lobster. They are rolled about in every direction when the animal is startled. The iris and pupil is less than one-fourth of the exposed surface; the sclerotic coat bulges out from the lids, and is of a dirty, mottled coffee-yellow and brown, with an occasional admixture of white; the iris, light-brown, with dark-brown rays and spots. The animal has the power to roll the eyes when aroused, seldom moving the head more than to elevate it; but the range of sight out of water is not well

developed, at least, for, after throwing small chips of rock down upon the walrus-bulls near me, causing only a stupid stare and low grunts of astonishment, I rose gently and silently to my feet, and stood boldly up before them, not more than ten feet away, but I was not noticed; had I, however, given them a little noise, or had I been standing hundreds of yards away from them, to the windward, they would have taken the alarm instantly, and tumbled off into the sea like so many hustled wool-sacks, for their sense of smell is keen.

The ears of the walrus are on the same line at the top of the head with the nostrils and eyes, the latter being midway between. The *pavilion* is a slight fleshy wrinkle, or fold, not at all raised or developed, and from what I could see of the *meatus externus*, it was very narrow and small, but they are quick and sensitive in hearing.

The head of the walrus male, full grown, is, on an average, 18 inches long between the nostrils and the post-occipital region, and weighs from sixty to eighty pounds. I can only estimate the gross-weight of a mature, well-conditioned bull at two thousand pounds. The skin alone weighs from two hundred and fifty to four hundred pounds. It is two and three inches thick on the shoulders and around the neck, and nowhere less than half an inch deep.

It feeds exclusively upon shell-fish (*Lamellibranchiata*, or clams, principally) and the bulbous roots of certain marine grasses and plants, which grow in great abundance in the many broad, shallow lagoons and bays of the mainland coast. I have taken from the paunch of a walrus over a bushel of crushed clams, shells and all, which the animal had but recently swallowed, since digestion had scarcely commenced. Many of the clams in the stomach were not even broken; and it is in digging these shell-fish that the service rendered by the enormous tusches becomes evident.

In landing and climbing over the low, rocky shelves at "Morserovia," this animal is almost as clumsy and indolent as the sloth; they crowd up from the water, one after the other, in the most ungainly manner, accompanying their movements with low grunts and bellowings; the first one up from the sea not sooner gets composed upon the rocks for sleep than the second one comes prodding and poking with its blunted tusks, demanding room also, and causing the first to change its position to another still farther off from the water; and the second is in

turn treated in the same way by the third, and so on, until hundreds will be packed together on the shore as thickly as they can lie, frequently pillowing their heads or posteriors upon the bodies of one another, and not at all quarrelsome; as they pass all the time when on land in sluggish basking or deep sleep, they seem to resort to a very singular method of keeping guard, if I may so term it, for in this herd of three or four hundred bulls under my eye, though all were sleeping, yet the movement of one would disturb the other, which would raise its head in a stupid manner, grunt once or twice, and before lying down to sleep again, in a few moments, it would strike the slumbering form of its nearest companion with its tusks, causing that animal to rouse up for a few minutes also, grunt and pass the blow on to the next in the same manner, and so on, through the whole herd; this disturbance among themselves always kept some one or two aroused, and consequently more alert than the rest.

In moving on land they have no power in the hind limbs, which are dragged and twitched up behind; progression is slowly and tediously made by a succession of short steps forward on the fore feet. How long they remain out from the water at any one time I am unable to say. Unlike the seals, they breathe heavily and snore.

The natives told me that the walrus of Bering Sea is monogamous, and that the difference between the sexes in size, color, and shape is inconsiderable; that the female brings forth her young, a single calf, in June, usually on the ice-floes in the Arctic Ocean, above Bering Straits; that the calf closely resembles the parent in general proportions and color, but that the tusks which give it its most distinguishing expression are not visible until the end of the second year of its life; that the walrus mother is strongly attached to her offspring, and nurses it later in the season in the sea; that the walrus sleeps profoundly in the water, floating almost vertically, with barely more than the nostrils above water, and can be easily approached, if care is taken, to within easy spearing-distance; that the bulls do not fight as savagely as the fur-seal or sealion, the blunted tusks of the combatants seldom penetrate the thick hide; that they can remain under water nearly an hour, or about twice as long as the seals, and that they sink like so many stones immediately after being shot.

These animals are seldom molested on Walrus Island, the

natives not making any use of their flesh, fat, or hides ; and when they are shot, it is usually but a wanton undertaking by the people while visiting the island in June and July. For the purpose of getting eggs, the natives come from the village on Saint Paul's twice or thrice every year, and only at this season.

As the females never come down to the Prybilov Islands, I have not had an opportunity of observing them, and have in this way not been able to see this animal as well as I could wish. The reason why this band of males, many of them old ones, should be here by themselves all through the year is not plain to me ; the natives assure me that the females, or their young, never have been seen around the shores of these islands. Over in Bristol Bay great numbers of walrus congregate on the sandy bars and flats, where they are hunted to a considerable extent for their ivory.\*

From descriptions of undoubted authority, the walrus of the North Atlantic is a much smaller animal than his relative in the Pacific, and not nearly so timid. It is also covered with a coat of short brownish-gray and black hair, while the male adult of Bering Sea is almost entirely naked. The skins and skeletons of the two animals are now in the Smithsonian collection.

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\* No walrus are now found south of the Aleutian Islands, but not more than thirty or thirty-five years ago small numbers of these animals were killed now and then on islands between Kodiak and Onemak Pass. The greatest number of them south of the arctic circle will now be found in Bristol Bay and on the north shore of the peninsula.

The finest baidars that I have seen in this country were the skin-boats of the Saint Lawrence natives, which were made out of dressed walrus-hides sewed with sinews. The flesh is exceedingly rank in taste and smell when fresh, and, in fact, quite as offensive to the civilized palate then as when putrid. The natives clean the small intestine and dry it, which gives them a piece of light, transparent gut-parchment, over a hundred feet in length and five to six inches broad, that serves admirably as material for water-proof coats and trousers ; the flipper-skin makes the toughest soles for their hair-seal boots, while the hide itself answers for all styles of cordage.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FISH AND FISHERIES.

#### THE FISHERIES OF ALASKA.

The value of the interests in the Territory classed under this head has been greatly overrated by writers, who have created an impression that there are extensive banks upon which cod may be taken, of the same quality and with the same success that attends the labors of fishermen on the Newfoundland Banks. This is untrue; but salmon, herring, and halibut are abundant, the salmon being the most valuable fishing interest, and only one of real commercial importance on the whole northwest coast.

There are not on this coast the variety and excellence of fish that is common to the Atlantic seaboard, and the shad and scup runs of the East are without a parallel in these waters. There are but few species here that have an economic value in regard to the subsistence of the natives, from Bering Straits to Dixon's Sound, viz: the salmon, cod-fish, sculpins or rock-cod, (*Sebastes*,) and halibut. Of the first, there is, both in quality and quantity, enough to warrant commercial activity and importance; of the second, the quantity and quality are insufficient, in a business point of view, provided even the demand was always equal to the supply. Halibut might be cured in a small way; but the rock-cod and sculpins are worthless, except to the Indians, when unable to procure either salmon or cod; the famous "oolichan" is confined to the Nasse River.

These fish are distributed throughout the Territory as follows; and first in the order of importance is—

1. *Salmon*.—Almost every stream, big or little, that empties into the sea or its bays, throughout the whole Territory, islands, and mainland, is visited at regular periods by one or more species of this genus, in greater or less numbers, with the widest range of variation in quality; the runs of this fish in May and June up the large rivers in this Territory being enormous.

During the last ten or twelve years steps have been taken by competent men on the Frazer River and the Columbia to utilize and turn to profit these great runs of the finest fish; but the industry of salting them for exportation failed, and a new

business—that of *canning* the fish—is being engaged in extensively on the Columbia River; and, it would seem, with a fair profit, capital might be advantageously employed in the prosecution of salmon-canning at the mouths of all the principal streams in this country, as there is enough of the raw material to employ a large number of men several months in the year in its preservation and profitable disposition; and I see no reason why this industry should not become one of great importance in the Territory.

The demand for canned salmon will grow in proportion as it becomes known, for it is a superior article of food, either plain as it comes in the can, or pickled quickly after opening.

2. *Cod*.—This fish is the most widely distributed of any belonging to the waters of Alaska or the North Pacific and Bering Sea. It will be found on soundings, wherever a hook may be dropped in Bering Sea, south of the latitude of Saint Lawrence Island, all around the Aleutian Islands, the Alaskan Peninsular, Kodiak, and becomes scarce and fails to the eastward as far as Kenai and Copper River, and then from Sitka and Prince of Wales Island to Fort Simpson, where it is only caught for a few weeks in the year, when running in schools, passing usually up toward the north.

The immense area frequented by this fish will be at once appreciated by glancing at the map and noting the soundings, which show that nearly the whole of Bering Sea bounded or staked out by our islands is a single great bank, and that large areas south of the Aleutian Islands, the Peninsular, and Kodiak, are shoaled off in a similar manner. Nevertheless, the catch and quality of Alaskan cod is much inferior to our eastern fisheries.

There is cod enough, however, of fair quality, to supply the immediate home-consumption of a large population, should there ever be such in the history of the Territory, but the fishing-grounds are not valuable enough to induce capitalists to engage in taking and curing fish for exportation. This matter has been honestly tested by experienced fishermen, who have been trained on the eastern banks, and is therefore beyond doubt. At present, however, in securing the small supply required by local demand, the characteristic impatience of the people of this coast is strikingly shown; for, even could they sell their fish caught in the north at as good a rate as that of the imported stock, they, as a class, would be dissatisfied with the small profits.



The coast-cod average in this Territory, "from the knife," about three to five pounds, and the deep or outer water cod, of the same species, average about eight or ten, but they are not as plentiful as the smaller. The best banks in the Territory are those south of Unga Island, about the Shumagins and south of Kodiak. The catch is best off Unga.

3. *Halibut*.—Found throughout the Territory on soundings south of the sixtieth parallel of north latitude. Halibut are quite abundant and of excellent quality, but the climate is such that the fishermen cannot properly dry or cure them for exportation, even in small cargoes. They are, however, not abundant enough for exportation, and must therefore be regarded as only of local importance.

The other fish—*rock-cod*, *sculpin*, *white-fish*—peculiar to the rivers, &c., which are found along the coast and in the bays and estuaries, possess no special merit, and have no commercial importance, but they are valuable factors to the natives' existence.

It will be observed that the waters of the Territory of Alaska are well stocked with fish for home use; in the salmon interests, the natural wealth is great, and will doubtless be utilized sooner or later by *canning*, but that the experiment of salting cod and salting salmon has not been profitable for sale in the Australian, South American, and even in our own market. There are twelve to thirteen small cod-fishing vessels that supply the San Francisco trade, but it is a significant fact that out of this number nine or ten deserted the Alaskan banks last season, and went on nearly two thousand miles farther into the Ochotsk for their catch, where the fish are superior in quality and more plentiful.

It will not be untrue to assert, from what is now known in regard to the fishing-interests of Alaska, that there is nothing there that can be considered parallel or at all equal to the runs of cod, scup, shad, and mackerel of the New England coast, save the periodic visit of salmon, which come in truly magnificent number and condition.

In the small harbor of Woods's Hole, Mass., Professor Baird caught in his nets, during one summer, *over seventy species of food-fishes*. That cannot be done in the North Pacific, no matter when or where the naturalist or fisherman may choose to try. The variety and number of piscatorial life in this region is poor indeed when compared with that of the North Atlantic.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ORNITHOLOGY OF THE PRYBILOV ISLANDS.

BY DR. ELLIOTT COUES, U. S. A.

(Based on Mr. H. W. Elliott's manuscripts and collections.\*)

Mr. Elliott's manuscripts and specimens having been submitted to me for elaboration in the present connection, an account of the birds of the islands is herewith rendered. His collections furnish the data for most of the technical portions of the memoir, while the biographical notices are, in substance, his own; these are placed between quotation-marks. The nomenclature and sequence of the species are adapted to the present paper from the latest systematic work upon American ornithology, the author's "Key to North American Birds," in which may be found a diagnosis of each species and variety not herewith described. The numeral prefix of each species is that which it bears in the author's "Check-List of North American Birds."

With the scientific names are given the English, and, in general, the Russian equivalents—the latter between quotation-marks. In most cases the synonyms and references of special pertinence are added.

#### GENERAL REMARKS ON THE BIRDS OF THE ISLANDS.

"While a few species of water-fowl come to these islands in innumerable numbers for the purpose of breeding, yet the list of birds to be met with here is a small one. It is, however, of exceeding interest to the naturalist, comprising many *desiderata* scarcely obtainable elsewhere.

"Over fifteen miles of the bold, high, basaltic, bluff shoreline of Saint George's Island is fairly covered with hundreds of thousands of nesting gulls (*Rissa*) and arries, (*Uria*), while

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\*The scientific readers of this report will, I am sure, approve of the reference of my MSS. to Dr. Coues for elaboration, as the revision of synonymy has become a serious matter in regard to the nomenclature of natural science, and, already, too many writers have added to existing confusion in this respect by attempting to do that which others than themselves are much better qualified for.—H. W. E.

down in the countless chinks and holes over the entire surface of the north side of this island millions of 'chooch-kies' (*Simorhynchus microceros*) breed, filling the air and darkening the light of day with their cries and fluttering forms. On Walrus Island the nests of the great white gull of the north (*Larus glaucus*) can be visited and inspected, as well also as those of the sea-parrot or puffin, (*Fratercula*), shags or cormorants, (*Graculus*), and the red-legged kittiwake, (*Larus brevirostris*.) These are all accessible on every side, affording the observer an unequalled opportunity of noticing these birds through the breeding-season, from its beginning in May until the end in September.

"Not one of the water-birds found on and around the islands is exempted from a place in the native's larder; even the delectable shags, 'orelie,' are unhesitatingly eaten by the people, and indeed furnish, during the winter-season especially, an almost certain source of supply for fresh meat. The large, gaily-colored eggs of the 'arrie' (*Lomvia arra*) are gathered in June and July, without stint, for use, and might be packed away in lime-water by the barrel, so as to keep through the year, if any provident or thoughtful action was taken in the matter. Walrus Island would alone supply the whole demand from year to year. On the occasion of my visit there, July 5, 1872, six men loaded a bidarra, capable of carrying four tons, exclusive of crew, down to the water's edge with eggs, in less than three working-hours.

"During the winter-months the birds are almost wholly absent. They begin to make their first appearance, in any number, for the season, early in May, and by the middle or end of September the great body of the millions that have bred during this time go to sea, and are not again noted, save a few stragglers now and then, until they re-assemble next May, for the repetition of their reproductive processes. The stress of severe weather in the winter-months, driving snow-storms, and floating ice-floes brought down from the north, which shut the islands in, still, cold, and quiet, are cause enough for the disappearance of the water-fowl.

"The position of the islands is such as to lie somewhat outside of the migratory path pursued by the birds on the mainland, and, owing to this reason, they are only visited by a few stragglers from that quarter, and also from the Asiatic side. One

species, (*Streptilas interpres*), however, comes here every summer, for three or four weeks' stay, in great number, and gets so fat in feeding upon the larvæ found on the killing-grounds that it often bursts open when it falls, after being shot on the wing. Our robin (*T. migratorius*) was seen by myself, near Saint Paul's Village, one cool morning in October, (the 15th,) and the natives told me that it had been noticed before in this way, never staying more than a few days or a week, and being brought there, undoubtedly, by some storm or gale of wind taking it up and off from its path over the mainland. In the same manner hawks, owls, and numerous strange water-fowl visit the islands, but never remain there long.

"The Russians tried the experiment of bringing up from Sitka and Ounalashka a number of ravens, with the view of stimulating them to live and breed upon these islands, where they would be almost invaluable as scavengers; but the birds invariably, sooner or later, and within a short time, took flight for the mainland or the Aleutian Islands. At the time of present writing the Alaska Commercial Company have sent up to the village of Saint Paul's a number of domestic pigeons, and the experiment will be tried with them.

"The natives have always, and still do, keep a small number of chickens; and, where poultry is taken into the winter living-rooms of these people, they get return in eggs. But the maintenance of a hennery, owing to the long season of cold, stormy weather, compelling the chickens to hunt shelter for weeks at a time, is impracticable, regarded with a view of profitable recompense for time and care.

"Walrus Island is the most favorable spot, in this whole Alaskan country, to observe the nesting and breeding birds of Bering Sea. It is a low, lava rock, seven miles to the eastward of Northeast Point, with an area of less than five acres, rugged and bare of all vegetation, save a species of close-growing curly grass. Here the *Lomvia arra* and many gulls, cormorants, sea-parrots, and auks come to lay their eggs in countless numbers. The face and brow of the low, cliff-like sea-front are occupied almost exclusively by the 'arries,' (*Lomvia arra*,) which lay a single egg each, on the surface of the bare rock, and stand straddling over it while hatching, only leaving at irregular and short intervals to feed. Hundreds of thousands of these birds alone are thus engaged about the 29th of June

on this little island, standing stacked up together like so many bottles, as thickly as they can be stowed, making all the time a deep, low, hoarse, grunting noise. They quarrel among themselves incessantly, and in this way roll thousands of eggs off into the sea, or into crevices and fissures, where they are lost and broken.

"The 'arrie' lays but one egg. If this is removed or broken, she will soon lay another; but, if undisturbed after depositing the first, she undertakes the hatching at once. The size, shape, and coloration of this egg are exceedingly variable. A large proportion of the eggs become so dirty, by rolling here and there in the excrement while the birds tread and quarrel over them, as to be almost unrecognizable. The shell is very tough, and the natives, when gathering them, fill tubs, baskets, &c., on the cliffs, carry them down to the general heap collected near the boats' landing, and pour them out upon the rocks with a single flip of the hand, just as a basket of apples would be emptied; and, after this, they are again quite as carelessly handled when loaded into the 'bidarrah,' sustaining through it all very little injury.

"The small grassy interior of the island, which is sharply margined by the surrounding breeding-belt of 'arries' on the shore-line, is the only place, I believe, in this sea where the great white gull (*Larus glaucus*) breeds. Among the little grassy tussocks here, it builds a nest of dry grass, sea-ferns, &c., very nicely laid up and rounded, and in which it lays usually three eggs, sometimes only a couple; in exceptional instances I have seen four. These big gulls could not breed on either of the other islands in this manner, for the foxes there would have the upper hand instantly; and the bird is too large to settle on the narrow shelf-ledges of the cliffs, like the smaller gulls and other water-fowls.

"The red-legged kittiwake, (*Larus brevirostris*), and its cousin, *Larus tridactylus*, build in the most amicable-manner together on the faces of the cliffs, associated with cormorants, sea-parrots, and auks, all together, and, with the exception of the latter, the nests are easy of access.

"As we land, the 'arries' fly from their eggs off and around for a short distance, and then settle down into the sea in platoons or files, swaying hither and thither with the movement of swell and tide, trailed out over the water like great whip-lashes.

Watch a boat as it approaches one of these swimming phalanxes and alarms it; out the birds sprawl, half swimming and half flying, making a noise like a shower of hail-stones falling upon a roof, as the scare spreads from bird to bird, until the whole vast flock is beating the water with a hundred thousand wings in almost vain endeavor to rise from the calm surface, for these birds in still weather have great difficulty in taking flight. They, however, succeed well and quickly when heavy swells or little wavelets lift them. A gull, on the contrary, rises gracefully and easily from the water, and, indeed, is the most attractive bird on the wing of all water-fowl."

"I have time after time been struck by the wonderful temerity of the foxes, (on Saint George's Island especially,) while secretly watching them as they were climbing up and down the faces of almost inaccessible cliffs, seeking eggs. They go on a full run or a stealthy tread over the brows of cliffs that fairly overhang the sea six and nine hundred feet below. They always bring the eggs up in their mouths, and carry them back from the brink of the precipice, where they leisurely suck them, usually biting the shell out at the large end. The 'arrie' suffers the most from these enemies, which are the only natural foes that the bird-kind has to contend with on these solitary islands."

1. **Turdus migratorius**, LINN.—*Robin*. "Rap-o-loof."

Casual, and rarely seen; never resident. (Spec., October, 1872.)

"I was most agreeably surprised, one cool morning early in October, while walking up on the Village Hill, Saint Paul's Island, to see a robin, a red-breasted robin, silent and gloomy, hopping and fluttering before me. It had evidently been brought to the island by the gale which blew two days previously, and was even now casting about for a good chance to leave. In order that I might observe the length of time this old friend of mine would stay with us, I did not shoot him, but strolled out to the locality every morning and evening until the end of the third day, when I missed him. The natives recognized it as a chance visitor, though seen almost every year in this manner. Two weeks later I observed a small flock of *Algiothi*, (red polls,) which were passing over the island, alighting here and there to feed. They are regularly seen migrating to the southward every fall."

- 50a. **Anorthura troglodytes** var. **alascensis**, (BD.) COUES.—  
*Alaskan Winter Wren*. "Limmer-shin."  
*Troglodytes alascensis*, BAIRD. Trans. Chicago Acad., i, 315, pl. 30,  
 fig. 3, (1869.) Saint George's Is.  
*Anorthura alascensis*, COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 87, (1872.)  
*Anorthura troglodytes* var. *alascensis*, COUES. *Ibid.*, 351.  
*Troglodytes hyemalis* var. *alascensis*, DALL. Proc. Cala. Acad.  
 Sci., (Feb. 8, 1873.)

This interesting local form of *Anorthura* differs from the ordinary North American bird in its superior size and darker brown colors, and in the much greater length and caliber of the bill. In young birds the difference is less strongly marked. The dimensions of an adult in Mr. Elliott's collection are as follows: bill, along culmen, .58; wing, 1.90; tail, 1.30; tarsus, .62; middle toe and claw, .64. The corresponding dimensions of an average specimen of var. *hyemalis* are: .39, 1.80, 1.20, .62, .58.

"This brave little bird was first brought into notice by Mr. Dall, who collected a single specimen while on the island in 1868, and sent it to the Smithsonian Institution. In his brief note accompanying it he speaks of its being abundant there, while I, in 1873, shot almost every one that I saw, and yet at the end of the season, August 4, I had but seven specimens. It was seldom seen, but then again in 1874 they were quite numerous.

"It is not a migratory bird, but remains permanently upon the island. Its nest is built in small, deep holes and crevices in the cliffs. I have not myself seen it, but the natives say that it lays from eight to ten eggs, in a nest made of soft, dry grass and feathers, roofed over, with an entrance at the side to the nest-chamber, thus being of elaborate construction.

"The male is very gay during the period of mating and incubation, flying incessantly from plant to plant or rock to rock, singing a rather shrill and very loud song, and making, for a small bird, a great noise.

"I shot the young, fully fledged, on the 28th of July, differing only from the parent in having a much shorter bill, and in a general darker and more diffuse coloration.

"Although Saint Paul's Island is but twenty-seven miles to the northwest from Saint George's, not a single specimen of this little wren has been seen there. I made, during the whole season of 1872, unavailing search for it.

"The native name, 'limmer-shin,' signifies a 'chew of tobacco,'

and is given on account of the resemblance of this wee bird in size and color to a tobacco-quid."

Mr. W. H. Dall found this species to be resident and abundant on the rocky cliffs of Amaknak Island, Ounalashka, where, he says, "it is quite familiar and bold. It builds in the crevices of the rocks, but I was not able to find the nest. It has a cheerful and melodious note, and is, to some extent, gregarious, three or four being usually seen together. It was not seen in the Shumagins, though it may occur there."

144a. **Leucosticte tephrocotis** var. **griseinucha**, (BRDT.)

COUES.—*Gray-eared Finch*. "Pahtoshkie."

*Linaria griseinucha*, BRANDT. "ORN. ROSS., (1842.)"

*Leucosticte griseinucha*, BP. *Consp. Av.*, i, 537, (1850.)—BP. et SCHLEGEL. *Monog. Loxiens* 5, pl. xli, (young,) (1850.)—BD. B. N. Amer., 430, (1858.)—DALL et BANN. *Trans. Chicago Acad.*, i, 282, (1869.)—COOP. B. Cal. i, 161, (1870.)—DALL, *Pr. Cala. Acad.*, (Feb., 1873.)

*Leucosticte tephrocotis* var. *griseinucha*, COUES. *Key*, 130, fig. 77, (1872.)

*Leucosticte griseogenys*, GOULD. *P. Z. S.*, 104, (1843,) and *Voy. Sulphur*, i, 42, pl. xxii, (1844.)

*Leucosticte littoralis*, BD. *Trans. Chicago Acad.*, i, 317, pl. xxviii, fig. 1, (1869.)—COOP. B. Cal. i, 163, (1869.)—DALL. *Proc. Cala. Acad.*, (Feb., 1873.)

*Leucosticte tephrocotis* var. *littoralis*, COUES. *Key*, 130, (1872.) (Cf. *ibid.*, 352.)

Numerous beautiful specimens of the adults of both sexes in high breeding attire, and others illustrating the earliest plumage of the young, are in the collection. There are no appreciable outward distinctions of sex. The bill at this season is black, the ash and black of the head are pure and well defined, the chocolate brown is rich, and the rosy tends to crimson. The very young birds are dark, sooty gray, overlaid with brown; a lighter and more rusty shade of the same edges the wing-feathers, and the bill is in part light colored.

Although this form is much larger than typical *tephrocotis*, and otherwise different in the *pictura* of the head, we do not find ourselves enabled to separate it specifically, since numerous intermediate specimens attest its intergradation with the former. Nor do we find it necessary to distinguish the slight variety, *littoralis*, by name; we refer it to var. *griseinucha*, considering both forms as the single arctic representative of *tephrocotis* proper.

"This agreeable little bird, always cheerful and self-pos-



sessed, is a regular and permanent settler on the islands, which it never leaves. In the depth of dismal winter, as well as on a summer's day, the pahtoshkie greets you with the same pleasant chirrup, wearing the same neat dress, as if determined to make the best of everything. It is particularly abundant on Saint George's, where its habits may be studied to best advantage.

"The pahtoshkie nests in a chink or crevice of the cliffs, building a warm, snug home for its little ones of dried grasses and moss, very neatly put together, and lined with a few feathers. The eggs vary in number from three to six, being generally four. They are pure white, with a delicate rosy blush when fresh; and measure .97 by .67 inch. The young break the shell at the expiration of twenty or twenty-two days' incubation, the labor of which is not shared by the male, who, however, brings food to his mate, singing the while, as if highly elated by his prospects of paternity. The chicks, at first, are sparsely covered with a sprinkling of dark-gray down, and in two or three weeks gain their feathers, fitting them for flight, although they do not acquire the bright rosy hues and rich brown of the parents the first year. Between the old birds there is no outward dissimilarity according to sex, the male and female being exactly alike in size, shape, and coloration.

"They feed upon various seeds and insects, as well as the larvæ which swarm on the killing-grounds. They are fearless and confiding, fluttering in the most familiar manner around the village huts. In the summer of 1873, a pair built their nest and reared a brood under the eaves of the old Greek church at Saint George's.

"The nests, of which I collected fifteen or twenty, are very neatly made up of dry grass and moss, thick, and compactly interwoven, placed on the faces of the basaltic and breccia cliffs which rise from the shore-line of the islands. These disintegrating tufa and breccia bluffs afford a thousand and one little pockets and crannies in which the pahtoshkie builds, secure from molestation by prowling foxes. It has no song, but utters a low, mellow chirp, alike either when flying or sitting. It is most abundant on Saint George's, where hundreds may be seen at any time during a short walk along the north shore. It consorts in pairs throughout the year, never going in flocks, and seldom flying or feeding alone."

Mr. W. H. Dall remarks upon the abundance of the bird on the Aleutians as well as on the Prybilov Islands. In August,

he says, it has no song, "except a clear chirp, sounding like 'wéet-a-wéet-a-wée-weet.' It was on the wing a great part of the time, avoiding alighting on the ground, but darting rapidly in a series of ascending and descending curves, now swinging on the broad top of an umbelliferous plant, now alighting on some ledge of the perpendicular cliff, jumping from point to point, seemingly delighted in testing its own agility." He found it particularly numerous in Ounalashka, where it is resident. A nest, which he discovered May 24, contained five white eggs, fresh; it was placed in a crevice of a rocky bank, about twelve feet above the beach, and was neatly built of grasses, lined with a few feathers.

152. **Plectrophanes nivalis**, (L.) MEYER.—*Snow Bunting*. "Snaguiskie."

Among Mr. Elliott's many specimens in pure black and white attire are a few, in the earliest plumage of the young, probably never seen in the United States. The general color is gray, overlaid slightly with a light-brown cast, the interscapular feathers having a dusky center. The gray fades on the breast into dull whitish, which occupies the rest of the under parts. Most of the secondary quills are white, with a dusky touch on the outer webs; the three inner ones, however, are black, with broad, chestnut-brown edging. Three lateral tail-feathers are mostly white.

"The snow-bird is another permanent resident of these islands, but one which, unlike the *Leucosticte*, is rather shy and retiring, nesting high on the rocky, broken uplands, and only entering the village during unusually severe or protracted cold weather.

"The snaguiskie builds an elegant and elaborate nest of soft, dry grass, and lines it warmly with a thick bed of feathers. It is placed on the ground, beneath some lava-slate, or at the foot of a boulder. Five eggs are usually laid, about the 1st of June; they are an inch long by two-thirds broad, of a grayish or greenish white, spotted sometimes all over, sometimes at or around the larger end only, with various shades of rich, dark-brown, purplish-brown, and paler neutral tints. Sometimes the whole surface is quite closely clouded with diffuse reddish-brown markings.

"The female assumes the entire labor of the three weeks' incubation required for the maturing of the embryos. During

this period the male is assiduous in bringing food, and, at frequent intervals, sings his simple but sweet song, rising, as he begins it, high up in the air, as the skylark does when caroling, and, with the end of the stave, dropping suddenly to the ground again. The young are early provided with a gray downy coating, which is speedily replaced by a plumage resembling that of the adult female, and, in less than four weeks from the day of hatching, the little snaguiskie is as big as its parents, and weighs more.

"The food of this species consists of the various seeds and insects peculiar to the rough, higher grounds it frequents. It never flies about in flocks, and at this season cannot be called gregarious, like the Lapland longspur, with which it is associated on these islands."

153. **Plectrophanes lapponicus**, (L.) SELBY.—*Lapland Longspur*.  
"Karesch-navie snaguiskie."

We give a description of the breeding-plumage of the female, probably not generally known: Upper parts of the body, wings, and tail almost precisely as in the male. Cervical collar evident, but not sharply defined, nor so rich in color. Black of the crown variegated with pale tips of the feathers; white of the supra-ocular and post-auricular lines tinged with buff; no continuous pure black on the sides of the head, chin, or throat; sides of the head blackish, interrupted with grayish auriculars; throat similarly varied, but chin left nearly pure white, the pattern of the black which occurs in the male being thus clearly indicated, but interrupted and obscured; sides of the breast and belly with disconnected, sparse, sharp, slender, dark-brown streaks, instead of the pure black, continuous, broad and heavy stripes of the male; other under parts as in the male. Bill blackish yellowish, dusky at tip; feet dark brown, but not black. Dimensions slightly inferior to those of the male.

The eggs of the Lapland longspur are extremely variable in coloration—few more so. They range from a nearly uniform dark chocolate-brown, (much like those of a marsh-wren,) through a lighter chocolate in innumerable dots on a grayish-brown ground, to a peculiar brownish-white ground, variously clouded and smirched with chocolate, and having, besides, irregular sharp spots, scratches, and straggling lines of blackish brown. The general aspect of these eggs is like that of an oriole's or blackbird's. They measure .80 to .90 in length by

.55 to .60 in breadth. The labels of various specimens before us from Arctic America record a nest of "hay," lined with deers' hair, or feathers.

"The longspur, a resident bird, is a delightful vocalist, singing all through the month of June in the most charming manner, rising high in the air, and hovering on fluttering wings over its setting mate. The song is only too short, lasting but a few moments, though continually repeated. The bird is much more shy and reserved than the common snaguiskie, rarely entering the village. It is most abundant on Saint Paul's, where, unlike the snowflake, it seeks the low, grassy grounds, both for food and nesting, being never found among the rough bowlders chosen for a home by the other species of *Plectrophanes*.

"Two nests which I found were built in tussocks of grass, on a low 'hummocky' flat, between the village and the main ridge of Saint George's, sheltered and half concealed beneath a drapey of withered grass. In each case the mother-bird did not fly away till I almost stepped on the nest, when she quickly disappeared, in perfect silence. One nest contained four, and the other five eggs, rather smaller than a snowflake's, and of a rich, gray-brown color, with deep shades of brown running over them in spots and suffused lines.

"These nests were not discovered until the 7th of July, at which date the eggs in both were perfectly fresh. They were, probably, not laid until about the end of June. The young appear in the same manner as those of *P. nivalis*. The males do not assume the distinctive coloration of their sex until the next season. The natives say that very severe weather sometimes drives these birds away, although the other *Plectrophanes* is never forced to leave."

226. **Corvus corax**, L.—Raven. "Var-rone."

As noted in Mr. Elliott's general introduction, the experiment of introducing ravens was unsuccessfully tried by the Russians.

"The natives still claim that if a number of *young* birds were brought here and raised, they could be induced to remain upon the islands during the whole season; that the failure to keep those ravens brought up from Ounalashka, several years ago, was due to the fact of their being old birds.

"At Ounalashka there is a Greek Catholic church, with a small cupola, surmounted, as is usual, by a large crucifix. Upon

this these ill-omened, croaking birds perch at all hours of the day, defiling the cross and tinned dome-roof below them, without exciting the slightest sense of the ridiculous or impropriety among the people there, the stranger only being amused."

341. **Falco sacer**, FORST.—*Gyrfalcon*.

*Falco sacer*, FORST. Phil. Trans. lxxii, 423, (1772.)—BAIRD. Trans. Chicago Acad. i, 271, (1869.)—COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 213, (1872).

Finding nothing definite in Mr. Elliott's manuscripts respecting this bird, we conclude that it does not reside on the islands, where, however, its casual presence is attested by a specimen in the collection labeled "Saint Paul's, March, '73." It is a young bird, apparently in its second year, which had doubtless wandered or been forced out of its usual way.

However we may interpret the relation subsisting between the various forms of *Hierofalco*, the name *Falco sacer* (FORST.) is specially pertinent to the present one, and has priority over the several designations more frequently employed.

"Hawks, like owls, are occasionally seen on the islands, the latter during the winter, especially. They do not remain long, and never breed, although the natives on Saint George's stoutly assert that a 'small brown owl' breeds there. I made unavailing search for it." Very probably the hawk-owl, (*Surnia ulula*.)

396. **Charadrius fulvus**, GM.—*Golden Plover*.

*Charadrius fulvus*, GM. Syst. Nat., i, 687, (1788.)  
*Charadrius pluvialis*, HORSF. Trans. Linn. Soc., xii, 187, (1822.)  
*Charadrius xanthocheilus*, WAGLER. Syst. Av., Charad. sp. 36, (1827.)  
*Charadrius taitensis*, LESS. Man. Orn. ii, 321, (1828.)  
*Charadrius virginianus*, JARD. et SELB. Ill. ii, pl. 85, (circ. 1830.)  
*Charadrius glaucopus*, FORST. Descr. An., ed. Licht., 176, (1844.)  
*Charadrius virginicus*, BLYTH. Cat. B. Mus. As. Soc., 262, (1849.)  
*Charadrius longipes*, TEMMINCK.  
*Charadrius auratus orientalis*, TEMM. et SCHLEG. Fn. Japonica.  
*Charadrius auratus*, SCHRENK. Amur Reise, 410, (1860.)  
*Pluvialis fulvus*, SCHLEGEL. Mus. Pays-Bas, *Cursores*, p. 50, (1864.)  
*Pluvialis fulvus, taitensis, xanthocheilus, longipes*, BP. Compt. Rend., 417, (1856.)

The single specimen of golden plover preserved by Mr. Elliott is of special interest and importance, since it is conclusively determined to be the true Asiatic *fulvus*, and not the North American var. *virginicus*. This discovery represents an addition to our *Fauna*, for *C. fulvus* has not hitherto been recognized

as North American. We have made the comparison with numerous examples before us from various Asiatic and Pacific localities, finding the present specimen indistinguishable. Length, about 9.50; wing, 6.40; tail, 2.60; tarsus, 1.60; middle toe and claw, 1.10; culmen, .95. There is a yellowish suffusion about the head, particularly along the superciliary line, which is hardly to be noticed in the ordinary North American bird. The specimen was taken on Saint Paul's, May 2, 1873. "A few stragglers land in April, or early in May, on their way north to breed, but never remain long. They return in greater number in the latter part of September, and grow fat upon the larvæ generated on the killing-grounds, leaving for the south by the end of October."

406. **Streptilas interpres**, L.—*Turnstone*. "Krass-nie Ko-lit-skie."

The numerous specimens all alike indicate an interesting approach to the peculiar features of var. *melanocephalus*, in the extent and intensity of the black areas on the head, neck, and back. The chestnut, in fact, is reduced mainly to a scapular patch, some edging of the feathers of the interscapular region, and a diffuse area on the wing-coverts. The upper parts of the body are otherwise black, relieved by the broad, pure white area of the lower back and rump, and varied with white on the crown and cervix. The front, sides of head and neck, throat, and entire breast are intense black, relieved by loreal, gular, auricular, and latero-cervical white areas.

"The turnstone arrives in flocks of thousands about the third week in July, and takes its departure about the 10th of September. It does not breed here. On its arrival it is quite poor in flesh, but, feeding upon the larvæ and maggots of the killing-grounds, it rapidly gains, and at length becomes extraordinarily fat—so fat that frequently it bursts open as it falls to the ground when shot on wing.

"It is a very handsome bird when in full plumage, with its bright-red legs, snowy, black-banded breast, and back tinged with brown and green reflections. Its well-known curious actions, in pursuit of its ordinary food, have given it its name. I met with it at sea, eight hundred miles from the nearest land, flying northwest toward the Aleutian Islands."

410. **Lobipes hyperboreus**, (L.) C.—*Northern Phalarope*.

The egg of this species, not yet generally well known, presents the following characters, taken from the unparalleled

series in the Smithsonian Institution, collected at various points in the Yukon and Anderson River region: The ground varies from dark greenish olive, or brownish olive, through various lighter drab tints, nearly to a buffy brown, occasionally to a light gray. The markings are usually heavy and bold, consisting of large spots, and still larger blotches or splashes resulting from their confluence, mingled with dots and scratches in interminable confusion. In general pretty evenly distributed, they often tend to aggregate about the larger end, in rarer instances forming a perfect wreath. In a few instances all the markings are mere dots. As a rule, the size and heaviness of the markings bear some proportion to intensity of the ground color; the markings are dark bistre-brown, chocolate, and sometimes still lighter brown. The longest and narrowest egg of several dozen measures 1.30 by only .75; a short, thick egg gives only 1.10 by .82; the average is about 1.20 by .80. The eggs are three or four in number, oftenest the latter, and are generally laid in June, oftenest in the latter half of the month. They are deposited in a slight depression of the ground, variously lined with a little withered vegetation.

"A few stray couples breed upon the islands, nesting around the margins of the lakelets. The egg I was unable to find, but I secured several newly-hatched young ones which were very pretty and interesting. They are only two or three inches long; with a bill about a third of an inch in length, and no thicker than an ordinary dressing-pin. The down of the head, neck, and upper parts is rich brownish yellow, variegated with brownish black, the crown being of this color mixed with yellow, and a long stripe extends down the back, flanked with one over each hip, another across the rump, and a shoulder-spot on each side. The under parts are grayish silvery white. This bird, when startled, or solicitous for the safety of its young, utters a succession of sonorous 'tweeet' sounds, quickly repeated, with long intervals of silence."

411. **Phalaropus fulicarius**, (L.,) BON.—*Red Phalarope*.

The nidification of this species is similar in all respects to that of *L. hyperboreus*, and the egg cannot be distinguished with certainty in any given instance. They average, however, somewhat larger—about 1.25 by .85. The largest specimen measured 1.30 by .90; the shortest, 1.15 by .90. Numerous specimens, in the Smithsonian collection, were taken early in July, at Franklin Bay, on the arctic coast, by Mr. R. Macfarlane.

"Though much more abundant than the preceding, at certain times, I am satisfied that the red phalarope does not breed here. It is found, like the other, by the marshy margins of the lakelets, solitary or paired, but never in flocks. The earliest arrivals occur in June, but the birds re-appear in greatest number about the 15th of August. They all leave by the 5th of October."

426 bis. *Tringa crassirostris*, TEMM. et SCHLEGEL.—*Thick-billed Sandpiper*. "Ko-lits-kie."

*Tringa crassirostris*, TEMM. et SCHLEGEL. *Fauna Japonica*, 107, pl. 64, (1846.) (?)—DALL. *Amer. Naturalist*, vii, 635, (Oct., 1873.)—COUES. *Check-List*, 85, No. 426 bis, (1873.)

The most interesting result, in some respects, of Mr. Elliott's ornithological researches is the determination of the occurrence of this species in abundance on the Prybilov Islands, where it breeds. This discovery adds a species, previously unrecognized as North American, to our *Fauna*. The announcement was lately made by Mr. W. H. Dall, as above, upon the strength of one of Mr. Elliott's earlier specimens from Saint Paul's. This example was identified by Mr. J. E. Harting,\* of London, well known for the extent and accuracy of his investigations of the Limicoline groups, to whom it was transmitted for the purpose by the Smithsonian Institution. Mr. Elliott's later collections contain numerous specimens, among them several newly-hatched young, hitherto probably unknown. No description of the species having been published in this country, we subjoin the following:

*Adult, in breeding-plumage.* (No. 64249, Mus. S. I.—676, Coll. H. W. E.—July 22, 1873. Saint George's.)—With somewhat the general appearance of a *Tringa alpina*, but the black area on the under parts pectoral, not abdominal. Bill about as long as the head, straight to the end, † compressed, stout, and high at

\* Deferring to this excellent authority on Limicoline birds, and without a copy of the work in which *Tringa crassirostris* was originally described, at hand, we have presented it under the same name. But almost certainly it is *not* the bird described by Schlegel as *Tringa crassirostris* in the *Museum des Pays-Bas*. The characters there given are those of a different bird altogether. By no latitude of interpretation can they be rendered applicable to the present species. In case our bird, here described in detail, be found not the same as the true *Tringa crassirostris*, it may appropriately be named *T. ptilocnemis*, in allusion to the feathered tibiae. We consider it most nearly allied to *Tringa maritima*, next to which it may take its place in the system.

† In other specimens, and usually, the bill is considerably longer, exceeding the head, and decidedly decurved at the end.



the base, with very long nasal fossæ, reaching to within  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch of the tip, and deep at the base; the groove of the under mandible co-extensive in length, but linear throughout. Feathers on side of under mandible extending beyond those on the upper; the interramal feathers projecting still a little ways farther. Legs very short, (much as in *Tringa maritima*;) tibial feathers reaching nearly or quite to the suffrago; tarsus shorter than the bill, or than the middle toe and claw. Wings and tail as usual throughout the genus.

A coronal area, the upper back, interscapular region and scapulars black, completely variegated with rich chestnut-brown, paler ochery brown and whitish, the body of each feather being black, with one or another or all of these various edgings; the coronal separated from the interscapular markings by a grayish-white, dusky-streaked cervical interval. Lower back and rump and upper tail-coverts blackish brown or grayish black, only varied with an occasional chestnut-edged feather. Wing-coverts grayish brown, with narrow white edging, the greater with broad, definite white tips. Secondaries nearly all pure white, a few of the outermost, and innermost also, with grayish-brown touches near the end. Primaries grayish brown with white shafts, except at tip, and fading to white on the inner webs toward the base; several of the innermost, also, largely white on the outer web, and with definite white tipping. Central tail-feathers brownish black; next pair abruptly paler, grayish; the rest white, or nearly so, with a faint gray tint. Front and sides of head, superciliary line, the tufts of flank-feathers, and entire under parts, white, interrupted on the breast with a large but not perfectly continuous nor well-defined blackish area, and marked on the upper breast and sides with a few narrow, sharp, blackish shaft-lines, a dusky auricular patch. Legs and bill dark. Length, apparently about 9.50 inches; wing, about 5; tail, 2.50; bill, 1.10 to 1.40; tarsus, .90 to 1.00; middle toe and claw, 1.05 to 1.20.

The sexes are not distinguishable by any outward mark. We have before us no specimen in complete fall-plumage; but one taken June 9, still retaining at that date the past season's plumage, for the most part, enables us to predicate the autumnal and winter vesture. The difference is entirely analogous to that seen in various other sandpipers. It consists in the great development and intensity of the chestnut edgings of the feathers of the upper part, to the restriction of their black fields, and to the exclusion, nearly complete, of the pale-ochery

and whitish edgings which make up the characteristic variegation of the breeding-plumage, in the absence of any dividing cervical interval between the coloration of the crown and that of the back, and especially in the strong, complete suffusion of the sides of the head and the whole throat with tawny brown. The pectoral area is only indicated by scattered blackish feathers, being in the fall probably still more obscure, or rather replaced merely by a few dusky streaks or spots.

*Newly-hatched young*, (taken early in July).—These interesting little creatures, two or three inches long, are very prettily marked. The down of the under parts is silvery white; that of the upper is rich reddish brown, varied with black, and with curiously sharp, whitish dots of definitely rounded contour, appearing like spots of mildew. Each such spot is about as large as a pin's head, and, examined with a lens, is seen to be the enlarged, circumscribed, brushy end of a downy plume, whence several tiny bristles project. Each such plume is white basally, then black for a distance, ending in the whitish tuft. The areas thus dotted correspond, consequently, to the areas of black variegation; but there is, also, a black, undotted loreal spot, frontal line, and a few other markings. The bill is mostly black, very short and slender; the legs are comparatively long and stout, and appear to have been light-colored.

*Nearly-fledged, not quite grown, young*, (taken late in July).—Several specimens retaining down, or traces of it, about the head and neck, otherwise completely feathered. The upper parts are much as in the adults in the breeding-season, as to the colors of the variegation, but the markings are in simple curved lines rather than sharp V-shaped patterns, and the edgings are much narrower. The edgings of the wing-coverts have an ochery cast. The interior tail-feathers have rusty edgings. The throat and breast are more or less suffused with pale rusty; there is no black pectoral area, but the jugulum, breast, and sides have an indefinite number of suffused, dusky markings.\*

\* In Mr. Harting's letter upon the subject, handed us by Professor Baird, to whom it was addressed, the following occurs, in substance: *T. crassirostris*, T. & S., SCH., M. P. B., *Sclop.*, 1864, 28; BLAK., *Ibis*, 1862, 315-330.—HAB., China, Japan, Java, Borneo.—SYN., *Schaeniclus magnus*, GOULD, P. Z. S., 1848, 39; B. Aust., vi, pl. 33; *Tringa magna*, BP., C. R., 1856; *Tringa tenuirostris*, GOULD, Hdbk. B. Aust., ii, 1865, 260, (nec HORSF., Linn. Trans., xiii, 1820, 192, quæ *Totanus stagnatilis*, L.) "Temmick & Schlegel say, (*l. c.*) 'This

The following measurements of a number of adult specimens will illustrate the size and shape, and, to a great extent, the normal variations in dimension of the species :

## Measurements.

Locality.	Date.	S. I. No.	Coll. No.	Sex.	Wing.	Tail.	Culmen of bill.	Tarsus in front.	Middle toe and claw.
Saint George's Island	July 22	64249	676	♂	5.10	2.50	1.12	0.90	1.08
Do.	July 22	64250	677	♂	5.20	2.60	1.28	1.00	1.10
Do.	July 4	64251	590	♂	5.10	2.30	1.10	0.94	1.16
Do.	July 7	64252	597	♂	5.00	2.50	1.20	0.95	1.06
Do.	July 7	64253	600	♂	5.10	2.80	1.45	1.00	1.15
Do.	June 19	64254	462	♂	5.15	2.75	1.40	0.98	1.08
Do.	July 7	64255	602	♂	5.10	2.40	1.30	0.97	1.12
Do.	July 7	64256	601	♂	5.18	2.70	1.41	0.95	1.13
Do.	July 7	64257	596	♂	4.80	2.50	1.25	0.90	1.12
Do.	July 4	64258	585	♂	5.00	2.50	1.30	0.96	1.15
Do.	July 4	64259	587	♂	5.05	2.40	1.25	0.97	1.07
Do.	July 7	64260	675	♂	5.25	2.80	1.42	0.95	1.20
Do.	July 1	64265	574	♂	5.35	2.75	1.40	1.00	1.10
Do.	July 4	64266	588	♂	5.30	2.70	1.45	0.98	1.20
Do.	July 7	64267	598	♂	4.90	2.50	1.20	0.96	1.14
Do.	July 7	64268	599	♂	4.90	2.30	1.30	0.91	1.10

"This is the only wader that breeds upon the Prybilov Islands, with the marked exception of a stray couple now and then of *Phalaropus hyperboreus*. It makes its appearance early in May, and repairs to the dry uplands and mossy hummocks, where it breeds. The nest is formed by the bird's selection of a particular mossy bunch, and there setting. It lays four darkly-blotched pyriform eggs, and hatches within twenty days. The young come from the shell in a thick yellowish down, with dark-brown markings on the head and back, getting the plumage of their parents and taking to wing as early as the 10th of August; and at this season old and young flock together for the first time, and confine themselves to the sand-beaches and surf-margins about the islands for a few weeks, when they take

species belongs to the same type as the Knot, (*T. canutus*), but is much more robust in size, the bill is longer, the tarsi are longer, and the toes more robust; (this is a mistake;) 'finally, it differs in the very different coloration of the plumage, notably in the breeding-season.' \* \* \* "It seems to me that the bird is in every respect a large dunlin, (*T. cinclus*), which it resembles much more nearly than it does *canutus*, not only in regard to the structure of the bill and feet, but in the character of the breeding-plumage," &c. Now, our *T. philonemis* bears a wonderful superficial resemblance to an overgrown dunlin, but its affinities, as shown by the feathered tibiae, and tarsus shorter than the middle toe, are entirely with *T. maritimus*, as already said, and some plumages very closely resemble the extensively-whitened winter-dress of the latter.

flight by the 1st or 5th of September, and disappear until the opening of the new season.

"It is a most devoted and fearless parent, and will flutter in feigned distress around by the hour, uttering a low piping note should one approach its nest. It also makes a sound exactly like our tree-frogs, and until I had traced the matter to this source, I searched several weeks unavailingly for the presence of these reptiles, misled by the call of this bird."

A set of four eggs of this species, the full complement, taken by Mr. Elliott,\* June 19, 1873, on Saint George's, are perhaps the first specimens which have reached naturalists; certainly the first we have had in this country. They appear to have been nearly or quite fresh at the date mentioned. The egg is rather a peculiar one; of all the sandpiper's eggs before us, it most resembles that of *Tringa maritima*. The shape is regularly pyriform, as usual in this family. Measurements of the four examples are:  $1.55 \times 1.08$ ;  $1.52 \times 1.05$ ;  $1.50 \times 1.08$ ;  $1.48 \times 1.05$ . The ground is nearly clay-color, but with an appreciable olivaceous shade; the markings are large, bold, and numerous, of rich, burnt-umber brown, of varying depth, according to the quantity of the pigment. These surface-markings occur all over the shell, except the extreme point, and are solidly massed by confluence on the larger half of the egg; all the markings are strong, as if laid on freely with a heavily-charged brush. With these surface-spots occur numerous shell-markings of the same character, but, of course, obscure, presenting a stone-gray or purplish gray shade; some of them look as if the color of the surface-spots had "run" and soaked into the olivaceous drab of the general surface.

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\* The eggs were first discovered by Mr. George R. Adams, agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, Saint George's Island. He, in order that they should be identified, notified Mr. Elliott of their position, who immediately shot the parent and secured the eggs. Mr. Elliott has had frequent occasion to acknowledge the courtesy and facilities for natural-history work furnished by the agents of the Alaska Commercial Company on both islands, Dr. H. H. McIntyre and Mr. Adams, above mentioned. To the last-named gentleman he is especially indebted for many desiderata. Mr. Samuel Falconer, assistant agent, and Drs. Otto Cramer and Meany, physicians on the two islands, are also among the few to whom Mr. Elliott's grateful obligations are due. From Dr. Cramer we have reason to anticipate a very valuable and interesting paper upon the stomach and intestinal parasites of the fur-seal, which he was engaged upon when Mr. Elliott took his departure from the islands, August 10, 1873.

436. ***Limosa uropygialis***, GOULD.—*White-rumped Godwit.*

*Limosa uropygialis*, GOULD.—BD. Trans. Chicago Acad., i, 320, pl. 32, (1869).—DALL and BANN. *Ibid.*, 293.—COUES. Key N. A., Birds 258, (1872.)

This well-known Old World species, lately added to our fauna, as above, is readily distinguished by the black and white barring of the upper tail-coverts. In winter the upper parts are pale gray, with dusky shaft-lines, and the under parts are nearly white—a condition never shown by our other species. In full plumage, the white of the rump and upper tail-coverts is more or less tinged with rusty, and the upper parts are brownish black, everywhere variegated with rusty. Bills of different specimens before us range in length from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches; those of the adults are mostly dark, but in the young fully the basal half is light-colored—dull whitish in the dried state.

Mr. Elliott did not take the eggs of this species, but two examples were secured by Mr. Dall, June 18, 1868, at Kutlik, Alaska. These differ as much from each other as eggs of this species do from those of other species. The ground of one is quite greenish olive; of the other, pale olive-gray. In the former, the markings are all subdued neutral tints, apparently in the shell; in the latter, the markings are nearly all on the surface, and quite bright chocolate-brown. In both cases the markings are numerous and of indeterminate shape, mostly small, and generally distributed, though tending to aggregate at the butt, where alone they lose their distinctness in coalescing to form a splashed area. Size,  $2.20 \times 1.45$ ;  $2.25 \times 1.50$ .

“Migratory only, never breeding here. Comes in a straggling manner early in May, passing northward with little delay, and re-appears toward the end of August in flocks of a dozen to fifty.”

440. ***Heteroscelus incanus***, (GM.) COUES.—*Wandering Tattler.*

*Scolopax incana*, GMEL. Syst. Nat., i, 658, (1788).—LATH. Ind. Orn., ii, 724, (1790.)

*Totanus incanus*, VIEILL. Dict. Deterv., vi, 400, (1816.)

*Heteroscelus incanus*, COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 261, (1872.)

*Tringa glareola*, PALL. Zoog. Rosso-As., ii, 194, pl. 60, (1811.)

*Totanus brevipes*, VIEILL. Dict. Deterv., vi, 400, (1816).—CASS. Pr. A. N. S., viii, 40, (1856.)

*Heteroscelus brevipes*, BAIRD. B. N. A., 734, pl. 88, (1858).—DALL. Tr. Chic. Acad., i, 293, (1869.)

*Totanus fuliginosus*, GOULD. Voy. Beagle; Birds, 130, (1841).—GRAY. G. of B., iii, pl. 154.

*Scolopax undulata*, FORST. Descr. Anim., ed. Licht., 173, (1844.)

*Totanus pulverulentus*, MÜLL. Verhand., 153, (1844.)—SCHLEGEL, Fauna Japan, pl. 65.

*Totanus oceanicus*, LESS. Comp. Buff., 244, (1847.)

*Totanus polynesia*, PEALE. Voy. Vinc. and Peac.; Birds, 237, (1848.)

*Totanus griseopygius*, GOULD. B. Aust., vi, pl. 38.

*Gambetta brevipes*, *fuliginosa*, *pulverulenta*, *oceanica*, *griseopygia*, BONAPARTE.

Two specimens are contained in Mr. Elliott's collections.

Migratory regularly, but does not breed here. It comes every year early in June, and subsequently re-appears toward the end of July, when it may be obtained on the rocky beaches. It never visits the uplands, and is a very shy and quiet bird.

443. **Numenius borealis**, (FORST.) LATH.—*Esquimaux Curlew*.

This curlew only visits the Prybilov Islands in the same manner as the *Limosa*. It breeds, apparently in great numbers, in the Anderson River region, to judge from the numerous sets of eggs in the Smithsonian forwarded by Mr. R. Macfarlane. The usual nest-complement is four, made up usually the third week in June. The nest is placed on a barren plain, and made of decayed leaves placed under the eggs in a depression of the ground. The eggs vary to the great extent usual among waders. The ground is olive-drab, either tending more to green, to gray, or to brown in different instances. The markings are always numerous and bold, of the dark chocolate, bister, and sepia browns of different depths, together with the usual stone-gray shell-markings. These always tend to aggregation at the larger end, or, at least, are more numerous on the major half of the egg, though the distribution is sometimes nearly uniform, and in no instance is the small end entirely free from spots. In one set the large end is almost completely occupied by a dense confluence of very dark markings. The smallest, and at the same time shortest, egg measures only  $1.90 \times 1.40$ ; the longest and narrowest,  $2.12 \times 1.33$ ; an average egg is  $2.00 \times 1.45$ .

We may refer, in this connection, to a species of curlew lately ascertained to inhabit Alaska, as one which may be expected to occur also on the Prybilov Islands. This interesting addition to our fauna is the *Numenius femoralis* of Peale—a species about as large as *N. hudsonicus*, and somewhat resembling it, but readily distinguished by the curious long bristly filaments which tip the abdominal feathers, and other characters. A

male specimen was taken by F. Bischoff at Fort Kenai, Alaska, May 18, 1869, and is now in the Smithsonian. (See Vigers, Zool. Journ., iv, 356; and Zool. Voy. Blossom, 28.)

A single specimen only of the Esquimaux curlew was taken by Mr. Elliott on Saint Paul's Island, June, 1872. None other than this one was seen by him.

482. **Philacte canagica**, (SEVAST.) BANN.—*Emperor Goose. Painted Goose.*

*Anas canagica*, SEVAST. Nov. Act. Acad. St. Peters., xiii, 346, pl. 10, (1800.)

*Anser canagicus*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. St. Peters., i, 37, (1836.)  
BRANDT. Descr. et Ic. An. Rosso-As., 7, pl. 1, (1836.)

*Chloephaga canagica*, BONAP. Comptes Rendus, (1856.)—BAIRD.  
B. N. A., 768, (1858.)—DALL and BANN. Trans. Chic. Acad.,  
i, 296, (1869.)—DALL. Proc. Cala. Acad., (Feb., 1873.)

*Philacte canagica*, BANN. Proc. Phila. Acad., 131, (1870.)—  
COUES. Key, 283, (1872.)

A set of five eggs, taken by Mr. Dall in Kúsolvak Slough, June 20, 1868 are much elongated and nearly equal at either end. The color is white, but with fine pale-brown dotting, giving a general light dirty-brown aspect. Specimens measure  $3.33 \times 3.10$ ;  $3.40 \times 2.90$ , &c.

“Visits the islands only as a straggler, sometimes landing so exhausted that the natives capture a whole flock in open chase over the grass, the birds being unable to use their wings for flight. I found the flesh of this bird, contrary to report, free from any unpleasant flavor, and, in fact, very good. The objectionable quality is only skin-deep, and may be got rid of by due care in the preparation of the bird for the table.”

Mr. Dall's interesting note may be appended, in further illustration of the history of this species:

“This magnificent bird abounds in profusion in the Kúsolvak Slough, or mouth of the Yukon, to the exclusion of all other species. My endeavors to reach that point being unavailing, I was obliged to do my best to obtain specimens elsewhere. It is quite scarce around the Kwichpak Slough and on the sea-coast. By offering a large reward, I obtained four fine specimens from the marshes around Kutlik. It is the largest of the geese of the country, and the delicate colors of the body, with the head and nape snow-white, tipped with rich amber-yellow, are a beautiful sight. The eye is dark-brown; feet, flesh-color. The eggs are larger and longer than those of *A. gambeli*, and rather brown fulvous, the color being in minute dots. It lays

on the ground, like the other geese. The Eskimo name is *Nachowth'luk*. The raw flesh and skin have an intolerable odor of garlic, which renders it a very disagreeable task to skin them, but when cooked this entirely passes away, and the flesh is tender and good eating.

"This goose arrives about June 1, or earlier, according to the season. As soon as the eggs are hatched the birds begin to molt. I saw half-molted specimens at Pastolik, July 29, 1867. It remains longer than any other goose, lingering until the whole sea-coast is fringed with ice, feeding on *Mytilus edulis* and other shell-fish, and has been seen as late as November 1 by the Russians. It usually goes in pairs, or four or five together, rather than in large flocks. Its note is shriller and clearer than that of *A. gambeli* or *B. hutchinsi*, and it is shyer than the other geese, except the black brant."

According to Mr. Dall, the emperor-goose does not occur in the Aleutian Islands from Ounalashka eastward.

485a. ***Branta canadensis*, var. *leucopareia***, (BRDT.) COUES.—

*White-collared goose*. "Chornie Goose."

*Anser canadensis*, PALLAS, *non auct.* Zoog. Rosso-As., ii, 230, (1811.)

*Anser leucopareius*, BRANDT. Bull. Ac. Acad. St. Petersburg., i, 37, (1836.) BRANDT. Descr. et Ic. Anim. Rosso-As., 13, pl. 2, (1836.)

*Bernicla leucopareia*, CASSIN. Ill. 272, pl. 45, (1855.)—BD. B. N. A., 764, (1858.)—DALL. Trans. Chic. Acad., i, 295, (1869.)

*Branta leucopareia*, GRAY. Hand-list, iii, 76, No. 10580, (1871.)

*Branta canadensis* var. *leucopareia*, COUES. Key 284, Fig. 185 b, (1872.)

There is no reasonable question that this is anything more than a race of the common *B. canadensis*. The supposed specific characters, not very tangible at best, are not entirely constant.

According to Mr. Dall, this goose is abundant on the coast about the mouth of the Yukon, where it breeds, but it is rare at Nulato or farther inland. The eggs were obtained at Pastolik.

"Occasionally straggles to the islands in small squads of ten to thirty, evidently driven by high winds from their customary line of migration along the mainland. Though not breeding here, it spends, occasionally, weeks at a time on the lakelets and uplands, before taking flight either north or south, as the season may be."

488. ***Anas boschas***, (L.)—*Mallard*.

"A pair bred during the season of 1872, on Polavina Lakelet, Saint Paul's Island, and several were observed later in the



fall. The mallard was also noted on Saint George's Island, but it is certainly not a regular visitor of either island."

492. **Mareca penelope**, (L.) BP.—*Widgeon*.

It is an interesting fact that the widgeon which visits the Prybilov Islands is not *M. americana*, which would have been anticipated, but the true *M. penelope*, as Mr. Elliott's specimens attest.

"It is seldom seen, *never in pairs*, does not breed on the islands, and apparently the few individuals noted during two years' observation were wind-bound or astray.

508. **Harelda glacialis**, (L.) LEACH.—*Long-tailed Duck*. "Saafka."

"Common and resident. It breeds on the lakelèts and sloughs of Saint Paul's, in limited numbers.

"This is a very noisy bird, particularly in the spring, when, with the breaking up of the ice, it comes into the open reaches of water with its peculiar, sonorous, and reiterated cry of *ah-naah-nadh-yah*, which rings cheerfully upon the ear after the silence and desolation of an ice-bound arctic winter."

The eggs of this species, according to the sets before me, are six or seven in number, of the usual shape and smooth texture of shell; one set is more decidedly pale greenish than the other, which is lighter, and rather gray, slightly inclining to creaminess. They measure  $2.20 \times 1.50$ , down to  $1.90 \times 1.40$ . One set was taken June 22, the other July 5.

510. **Histrionicus torquatus** (L.) BP.—*Harlequin Duck*.

"Common on and around the island shores, idly floating amid the surf in flocks of fifty or sixty, or basking and preening on the beaches and outlying rocks. It may be seen all the year round, excepting only when forced away by the ice-floes. Its nest, however, eluded my search; and, although I am quite confident that it breeds on either the rocky beaches or the high ridges inland, the natives themselves were equally ignorant of its eggs.

"My experience of this bird, it will be observed, differs from Mr. Dall's, who states that it 'is an essentially solitary species, found, alone or in pairs, only in the most retired spots, on the small rivers flowing into the Yukon, where it breeds.' (*Trans. Chicago Acad.*, i, 298.) I did not find it particularly wild or shy, and numbers are killed by the natives every fall or spring. It is a remarkably silent bird; I heard from it no cry what-

ever during the whole year. It is a most gregarious duck; solitary pairs never stray away from the flock. The females seem to outnumber the males, two to one."

511. **Somateria stelleri**, (PALL.) NEWT.—*Steller's Eider*.  
*Anas stelleri*, PALL. Spic. Zool., vi, 35, pl. 5, (1769.)  
*Clangula stelleri*, BOIE. Isis, 564, (1822.)  
*Fuligula stelleri*, BP. Syn. B. U. S. 394, (1828.)  
*Macropus stelleri*, NUTT. Man., ii, 451, (1834.)  
*Polysticta stelleri*, EYTON. Hist. Brit. B., 79, (1836.)—BD. B. N. A., 801, (1858.)  
*Eniconetta stelleri*, GRAY. List Gen. of B., 95, (1840.)  
*Harelda stelleri*, KEYS, et Blas. Wirb. Europ., 230, (1840.)  
*Heniconetta stelleri*, AGASS. Ind. Univ., 178, (1846.)  
*Somateria stelleri*, NEWT. P. Z. S., 400, (1861.)—COUES. Key, 291, (1872.)  
*Anas dispar*, SPARRM. Mus. Carls., pl. vii, viii, (1786.)  
*Fuligula dispar*, STEPH. Shaw's Gen. Zool., xii, 206, (1824.)  
*Stelleria dispar*, BP. Comp. List B. Eur. and N. A., 57, (1838.)  
*Anas occidua*, BONN. et VIEILL. Ency. Met., i, 130, (1823.)

"A few of these ducks were observed, but not secured, on Saint Paul's, in the spring of 1872. Two were shot at the East Point, Saint George's, the same year. It is only a straggler."

As several experienced ornithologists have stated, Steller's duck is a true eider in all essential respects. Various views of its systematic position which have been entertained are indicated by the foregoing synonymy.

An egg of Steller's duck, in the Smithsonian, from the Petersburg Museum, through H. E. Dresser, esq., collected in Kamtschatka, measures  $2.20 \times 1.60$ , and is like that of the common eider in shape, color, and texture of shell.

534. **Graculus bicristatus**, (PALL.) GRAY. *Red-faced Cormorant*.  
 "Oreel."  
 ? *Red-faced Cormorant* or *Shag*, PENNANT & LATHAM. (Arct. Zool., 11, 584; Gen. Syn. vi, 601. Kamtschatka.)  
 ? *Pelecanus urile*, GM. Syst. Nat., 1, 575, (1783.)—LATH. Ind. Orn. ii, 888, (1790.)  
*Phalacrocorax bicristatus*, PALL. Zoog. Rosso-As., ii, 301, pl. 75, f. 2, (1811.)  
*Graculus bicristatus*, GRAY. Gen. of Birds. Hand-list, iii, 128, No. 11129.—BD. Tr. Chic. Acad., 1, 321, pl. 33, (1869.)—DALL. & BANN. *Ibid.*, 302.—COUES. Key, 304, (1872.)  
*Urile bicristatus* BP., *partim*. Comp. Av., 11, 175, (1851.)  
 "Phalacrocorax pelagicus, PALL." Zoog. Rosso-As., ii, 303, pl. 76, (1811.)

The cormorant, which swarms on the Prybilov Islands, appears to be unquestionably the bird of Pallas, which is most

probably the red-faced cormorant, *P. urile*, of earlier authors. In adult plumage it is readily recognized by the naked red skin which entirely surrounds the base of the bill, somewhat carunculate, and the blue base of the under mandible, as well as by the other points noticed in the later treatises above quoted. In the great confusion subsisting among authors respecting the North Pacific cormorants, we do not venture to cite several names more or less probably synonymous.

Several eggs of this cormorant, brought in by Mr. Elliott, are covered with the white, chalky incrustation, in a maximum amount of depth and irregularity, the shell being very pale bluish beneath. They measure about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  wide, being thus narrowly elongate, though little more pointed at one end than at the other. They are all much soiled with the filth of the nest.

"This cormorant, the only one of its tribe visiting the Seal Islands, is a common bird, and is found the whole year round. The terrible storms in February and March are unable to drive the "shag" away from the sheltered cliffs of the island, while all other species, even the big northern gull, depart for the open water south.

"It comes on to the cliffs to make its nest and lay, the earliest of the birds in this sea. Two eggs were taken from a nest on the reef, Saint Paul's Island, June 1, 1872, which is over three weeks in advance of the other water-fowl, almost without exception. The nest is large, carefully rounded up, and built upon some jutting point or narrow shelf along the face of a cliff or bluff; in its construction sea-ferns, (*Sertularidæ*), grass, &c., are used, together with a cement made largely of their excrement.

"The eggs are usually three in number, sometimes four, and, compared with the size of the bird, are very small. They are oval, of a dirty, whitish gray, green, and blue color, but soon become soiled; for although the bird's plumage is sleek and bright, yet it is exceedingly slovenly and filthy about the nest. The young come from the shell at the expiration of three weeks' incubation, without feathers, and almost bare even of down. They grow rapidly, being fed by the old birds, who eject the contents of their stomachs, such as small fish, crabs, and shrimps all over and around the nest. In about six weeks the young cormorant can take to its wings, being then fully as large and heavy as the parents; but it is not until the beginning of its second year that it has the bright plumage and metallic

gloss of the adult, wearing, during the first year, a dull drab-brown coat, with the brilliant colors of the base of the bill and gular sac subdued.

"This shag is a bold and very inquisitive bird, and utters no sound whatever except when flying over and around a boat or ship, which apparently has a magnetic power of attraction for them. When they are hovering and circling around in this way, I have heard a low, droning croak come from them.

"The cormorant cannot be called a bird of graceful action at any place, either on the wing or on shore. Its flight is a quick beating of the wings, (which are usually more or less ragged,) with the neck and head stretched out horizontally to the full length. It is exceedingly inquisitive, flying around again and again to satisfy its curiosity, but never alighting on a boat or ship, though coming close enough sometimes to be almost touched by hand. It is very dirty on the rocks, and does not keep its nest in tidy trim like the gulls; but in regard to its plumage, it cannot be surpassed, or even equaled, by any bird of Bering Sea for brilliant gloss and glittering sheen. It fairly shimmers, when in the sunlight, with deep bronze and purple reflections, as though clothed in steel armor.

"In their stomachs I have found almost invariably the remains of small fish and a coil of worms, (*Nematoda*.)

"As this bird is found during the whole winter, in spite of severe weather, perched on the sheltered bluffs, the natives regard it with a species of affection, for it furnishes the only supply that they can draw upon for fresh meat, soups, and stews, always wanted by the sick; and were the shags sought after throughout the year, as they are during the short spell of intensely-bitter weather that occurs in severe winters, driving the other water-fowl away, they would certainly be speedily exterminated. They are seldom shot, however, when anything else can be obtained."

**Diomedea brachyura**, TEMM.—*Short-tailed Albatross*.

"Twenty or thirty years ago, when whaling-vessels were reaping their rich harvests in Bering and the Arctic Seas, the albatross was often seen about the islands, feeding upon the whale-carrion which might drift on shore. But with the decrease of the whale-fishery the birds have almost disappeared. Only a single individual was noted during my two years' residence. This was taken by Dr. Meany, on the north shore of Saint George's.

"It is common around Ounalashka Island, where I saw a large number, on my way to San Francisco, in August, 1873."

- 582a. **Fulmarus glacialis** var. **rodgersi**, (CASS.) COUES.—*Rodgers's Fulmar*. "Lupus."  
*Fulmarus rodgersii*, CASS. Proc. Phila. Acad., 290, (1862).—COUES. *op. cit.*, 29, (1866).—BAIRD. Tr. Chicago Acad., i, 323, pl. 34, fig. 1, (1869).—DALL et BANN. *Ibid.*, 303.  
*Fulmarus glacialis* var. *rodgersi*, COUES.—Key N. A. Birds, 327, (1872.)

Distinguished from the ordinary fulmar by the restriction of the darker slate-gray mantle, most of the wing-coverts and some of the secondaries being white.

An egg of this fulmar, procured by Mr. Elliott, is much more elongate than the only specimen of *F. glacialis* before me, and the shell is even rougher than in the latter, with innumerable raised points and minute fossæ. It measures 2.90 in length by 1.90 in breadth, and is scarcely more pointed at one end than at the other. The color is white, much soiled, in this instance, with adventitious yellow discoloration. The description applies to the whole of a large series examined.

"This is the only representative of the *Procellarinæ* I have seen on or about the Prybilov Islands. It repairs to the cliffs, especially on the south and east shores of Saint George's, comes very early in the season, and selecting some rocky shelf, secure from all enemies save man, where, making no nest whatever, it lays a single large, white, oblong-oval egg, and immediately commences the duty of incubating. It is one of the most devoted of all water-fowl to its charge, for it will not be scared from the egg by any demonstration that may be made in the way of throwing rocks or yelling, and will even die as it sets rather than take to flight, as I have frequently witnessed.

"The fulmar lays by 1st to 5th of June. The egg is very palatable, fully equal to that of our domestic duck—even better. The natives lower themselves over the cliffs, and gather a large number of eggs every season on Saint George's Island.\*

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\* But it is hazardous work, and these people on St. George seldom gather more than they want at the time of taking. The sensation experienced by the writer, who has dangled over these precipices on a slight thong of raw-hide, with the surf boiling three or four hundred feet below, and loose rocks rattling down from above, any one of which was liable to destroy life, is one not to be expressed by language, and which, I think, quite sufficient excuse for the natives to be content with just as few eggs as possible.—H. W. E.

"The *Lupus* never flies in flocks; it pairs early, and is then exceedingly quiet. I have never heard it utter a sound save a low, droning croak, when disgorging food for its young.

"The chick comes out a perfect puff-ball of white down, gaining its first plumage in about six weeks. It is a dull gray, black at first, but by the end of the season it becomes like the parents in coloration, only much darker on the back and scapularies.

"They are the least edible of all the birds about the islands. Like others of the family, they vomit up the putrid contents of their stomachs upon the slightest provocation."

540. ***Stercorarius pomatorhinus***, VIEILL.—*Pomarine Jäger*. "Raz-boi-nik."

*Larus parasiticus*, MEY. et WOLF. *Tasch. Deutsch.*, 11, 490, (1810.)

*Larus crepidatus*, GM. *L. N.*, i, 602, (1798.) (Qu. tes *Stero. striatus* BRISS.)

*Lestris striatus*, EYTON. *Br. Birds*, 53.

*Stercorarius pomarinus*, VIEILL. *Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat.*, xxxii, 158, (1819.)—COUES. *Proc. Phil. Acad.*, 129, (1863.)

*Stercorarius pomatorhinus*, COUES. *Key*, 309, (1872.)

*Cataractes pomarinus*, STEPH. *Gen. Zool.*, xiii, 216, pl. 24, (1825.)

*Coprotheres pomarinus*, REICH, *Syst. Av.*, 52, (1580.)

*Cataractes parasita* var. *camtschatica*, PALLAS. *Zoog. Rosso-As.*, ii, 312, (1811.)

"A rare visitor. The specimen secured was the only one seen on the islands. It was found on the high, mossy uplands, perched in a listless attitude on a tussock of grass."

541. ***Stercorarius parasiticus***, (BRÜNN.) GRAY.—*Parasitic Jäger*.

*Catharacta parasitica*, BRÜNN. *Orn. Bor.*, 37, (1764.)

*Larus parasiticus*, LINN. *Syst. Nat.*, i, 226, (1766.)

*Cataractes parasita*, PALL. *Zoog. R. A.*, ii, 310, (1811.)

*Lestris parasita*, ILLIGER. *Prod.*, 273, (1811.)

*Lestris parasitica*, KEYS et BLAS. *Wirb. Eur.*, 1, 240, (1840.)

*Stercorarius parasiticus*, GRAY. *Gen. of B.*, 10, 652, (1849.)—LAWR. *B. N. A.*, 839, (1858.)—COUES. *Pr. Phila. Acad.*, 133, (1863.)—

DALL et BANN. *Tr. Chicago Acad.*, i, 303, (1869.)

*Lestris richardsoni*, SW. *F. B. A.*, 11, 433, pl. 73, (1831.)

*Stercorarius richardsoni*, COUES. *Proc. Phila. Acad.*, 135, (1863.)

*Cataractes richardsoni*, MACGILLIVRAY. *Man. Orn.*, ii, 257, (1842.)

*Catharacta coprotheres*, BRÜNN. *Orn. Bor.*, 38, (1764.)

*Lestris coprotheres*, DESMURS. *Traité Oöl.*, 551, (1860.)

*Stercorarius crepidatus*, VIEILL. *Nouv. Dict.*, xxxii, 155, (1819.)

(Not of Gmelin.)

*Lestris crepidata*, DEGLAND. *Mem. Soc. Roy. Lille*, 108, (1838.)

*Stercorarius cephus*, SW. *F. B. A.*, ii, 432, (1831.)

*Lestris hardyi et spinicauda*, BP. *Consp. Av.*, ii, 210, (1856.)

"I have seen but four or five examples of this species, which may be rated as an infrequent visitor. It may be found upon the grassy uplands, where it will alight and stand dozing in an indolent attitude for hours. No one of the three species of *Stercorarius* was observed to breed here."

Numerous eggs of this species from the barren grounds of the Anderson River region, and the arctic coast to the eastward, offer the following characters: The ground color is as various, and of the same shades, as that already mentioned under head of *Numenius borealis*, and in fact the whole aspect of the egg, markings included, is quite similar. But although pointed, they have not the peculiar pyriform shape usual among *Limicolæ*. I find no specimens heavily marked at the butt, though the tendency is to a wreath by confluence around the larger end. In some specimens the markings are all small and scratchy, and distributed with "uniform irregularity" over the whole surface. A certain proportion of stone-gray shell-markings always appears to accompany the various chocolate and other browns of the surface. Specimens range from  $2.40 \times 1.70$  to  $2.00 \times 1.50$ , averaging nearer the former dimension.

The eggs of the next species cannot be distinguished from those of the present with certainty, since, though they average less in size, the larger specimens overlap the measurements of even average *parasiticus*. A fair specimen is  $2.10 \times 1.50$ ; the smallest examined measured only  $1.90 \times 1.40$ .

542. ***Stercorarius buffoni***, (BOIE.) COUES.—*Long-tailed Jüger*.

? *Catharacta cepphus*, BRÜNN. Orn. Bor., 36, (1764.)

*Lestris cepphus*, KEYS et BLAS. Wirb. Eur., i, 240, (1840.)

*Stercorarius cepphus*, GRAY. Gen. of B., iii, 652, (1849).—LAWR. B. N.

A., 840, (1858).—COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., 243, (1861.)

? *Harus parasiticus*, LATH. Ind. Orn., ii, 819, (1790.)

*Lestris parasiticus*, TEMM. Man. Orn., iv, 501, (1840).—Sw. & RICH. F. B. A., ii, 430, (1831.)

*Stercorarius longicaudatus*, BRISSON.—VIEILL. Nouv. Dict., xxxii, 157, (1819.)

*Lestris longicaudatus*, THOMP. Nat. Hist. Ireland, iii, 399, (1851.)

*Cataractis longicaudatus*, MACGILL. Man. Orn., ii, 258, (1842.)

*Lestris buffoni*, BOE. Isis, 562-576, (1822.)

*Stercorarius buffoni*, COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., 136, (1863).—DALL et BANN. Trans. Chic. Acad., i, 304, (1869).—COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 310, 1872.

*Lestris lessoni*, DEGLAND. Mem. Soc. Roy. Lille, (1838.)

*Lestris crepidata*, BREHM. Naturg. Eur. Veg., 747, (1823.)

"Seldom seen. The specimen in my collection is one of

the only two I ever observed on the islands. When I came upon them, July 29, 1872, they were apparently feeding upon insects, and upon a small black berry which ripens on the highlands," (the fruit of the *Empetrum nigrum*.)

543. **Larusglaucus**, BRÜNN.—*Glaucous Gull. Burgomaster.* "Chikie."

"This large, handsome bird is restricted by reason to Walrus Island alone, although it comes sailing over and around all the islands, in easy, graceful flight, every hour of the day, and frequently, late in the fall, will settle down by hundreds upon the carcasses on the killing-grounds. But upon Walrus Island this bird is at home, and there lays its eggs in neat nests, built of sea-ferns and dry grass, placed among the grassy tussocks on the center of the island:—there are no foxes here.

"It remains by the islands during the whole season. Though it is sometimes driven by the ice to the open water fifty to a hundred miles south, it returns immediately after the floe disappears.

"The 'chikie' lays as early as the 1st to 4th of June, depositing three eggs usually within a week or ten days. These eggs are large, spherically oval, having a dark grayish-brown ground, with irregular patches of darker brown-black. They vary somewhat in size, but the shape and pattern of coloring is quite constant.

"The young *burgomaster* comes from the shell at the expiration of three weeks' incubation, in a pure-white, thick coat of down, which is speedily supplanted by a brownish-black and gray plumage, with which the bird takes flight, having nearly the size of the parent. This dark coat changes within the next three months to one nearly white, with the lavender-gray back of the adult; the legs change from a pale-grayish tone to the rich yellow of the mature condition, and the bill also passes from a dull-brown color to a bright yellow with a red spot on the lower mandible.

"It has a loud, shrill cry, becoming soon very monotonous by its constant repetition, and also utters a low, chattering croak while coasting.

"It is a very neat bird about its nest, and keeps its plumage in a condition of snowy purity. It is not very numerous; I do not think that there were more than five or six hundred nests on Walrus Island at the time of my visit, in 1872."



552. *Larus tridactylus* var. *kotzebui*, (BP.) COUES.—*Pacific Kittiwake*. "Chornie-naushkie goverooskie."  
*Rissa kotzebui*, Bp. Consp. Av., 11, 226, (1856.)—COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., 305, (1862.)—COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., 207, (1869.)  
*Larus tridactylus*, DALL & BANN. Tr. Chic. Acad., 1, 305, (1869.)  
*Larus tridactylus* var. *kotzebui*, COUES, Key, 314, (1872.)

We have called attention, in our publications above quoted, to the fact that the North Pacific kittiwake has the hind toe better formed than that of the Atlantic bird; and this is the sole basis of the supposed species.

Although thus so similar to the true *Larus tridactylus* that it cannot be specifically distinguished, and also totally distinct from the next species, there has been a strange confusion regarding it. I do not venture now to add to the foregoing synonymy several names more or less doubtfully here applicable. Bonaparte quotes as synonymous, *Rissa nivea* of Bruch, J. f. O., 1855, 285; and also queries *R. brachyrhyncha* of Bruch, *ibid.*, 1853, 103. No one of the four species of *Rissa* described by Mr. Lawrence, in 1858, in Baird's work, pp. 854, 855, belongs here.

"This kittiwake breeds here by tens of thousands, in company with *R. brevirostris*, coming at the same time, but laying a week or ten days earlier; in all other respects it corresponds in habit, and is in just about the same number. It is a remarkably constant bird in coloration, when adult, for I have failed to observe the slightest variation in plumage among the great numbers here under my notice.

"In building its nest it uses more grass and less mud-cement than the *brevirostris* does. The eggs are more pointed at the small end and lighter in the ground-color, with numerous spots and blotches of dark brown. The chick is difficult to distinguish with certainty from the *brevirostris*, and it is not until two or three weeks have passed that any difference can be noted in the length of bill and color of feet.

"Like *Rissa brevirostris*, the male treads the female on the nest, and nowhere else, making a loud, shrill, screaming sound during the ceremony."

553. *Larus brevirostris*, (BRANDT.)—*Short-billed or Red-legged Kittiwake*. "Goverooskie."  
*Rissa brevirostris*, BRANDT.—LAWR. B. N. A., 855, (1858.)—DALL & BANN. Tr. Chicago Acad., i, 305, (1869.)  
*Larus brevirostris*, COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 315, (1872.)

- Larus brachyrhynchus*, GOULD. P. Z. S., (July 25, 1843.)—GOULD.  
 Voy. Sulphur, 50, pl. 34, (—.) Not of RICHARDSON.  
*Rissa brachyrhyncha*, BP. Consp. Av., ii, 226, (1856.)—COUES.  
 Proc. Phila. Acad., 306, (1862.)  
*Rissa nivea*, LAW. B. N. A., 855, (1858.) (Excl. Syn. Not *Larus*  
*niveus*, FALL.)

This excellent species will instantly be distinguished from the preceding by its short bill, and especially by its rich coral, vermilion, or lake-red legs, (drying straw-yellow.) There is no possibility of confounding the two, although their synonymy has become involved to such an extent that the task of disentangling it is almost hopeless. The names above quoted are of unquestionable pertinence here; several others that might be quoted are preferably left untouched.

"This beautiful gull, one of the most elegant of birds on the wing, seems to favor these islands with its presence to the exclusion of other land, coming here by tens of thousands to breed. It is especially abundant on Saint George's Island. It is certainly by far the most attractive of all the gulls; its short, symmetrical bill, large hazel eye, with crimson lids, and bright-red feet, contrasting richly with the snowy-white plumage of the head, neck, and under parts.

"Like *Larus glaucus*, this bird remains about the islands during the whole season, coming on the cliffs for the purpose of nest-building, breeding by the 9th of May, and deserting the bluffs when the young are fully fledged and ready for flight, early in October.

"It is much more cautious and prudent than the 'arrie,' for its nests are placed on almost inaccessible shelves and points, so that seldom can a nest be reached unless a person is lowered down to it by a rope passed over the cliff.

"Nest-building is commenced by this bird early in May, and completed, usually, not much before the first of July. It uses dry grass and moss, cemented with mud, which it gathers at the margin of the small fresh-water sloughs and ponds scattered over the islands. The nest is solidly and neatly put up, the parent birds working in the most diligent and amiable manner.

"Two eggs are the usual number, although occasionally three will be found in the nest. If these eggs are removed, the female will renew them, like the 'arrie,' in the course of another week or ten days. They are of the size and shape of the common hen's egg, but colored with a dark-gray ground, spotted and blotched with sepia-brown patches and dots. Once in a while

an egg will have on its smaller end a large number of suffused blood-red spots.

"Both parents assist in the labor of incubation, which lasts from twenty-four to twenty-six days. The chick comes out with a pure-white downy coat, and pale whitish-gray bill and feet, resting helplessly in the nest while its feathers grow. During this period it is a comical-looking object. The natives capture them now and pet them, having a number every year scattered through the village, where they become very tame, and it is not until fall, when cold weather sets in and makes them restless, that they leave their captors and fly away to sea.

"This bird is very constant in its specific characters. Among thousands of them I have never observed any variation in the coloration of the bills, feet, or plumage of the mature birds, with one exception. There is a variety, seldom seen, in which the feet are nearly yellow, or rather yellow than red, and the edge of the eyelid is black instead of scarlet; there is also a dark patch back of each eye. The color of the feet is probably an accidental individual peculiarity; the dark eye-patch and absence of bright color from the eyelids may depend upon season."

606. *Colymbus arcticus*, (L.)—*Black-throated Diver*.

It is interesting to observe that this bird is the true *C. arcticus*, and not var. *pacificus*, which might have been expected to occur. This is sufficiently attested by the measurements of a fine adult specimen, No. 498 of Mr. Elliott's collection. Length, about 31 inches; wing, 12; bill, along culmen,  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ; along gape, 4; its depth at base, .80; tarsus,  $3\frac{1}{8}$ ; middle toe and claw, 4. The bill is quite stout, with the culmen convex throughout, showing nothing of the slender, straight, or almost recurved shape characteristic of var. *pacificus*.

We find nothing respecting this species in Mr. Elliott's MSS. It was the only one seen by him. It was found dead, cast upon the sand-beach at Zapadnie, Saint George's Island, and brought to Mr. E. by the natives, who differed among themselves as to whether they had ever noticed it before about the islands. At all events, it is seldom seen there.

610. *Podiceps griseigena*, (BODD.)—*Red-necked Grebe*.

As in the case of the last species, the present is of the typical form rather than of the North American variety. The difference, as stated in our synopsis, (Pr. Phila. Acad., 1862, 232,) lies in

the size and coloration of the bill. In true *griseigena* the bill is little, if any, over 1.50 inches along the culmen, or 2.00 along the gape, and the yellow is either entirely restricted to the base, or only extends thence a little on the edge of the under mandible. In var. *holbölli* the above-mentioned measurements of the bill are respectively 1.90 and 2.40, and much or most of the under mandible, with the cutting-edges of the upper, are yellow. In the present specimen, the culmen measures 1.60; the gape, 2.15, and there is little yellow, excepting at the base of the bill.

Eggs of the American red-necked grebe, from the Yukon and other interior arctic localities, are rough, white, either inclining to pale-greenish or with buffy discoloration, and of the usual narrowly-elongate shape common in the family. They measure from 2.10 to 2.35 in length by 1.25 to 1.45 in breadth, the longer eggs not always being proportionally wide.

"It is the only specimen seen during my residence upon the islands. It has been observed before by the natives, who, however, affirm that it is uncommon."

617. *Fratercula corniculata*, (NAUM.) BRANDT.—*Horned Puffin*.  
"Epatka."

- (?) *Alca arctica*, var. B., LATH. Ind. Orn., ii, 792, (1790.)  
*Lunda arctica*, PALL. partim., Zoog. R. A., ii, 365, (1811.)  
*Mormon corniculatum*, NAUM. Isis, 782, pl. 7, f. 3, 4, (1821).—  
 KITTL. Kupf. Naturg. Vog. pl. i, fig. 1.—DALL & BANN.  
 Trans. Chic. Acad., i, 308, (1869.)  
*Mormon (Fratercula) corniculata*, Bp. Comptes Rendus, 774,  
 (1856).—CASS., in Bd. B. N. A., 902, (1858.)  
*Fratercula (Ceratoblepharum) corniculata*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc.  
 Acad. St. Petersb., ii, 348, (1837.)  
*Fratercula corniculata*, GRAY. Gen. B., iii, 637, pl. 174, (1849).—  
 COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., 1868.—COUES. Key, 340, (1872.)  
*Lunda corniculata*; SCHLEGEL. M. P. B., ix, *Nerin.*, 28, (1867.)  
*Lunda (Ceratoblepharum) corniculata*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad.,  
 St. Petersb., vii, 242, (1869.)  
*Mormon glacialis*, GOULD, nec. LEACH. B. Eur., v, pl. 404,  
 (1837).—AUD. Orn. Biog., iii, 549, pl. 293, (1835).—ID. B.  
 Amer., vii, 236, pl. 463.

An egg before me is noticeably more elongate than that of *F. arctica* or of *F. cirrhata*, though not more pointed. The shell is rather rough, and dead-white. We may anticipate that in some instances a few obscure obsolete spots may appear, as they occasionally do in the eggs of *F. arctica*, and, doubtless, also show the usual discolorations in many cases. The present specimen measures 2.75 by 1.75.

"The eye never fails to be arrested by this odd-looking bird, with its great shovel-like, lemon-yellow and red bill, as it sits squatted in glum silence on the rocky cliff-perches, regarding approach with an air of stolid wonder. It seems to have been fashioned with especial regard to the fantastic and comical.

"This *mormon*, in common with one other species, *M. cirrhata*, comes up from the sea, from the south, to the cliffs of the islands about the 10th of May, always in pairs, never coming or going in flocks. It makes a nest of dried sea-ferns, grass, moss, &c., far back or down in some deep, rocky crevice, where the egg when laid is generally inaccessible—nothing but blasting-powder would reach it.

"It lays but a single egg, large, oblong-oval, pure white, and, contrary to the custom of the gulls, arries, choochkies, &c., when the egg is removed the sea-parrot does not renew it, but deserts the nest, perhaps locating elsewhere. The young chick I have not been able to get—not until it comes out fledged and ready for flight in August, when it does not differ materially from its parent. The species leaves the islands about the 10th September.

"This bird is very quiet and unobtrusive; it does not come in large numbers to the islands, for it breeds everywhere else in Bering Sea. Its flight is performed with quick and rapid wing-beats, in a straight and steady course. There is no difference between the sexes as to size, shape, or plumage."

619. ***Fratercula cirrhata***, (PALL.) STEPH.—*Tufted Puffin*. "Tawpawkie."

*Alca cirrhata*, PALL. Spic. Zool., 7, pl. 1, ii, fig. 1, 2, 3, (1769.)

*Lunda cirrhata*, PALL. Zoog. R. A., ii, 363, p. 82, (1811.)—

SCHLEG. Mus. Pays-Bas, *Urin.* 27, (1867.)—COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., (1868.)

*Lunda (Gymnoblepharum) cirrhata*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. St. Petersb., vii., 244, (1867.)

*Fratercula cirrhata*, STEPH. Shaw's Gen. Zool., xiii, 40, (1825.)

*Fratercula (Gymnoblepharum) cirrhata*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. St. Petersb., ii, 349, (1837.)

*Mormon cirrhata*, NAUM. Isis, 781, pl. 7, f. 1, (1821.)—CASS. B. N. A., 902, (1858.)—DALL & BANN. Trans. Chicago Acad., i, 308, (1869.)

*Fratercula carinata*, VIGORS. Zool. Journ., iv, 358.

*Sagmatorhina lathamii*, BP. P. Z. S., 202, pl. 44, (1851.)—COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., (1868.)

*Sagmatorhina labradoria*, CASS. B. N. A., 904, (1858.)—DALL & BANN. Trans. Chic. Acad., i, 309, (1869.)

As Professor Brandt showed, shortly after the publication of our Monograph, the *Sagmatorhina lathami* of Bonaparte (= *S. labradoria*, Cass.) is merely the young of this species, at an age before the bill has attained its final shape and coloring. Of this fact we became ourselves aware about the same time, from examination of various specimens in the Smithsonian.

The genus, of course, falls, as well as the species. In our Monograph we were so far wrong as to assign to it a second supposed species, the *Cerorhina suckleyi* of Cassin, which is the young of *Ceratorhina monocerata*.

"Comes to the islands at the same time as *F. corniculata*, and resembles the *Epatkie* in its habits generally. It lays a single large white egg, of a rounded-oval shape. I was never able to see a newly-hatched chick, owing to the retired and inaccessible nature of the breeding-places. Could Walrus Island be visited frequently during the season, interesting observations might be made there, for the nests are more easy of access. The young tawpawkie, six weeks old, resembles the parents exactly, only the bill is lighter colored, and the plumes on the head are incipient. This is the only place where the birds can be daily seen and watched with satisfactory results. I took eggs from over thirty nests in July. The natives say it is very quarrelsome when mating, its cries sounding like the growling of a bear as they issue from far down under the rocks that cover its nest."

The egg is much thicker and more capacious than that of *F. corniculata*, though no longer. The shell is rough, dead-white, and, besides the frequent discolorations, shows in several specimens very pale, obsolete shell-markings of purplish gray. Several specimens measure as follows:  $2.85 \times 1.95$ ;  $2.80 \times 1.92$ ;  $2.75 \times 2.00$ ;  $2.65 \times 1.95$ .

621. **Phaleris psittacula**, (ESCH.) TEMM.—*Parroquet Auk*. "Baillie Brushkie."

*Alca psittacula*, PALL. Spic. Zool., fasc. v, 13, pl. 2, pl. 5, f. 4, 5, 6, (1760.)

*Lunda psittacula*, PALL. Zoog. Rosso-As., ii, 366, pl. 84, (1811.)

*Phaleris psittacula*, TEMM. Man. Orn., i, 112, (1820.)—COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 342, fig. 222, (1872.)

*Ombria psittacula*, ESCHSCH. Zool. Atlas, iv, 3, pl. 17, (1831.)—BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersb., ii, 348, (1837.)—ID. *Ibid.*, vii, 237, (1869.)—CASS. B. N. A., 410, (1858.)—ELLIOT. B. N. A., pt. i, pl. 70.

*Simorhynchus psittaculus*, SCHLEG. Mus. Pays-Bas, ix, 24, (1867.)—COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., (1868.)

Not only on account of the form of the bill, which, though singular among *Alcidæ*, is not more different from that of some others than these are among themselves, but also in consequence of a different mode of life, to which the shape of the bill fits it, as attested by various observers, we now place the bird in a separate genus from *Simorhynchus*, under which we formerly included it. The species is said to live chiefly upon bivalve mollusks, such as *Mytilus*, &c., for opening which its bill is adapted; and Professor Brandt notes the curious analogy afforded, in this respect, with *Hæmatopus*, as compared with allied Charadrine genera.

Mr. Gray adduces a reference to the unexpected occurrence of this species in Sweden.

"This quaintly-beaked bird is quite common on the Prybilov Group, and can be obtained at Saint George's in considerable numbers. It comes here early in May, and locates in a deep chink or crevice of some inaccessible cliff, where it lays a single egg and rears its young. It is very quiet and undemonstrative during the pairing-season, its only note being a low, sonorous, vibrating whistle. Like *Simorhynchus cristatellus*, it will breed in company with the 'choochkie,' but will not follow that lively relative back upon the uplands, the 'baillie brushkie' being always found on the shore-line, and there only.

"The egg, which is laid upon the bare earth or rock, is pure white, oblong-ovate, measuring  $2\frac{1}{2}$  by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. It is exceedingly difficult to obtain, owing to the birds' great caution in hiding, and care in selecting some deep and winding crevice in the face of the cliff. At the entrance to this nesting-cavern the parents will sometimes squat down and sit silently for hours at a time, if undisturbed.

"It does not fly about the islands in flocks, and seems to lead a quiet, independent life by itself, caring nothing for the society of its kind. The young, when first hatched, I have not seen, but by the 10th to the 15th of August they may be observed coming out for the first time from their secure retreats, and taking to wing as fully fledged and as large as their parents.

"They take their departure from the 20th of August to the 1st of September, and go out upon the North Pacific for the winter, where they find their food, which consists of *amphipoda* and fish-fry. I have never seen one among the thousands that were around me when on the islands 'opening' the bivalve-shells, such as mussels, &c., as stated by Professor Brandt. It

feeds at sea, flying out every morning, returning in the afternoon to its nest and mate."

The egg of *Phaleris psittacula* is about as large as a small hen's egg, which it resembles, although averaging more elongate. The shape, however, is extremely variable; thus, one measures 2.25 by 1.50, and another 2.35 by only 1.45, the latter being remarkably narrow, elongate, and pointed. The shell is minutely granular, and rough to the touch. It is white, unmarked, but often found variously soiled and discolored, sometimes by mechanical effect, and sometimes by fluids of the oviduct or cloaca. Mr. Elliott says, "So effectually do these birds secrete their eggs in the deep recesses of cliff crevices and chinks that I was unable to obtain more than four perfect specimens, although several hundred 'baillie brushkies' were breeding on the cliffs, each pair marked by myself, (in daily observation,) close by the village, at Saint George's Island, during the summer of 1873. Nothing, save blasting-powder, or similar agency, can open the basaltic crevices in which the bird hides, and, of course, resort to this action would also destroy the egg."

622. **Simorhynchus cristatellus**, (PALL.) MERR.—*Crested Auk*.  
"Canooskie."

*Alca cristatella*, PALL. Spic. Zool. fasc., v, 20, pl. 3, pl. 5, figs. 7, 8, 9, (1769.)

*Uria cristatella*, PALL. Zoog. Rosso.-As., ii, 370, (1811.) (Excl. syn. *Alca camtschatica*, LEPECH.)

*Simorhynchus cristatellus*, MERREM.—SCHL. M. P. B., ix, 25, (1867.)—COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., (1868.)—COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 342, figs. 223, 224, (1872.)

*Simorhynchus (Tylorhamphus) cristatellus*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersb., vii, 223, (1869.)

*Tylorhamphus cristatellus*, BRANDT. Op. cit., ii, 348, (1837.)

*Phaleris cristatellus*, STEPH. Shaw's Gen. Zool., xiii, 47, pl. 5, (1825.) (Nec TEMM.)—SCHRENCK. Reise Amur-Land, i, vt. ii, 500, pl. 16, figs. 4, 5.

*Phaleris (Simorhynchus) cristatellus*, CASS. B. N. A., 906, (1858.)

*Uria dubia*, PALL. Zoog. R. A., ii, 371, (1811.)—(*Avis ptil. hyem. vestita*, sec. BRANDT.)

*Phaleris dubia*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersb., ii, 347, (1837.)

*Tylorhamphus dubius*, BONAP. Comptes Rendus, xlii, 774, (1856.)

*Simorhynchus dubius*, COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., (1868.)

*Alca tetracula*, PALL. Spic. Zool. fasc., v, 23, pl. 4, (1769.) (*Junior*.)

*Uria tetracula*, PALL. Zoog. R. A., ii, 371, (1811.)

*Phaleris tetracula*, STEP. Gen. Zool., xiii, 46, (1825.)—BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersb., ii, 347, (1837.)



*Tylorhamphus tetraculus*, BONAP. Comptes Rendus, xlii, 774, (1856.)

*Phaleris (Tylorhamphus) tetracula*, CASS. B. N. A., 907, (1858.)

*Simorhynchus tetraculus*, COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., (1868.)—  
COUES. Key N. A. B., 342, (1872.)

*Phaleris psittacula*, TEMM. Man. d'Ornith., i, p. cxii, (1820.)

*Phaleris superciliata*, AUD. Orn. Biog., iv, pl. 402, (1839.) (Nec  
LICHT.; nec BP.)

“This fantastic-looking bird, conspicuous by reason of its curling crest and bright crimson bill, breeds in company with the *S. microceros*, but in no number whatever compared with the ‘choochkie’—a few thousand pairs only at Saint Paul’s, and relatively more on Saint George’s, of course.

“It makes its appearance in early May, and repairs to chinks and holes in the rocky cliffs, or deep down under large boulders and rough basaltic shingle, to lay, making no nest whatever, depositing the egg upon the bare earth or rock. But so well do these birds succeed in secreting it that, although I was constantly upon the ground where several thousand pairs were laying, I was unable to successfully overturn the rocks (under which they hide) and get more than four eggs, the result of over a hundred attempts.

“The note of the ‘canooskie’ while mating is a loud, clanging, *honk*-like sound; at all other seasons they are silent.

“The *Simorhynchus cristatellus* lays but one egg, and the parents take turns, I am inclined to believe, in the labor of incubation and in feeding their young. The egg is rough, pure white, but with frequent discolorations, and, compared with size and weight of the parent, very large. It is an elongated oblong-oval, the smaller end being quite pointed. Length, 2.10; width, 1.40.

“I have not seen a chick, nor could I get any notes upon its appearance from the natives, but I have shot the young as they came out for the first time from their dark, secure hiding-places, fully fledged, with exception of crest, being by this time, the 10th to 15th August, as large as the old birds, and of the same color and feathering.

“The ‘canooskie,’ like its cousin, the ‘choochkie,’ has no sexual variation in size or plumage. Males and females are, to all external view, precisely alike.

“The bright crimson bill, however, varies considerably, not in color, but in its relative strength and curve, the slenderer bill not being confined, as far as I could see, to the young

birds, some old ones having the light and more pointed beak."

We do not hesitate now to follow Professors Schlegel and Brandt in uniting the *dubia* and *tetracula* with the *crisatella* of Pallas. We were never satisfied of the distinction of the former, and in our Monograph expressed the strongest doubts of its validity as a species. The other, however, we fully believed, until recently, to be a good species.

624. **Simorhynchus pusillus**, (PALL.) COUES.—*Least, or Knob-billed, Auk*. "Chooch-kie."

? ? *Alca pygmæa*, GMELIN. Syst. Nat., i, 555, (1788).—(*Nonne potius* = *Alca camtschatica*, LEPECH., juv.; h. e. = *S. cassini*, NOB. ?)

*Phaleris pygmæa*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersburg, ii, 347, (1837.) (Excl. syn. *A. pygmæa*, GM.)

*Tylorhamphus pygmæa*, BP. Comptes Rendus, xlii, 774, (1806.) (= *Uria pusilla*, PALL.)

*Symorhynchus pygmæus*, SCHL. Mus. Pays-Bas, ix, 23, (1867.)

*Uria pusilla*, PALL. Zoog. R. A., ii, 373, pl. 70, (1811.) (Excl. syn.)

*Phaleris pusilla*, CASS. Proc. Phila. Acad., 324, (1862.)

*Phaleris (Ciceronia) pusilla*, CASS. B. N. A., 909, (1858.)

*Simorhynchus pusillus*, COUES. Pr. Phila. Acad., (1868.)—BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersburg, vii, 230, (1869.)—COUES. Key N. A. B., 343, figs. 227, 228, (1872.)

*Phaleris corniculata*, ESCHSCH. Zool. Atl., 4, pl. 16, (—.)

*Phaleris microceros*, BRANDT. Bull. Sc. Acad. St. Petersburg, ii, 346, (1837.)

*Phaleris (Ciceronia) microceros*, CASS. B. N. A., 908, (1858.)

*Ciceronia microceros*, REICHENBACH.

*Simorhynchus microceros*, COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., (1868.)

*Phaleris nodirostra*, BP. Comp. & Geog. List, 66, (1838.)

*Ciceronia nodirostris*, BP. Comptes Rendus, xlii, 774, (1856.)

There is now no reasonable doubt of the identity of the names above quoted, excepting *Alca pygmæa*, which remains unidentified. It may have been this species, but most probably it was the young of *S. camtschaticus*, in the same state as the young bird we recently called *S. cassini*. The strong doubt we expressed in our Monograph respecting the distinction between the *microceros* or *nodirostris* of authors and the *pusilla* of Pallas, has been confirmed.

"This little bird is the most characteristic of the water-fowl frequenting the Prybilov Islands, to which it repairs every summer by millions to breed, with its allies, *S. cristatella*, (ca-nooskie,) and the *Phaleris psittacula*.

"It is comically indifferent to the proximity of man, and can

be approached almost within an arm's length before taking flight, sitting upright and eyeing one with an air of great wisdom, combined with profound astonishment.

"Usually about the 1st or 4th of May, every year, the choochkie makes its first appearance around the islands for the season, in small flocks of a few hundreds or thousands, hovering over and now and then alighting upon the water, sporting one with another, in apparent high glee, and making an incessant low chattering sound. By the 1st to the 6th June they have arrived in greatest number, and they then commence to lay. They frequent the loose stony reefs and boulder-bars on Saint Paul's, together with the cliffs on both islands, and an area of over five square miles of basaltic shingle on Saint George's. To the last island they come in greatest number. There are millions of them. They make no nests, but lay a single egg each, far down below among loose rocks, or they deposit it deep within the crevices or chinks in the faces of the bluffs.

"Although, owing to their immense numbers, they seem to be in a state of great confusion, yet they pair off and conduct all of their billing and cooing down under the rocks, upon the spot chosen for incubation, making during this interesting period a singular grunting or croaking sound, more like a 'devil's fiddle' than anything I have ever heard outside of city limits.

"A walk over their breeding-grounds at this season is exceedingly interesting and amusing, as the noise of hundreds of these little birds directly under foot gives rise to an endless variation of sound, as it comes up from the stony holes and caverns below, while the birds come and go, in and out, with bewildering rapidity, comically blinking and fluttering.

"The male birds, and many of the females, regularly leave the breeding-grounds in the morning and go off to sea, where they feed on small water-shrimps and sea-fleas, (*Amphipoda*), returning to their nests and sitting partners in the evening.

"The choochkie lays a single pure-white egg, exceedingly variable in size and shape, usually oblong-oval, with the smaller end somewhat pointed. I have several specimens almost spherical, and others drawn out into an elongated ellipse; but the oblong-oval, with the pointed smaller end, is the prevailing type. The egg is very large, compared with the size and weight of the little parent. Average length, 1.55; width, 1.12. The

general aspect is much like that of a pigeon's egg, excepting the roughness of the shell.

"The chick is covered with a thick, uniform, dark-grayish-black down, which is speedily succeeded by feathers, all darker than those of the parent, when it takes flight from the islands for the year six weeks after. The parents feed their young by disgorging, and when the young birds leave, they are as large and heavy as the old ones. I am strongly inclined to think that the male bird feeds the female while incubating, but have not been able to verify this supposition by observation, as the birds are always hidden from sight at the time."

634. *Lomvia troile* var. *californica*, (BRY.) COUES.—*Murre Guillemot*.

*Cephus lomvia*, PALL. Zoog. R. A., ii, 345, (1811.)

*Uria troile*, NEWB. Pac. R. R. Rep., vi, pt. iv, 110, (1857.)

*Cataractes californicus*, BRYANT. Proc. Bost. Soc. 11, fig. 3, 5, (1861.)

*Lomvia californica*, COUES. Proc. Phila. Acad., fig. 16, (1868.)

*Lomvia troile* var. *californica*, COUES. Key N. A. Birds, 346, (1872.)

All the Murres of the *troile* type we have seen from the North Pacific agree in possessing a particular shape of the bill, readily distinguishable from that presented by the Atlantic birds. While we would by no means insist upon, or even admit, that this is a specific character, especially since we have no doubt that some of the circumpolar colonies of these birds will show an intermediate style, we think it as well to recognize the character by a varietal name. The shape is difficult to describe in words: the gonydeal angle is stronger, pointed, and more protuberant, the gonyes straighter and more decidedly ascending, the culmen less deflected at the tip, and the commissure consequently straighter than are these several points in true *troile*. It is, in short, some approach to the configuration of the bill in *L. svarbag*, (*brünnichii* of authors.)

"Limited numbers of the Californian guillemot are found occasionally perched on the cliffs with the 'arrie;' they can only be distinguished at a slight distance by a practiced eye, for they resemble their allies so closely and conform so strictly to their habits, that it will be but repeating the description of the *L. arra*, given here, should I attempt it. The largest gathering of these birds I have ever seen at any one place on the islands was a squad of about fifty, at the high bluffs on Saint George's, last summer; but they are generally scattered by ones, twos, and threes, among thousands and tens of thousands of the *arra*."

635. *Lomvia arra*, (PALL.) COUES.—*Thick-billed Guillemot*. "Arrie."  
*Cephus arra*, PALL. Zoog. R.-A., ii, 347, (1811.)  
*Uria arra*, CASS. Proc. Phila. Acad., 324, (1862.)  
 (Also, *Uria brünnichii*, &c., of authors referring to the North Pacific  
 thick-billed bird.)

It is an interesting fact that these specimens, unquestionably of the "thick-billed" guillemot, do not exhibit the extreme shortness and stoutness of bill shown by those of the North Atlantic, the bill being almost exactly intermediate. With the chord of culmen about  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches long, the depth of the bill opposite the nostrils is hardly, or not,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of an inch, and thus much less than half as long, instead of about half as long. The gape is about 3 inches. While the bill shows the dilated and denuded basal portion of the maxillary tomium, characteristic of the species, this raised, naked border is not yellowish, but of a peculiar glaucous bluish-gray color. The tip of the bill is less hooked than in true "*brünnichii*," though more so than in *troile*. The modification of the bill appears somewhat singularly analogous to that which takes place in var. *californica* as compared with true *troile*.

This bird is, of course, the true *arra* of Pallas, (a name apparently derived from the Russian vernacular,) whatever be its relationship to the Atlantic bird. We should not be surprised if some of the circumpolar forms were to connect the extremes of *brünnichii* and *troile* by insensible gradations.

"The great egg-bird of the North Pacific, frequenting these islands by millions. This *Uria* and one other, the var. *californica*, are the only birds of the genus found here, but the latter is in comparatively no number whatever, not one being seen where a thousand of the former are visible at once.

"They appear very early in the season, but do not begin to lay until the 18th or 25th of June, and the natives tell me that in open, mild winters these birds are seen in straggling flocks all around the islands. I feel quite well assured that all the individuals do not migrate from this sea and the vicinity of the Aleutian Islands.

"They lay their eggs upon the points and narrow shelves on the faces of the cliff-fronts to the islands, standing over the eggs, side by side, as thickly as they can crowd, making no nests. They quarrel desperately, and so earnestly, that all along under the high bluffs on the north shore of Saint George's hundreds of dead birds are lying, having fallen and dashed them-

selves to death upon the rocks while clinched in combat with rivals in mid-air.

"They lay but a single egg, upon the bare rock. The egg is large and very fancifully colored, a bluish-green ground with dark-brown mottlings and patches, but exceedingly variable in size and coloring. The outline of the egg is pyriform, sometimes more acute. It is the most palatable of all the varieties found on the islands, having no disagreeable flavor, and, when perfectly fresh, being fully as good as a hen's egg.

"Incubation lasts nearly twenty-eight days, and the young come out with a dark thick coat of down, which is speedily supplanted by the plumage and color of the old birds within six weeks of hatching. They are fed by the disgorging parents, apparently without intermission, uttering all the while a harsh rough croak, lugubrious enough.

"The males and females have no sexual distinction as to size, shape, or plumage. On Saint George's Island, while the females begin to set, along toward the end of June and first of July, the males go flying around the island in great files and platoons, always circling against, or quartering on, the wind, at regular hours in the morning and the evening, *making a dark girdle of birds more than a quarter of a mile broad and thirty miles long, whirling round and round the island*, and forcing upon the most casual observer a lasting impression. The flight of the 'arrie' is straight, steady, and rapid, the wings beating quickly and powerfully; it makes no noise nor utters any cry, save a low, hoarse, grunting croak, and then only when quarreling or mating.

"This 'arrie' is a valuable bird to the inhabitants of the Seal Islands, and, indeed, for that matter, is the only one that has much economic worth to man in Bering Sea."

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.



## A P P E N D I X .

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### SAINT MATTHEW'S ISLAND, BERING'S SEA.

This island lies about 200 miles north-northwest from Saint Paul's, and is not large, being some 22 miles in length and excessively narrow in proportion. Hall's, a small island, lies west from it, separated by a strait less than 3 miles in width, and a sharp jagged rock stands out some 1,200 feet abruptly from the sea, 5 miles south of Sugarloaf Cone.

Our first landing, early in the morning of August 5, was at the slope of Cub Hill, near Cape Upright, the easternmost point of the island; the air coming in from the northwest was cold and chilly, and snow and ice were on the hill-sides and in the gullies. The hill-sides and summits were of a grayish-russet tinge, with rich green swale-slopes running down into the lowlands, which are more intensely green and warm in tone there.

The island everywhere presents the appearance of a long stragglng reach of bluffs and headlands connected with bars and lowland spits, at a small distance resembling half a dozen distinct islands, when seen from the ship.

The pebble-bar formed by the sea between Cape Upright and Waterfall Heads is covered with a deep stratum of glacial drift carried down from the slopes of Polar and Cub Hills, and extending over two miles of this water-front to the westward, where it is met by a similar washing from that quarter. Back and in the center of this neck are several small fresh lakes and lagoons without fish, but emptying into them are a number of clear, lively brooks in which are brook-trout of large size and fine quality. A luxuriant growth of deep moss and grass interspersed exists on the lowest ground, and occasionally strange dome-like piles of peat lifted four or five feet above the marshy swale appear like abandoned huts, with a great variety of pretty flowers, growing thickly everywhere on these places.

As these lowlands rise on to the flanks of the hills the vegetation changes rapidly to a simple coat of cryptogamic gray and light russet, with a slippery slide for the foot wherever ascent

of a steep place is made, water oozing and trickling almost everywhere underneath. The swales frequently rise high, and cross the hill-summits and ridges without any interruption in their wet swampy character from valley to valley.

Here, on the highest summits, where no moss ever grows and nothing but a fine porphyritic shingle slides and rattles under tread, are bear-roads leading from nest to nest, or lairs, which they have scooped out on the hill-sides and where the she-bears undoubtedly bring forth their young, but it is not plain where these bears, which are all around us by hundreds, spend their winters. I am inclined to believe that they do not stay on the island; but as soon as the floes come down from the north, driving off the seal and walrus, they leave the island and take to this ice, keeping by the water's edge, where their prey will be found, and returning as soon as the season opens. Now as we see them they are all eating grass and roots, digging or browsing, or else heavily sleeping on the hill-sides. Their manner of browsing is very similar to the action of a hog engaged in grazing.

The action of ice in rounding down and grinding hills, carrying the soil and *débris* off into depressions and valleys, is most beautifully exhibited here. The hills at the northern foot of Sugarloaf Cone are bare and literally polished by ice-sheets and slides of melting snow; the rocks and soil from the summits and slopes are carried down and dumped, as it were, in numberless little heaps at the base. Nowhere can the work of ice be seen to better advantage than here, especially so with regard to the chiseling power of frost on the faces of the porphyry cliffs. The flora here is more extensive than on the Seal Islands, 200 miles to the southward, but the species of grass are not near so varied; indeed, there is very little grass-land here. Wherever there is soil it seems to be converted by the abundant moisture into a swale or swamp, over which we traveled as on a quaking water-bed; but on the rounded hill-tops and ridge-summits the smooth shingle makes good walking. The high land everywhere here is paved with this fine shingle, that has been created by the disintegrating power of frost, which evidently has an annual iron grip on the island.

The west end of the island differs materially from the east; the fantastic weathering of the rocks at Cathedral Point, Hall's Island, strikes the eye of the most casual observer as the ship enters the straits going south. This eastern wall of the point

looms up from the water like a row of vast cedar-trunks; the scaling off of the basaltic porphyry and growth of yellowish-green and red mossy lichens made the effect most real, while a dense bank of fog lying just overhead seemed to shut out from our vision the foliage and branches that belonged above. The north cape of Hall's Island changes like a chameleon when approached, presenting with every mile's distance a new and characteristic feature.

At our anchorage in the straits (20 fathoms) we caught a good supply of cod and halibut of fair quality. Great flocks of murre (L. *arra*) came off from the cliffs, where they were breeding, and settled in the water around the ship, as we had anchored on a feeding-ground. Many walrus appeared around the "Reliance," amusing us greatly by the stupid alertness displayed when they rose head and shoulders out of the water and discovered us; a short look and a snort, then, stern foremost, they dropped into the sea out of sight, as though a trap-door had been suddenly sprung beneath them.

The grass on Hall's Island, like Saint Matthew's, is confined mostly to the swale, which runs from the valleys up to the very highest ridges; patches of deep, rich green contrasting quite pleasantly with the dull russet and ocher which covers everything else.

Our visit at the west end of this island of Saint Matthew's was most interesting; the rich, elegant coloring of the rocks and fantastic arrangement of the basalt and porphyry at Statue Point caused an old sailor in our boat to cry out, "That reminds me of Constantinople, a regular Turk's house!" and it certainly did resemble Ottoman architecture.

We found the ruins of the huts built by a party of five Russians and seven Aleuts who passed the winter of 1810-11 on the island, but were stricken down with scurvy, so that all the Russians died save one; the rest recovered and left the following year.

The result of a careful examination of this island shows conclusively that the character of the gravel spits and necks is such as not to be fit for the reception of breeding-seals, as it would be speedily converted by a rookery into a sheet of mud and slime, and there is no other landing afforded save at the base of cliffs rising abruptly from the sea. Seals also, if landing here, would, independent of bear warfare, find a climatic disadvantage, for snow and ice do not leave the landings until late.

in June; this was evident, although we had an exceptionally mild winter, for on August 12, patches of ice and snow were on the beaches, and a considerable quantity on the hill-slopes, without any regard to the sun's position.

Vegetation on the island is varied and abundant where it is able to grow, but the greater part of the country is either a fine porphyry shingle or cold wet swale, so that grasses do not thrive as they do on the Seal Islands; the small annuals and perennials, however, are scattered in great variety, and where the sand has been cast up at the barrabkie beach, west end, it has mixed in with the drift-soil, and warmed it so that the wild wheat (*Elymus*) was growing thick, with ears which gave promise of ripening. Mosses and lichens are especially abundant, the "*tripe de roche*" covering the high rounded summits with its dark-brown tinge. The only berries, *Empetrum nigrum* and *Rubus chamaemorus*, were very common. The high summit slopes of Glacial Head, 1,670 feet, were fairly spangled with beautiful flowers, blue, red, white, and yellow. Three varieties of the creeping willow (*Salix*) grow here in great profusion, large masses of the leaves being collected in hollows, upon which bears have made very comfortable beds; several of the higher hills, contrary to the general rule, are well covered with grass and flowering plants, such as the south slope of Upright Ridge, 1,560 feet, all of Camp Hill, north slope of Pyramid Ridge, &c.

Nowhere on the island can a well-defined crater-summit or crater be found, unless the smoking cleft in the ridge of Pinnacled Rock will answer to that description; but this island is inaccessible, rising sheer and abrupt from the sea to a height of at least 1,200 feet. Its greatest width is not over 500 feet, and it appears to be made of reddish lava. Its sharply-serrated ridge looms up from the southeast like a great brick cathedral in the hazy glow of the morning sun; upon its steep sides myriads of water-fowl breed, principally murre, (*L. arra*.) From the summit of Sugarloaf Cone, 1,520 feet, we can look upon its greatest latitude, and view what appears to be a blackened crater or smoky fissure between the two walls; one or two small rocks convoy it, but the water is bold all around, as well as at Saint Matthew's, which can be approached with great safety from all sides; there is, however, no harbor, but the roadsteads are good.

Polar bears breed here, and live chiefly during the summer

upon roots, grasses, &c., eggs, birds, and an occasional walrus or hair-seal. On Hall's Island a small walrus was discovered where the bears had eaten out the entire animal, leaving the skin intact, tough and thick, untouched from the head down to the posteriors, where it was broken in to get at the flesh; it lay just like a bag, bones and all taken out, even to the head, and polished.

No less than sixteen of these big beasts were seen at once (ten upon the beach together) as the ship's boat approached the water-fall on Hall's Island. Of course, it is impossible to say how many "medvoidie" there are on Saint Matthew's, but it is safe to assert that there cannot be less than a hundred and fifty to two hundred; but they must go off on the ice during winter and early spring.

I do not think a full-grown polar bear, powerful as it is, can successfully capture a mature walrus; the thick skull and hide, immensely tough, of the latter would resist any sudden attack from the former, and, the alarm once given to the walrus, the bear could not prevent the clumsy but strong animal from floundering into the water and safety. The bears, however, can and do swim in between a young walrus and the water and secure it.

We shot some fifteen or twenty bears, all that we could use or care for, relishing the meat very much, it being fully as good and tender as the generality of beef. The bears were easily killed, never showing fight in any instance. They were in most excellent condition, fat and sleek. If caught napping or asleep, they were easily approached, as the hunter could get within a few yards before alarming them; but if they got wind of us, they would turn and shamle off with considerable speed, taking to the hills at once.

When surprised, the bear would arise and face us for a few moments, and sniff and snort, making no other sound; but in its death-cries after shooting it was silent.

I searched everywhere for its bones, skulls, &c., which should be found, it seemed to me, bleaching on the hill-sides and in the valleys, but, with the exception of one very old, battered head, and a small one, nothing was seen on the island of this character. At this season (August 9) the she-bears and their cubs were by themselves, (they usually have two cubs,) and the young he-bears going about in squads of twos, threes, and fours, the old males sleeping and feeding apart.

They sleep soundly, but fitfully, rolling their heavy arms and legs about; for naps they prefer little grassy depressions on the hill-sides and along the numerous small water-courses; and the paths they made were broad and well-beaten all over the island.

These bears, when full grown, are exceedingly muscular and very strong. One shot by Lieutenant Maynard measured eight feet from tip of nose to tail, and could not have weighed less than a thousand or twelve hundred pounds; it had a girth of 24 inches around the muscles of the fore-arm, when the skin was removed, just back of the carpal joint, corresponding to our wrist; it was fat, and had scars upon its head, which were evidently received in fighting with its kind. No worms were found in the intestines or stomach; the liver was speckled with light grayish-green dots and patches.

NOTE.—Lieutenant Maynard and myself surveyed this island, and made a careful chart of it; Captain Baker gave us soundings, which accompany the map. The only existing chart is a Russian one, and very inaccurate.—  
H. W. E.

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#### SAINT LAWRENCE ISLAND.

This is the largest island in Bering Sea, and lies directly south from Bering's Straits about 180 miles; it is about 80 to 85 miles in length, with an average width of 15 to 20. The sea has built on to it most extensively, in the same manner as on the island of Saint Paul, but it is quite dissimilar in form and climate.

We made our first landing on this island early in the morning of August 18, near Kagallegak, or opposite Poonook Islets, and a baidar with a number of the natives, Mahlemute Eskimo, came off to us as soon as we dropped our anchor.

We found the island, at this landing, to be made up of coarse feldspathic red granite flats and hills, with extensive lagoons and lakes. The skeleton of the island seems to be of these low granitic hill-ranges, and between them stretch long, low, even reaches of sand-beach for miles and miles. At Kagallegak the eye sweeps over extensive, level plains to the northward, upon which the green *Eriophorum angustifolium* principally grows, the ground, or "tundra," being wet and boggy; while, on the sand-beach reaches, the "wild wheat" (*Elymus mollis*) grows abundantly, short and stunted.

These great level, low areas, so peculiar to this island, are made up of fine granitic drift, lined at the sea-margin with sand; the hills and hill-ranges are rich in color, with deep blue-black patches caused by protrusions of trap; but no shrubbery whatever grows on those at the east end and north end of the island, save the creeping salix, dwarfed and stunted—cryptogamic plants chiefly. The main body of the range is composed of reddish, coarse and fine grained feldspathic granite, with abundant trap protrusions, which weather out and fall down upon the flanks of the ridges in dark patches and streaks, contrasting, at a distance of eight or ten miles, very sharply with the main ground of pinkish rock, moss-grown, and colored here and there with the greenish-russet tinge peculiar to such vegetation; this dark marking of the trap, at a little distance, appears like low-growing shrubbery. Snow and ice lay in the gullies and on the hill-sides.

The low plains have the russet yellowish green peculiar to the tundra of the north; the sand is a bright light brown. Small streams flow down from the hills and empty into the sea and lakes, in which we found a few *parr* or young salmon; the lakes and lagoons are fairly stocked with a white-fish—nothing else of this kind.

The entire expanse of the lowlands over which we traveled was like a great sponge filled and overrunning with water, the chief vegetation upon it being the beautiful tufted or plumed grass, (*Eriophorum*,) bearing exquisite tassels of white, silken floss; this grass, in conjunction with several cryptogams, a few scattered *Rubus chamæmoris* and *Empetrum*, make up the rich russet-green, flecked with gray-green spots, which mark these great marshy tracts in the Alaskan country. There are many places where this vegetation, during ages past, has decayed and formed bog-holes or pools, into which the pedestrian will mire down to his waist at a single step.

A small *succinea*, or land-snail, was very abundant on these flats, near our landing at Northeast Point, and all along the shore-line we saw an abundance of drift-wood, logs, and pieces, most of it pine or spruce, a few poplar sticks, and a number of unrecognizable twisted knots.

Very little *algæ*, or sea-weed, or any marine life whatever, was evident from the surf-castings; only a few mussels and small conch-shells, (*Fusus*.) The beach is made up, in some places

for long distances, of granite pebbles and bowlders, scattered with some trap.

At Northeast Point the natives have quite a wood-cutting camp, hewing and carving, and the chips are scattered all along the beach-levels for miles; there are places here where the ice, in some unusual season, has carried large logs and pieces of drift-wood back full half a mile from the sea; and there they lie to-day deeply imbedded in the swale, settling and decaying. The ice-jams which have taken place to effect this must have been very severe.

The southwest point of Saint Lawrence is largely made up of trap and porphyry, slate, &c.; the water very bold and deep.

The natives on the island cannot be much over three or four hundred in number, and are living in five settlements, about equidistant, around the coast. They are well formed and hearty, genial and good-natured. They are of Mongolian cast and build, strongly resembling Chinamen, only that nearly all the men shave the occipital portion of the head instead of the frontal, as practiced by the Celestials; the women, however, do not shave their heads, and do their hair up in two braids hanging down behind, tied up with beads, &c.

They met us in an unaffected, free manner, showing no fear or hesitation, and, coming upon deck, commenced a vociferous cry for tobacco, and that alone; yet they were civil and curious; three or four women usually came in each baidar with them, paddling like the men; the boats, about 14 feet long with 4 feet of beam, consisted of a frame, very neatly lashed together, of pine, with whalebone fastenings, over which walrus-hide was stretched; they propelled it with paddles and oars, which were also well made.

They live in summer-houses made of walrus-hides, weighted down by logs and stones so as not to be blown away; and close by are the winter-houses, which are under ground, with a tunnel entrance.

The food of these people is whales' blubber, cut in large chunks, of the strongest, rancid odor; mullets from the fresh-water lakes, and caught in nets of walrus-thongs; murre, small waders, walrus and hair-seal meat, varied by geese and ducks. They had no iron cooking-utensils; all wood, and made by themselves, using hot stones for boiling water. Seal and whale oil they had *cached* both above and under ground; they preserve all fish and bird offal and devour it raw, saving the skins of the



latter, which they make up into "parkies" or sacks for clothing; this is, however, a poor garment when made of bird-skins; it is always giving way at the seams, feathers flying, &c.; the skin is usually turned outside and the feathers worn next to the body. Furs are nearly all worn in this way; and the garments worn were principally made of reindeer-skins, procured from the Asiatics in exchange for wood and ivory and tanned hair-seal.

They were poor, and had nothing for trade but clothing made from the intestines of the walrus, walrus-teeth, and some whalebone; but they had an ample supply of food, such as it was, and their desire that we should taste of it was almost equal to our determination not to do so.

They were exceedingly anxious to trade, and I noticed that the women seemed to have equal rank with the men, doing more than half the talking, and barter solicitation; they seemed to be warmly attached to one another. The females all had their faces curiously tattooed in pale-blue lines on the cheeks and chin, and the arms.

They had a few dogs, very large, with long, shaggy hair, pointed ears, and short, bear-like tails; they were of a mild and inoffensive disposition, and were highly valued by their owners.

They took us to a place where they had six polar-bear skulls placed on the sand, side by side, with a post at the head, which they gave us to understand we could not touch; for I wanted to carry off one of the bear-skulls, which was 17 inches long and measured 10 across the zygomatic arch; it was undoubtedly a grave where some one of their number had perished by the agency indicated by the skulls. Bears, however, rarely visit this island, and foxes are the only land-animals.

The natives were supplied with coarse, smooth-bore muskets, which, I thought, they seldom used. All the birds, such as murrens and geese or ducks, are caught in large nets stretched over the brows of cliffs, or across the lagoons. These nets are very neatly made of walrus-hide.

No animals were seen by us in the water about the island save an occasional hair-seal thrusting its head out from the sea. A few cod-fish were caught, and when the natives came aboard, on the 18th, the cods' heads and intestines lying in the ship's scuppers, where the cook had been cleaning the

fish, were eagerly picked up and carried off by the Eskimo in great glee, as if regarded as a prize.

Bird-life was not so extensive as at Saint Matthew's, the murren (*Uria lomvia*) predominating on the sea-front, while in the lagoons were several large flocks of the emperor-goose (*C. canagica*.) *Tringa crassirostris*, so common on the Seal Islands and on Saint Matthew's, was not seen here. A stone-chat (*S. œnanthe*) was observed, as also *Budytes flava*. The small Asiatic tern, in large numbers, hovered over the lagoons. The turnstones here (*S. interpres*) have a much blacker, duller tone than the variety on the Seal Islands.

Our observations here would make Saint Lawrence of the same formation as the mainland on either side of the straits, and just as old, but the islands of Saint Matthew's and the Prybilov group, as much more recent, and belonging to a different epoch. Saint Lawrence is ice-bound and snow-covered too large a portion of the year ever to become a fit place for the fur-seal to breed; and it may be safely said that no land of ours in the north is adapted to the wants of that animal except that of Saint Paul and Saint George.

## STATISTICS AS TO THE NATIVES.

List of natives living on the Aleutian Islands in 1833-'34, taken from Bishop Veniaminov's "Zapieska, etc."

Island.	Name of settlement.	Number of natives.			No. of houses.	No. of boats.	Distance from the head settlement, versts.
		Males.	Females.	Total.			
Ounalashka .....	Gavanski .....	90	106	196	27	15	.....
	φ Nateekenski .....	6	9	15	2	2	12
	φ Paystravski .....	16	21	37	5	4	20
	φ Vaysaylovski .....	7	8	15	3	3	40
	Makooshenski .....	15	20	35	6	5	90
	Koshegenski .....	18	23	41	8	9	140
	Chernovski .....	20	24	44	4	10	170
	φ Kahlechtsenski .....	6	8	14	2	2	20
	φ Bobrovski .....	21	20	41	4	6	12-40
	Total 9 settlements .....	214	256	470	65	58	.....
Oomnak .....	Rychesnoi .....	38	45	83	13	12	300
	φ Tooleekski .....	11	15	26	3	6	200
	Total 2 settlements .....	49	60	109	16	18	.....
Ahkoon .....	Artaynovski .....	16	16	32	7	9	120
	φ Raychevski .....	19	18	37	5	8	160
	φ Sayraidneuski .....	7	9	16	2	4	150
	Total 3 settlements .....	37	43	80	14	21	.....
Borka .....	Saydankooski .....	17	27	44	6	7	40
	φ Oonalgenski .....	10	13	23	3	4	25
	Avatanok .....	24	25	49	5	9	150
	φ Akootanski .....	6	7	13	2	1	90
	Teegalda .....	38	59	91	2	4	375
	Onemak .....	38	53	91	2	4	375
Total 6 settlements .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	
Peninsula Alaska ..	φ Morzavski .....	16	29	45	7	6	460
	Bellkovski .....	49	53	102	10	16	525
	φ Pavlooski .....	28	31	59	8	9	585
	Total 3 settlements .....	93	113	206	25	31	.....
Oonga .....	Oongenski .....	52	64	116	13	15	650
Prybilov Islands ...	Saint Paul and Saint George ..	88	94	182	.....	.....	.....
	Miscellaneous .....	10	18	38	.....	.....	.....
	Total 3 settlements .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Making a grand total of 26 settlements .....		678	806	1,484	157	182	.....

NOTE.—The mark φ is prefixed to all stations not existing at the present writing, September, 1874.

List of people living on the Aleutian Islands, 1874, taken from Father Innocent Shiesnekov's record, September 2, 1874.

Place.	Creoles.		Aleuts.		Total.
	Men.	Women.	Men.	Women.	
Unalashka.....					4
Do.....	71	73	130	105	*23
Makooshin.....	11	13	9	16	49
Kosheega.....			31	43	74
Chernovskie.....		3	32	35	70
Oomnak.....	4	3	52	60	119
Borka.....			52	58	110
Akootan.....		1	51	42	94
Avatanok.....			19	22	41
Teegalda.....			21	23	44
Protahavakoi.....	14	12	62	52	140
Bellkovskie.....	17	33	92	106	248
Vozneeshenskoi.....	4	5	5	8	22
Unga.....	24	33	51	54	162
Kovorinskoi.....	16	9			25
Atka, 1872:					
Neekoliefskoi.....			48	48	96
Nazan.....	22	31	39	39	131
Attou.....	15	10	71	59	†155

\* Church-workers, &c.

† Thirty-five souls independent of this number went to Copper Island in 1872; twenty-three came to Unalashka also.

“In 1848 there were some 1,400 souls on the Aleutian Islands west of the Peninsula; the small-pox then broke out, and over 500 died that season, leaving some 900, about which number still remain. In those days these people were very poor compared with their present condition; they had but little money, very little tea, bread, and sugar, and very few clothes.”—*Father Shiesnekov, Unalashka, September 2, 1874.\**

The following table shows the population of Russian America in 1834, as given by Bishop Veniaminov: †

\* This priest, who is a very intelligent and unassuming man, gave Lieutenant Maynard and myself a long and exceedingly interesting account of the manner in which the Aleuts were living under Russian rule, in order that we might have a basis for comparison of the present, as we saw it, with that of the past. The testimony of this gentleman I regard as of the greatest value, for he knows more of the subject than any other man living who can be found, as his whole life has been passed in this country, and his character as a prelate and a gentleman is highly respected by all who know him.

† Veniaminov appears to have been the only Russian who, during the whole occupation of Alaska by that people, has given to the world anything like a history of the country or a sketch of its inhabitants, that has ability or the merit of truth. He is at present living, and ranks second to the Emperor in the Russian Empire, being the primate of the national church. He must have been a man of fine personal bearing, judging from the description given of him by Sir George Simpson, who met him at Sitka in 1842: “His appearance, to which I have already alluded, impresses a stranger with something of awe, while, on further intercourse, the gentleness which characterizes his every word and deed insensibly molds reverence into love; and

<i>Koloshians</i> .....	5, 000
<i>Copper River</i> .....	300
<i>Choogachie</i> .....	471
<i>Peninsula</i> .....	1, 600
<i>Kodiaks</i> .....	1, 508
<i>Koskoquim</i> .....	7, 000
<i>Yukon River</i> .....	not known
<i>Russians</i> .....	706
<i>Oogahlensie</i> , (Mount Saint Elias, near) .....	150
<i>Kolchans</i> , (interior) .....	not known
<i>Kenai</i> .....	1, 628
<i>Aglahmutes</i> .....	402
<i>Ounalashka Aleuts</i> .....	1, 497
<i>Atka Aleuts</i> .....	750
<i>Mahlemutes</i> , &c. ....	not known
<i>Creoles</i> .....	1, 295
<b>Total actually known</b> .....	<b>22, 800</b>
<b>Estimate of the rest</b> .....	<b>17, 000</b>

Making a total, for the Territory, of some..... 40, 000

The following is a list of the different tribes of Indians living between Prince of Wales Island and Yakhutat, or Bering's Bay, Alaska, in 1837-'38, (from Veniaminov, part III):

"The numbers of these people (Indians) living in Russian America between Prince of Wales and Bering's Bay in 1835 was 10,000, but now (1838) not much over 6,000. The settlements, and people in them, number as follows:

	Souls.
Yahkutatskie, (Bering's Bay) .....	150
Ahkvaystkie, (Lituya Bay) .....	200
Laydanoprodevskie .....	250
Chelkatskie (Chilcats) .....	200
Ahkootskie .....	100
Seethenskie, (Sitka) .....	750
Kootsnovskie, (Hootsino) .....	300
Kaykovskie, (Cakes) .....	200
Koonjeskie .....	150
Gaynoovskie .....	300

at the same time his talents and attainments are such as to be worthy of his exalted station. With all this, the bishop is sufficiently a man of the world to disdain anything like cant. His conversation, on the contrary, teems with amusement and instruction, and his company is much prized by all who have the honor of his acquaintance."

	Souls.
Stohenskie, (Stickeen) .....	1,500
Tangasskie, (Tongass) .....	150
Kaheganskie, (Prince of Wales Island) .....	1,200
Chasenskies .....	150
Soanahnskies .....	100
Total .....	5,850

“A count equal to this may be made on the Nasse, Skeena, &c., a country now under the control of the English, including Queen Charlotte’s Island at 8,000, makes the number of all the Koloshes (Indians) living in this country at this time (1838) 25,000, and not less than 20,000.”

Table showing the entire number of Christians\* in the Territory of Alaska in 1863, (Techmainov, p. 264.)

Name of people.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Russians .....	576	208	784
Creoles .....	853	823	1,676
Aleuts, (Ounalashka, Kodiak, and Atka) .....	2,206	2,185	4,392
Kenai .....	430	507	937
Choogach .....	226	230	456
Ooglamutes .....	73	75	148
Copper River .....	17	1	18
Magmutes .....	18	1	19
Aglemutes .....	19	20	39
Aziagmutes .....	105	101	206
Koskoquims .....	755	640	1,395
Kvichpaks .....	226	153	379
Agloomutes .....	19	20	39
Ingaleeks .....	263	213	476
Kolchans .....	97	93	190
Koloshes .....	221	226	447
Koorilsov .....	63	48	111
Tongass .....	1	1	2
Total .....	6,314	5,714	12,018

\* The term “Christian” here simply indicates the *baptism* of the Indians, with the marked exception of the Aleuts. For instance, the 1,395 Koskoquims who permitted the priests to baptize them, had then no more idea of the principles or practice of Christianity than they have now; they received some trifling reward at the time, of tobacco, cloth, &c., for submitting to the ceremony.

## LETTER FROM MR. DALL.

While in the Territory last season, I had the satisfaction of meeting this gentleman, an employé of the United States Coast Survey, and we had occasion to exchange views in regard to the condition of the people. The opinions of Mr. Dall were, in some instances, so different from mine that I asked him to embody his conclusions in the form of a letter in order that I might publish them, to show the contrast. This he has done, and I take pleasure in making known the views of Mr. Dall, and in appending a criticism based upon my knowledge and judgment. I may say at the outset that, while I concede for the sake of argument that Mr. Dall "has seen more of the country than any other individual," I am not willing to grant the plain inference that he has studied that which he has seen more intelligently or patiently than others, who may have seen less, but still enough to form a correct opinion.\*

OONALASHKA, ALASKA TERRITORY,  
U. S. COAST SURVEY SCHOONER YUKON,

*August 31, 1874.*

GENTLEMEN: At the instance of Mr. Elliott, I have addressed to you the present letter, intended to embody the conclusions to which I have been led during a long residence in this Territory, bearing on the subject of your inquiry.

For nearly ten years I have been constantly engaged either in the study of the subject or in active investigation in this region. Three winters and more than seven years of this period I have been actually resident in the Territory, and the duties assigned to me have carried me to nearly every point in it which is of any importance. I have consequently seen more of the country than any other individual, and never having been connected in any way with any trading company, it may be

\* In making my comments upon this letter, I do not wish to appear in the light of 'laying down the law' in every case, for it is a question well open to argument as to the effect of any attempt to educate these people. A long interview with General Eaton, Commissioner of Education, upon this subject pleased me very much, for I found that he had a quite different idea from the plan now followed of schools on our Indian reservations; indeed, it was almost identical with the views of the Russian bishop in San Francisco, who has charge of the Greek Catholic church in this Territory. The system of General Eaton will undoubtedly be found in his report for this year.

reasonably assumed that I have been in the position of an impartial observer, and that my views on the subject are not without a certain weight.

I will endeavor to state as succinctly as practicable the present condition of the Aleutian people and its relation to their past condition, the position which they hold in regard to the traders, and what action seems to me desirable on the part of the Government to protect its honor and their rights from invasion.

Briefly, the past may be summed up in the statement that the Aleuts were found by the early Russian explorers a race possessed of much intelligence, not without spirit, yet far less warlike and aggressive than the Eskimo of Kodiak and elsewhere, (who are usually confounded with the Aleuts,) and an entirely different people in character and disposition from the Indians of the coast or the interior. They were reduced by the most barbarous and inhuman treatment to less than 10 per cent. of their original numbers, and were regarded as the slaves of the traders.

The first reaction against this system took place in 1794, and then and afterward in 1799, 1805, and especially 1818, the Russian government, recognizing its duty, interposed between the Aleuts and the trading companies regulations intended to curb the exactions of the latter and improve the condition of the former.

In 1824, Father Innocentius Veniaminoff, a noble, and devoted missionary, now primate of the Greek Church, began his labors among the Aleuts, and to him is due directly most of their improvement, mental and moral, since the time mentioned. In 1861 and 1862 the report of Imperial Commissioner Golovin was prepared and submitted, and the result showing that the regulations of the government had been more or less unsuccessful in checking the rapacity of the traders, their charter was not renewed.(1)

In the Russian plan, the Aleuts were in a condition of serfdom to the company which controlled the colonies. Yet the company had its own obligations to fulfill toward them, and when these were enforced, no Russian, except the commander of a trading-post, could strike a native; the Aleuts were insured a subsistence; the making of quass, a fermented liquor, of which the basis is meal and sugar or molasses, was forbidden under heavy penalties, and intoxicating spirits were only



furnished to the natives when actually engaged in heavy manual labor for the company, and then in very limited quantities. Schools were obliged to be maintained by the company, in which the priests were usually the teachers, and though these were of rather a poor character, yet the children who manifested more than usual ability were able to enter a higher seminary at Sitka, and to obtain in this manner a tolerable education, for which in return they were bound to the company's service at stated wages for a term of years. A number of individuals thus educated(2) participated with credit to themselves in the exploration of the Territory, and commanded vessels belonging to the company, or otherwise held positions of responsibility. The entire race became christianized, their religion being of a low type it is true, but unmistakably earnest and devoted.

So much for the past. Under this system of tutelage the Aleuts lost almost entirely the feeling of independence or the capacity for independent action and self-guidance.

In describing their present condition, I must premise that no one who has studied them at all has ever placed them in a light which would class them with our wild and unruly Indian tribes, and that the care and endeavors wasted on some of these should not be taken as factors in forming a judgment of what is desirable or practicable to be done for the Aleuts. The latter are a mild, intelligent, and docile people, always ready to submit to authority, even if groundless or self-constituted.

I have visited personally all the principal settlements in the Pribiloff and Aleutian Islands, and with Ounalashka am especially familiar, having wintered here and been brought into tolerably close relations with the people during the last three years.

The settlements can be assigned to four principal groups, excluding that of Attu, which I am informed is about to be abandoned. These are Atka, Ounalashka, Belkoffsky, and the Shumagin Islands. There are a number of very small outlying settlements, but all of them are closely contiguous to one or the other of these principal places.

The people of Atka are more enterprising and intelligent in hunting, and have been less demoralized by contact with traders; the converse is true of Belkoffsky and the Shumagins; otherwise the uniformity of character and condition throughout the Aleutian chain is remarkable. The people of the Pribi-

loff group have been under exceptional conditions for several years. They have had schools, (after a fashion,) steady and remunerative employment; a resident physician, and are able to purchase provisions and other necessaries at a reasonable price; hence they cannot be compared with the others who have had none of these advantages. That the former show the good effects of their situation, it is hardly necessary to state.

The relations between these people and the traders, or, more strictly, with the one trading company which has at present an overwhelming predominance throughout the Aleutian region, are peculiar, and require a word of explanation.

The Aleuts, except on the Pribiloff Islands, gain a livelihood by hunting the sea-otter and by fishing. None of the islands afford any subsistence except that drawn from the sea.

To hunt or fish, in fact to live, the Aleut is totally dependent on his skin-canoe. To make this canoe he must have hair-seal or sea-lion skins. From various causes the sea-lions are not now to be found, as formerly, within reach of the large settlements, except on the Pribiloff Islands. This made no difference under the Russian rule, as the sea-lion skins were taken under the company's direction at the Pribiloff Islands, and were then distributed to the various points where they were needed, and were given to the Aleuts gratis. Now, on the contrary, they are obliged to buy them, and to buy them of the company, who hold the lease of the Pribiloff Islands, except in very rare cases. As the company's agents, in the natural course of business, will sell these materials only to those natives who are known to bring all their furs to the company's store for sale, it follows that the lease of the fur-seal islands carries with it a practical monopoly of all the fur-trade of the Aleutian nation, that is to say, the sea-otter as well as the seal trade.(3)

Though questions may arise in the minds of those less familiar with the subject than myself as to the necessity of this monopoly, it is sufficient to say that it is a fact, and, joined with the very great profits of the seal-trade, gives such a weight to a company possessing these advantages as to enable them to kill out all opposition traders, or to reduce their business and influence to a nullity. In point of fact, then, except in Belkoffsky and the Shumagins, where sea-lion are yet obtainable by the natives without the intervention of the company, the latter is in the possession of absolute and unchecked power over the whole Aleut nation.

Before proceeding to discuss how this power has been exercised, it is necessary to call attention to certain characteristics of the natives which your own observation will doubtless confirm. Like all races of a low degree of civilization, the attraction which intoxicating liquors, fermented or distilled, exercises over them is not equaled by any other influence to which they are subjected. The manufacture of quass, which they derived from the Russians, although prohibited by the regulations of the Russian company, has become a universal practice, and, joined to the absence of any elevating influences, such as schools, or the supervision of agents deriving their authority from the Government, is rapidly and surely degrading the character and increasing the mortality of the Aleuts. Wherever opposition traders meet, they both connive at this infamy, and in such places the deterioration of the people is more marked and rapid. There are no grounds for stating, nor is it my opinion, that the present company has abused its position more than any other would do in the same case; this, however, is not the question at issue, but whether it is consistent with the honor of the Government and with its duty toward a people who occupy the position of wards of the United States to leave them in a condition where the grossest tyranny is possible, and where gradual degradation and relapse into barbarism is certain. Let us examine for a moment the condition of the Territory. There is absolutely no law, no means of protection, no redress for injury for any citizen of the United States even, to say nothing of natives.(4) A number of murders among the whites have occurred during the past few years. Only one man was ever apprehended, and I am informed that he was discharged by the courts of Washington Territory for want of jurisdiction. That acts of injustice and oppression have occurred between the traders and the company I have abundant evidence, though such things are not likely to occur in the presence of a United States officer. Suppose some act of gross injustice should occur, in what way would the unfortunate Aleut make his troubles known, if his long experience under the Russians, and disappointed hopes under the various visits of United States officials, had not taught him that the best way was to bear it in silence?

If he desired to communicate with civilization, the only mails are by the company's vessels, and I have positive evidence that they do not always respect even the sanctity of offi-

cial communications intrusted to their agent for transmission.(5)

Does he desire to communicate with the cutter during her annual visit, (if he is fortunate enough to live in Ounalashka when she does come,) he knows that a year must elapse before any result can be attained, and meanwhile he will be subjected to ill-treatment from the agent of whom he has complained, intensified by the knowledge that complaint has been made.(6)

In old times each village had a *tyone* or chief elected by suffrage, whose duty it was to be present at all trade, and arbitrate between the traders and the natives, and prevent any cheating of the latter by the former. Now, the *tyone* is the creature of the company, paid by them; if there are opposition traders there are two *tyones*, and it is evident how impartial must be their arbitration, and what is the character of the protection they afford.

The Russians left these people with their self-reliance enfeebled, but their intelligence and morals elevated to some extent above their original condition. We have done nothing to sustain them in this position, nor to cultivate their self-reliance.

I think I may say that inquiries on your part in relation to specific acts of oppression would be quite fruitless. Those natives who may have suffered have long since learned by experience that complaints result in nothing unless in an aggravation of the original difficulty, and the *tyone* paid by the company can always bring forward evidence such as his employers may desire. I must again repeat, that it is not a question of punishing actual offenses, but of providing against the perpetration of them; and to await outrages so gross as to force their way to our ears, before extending protection, is to wait till the stable is empty before locking the door.

I do not blame the traders for doing little or nothing to elevate or improve the natives.(7) It is not their business; and, even if they were willing to work against their own pecuniary interest in this way, it still should not be left to them.

The description of men who gain their livelihood as fur-traders are, with rare exceptions, unfit to be trusted with absolute power over unresisting natives, notwithstanding the possible high character of the distant heads of the company who employ them.

What then should be done to regulate the action of the two parties?

It is with some hesitation that I offer my opinion on so grave a question. One thing I feel certain of: the manufacture of quass should be put down, and no intoxicating liquor should be allowed to enter the country on any pretext whatever.

I think it the duty of the Government to provide schools for the younger people, who are growing up in ignorance, while many of their parents can read and write in the Russian language. These schools should teach the rudiments of English education, and should be free from any religious bias, as otherwise they would fail. Attendance should be made compulsory.

But it may be said that this would require many officials and great expense to get at the separated communities. I think I can show that this need not necessarily be the case. Suppose that the laws governing the Indian reservations were extended over the Aleutian region. A beginning could be made at the four principal places I have named, or at one or more of them; and extended, or the plan modified, as experience would show desirable. The few outlying smaller settlements could be reached from these, if not at once, at least eventually. Let the settlement be declared a reservation, and the resident official invested with the powers of an Indian agent, and supplemented by a schoolmaster. Then the first would be in a position to arbitrate between the natives and traders in disputed cases, and to enforce justice on both sides.(8)

I have not arrived at that point where I should believe that the Government habitually employs dishonest agents, though long experience in Alaska might shake any man's optimism.

At all events, it seems to me to be the duty of the Government to act in the matter, if only to save its own honor. I think there is a duty involved aside from economical considerations. The citizens, if not the wards of the United States, are entitled to the protection of the law, and it should be extended to them. Whether the method which I have suggested is the best or not is a question to be decided by others, but I cannot see how there can be two opinions about the duty of extending the protection of the laws and an opportunity for education to these and other civilized inhabitants of this Territory.

That these are now wanting no honest or sane man can deny.

It would be very desirable, also, that the headquarters of authority in the Territory be transferred to Ounalashka. It is

the most important and central point; but even Kodiak would be better than Sitka, which has now no importance and hardly any business.(9)

Apologizing for having trespassed on your attention with so lengthy a communication, I will now close this letter with one remark, which has no special connection with the foregoing, but which I believe of some importance. This is, that it would be very desirable that the officers of the United States employed on the Pribiloff Islands should be prohibited from receiving pay from, or rendering services for pay to, the company whom practically they are placed there to watch. That this has occurred in several instances I am aware, and probably in some cases without any improper intent on either side; but it is evident at once that it opens a wide door for scandal, if not for fraud.(10)

I remain, with great respect, yours, very truly,

WM. H. DALL,

*Acting Assistant United States Coast-Survey,*

*In charge Hydrographic Reconnaissance of Alaska.*

Messrs. H. W. ELLIOTT and

WASHBURN MAYNARD, U. S. N.,

*United States Commissioners.*

#### COMMENTS UPON THE FOREGOING LETTER.

(1) The fact the Russian American Company, at the close of its third term of twenty years, in 1862, was over two millions of silver rubles in debt may have had a great deal to do with the failure in getting a renewal of its charter. A losing business is not often persisted in a great while by either corporations or individuals. The extravagance and shiftlessness in the management of affairs in Alaska by the officers of the Russian American Company, during the last twenty or thirty years of its existence, may alone have tended to the result.

(2) Here Mr. Dall, not directly perhaps, but plainly, gives us to understand that a number of natives, Aleuts, were educated in Russian schools, and "participated with great credit to themselves in the exploration of the Territory, and commanded vessels belonging to the company, or otherwise held positions of responsibility." This is a mistake; for these people, serving with such credit, educated by the company in question, *were not Aleuts; but creoles, or half-breeds, and octoroons.* There is no record of any service rendered the Russian company by the *Aleuts*, other

than that of good, honest manual labor, with the exception of a certain Aleut named Oostigov, who at Sitka "was considered a fair navigator." These people made good ordinary carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, locksmiths, and sailors—good enough for the Russian service—but such a grade of labor will not satisfy our traders or captains; and there is, therefore, no demand for such upon these people, and there never will be, as long as the country is under American control. We have in San Francisco to-day too many idle workmen of all grades better than the Aleuts could be made, and when such labor is wanted in Alaska, these men will be employed there. Removing the Russian Company from the country leaves no future employment whatever for the Aleuts, in the capacity above mentioned, no matter what may be their educational advantages.

(3) That Mr. Dall can advance such an argument in regard to the monopoly of the fur-trade of the Aleutian Islands by the control of the sea-lion skins of the Prybilov Islands is very strange, for the fact is, that any trader to-day who may deem the fur-trade of that section worth the outlay necessary to fit up a small schooner or sloop, and send it out every other season equipped for sea lion hunting among the Aleutian Islands, on the north side of the Peninsula and those islands south of it, can secure skins enough for the entire use of the whole Aleutian population! An annual outlay of only \$2,500 is all that is necessary for an opposition trader at Ounalashka to place himself on the same footing, in this respect, with his present rival there. Whether the fur-trade of that district is worth enough to warrant this small expenditure or not is a matter for the traders themselves to settle, not us, but the fact speaks for itself. Even if there were no sea-lions except on the Prybilov Islands, (which is not true,) the traders who take any interest in this section are perfectly independent of the Alaska Commercial Company, for there are thousands upon thousands of walrus not four hundred miles from Ounalashka, the skins of which can be made, with a little more labor, quite as valuable for covering the bidarkies or canoes of the sea-otter hunters; if anything, they are more durable, and these walrus can be obtained as easily as so many hogs or sheep.

(4) In this paragraph I concur; it is true.

(5) This is a case in which I think, or rather know, that Mr. Dall casts an unworthy reflection upon the Alaska Commercial Company without just ground. The facts are as follows: In

the spring of 1872 the Alaska Commercial Company sent a man from San Francisco, on trial, to serve as assistant agent at Ounalashka; he was found wanting, and in less than six months from the time of his engagement he was dismissed from its service as unfit and incompetent. Mr. Dall had given a letter to the person in question, while that person was acting for the company as assistant trader at Ounalashka, for transmission to the postmaster at San Francisco. This letter contained a small sum of money, (a twenty-dollar greenback, I believe,) and never reached its destination. I am, of course, not prepared to say whether the man robbed the letter or not; but I should acquit the company of collusion in so contemptible a matter, even if this man did do so. Then, again, Mr. Dall writes this letter with the ship of an opposition trader laying over ten days at anchor in the same harbor with us—no other vessels than those of the company to carry the mails!

(6) This is one of the reasons why I ask for a steam revenue-vessel in this Territory: *it is impossible for a sailing-cutter to go about from place to place, as she ought to do.*

(7) In this case I think I have shown, in a foregoing chapter, that, contrary to Mr. Dall's statement, *it is to the direct interest of traders to do all in their power to improve and elevate the natives*, and that the natives are to-day living, at Ounalashka and elsewhere in the Aleutian district, in better condition than they have ever lived before.

The traders, however, differ in their appreciation of this truth; but two very successful traders in the Territory, Capt. E. Hennig and M. Mercier, have given me good reason for making this statement—so emphatic: a trader who does the best by the natives will be the better served by them. Father Shiesnekov makes a deliberate statement which I print in this appendix (page 226) that conflicts with Mr. Dall's decidedly, and as this priest has spent over twenty-five mature years of active intelligent labor among these people, his judgment is worth something, inasmuch as *he* "has seen more of the country than any other individual," and no one can controvert the fact.

(8) This policy of Mr. Dall's, of declaring four or five Indian reservations in the Aleutian district, with an Indian agent and schoolmaster in each, would, in my best judgment, amount to nothing but discord and mischief. What security can the Government have for the disinterestedness and honesty of its Indian agents? Are such agents to tell the traders in the country



how much they shall pay the natives, or to advise the natives how to meet the traders? Interference thus by the Government with the relationship of the traders to the natives will surely be bad; *i. e.*, if the natives are fleeced now, they will, with an Indian agent arbitrating, be doubly fleeced. The poor Aleuts are the gainers by having only one power, the traders, to deal with, as at present, or they could not live as they do. There is no middle ground here. If Alaska is an Indian reservation, then there can be no white people there; if not, then Government cannot interfere with legitimate trade.

With regard to the schoolmasters, were the Government able to select and send the most zealous and excellent of their class, they would find in this Territory a barren field. Let the Greek Catholic Church continue its work; it is the only power that can accomplish any good in the mental future of the Aleut.

(9) I think myself that Ounalashka is the best place, but Kodiak is more central.

(10) I happened to be talking about this matter, in the spring of 1872, with one of the persons, perhaps, of whom Mr. Dall complains. It is, however, a very clear case, and the only one that has occurred since the granting of the lease, and in no way improper; but "as it opens a wide door for scandal, if not for fraud," I was assured by the company that the thing should never again occur. The facts are these: During the sojourn of one of the Government agents, stationed on the islands, this gentleman took a deep interest in the language of the Aleuts, being himself a linguist of fine accomplishment; the agent of the company conceived the idea of getting him to teach the school, on account of his knowledge of the Russian, which the schoolmaster employed did not possess, in the hope that the school would be more attractive to the native children. During the winter, therefore, the Government officer voluntarily taught school, although the attendance was small, for reasons which I have given in the body of my report. The only other instance where anything of this kind had occurred was in the case of this same gentleman, who had with great labor and pains compiled an English and Aleutian vocabulary, which was deemed by the Alaska Commercial Company to be of value for the use of their traders, and they purchased it for some \$100, I believe, soon after the connection of this gentleman with the Seal Islands was dissolved. But long before the date of Mr. Dall's letter the company's agent informed me of this action on their

part, and, at the same time, announced their determination to do so no more, in consequence of its liability to misrepresentation. This Government agent left the Seal Islands in 1872, at his own request, on account of the isolation and distance from his family, and has been in Washington, employed in the Treasury Department, ever since. Most likely, in this matter Mr. Dall refers to transactions that took place on the islands before the granting of the lease, and of which I have no knowledge other than that of hearsay; but as to what has transpired on these islands since the inauguration of the present state of affairs, I am fully cognizant; that which took place previous to this is now of no importance. It was a disorderly medley of civil and military authority, and, as near as I can learn, reflects no special credit upon any of the officers concerned on the part of the Government.

## THE PRIBYLOV ISLANDS.\*

"Under the name of the *Prybilov Islands* are known two small islands lying in Bering Sea, between 56° and 57° north latitude and 168° and 170° west longitude.

"These islands were not known before the year 1786; mate *G. Prybilov*, then in the service of a swan-hunting company, first, in the Russian name, found them, but at the same time he was not the first discoverer, because, as before said, (Part I, chap. 1,) on one of them (southwest side of Saint Paul) signs, such as a pipe, brass knife-handle, and traces of fire were found, indicating that people had been there before, but not long, as places were observed where the grass had been burned and scorched. But if we can believe the Aleuts in what they relate, the islands were known to them long before they were visited by the Russians. They knew and called them '*Ateek*' after having heard about them.

"Eegad-dah-geek, a son of an Oonimak chief by the name of Ah-kak-nee-kak, was taken out to sea in a bidarkie by a storm, the wind blowing strong from the south. He could not get back to the beach, nor could he make any other landing, and was obliged to run before the wind three or four days, when he brought up on Saint Paul's Island, north from the land which he had been compelled to leave. Here he remained until autumn, and became acquainted with the hunting of different animals. Elegant weather one day setting in, he saw the peaks of Oonimak. He then resolved to put to sea, and return to receive the thanks of his people there; and, after three or four days of traveling, he arrived at Oonimak, with many otter tails and snouts.†

"The islands were both at first without vegetation, with exception of Saint Paul's, where there was a small *tal-neek* creeping along on the ground; and on Saint George, if we believe

\* Translated by the writer from Bishop Innocent Veniaminov's work "*Zapieska ob Octrovah Oonahlashkenskaho Otdayla*. St. Petersburg, 1840. (The only Russian treatise upon the subject found. The selections most pertinent to the subject are introduced alone in this translation.) H. W. E.

† Here Veniaminov says that he does feel inclined to believe this story, as the peaks of Oonimak can be seen occasionally from Saint Paul's! I have no hesitation in saying that they were never observed by any mortal eye from the Prybilov Group. The wide expanse of water between these points, and the thick, foggy air of Bering Sea, especially so at the season mentioned in this story above, will always make the mountains of Oonimak invisible to the eye from Saint Paul's Island. A *mirage* is almost an impossibility; it may have been much more probable if the date was a winter one.—H. W. E.

the accounts of the first ones there to see, nothing grew, even grass, except on the places where the carcasses of dead animals rotted. In the course of time both islands were covered with grass, a great part of it being of the sedge kind. On them are two varieties of berries, &c., &c.

"The Aleuts serving the company here sustained the following relations between themselves and it, to wit: Each of them worked without solicitation and at whatever was found, and to which they were directed, or that which they understood. Payment for their toil was not established by the day or by the year, but in general for each thing taken by them or standing or put to their credit by the company; for instance, especially, the skins of animals, the teeth of walrus, barrels of oil, &c. These sums, whatever they might be, were placed by the company to their credit, for all general hunting and working was established or fixed for the whole year fairly. The Aleuts in general received no specific wages, though they were not all alike or equal, there being usually three or four classes.

"In these classes, to the last or least, the sick and old workmen were counted in, although they were only burdens, and therefore they received the smaller shares, about 150 rubles, and the other and better classes received from 220 to 250 rubles a year. Those who were zealous were rewarded by the company with 50 to 100 rubles. The wives of the Aleuts, who worked only at the seal-hunting, received from 25 to 35 rubles.\*

"*Animals on the Prybilov Islands.*—Foxes and mice. Sometimes the ice brings bears and red foxes. The bears were never allowed to live since they could not be made useful; and also the red foxes, as they would only spoil the breed already existing, with regard to color of the fur.

"Fur-seals, sea-lions, hair-seals, and a few walrus are the only animals that may be said to belong to the Prybilov Islands.

"*Birds.*—The *guillemonts*, (or *arries*;) gulls; puffins; crested, horned, and white-breasted auks; snow-finches; geese, (two kinds;) a few kinds of *Tringa*; sea-ducks, black and gray. Most of these birds come here to lay, and with them *jagers*, hawks, owls, and '*chikees*,' (big *Laurus glaucus*,) and the albatross is frequently to be seen around the beaches."

"*Sea-otters* became scarce generally in 1811, and in the next thirty years extinct.

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\* Compare this annual payment made by the Russians with the cash settlement made every year by the Alaska Commercial Company, the present lessee of these islands, as presented in the chapter on the condition of affairs on the seal islands.—H. W. E.

"*The fur-seals* ('sea-cats') astonish us by their great numbers, as they gradually come up on to their breeding-places, notwithstanding harsh and foolish treatment of them, continued almost half a century (until 1824) without mercy.

"In the first years, on Saint Paul's Island, from 50,000 to 60,000 were taken annually, and on Saint George from 40,000 to 50,000 every year. Such horrible killing was neither necessary nor demanded. The skins were frequently taken without any list or count. In 1803, 800,000 seal-skins had accumulated, and it was impossible to make advantageous sale of so many skins; for in this great number so many were spoiled that it became necessary to cut or throw into the sea 700,000 pelts! If G. Rezanov (our minister to Japan) had not given this his attention, and put himself between the animals and this foolish management of them, it appears plainly to me that these creatures would have long ago changed for the worse.

"Of the number of skins taken up to 1817, I have no knowledge to rely upon, but from that time, and up to the present writing, I have true and reliable accounts, which I put in the appendix to this volume. From these lists it will be seen that still in 1820, on both islands, there were killed more than 50,000 seals, viz, on Saint Paul's, 39,700; and on Saint George, 10,250. There were eye-witnesses to the reason for this diminution of the seals, and it is only wonderful besides that they are still existing, as they have been treated almost without mercy so many years. The cows produce only one pup each every year. They have known deadly enemies, and also are still exposed to many foes unknown. From this killing of the seals they steadily grew less, except on one occasion, which was on Saint George's Island, where an opportunity was given suddenly to kill a large number; but the circumstances do not seem to be important. On one occasion a drive was made of 15,000 male and female seals, but the night was dark, and it was not practicable to separate the cows from the males; and they were, therefore, allowed to stand over until daylight should come. The men put in charge of the herding of the drove were careless, and the seals took advantage of this negligence, and made an attempt to escape by throwing themselves from the bluffs over the beach near by into the sea; but, as this bluff was steep, high, rough, and slippery, they fell over and were all injured. Now, for the first time, great numbers of seals were missed, and why, it was not significant or apparent; but on the following year, instead of the appearance and catch of 40,000 or

50,000, less than 30,000 were killed and taken, and then, too, the numbers of seals were known to diminish, and in the same way, only greater, on the other island. For instance, in the first years, on the island of Saint George, the seals were only five or six times less than on Saint Paul, but in 1817 they were only less than one-fourth; but in 1826 they were almost one-sixth again.

"The diminution of seals there (Saint Paul's) and on the other island, from 1817 to 1835, was very gradual and visible every year, but not always equal.

"The killing of seals in 1834, instead of being 80,000 or 60,000, was only 15,751 from both islands, (Saint Paul, 12,700; Saint George's, 3,051)."

In the first thirty years, according to Veniaminov's best understanding, there were taken "more than two and a half millions of seal-skins;" then, in the next twenty-one years, up to 1838, they took 578,924. During this last taking, from 1817 to 1838, the skins were worth on an average "no more than 30 rubles each," (\$6 apiece.)

"A great many sea-otters (*Enhydra marina*) were found on Saint Paul's Island at first, and as many as 50,000 were taken from the island, but years have passed since one has been seen in the vicinity, even, of the islands."

Table I, Part II, Bishop Veniaminov's Zapieska, &c., showing the seal-catch during the period of gradual diminution of life on the islands from 1817 down to 1836, the year of scarcity, and from which date they have as gradually increased up to the present number, their maximum limit in a state of nature, at which the seal-life has stood during the past twenty years; the killing has also been gradually increased up to the present figure, 100,000 annually.

Taken from—	1817.	1818.	1819.	1820.	1821.	1822.	1823.
Saint Paul's Island .....	47,860	45,932	40,300	39,700	35,750	28,150	24,100
Saint George's Island .....	12,328	13,924	11,924	10,520	9,245	8,319	5,773
Total .....	60,188	59,856	52,225	50,220	44,995	36,469	29,873
Taken from—	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.
Saint Paul's Island .....	19,850	24,600	23,250	17,750	18,450	17,150	15,200
Saint George's Island .....	5,550	5,500	(*)	*1,950	4,778	3,661	2,834
Total .....	25,400	30,100	23,250	19,700	23,228	20,811	18,034
Taken from—	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1837.
Saint Paul's Island .....	12,950	13,150	13,200	12,700	4,052	4,040	4,220
Saint George's Island .....	3,084	3,296	3,212	3,051	2,528	2,550	2,582
Total .....	16,034	16,446	16,412	15,751	6,580	6,590	6,802

\* Left to breed.

Grand total for Saint Paul's Island .....	464,259
Grand total for Saint George's Island .....	114,665
Total catch during nineteen years of diminution .....	578,924

*Meteorological abstract for the months from September, 1872, to April 1873, inclusive, made by Chas. P. Fish, United States Signal-Service, at the office of the Chief Signal-Officer, United States Army, division of reports and telegrams for the island of Saint Paul, Bering's Sea, for the benefit of commerce and agriculture.*

Month of record.	September.	October.	November.	December.
Mean of barometer, corrected .....	29.773	29.512	29.458	29.468
Maximum of barometer, corrected .....	30.46	30.04	30.23	30.04
Minimum of barometer, corrected .....	28.87	28.51	28.62	28.05
Monthly range of barometer, corrected ..	1.59	1.53	1.61	1.99
Greatest daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.97	.97	.87	.80
Least daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.03	.04	.06	.03
Mean daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.259	.293	.339	.249
Mean of exposed thermometer .....	44° 2	36° 0	34° 3	26° 6
Maximum of exposed thermometer .....	52°	45°	41°	37°
Minimum of exposed thermometer .....	33°	22°	23°	4°
Monthly range of exposed thermometer .....	19°	23°	18°	33°
Greatest daily range of exposed thermometer ..	11°	11°	12°	11°
Least daily range of exposed thermometer ..	1°	1°	1°	1°
Mean of maxima of exposed thermometer ..	46° 8	38° 7	36° 2	29° 1
Mean of minima of exposed thermometer ..	41° 8	33° 3	31° 5	24°
Mean daily range of exposed thermometer ..	5° 0	5° 4	4° 7	5° 1
Mean relative humidity .....	85.6	83.9	86.6	87.8
Maximum relative humidity .....	100	100	100	100
Minimum relative humidity .....	56	65	60	70
Prevailing wind .....	N.	N.	S.	N.
Number of miles traveled by wind .....	9,138	11,872	14,539	16,644
Mean daily velocity of wind .....	304.6	383	484.6	530.5
Mean hourly velocity of wind .....	12.7	16	20.2	22.1
Maximum hourly velocity of wind .....	33	42	74	53
Proportion of cloudiness .....	92	84	78.9	84
Amount of rain-fall, in inches .....	2.89	3.06	2.38	2.99
Greatest daily amount of rain-fall .....	.85	.58	.31	.43
Amount of melted hail and snow, (included in rain-fall) .....	.20	.91	.82	2.38
Number of days on which precipitation occurred ..	30	29	27	27
Number of days on which hail or snow fell .....	4	15	17	24

Month of record.	January.	February.	March.	April.
Mean of barometer, corrected .....	29.953	29.507	29.768	29.769
Maximum of barometer, corrected .....	30.50	30.51	30.31	30.35
Minimum of barometer, corrected .....	29.32	28.26	29.05	29.00
Monthly range of barometer, corrected ..	1.18	2.25	1.26	1.35
Greatest daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.58	.95	.66	.73
Least daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.03	.06	.05	.03
Mean daily range of barometer, corrected ..	.194	.421	.219	.242
Mean of exposed thermometer .....	15° 7	18° 6	12° 6	23° 9
Maximum of exposed thermometer .....	34°	34°	35°	35°
Minimum of exposed thermometer .....	11°	12°	7°	3°
Monthly range of exposed thermometer .....	45°	46°	42°	32°
Greatest daily range of exposed thermometer ..	23°	28°	20°	24°
Least daily range of exposed thermometer ..	0°	3°	3°	3°
Mean of maxima of exposed thermometer ..	18° 9	22° 6	17° 1	27° 9
Mean of minima of exposed thermometer ..	11° 9	15° 1	7° 4	19° 4
Mean daily range of exposed thermometer ..	7° 0	7° 5	9° 7	8° 5
Mean relative humidity .....	85.7	86.2	81.8	84.29

## Meteorological abstract, &amp;c.—Continued

Month of record.	January.	February.	March.	April.
Maximum relative humidity .....	100	100	100	100
Minimum relative humidity.....	53	49	46	63
Prevailing wind.....	E. N. E.	N.	N.	N.
Number of miles traveled by wind.....	17,903	16,646	14,512	18,607
Mean daily velocity of wind.....	577.5	594.3	468.1	620.2
Mean hourly velocity of wind.....	24.1	24.8	19.5	25.84
Maximum hourly velocity of wind.....	43	82	88	53
Proportion of cloudiness.....	62.8	74.9	68	73.6
Amount of rain-fall, in inches.....	0.96	5.78	1.21	1.77
Greatest daily amount of rain-fall.....	.39	1.07	.38	.50
Amount of melted hail and snow, (in- cluded in rain-fall).....	.83	4.87	1.21	1.77
Number of days on which precipitation occurred.....	21	27	27	26
Number of days on which hail or snow fell.....	20	25	27	26

NOTE.—It will be noticed that I have not spelled the name *Behring* in accordance with the usual custom observed by English writers, who have thus given the phonetic value of the Slavonic characters used by the Russians in writing the name of this celebrated navigator; but by reference to the following statement made by Professor Gill, of the Congressional Library, it will be seen that the name in question may properly be spelled "*Bering*." Professor Gill says: "The name of the navigator which has been conferred on the strait separating America and Asia, is unquestionably spelled BERING and not BEHRING. I submit, in explanation, my reasons: 1st. The navigator himself was born in Jutland, and a scion of a Danish family, whose members bore the name of Bering, and two representatives of which had the same Christian name, viz, (1) Vitus Bering, born 1617, died 1675, some time professor of poetry at Copenhagen, and (2) Vitus Bering, born 1682, died 1753, a priest of Ollerup and Kirkeby. The form *Behring*, so far as I can ascertain, is unknown in Denmark, (see Nyerup's Dansk-Norsk Litteratur-lexicon, v. i, pp. 56, 57, 1818.) 2d. The form *Bering* is almost (but not quite) universally adopted in all non-English works; for example, *Biographie Universelle*, (Michaud,) v. 4, p. 261, 1811, also, *nouv. ed.*, v. 4, p. 28, 1854; *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, (Hoefler,) v. 5, p. 527, 1855; *Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste*, (Ersch und Gruber,) v. 9, p. 136, 1822; *Neues Konversations-Lexicon*, (Meyers,) v. 3, p. 238, 1862; *Deutsch-Amerikanisches Conversations-Lexicon*, (Schem,) v. 2, p. 296, 1869, and numerous others. The exceptional cases, *e. g.* *Pierer's Universal Lexicon*, *Grande Dictionnaire Universelle du xix. siècle*, &c. In English dictionaries, the true form *Bering* is adopted in the *Brief Biographical Dictionary*, by Holes, 1865, and the *Dictionary of Biographical Reference*, by Phillips, 1871, and is gradually superseding the more familiar English form. An explanation of the reason of the origin of the name *Behring* is found in the fact that it was originally derived from the Russian, without a knowledge of its primitive source, and was the nearest English phonetic expression of the Russian characters. Inasmuch, however, (1) as the original form of a name, without regard to its pronunciation, is universally adopted in our biographies and bibliographies, and (2) as the original form of the navigator's name was *Bering*, such is the correct one, and that which must ultimately supersede the other. It need only be added that Bering himself, and the Russians universally, (?) adopt that form when writing in English characters, and that the Russian letter ('e') in his name, represented by 'eh,' is especially ordained by the Russians to be rendered by the Latin character 'e,' in accordance with the pronunciation of the Latin and continental races generally."



## SKETCHES OF THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.

[Taken from Veniaminov, Zapieska, part 1, p. 134.]

## ISLANDS OF THE FOUR MOUNTAINS—"CHEETIERY SOPOCHNIE."

KAYGAMILYAK is the longest; has a number of smoking hills, sometimes burning. On the southeast side of the island are the remains of what once must have been large settlements. On these islands are arries (*Lomvia arra*) and a tundra goose, which latter comes here to shed feathers and rear its young, and on the rocks around the coast are sea-lions and hair-seals.\*

TAHNAK is the largest of the group. On this island are red foxes, with very coarse fur, and a few sea-fowl. In 1764, 100 Aleuts lived here or hereabouts. At this time (1834) the men have nearly all been destroyed by the hand of Stepan Glottov, and the women nearly all perished of hunger. What remains of the Aleuts is on the island of Oomnak. This is the highest one of the group under discussion. Hot springs are to be found on the east side, and on the southeast side are the ruins of old dwellings. Sea-otters are found about this place. A small island lies to the west; it is round and full of bold hills, steep. On the southeast side, in 1834, was a small settlement, which the Aleuts say was occupied by a most savage and war-like people. They were destroyed by Glottov. A few sea-lions are found here. Near this is another small island, round and full of high hills. There are remains of two settlements on it; signs of sea-otter; no one there, now; (1834;); sea-fowls, sea-lions, and hair-seal.

UNASKA is quite large; high hills, cliffs, &c. On the east side is a volcano, which began in 1825 to burn; no hot springs there; no people there, though the relics of two old settlements are seen. Birds breed on the cliffs; on the beach sea-lions, and, at times, sea-otters.

AMOOTOYON is another small island, round, bluff, and moun-

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\* Last September, (1874,) Captain Hennig, while cruising with a party of sea-otter hunters, discovered a warm cave on the northeast side of this island, in which he found eleven mummies well embalmed. A full and interesting history of the matter was given to him by the natives, but it is too long for insertion here. Those mummies are now in the Smithsonian Institution, presented by the Alaska Commercial Company. These bodies were put into this cave, according to the people, in 1724 or 1725.—H. W. E.

tainous—the least important of this group; no bays, no streams, nothing but arries, sea-lions, and, at times, sea-otters. Between this island and Unaska is a rock where a great many sea-fowl breed, and sea-lions.

OOMNAK is the largest of the Aleutians. It has three high mountains; is very hilly, with a number of large lakes and streams. In 1805 the people were able to take 2,000 salmon every year, but now (1834) they cannot get more than 200 to 400; in the winter from 50 to 100. On the northeast side of the island, in the mountains, is a lake, on the bluffly beaches of which amber is found. Everything grows on the island that is peculiar to Ounalashka, save the willow. In the year some 50 black foxes are killed, 80 cross, and about 40 red. On the north shore and under Tuleeskoi Sopka is a large number of sea-lions, hair-seal, and sea-otters, from 10 to 40 annually killed. In older times the Aleuts used to get porphyry from the north-northwest side of Tuleeskoi for their weapons. There is less snow here than on Ounalashka. A great many hot springs here; one on the north side is so hot that meat can be cooked in it. Under most of these springs is a subterranean noise.

Before the coming of the Russians on Oomnak there were twenty settlements, some of them quite large, like the one at Tuleeskoi, where there were so many people that they were able to take at one time all the meat and blubber of a large whale. At the present time (1834) there are only two villages, *Raychesnoi* and *Tuleeskoi*, altogether 109 souls. The former lies on the southwest side of the island, and a wooden church was built here in 1826; 13 huts and 3 bath-houses, under the supervision of Krukov, a creole, were built in 1834; 38 males and 45 females; they had plenty of hens and raised at times potatoes; fish quite scarce; crabs and sea-urchins abundant. They have plenty of roots, but at times are without oil, and cannot then cook or use the roots, and they frequently go a year without getting a whale. In the winter they go to *Samalga* and kill from 3 to 10 sea-otters. *Tuleeskoi*, on the east side, in 1834, had 11 men and 15 women. In 1830 there were 3 settlements on this island, on the south side, and on the island *Yeagovskie*. At *Samalga* in olden times (1794) there was a large settlement, 400 souls, but all are scattered and gone now. On the south side is a beach out upon which sea-otters used to come during the prevalence of furious gales of wind from that quarter.

BOGA SLOV ISLAND made its appearance first in 1796, (May,)

and was finished in 1825; is oval-shaped; no fresh water; sea-lions breed there.

OUNALASHKA.—*Makooshin* is the highest mountain on the island; 5,475 feet; volcano. No one remembers of its having disturbed the settlement near it. In 1818 it made the earth tremble and a loud noise, but nothing more ensued. It can be ascended in August and September, when there is least snow and the winds do not blow so hard. A great many creeks and streams on the island, running down from the high hills to the sea; many pretty water-falls. There are twenty streams in which fish run up from the sea, independent of the trout found in all of them; salmon, salmon-trout, "keezoog," hump-backed salmon, and "hie-eks." Lakes on the island are nearly as numerous as the streams, and are frequently found high up in the mountains; many of them are very deep; one of them more than ten versts in circumference, and in this one no bottom was found.

Gulfs and bays on all sides of this island, especially on the north side, and more good ones than on any other island of the whole Aleutian chain; three are on the eastern side, *Beaver*, *Captain's*, and *Makooshin*. The first ship entered Captain's Harbor in 1769, Captain Layvashava. At *Oobiennah Bay* a squad of Aleuts destroyed a Russian ship. *Matreskenskayah Bay*, a great place for hump-backed salmon, and *Paystrokovskie*, two small bays distinguished by the coming of a great many whales; and from these bays to the west, about eight versts, are some small lakes, but very deep; all these bays are good places for ships to stand at anchor.

In *Starry Gavan* the first Russian ship entered in 1761. *Anglieskie Bay* is where Captain Cook anchored. *Chernovskie* is the finest harbor on the island, in the straits between *Oomnak*, and a dozen others, but of less importance. *Kahlecta Point* received its name because in a little bay under it a great many whales used to resort; this point is the land-mark for the harbor of Ounalashka. *Cheerful* or *Jolly Point*, so called by the sailors who usually make it in a fog. It is made up of some thirty differently colored strata or layers, horizontal, distinguishing it from all other capes or points; from its very summit down to the water's edge, on one side, is a vivid green slope.

At *Morkrovskie Point*, to the southward in the hills, are the remains of a fossil elephant, and a little farther, trending from the southeast to the northwest, behold an elephant of the true kind, lying quite horizontally, over 14 feet wide, and about 10

above the water. At *Aspeetskie Point* the Russians found a stone slate which belonged to one of the first chiefs. The Russians also called the people living near this place "*Aspeet*."

The points on the southern side of Ounalashka are not well known; they are not safe to approach, on account of reefs and submerged rocks, which extend out to sea a long way, and the water breaks very heavily on them and on the cliffs.

Vegetation on Ounalashka is found everywhere, except on the summits of the highest mountains and the faces of steep cliffs. On the east side of the island, in Captain's Bay and part of Beaver Bay, the small willow grows best, berries, mushrooms, &c.

*Animals*.—Foxes, mice, (brought by the Russians,) cows, and rats; the latter came only in 1828, brought in the ship "*Finland*," and in less than two years they increased so that they got over to *Makooshin* settlement, a distance of over fifty versts, in spite of high, snowy ridges and high streams between, and attacks by foxes. The foxes on this island yield to the hunters about 500 annually; of these 100 are black, 250 cross, and 150 red. Of the water-animals, in early times there were great numbers of hair-seal, fur-seal, sea otter, and sea-lions, but nowadays they come in such small numbers that from them all hardly more than a hundred skins are taken per annum. Sea-otters are found only on the southern side near the beach, and in very small numbers, as they come from the sea; sea-lions in less number and only in one place, on the southern side, not far from *Osofskie Bay*, on a rock separated from the beach by a narrow canal. Fur-seals used to come into the bays here until the discovery of the *Prybilov Islands*, and since then hardly a single one.

The island was not known earlier than 1760. In 1762 the Russians, who first discovered this place, were unhappily nearly exterminated, and in revenge for this the natives were nearly all destroyed in 1763 by *Solovaiyat*, and the rest in the following year.

There are only two hot springs on the island; one on the point near *Makooshin* settlement has a little run of water and is not very hot; the other near a small lake back from *Indian Bay*, five versts from *Illoulook*, has a temperature of about 57° to 60°.

From a lake known to and spoken of by the Aleuts, near *Makrovskoi Gulf*, high up in the mountains, under the cliffs on

the eastern beach, is found the finest *amber*; hair-seals go up into the lake.

Near Makooshin Gulf, between a long tufa or breccia place or edge and *Taraksovskoyan Bay*, in the mountains, is a lake on the beach of which is found native copper; and above this, in the mountains of the third range, also, is a lake, on the beach of which is found hollow stones which rattle when shaken, and in the cleft of a cliff or cave is seen the gleam of light, like water. On the south side of the island, near *Oin-nomaden Bay*, are two lakes also in the mountains, in one of which hair-seals go, and on the beach under the cliffs are found shining stones. In the mountains near Captain's Harbor is a lake on the beach of which white pearls were reported found, but in 1812 men were sent, in August, to look for them and found only ice.

In Beaver Bay, on the left side, near *Agamgeek Bay*, is a waterfall tumbling down from high cliffs, the water of which the Aleuts dare not drink for fear of death, and near this place stands a stone which is honored as a petrified devil.

There is a stream under Makooshin Mountain, on the north side, by the banks of which are iron bogs, and above them it is said native copper is found; back from Makooshin Gulf, in the mountains of the third range, mica ("sluda") is found.

Before the Russians came, in 1762, there were on this island twenty-four settlements, and altogether a great many people. Even as late as 1805, there were fifteen counted settlements, and in them 800 souls; but at present (1834) there are only ten, and in them only 470; and all of them placed, with one exception, on the west and northwest shores.

*Illou-look* is the head settlement. Solovayiah is said to have lived here. Built here (1834) is a wooden church, with bells; five houses, three magazines or warehouses; five "bar-rabkies," or huts, and one barn—all the property of the company. The head office for the whole Aleutian district is here, under a chief trader and three store-keepers. Twenty-seven youths, or huts, belong to the creoles and Aleuts, 275 souls in number. (Male Aleuts, 90; females, 106; over them Russians and creoles, 75.) Here, with the exception of the Russian American Company's office at Sitka, was the first school. It was opened the 12th March, 1835; started in 1834 by 22 males, creoles and Aleuts. In this school no more than twelve boys could be brought together in 1835. There was a hospital with eight sick men attended by a surgeon, and a home for orphan

girls, with twelve of them in it. Some of the company's servants raised pigs, chickens, and ducks, and nearly all the housekeepers had a garden, where they raised turnips and potatoes. (In 1838, one hundred and twenty kegs were raised by the whole settlement.) The ground for the first church was prepared in 1825; church built in 1826; provided with bells, and pictures in gilt frames; built by the Aleuts.

The profits of this country, or settlement, in especial: from ten to forty fur-seals are taken every year as they come down from the north; the yield from the fish is not important; the river which comes down from the mountains in *Natikenskoi Bay* is the best place, and sometimes the dog-salmon are there in such numbers that it is difficult to get through the water. It is said that the river which is by this settlement used to be the best for fish; it is now spoiled.

Cod-fish are caught a long way out, as far as twenty to eighty "sajens,"\* and in late years in small numbers. A willow grows near the settlement, quite large, and, though the company have annually repaired and built with it some sixty baidars and over one hundred and twenty boxes, it is still abundant. For cattle this place is not very profitable, because, around this settlement, though grass grows earlier than elsewhere in the district, snow falls and lies from five to seven months, and the mowing has to be done in bad or hard places, and, on account of the rare occurrence of sunlight and the frequency of rains, hay-making is exceedingly difficult. Potatoes and turnips do not thrive in a noteworthy manner.

*Natielcouskoi* settlement lies on the west side of Captain's Harbor. It has two yourts and 15 souls, (6 males, 9 females.)

*Paistrakhovskie* is on the left side of Captain's Harbor; five yourts; 37 souls, (16 males, 21 females.) The mountain above it has a bowl-shaped crater, and in it is a lake.

*Vaysaylovskie* lies on the left side of the point of the same name; 15 souls, (7 males, 8 women.)

*Makooshenskoi* lies on the north side of Makooshin Gulf; built here, a yourt, barrabkie, store-house, and bath-house belonging to the company, and a trader stationed here. The Aleuts possess six yourts and six barrabkies; 35 souls, (15 males, 20 females.) Not far from the settlement, back from the mountains near the sea, pumice-stone is found. There were five settlements near this place in ancient times, excepting

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\* "Sajen," equivalent to seven feet.

*Starrie-chovskaho*, which existed up to 1805. They get from 80 to 150 foxes here, with varying grades of fur.

*Koshegenskoï* lies inside of Koshegenskaho Gulf, on the left side, on a very even place, near the debouchure of a stream. The company has erected here a yourt, store-house, bath-house, and a barn belonging to it, which has a trader here, who attends to the business of all the southern part of the island. The Aleuts have eight yourts, and are 41 souls in number, (18 men, 23 women.) There are not many fish here; in the best days of salmon-running not over 300. Sometimes sea-lions lie on the south side. A small number of hair-seals are killed on the rocks. Roots in abundance. In 1833 the company introduced cattle here.

*Chernovskïe*, on the northwest side of the island, has four yourts and 44 souls, (20 males, 24 females.) The harbor is elegant, but not always without danger to sailing-veßsels; for, if caught outside in the straits, without wind, they may be carried against the cliffs of Oomnak Straits.

On the south side of Chernovskie stands a citadel, and to the north, a distance of 20 versts, near an old settlement, was found a copper chain, four links. This settlement is the poorest on the island. The principal subsistence is mussels. There is only one fish-stream, and that falls near the settlement.

*Emagenskoï* is in Captain's Harbor, 8 versts northeast from Illoulook, on a little bay of the same name; 32 souls (15 males, 17 females) live here in four yourts.

*Kählechtsenkoï*.—Three yourts; 14 souls. A small stream here, where a great many fish are taken. Sometimes more than 2,000 salmon are secured. The natives frequently get whales here.

*Bobrovskie*.—Forty-one souls, (21 males, 20 females,) four yourts, and a few gardens; they get a small number of salmon-trout and dog-salmon in three small streams.

*Borka* or *Spirkin* lies on the south side of the island, divided from the mainland by a wide strait. This island stands out bold and abrupt, high from the sea. On the north shore are a few small bays; above one of them is the settlement, of six yourts, 44 souls, (17 males, 27 females.) They have a few gardens. Principal subsistence, sea-fish and mussels. On this island is found a green stone, irony, or blackish, shiny red, which the Aleuts require in painting their "*kamlaykas*."\*

\* Skin shirts.

On AMAKNAK ISLAND were three settlements before the coming of the Russians in 1762, but now there are none; hogs run from April to October; on the little island to the west, *Ooknadak*, was a small settlement.

The KRAMEETSIA ISLANDS are seven in number, lying between Ounalashka and Oonemak, viz: *Oonalga*, *Akootan*, *Akoon*, *Goloi*, *Avatanak*, *Teegalda*, and *Oogomak*. Akootan is the largest and most mountainous; the smallest and lowest is Oonalga, and all of them have inhabitants save Goloi and Oogomak; all have foxes save Goloi; the catch is from 180 to 250 yearly.

OONALGA has a small lake and three small streams, into which only salmon-trout run. The berries are "sheksa," (*Empetrum nigrum*,) salmon-berry, and "moroshkie," (*Rubus chamæmorus*.) Snow does not lie long here. The settlement is on the south side, on the cliffs; 3 yourts, 23 souls, (10 males, 13 females.) The little, bold rocky islands to the northeast of Oonalga are frequented by hair-seals; on only one of them is a spring of water. Ships can go all around these islands without danger; they are free from rocks or shoals.

AKOOTAN, a rough, rocky island, with a high volcano near the middle; the beaches are few and far between, and but little land fit for vegetation. Two lakes on it, with five streams; one bay on the south side; a few fish come into the streams. Berries of all kinds grow here, peculiar to this country; (from 40 to 60 foxes are killed here every year, the greater number red.) On the northeast side, in a small bay, are hot springs, coming from the mountains, with so high a temperature, that meat and fish can be cooked in them. On the very summit of the volcano are found small, but deep, lakes, and the place where the volcano breaks out strongly resembles the spout-hole of a huge whale, the ridge of the mountain resembling the back and head of this animal.

In old times there were 7 settlements, with 600 people; in 1810 there was but one, and in the present time (1834) but one, and this is on the north side, where a small stream runs down, surrounded by high and rugged mountains. This is the smallest settlement in this district, 13 souls, living on fish, which come into the streams and along the beach.

AKOON lies near Akootan; it is smaller, and the mountains not so high; one mountain, on the south side, always smokes, but the smoke is never noteworthy. The beach is mostly bluffs, rugged. The berries "moroshkie" and "zemlianeeka" are



found. Plenty of lakes, four large ones and five streams, into two of which fish run in small numbers. From 80 to 120 foxes are annually killed. In 1830 the people here captured two wolves; they must have been of only one sex, or they would have increased; these animals are very disagreeable, for they kill the foxes and spoil the traps. There were, long ago, eight settlements on this island, with more than 500 people, but now (1834) there are only three, with 85 souls, viz: *Artelnovakie*, southwest side of the island, on a high bluff, with two yourts, two barrabkies, and a bath-house, and a trader belonging to the company; the Aleuts have seven yourts, 32 souls, (16 males, 16 females.) The trader and a few Aleuts have a small garden. They sometimes capture a whale. *Raychesnoi* is on the north side, near a stream; five yourts built here and a few barrabkies, 37 souls, (19 males, 18 females.) *Seeraidenskoi* is inside of a bay of that name, looking out on Avatanak; two yourts and 16 souls. The people in both of these settlements live by the beach, depending upon it and a few hair-seals that may come around.

AVATANAK ISLAND has on its southeast side a hot spring, only open to view at low water. This is the only island where the Aleuts find red chalk. Above this island, near Akootan, are two remarkable rocks, "Ooshenadskie." On them in early times sea-lions were found, and one of them from all sides resembles a bell. This island lies between Goloi and Teegalda. From two lakes rises quite a stream on the north side, and which in old times was a great fish-place, and since the extermination of the Aleuts there by Salovayiah's comrade, Natorbin, not a fish has come since. On the south side of the island sea-otters come, and on the island foxes of different colors, of which twenty to thirty are taken per annum. In early times three, not large settlements, were here; now there is but one, on the north side, and consists of five excellent yourts, and distinguished by their being all clean and free from blackness; 49 souls, (24 males and 25 females.) Vegetation here is not good. When during my last visit to this place, in 1833, I saw the signs or ruins of the yourt where Salovayiah and Natorbin lived, and a woman was living then who had been a witness to their cruelty. A small island lies near Avatanak which a few hair seal repair to, and on the east side of it is found red chalk.

TEEGALDA lies east of Avatanak. It is next in size to Akootan. There are 3 lakes here from 300 to 1,000 sajens around,

and a small stream flows, from which about 1,000 fish are taken. All berries are found here except the huckleberry. From 50 to 70 foxes are killed here every year. The greatest number of them are black and black-haired. In the autumn and winter are plenty of "beach-geese," and in the spring "toondra geese." On the southwest side of this island is found stone-coal, and in the lake near the settlement is a red or golden ocher. In ancient times there were five settlements, in them over 500 people, but now there is only one, which lies on the north side, with a population of 92 souls, (39 males, 53 females.) They have a fine "kozarmie," (barrack,) well built and always kept clean; five yourts, a bath-house, and a few barrabkies. The number given above of these people includes those who were brought over from Oogamak in 1826. In this place are the ruins of an old yourt, 30 sajens (210 feet) long. Opposite the town, on the north side of the island, near Oogamak, is a number of steep, high rocks (28) or islets. On them the big burgomaster-gull breeds, and over 500 eggs are taken every year. On them are three green places only, and on many of these islands lie hair-seals, and on one of the northern ones are sea-lions. This is the chief supplying place for all these people here for winter-food. On them are no lakes or streams. On the north side is a greenish red used by the Aleuts for painting their hats.

**OOGAMAK.**—No water save a small spring; a small number of foxes (7) killed annually. On the island comes a larger number of hair-seals than are found on all the others. On the cliffs, sea-parrots breed, and over 500 are annually shot; on the low rocks sea-lions previously came in considerable numbers, one of which traveled over and back from the south to the north side of the island; a good many stay all winter. In early times on the island there were many people, but they have been growing less and less, so that now there are only 18.

**OONEMAK.**—This island was in old times the most densely populated of all these islands; there were 12 settlements. In 1831 the ruins of a "kozarmie" or barracks exhibited a length of over 600 sajens, (4,200 feet,) and yourts were from 12 to 30, and even 50 sajens. At the present time (1834) only one settlement, *Sheshal-dinskie*, with 71 souls, (30 males, 41 females,) who are poorest of all the Aleuts. They have but 2 yourts and 4 bidarkies, and the company has a trader here and two workmen; they have a yourt, a barrabkie, and "banio," (or bath-house.)

*Animals.*—Mice or lemmings, minks, Parry's marmot, rabbits,

wolves, bears, deer, land-otter, and red foxes, hair-seals on all sides; sea-lions in small numbers; on the south and northwest sides, where there are some lagoons, walrus are sometimes found; on the beaches of this island sea-otters came twice, first on the north beach, and second on the west. About the north shore is a considerable number of whales. From 80 to 150 foxes were killed per annum, 1 to 3 wolves, and a few minks and land-otters constitute the real hunting. Bears are plenty, but they are coarse and mostly red, (cinnamon.) The most valuable thing is the whalebone; but little, however, of this is found.

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NOTES UPON THE ANIMALS OF THE ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.

[Translated from Veniaminov's *Zapieska*, 1840.]

(Part 1, chap. xii, p. 68.) "The numbers of several kinds of animals are growing very much less in the present as compared with past time. For instance, the company here (Ounalashka) regularly killed more than a thousand sea-otters, (annually;) now (1840) from 70 to 150, (in 1832-1833 there were 175 to 200, and a long time previous to this such a number was not obtained;) and there was a time (1826) when the whole returns from the hunters of this Ounalashkan district were only 15 skins." "The company on the island of Saint Paul killed from 60,000 to 80,000 fur-seals per annum, and in the last season, (1836,) with all possible care in getting, they obtained only about 1,200. On the island of Saint George, instead of 40,000 or 35,000, only 33,000 (1,300?) were killed."

(Part 3, p. 529.) "The kind of deer here I have had a glimpse at, and I know that the large males do not weigh more than three poods,\* (108 pounds.) They go to several islands of the Shumagin group, Oonemak, and all over the peninsula, (Alaska.)

"*Bear*.—Here all have patched and harsh fur, and are found on Oonemak and the peninsula; they are also very quiet and seldom go for man. The hunters are only afraid of those which have *torn ears*. They eat meat, fish, and roots. At the time of salmon running in the rivers, bears generally go there and capture fish. The bears go into the water above their knees, stand up opposite the stream, and watch a fit opportunity when they can

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\* This is an error obviously; they will weigh from 216 to 324 pounds.—H. W. E.

grab or snatch the fish, which, when they see it near, they instantly strike at it with their paws and most always hit; then they either throw or carry their prey to the beach and return to continue their work until they have as many as they want. With the last fish they go to the bank and begin to eat. After killing the fishes the bears eat only the heads, because this is the fattest part.

"Bears in the winter sleep in dens, anywhere under cliffs, in holes, or caves; but I have heard that they have been sometimes seen walking about in the winter.

"Foxes may be divided into *black*, *cross*, and *red*, the greater part red. They are caught in two ways, *i. e.*, guns and traps; the latter is the best method, and by it the most are secured. Hunting-season is in the fall and winter, when they are in new and full fur. Trapping-season begins about 5th October and continues as long as the snow lasts.

"*Blue foxes* are confined to the Prybilov Islands, on Saint George especially, where they annually kill about 1,500. It is said that when these islands were first discovered there was naught but blue foxes there, of most excellent quality; but a few winters afterward came white foxes, which breed very rapidly, and in a great measure spoiled the fur; that now the fur which once was called *blue* is called *smoky*.

"*Sea-otters* are distinguished above everything on account of their great value and small numbers. There was a time when they were killed in thousands, now only by hundreds. There are plenty of places where before there were great numbers of sea-otters; now not one is to be seen or found. The reason for this is most evident: every year hunted without rest, they have fled to places unknown and without danger.

"*Land-otters* are found only on the Shumagins, Oonemak, and the peninsula in this Aleutian district. They do not live in the sea, but are found in the lakes and go close to the sea; they have longer feet or limbs, and can run on land better than any of the other animals (amphibious) of their class. Of the number taken in this district there is no true record, but in the best years they do not get over 100. They are hunted, like foxes, with guns and traps, but they are very strong and full of life."

## INDIAN TARIFF.

The following table shows the prices paid by the Russian-American Company in the Alaskan Territory, where it had no competition. (The quotations are in paper rubles= $\approx$ to 20 cents each, (100 kopecks make a ruble;) a silver ruble is equal to about 75 cents.)

	1804.	1827.	1836.	1850.	Now (1874) the natives receive—
	<i>R. kop.</i>	<i>R. kop.</i>	<i>R. kop.</i>	<i>R. kop.</i>	
Sea-otter, prime .....	10 00	20 00	30 00	50 00	\$40 each.
one year old .....	4 00	10 00	15 00	25 00	\$10 each.
six months old .....	0 60	2 00	3 00	3 00	\$2.50 each.
Fur-seals, five to three years..	0 20	0 50	0 75	0 75	40 cents to \$3 each.
two to one year .....	0 20	0 40	0 50	0 50	Do.
Martens, very best .....	0 20	0 50	0 30	1 00	From \$1.50 to \$3 each.
Beavers, best .....	1 20	2 50	4 00	4 00	From 50 cents to — each.
Land-otter, best .....	1 60	3 20	4 60	6 00	From \$2 to \$2.50 each.
Bears, big black .....	2 00	4 00	4 00	5 00	From \$3 to \$5 each.
Lynx .....	0 80	3 00	3 00	5 00	From \$1 to \$2.50 each.
Mink, best .....	0 20	0 30	0 25	0 50	From 50 cents to \$1.50 each.
Foxes, extra black .....			9 00	10 00	From \$40 to \$100 each.
blue .....	0 20	1 00	1 00	0 50	40 cents each.
silver, extra .....	1 00	3 00	3 00	3 00	From \$3 to \$10 each.
red, extra .....	0 75	1 50	2 00	3 00	From \$1 to \$1.50 each.
Wolves, extra .....	1 00	1 00	2 00	4 00	From \$2 to \$5 each.
Wolverines, extra .....	0 80	2 00	2 00	4 00	Do.

Where this company had competition, however, the prices ranged quite high, to wit: At Sitka, for sea-otter, 140 to 150 *silver* rubles; beaver, from 2 to 18 rubles; land-otters, 2 to 18; mainland-foxes, black, 2 to 36 rubles; silver foxes, 3 to 18; red, 2 rubles to 50 kopecks; martens, 50 kopecks to 3 rubles; lynx, from 3 to 9 rubles; bears, 1 to 18 rubles; wolverines, 2½ to 18 rubles; (these quotations are all in silver rubles.)

The value of staple furs of Alaska in the Chinese market during 1799 was—

Sea-otter, prime, \$75 to \$100 each.

Fur-seal, prime, \$3.50 to \$3.75 each.

This is interesting, as the value of a dollar has not changed since that time in that country, and sea otter sells to-day at about the same rate as given.

Few fur-seals are sold in this market now, but the great bulk of the sea-otter catch of the Kuriles goes into China. They do not possess the art of dressing the former well, and were in the habit of wearing them simply tanned. The Chinese for all un-

dressed furs, like marten, beaver, &c., offer one of the best cash markets in the world; indeed, all the early trade of Alaska went into China, both from Russian, French, and English traders.

The following table shows the number of sea-otters and fur-seals secured off the coasts of California and Oregon by the Russians during the period of their occupation of Ross, or Bodega, in California, from 1824 to 1834 inclusive:

	1824.	1825.	1826.	1827.	1828.	1829.	1830.	1831.	1832.	1833.	1834.
Sea-otters .....	475	500	287	9	1	18	12	112	1	187	220
Sea-otters, young .....			13	3		5	4			34	35
Fur-seals .....	1,050	455	290		210	287		205	118	54	

During the last forty years there have been no sea-otters to speak of taken on the Californian coast; and in 1835 the last fur-seals, fifty-four in number, were taken on the Farallones, two small rocky islets off the mouth of San Francisco Harbor. Hunters along the coast of Oregon still continue, however, to shoot a few annually, but at restricted localities, as on the small reach of coast at Gray's Harbor, where nearly all that are now obtained from the whole district are found.

## THE FUR-SEAL ROOKERIES OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.

While the *Callorhinus* is found in such great numbers in the North Pacific, there is nothing of its genus found in the waters of the North Atlantic, and none to speak of in the South Pacific, and to-day the whole number found elsewhere than Alaska is quite small, though in early days, some hundred years ago, when the fur-seal was first discovered on the South Shetland Islands, they were so abundant and so numerous that hundreds of thousands were annually taken—taken without the slightest regard to sex or condition, although the skins were not of great value then. So numerous were these animals that for over fifty years an immense number, several hundred thousand skins, were yearly secured in this reckless, ruinous fashion, and it was not until the beginning of the last decade that the supply grew so small that scarcely a vessel of the former fleets remained on the ground; and last season, the winter of 1873-'74, less than 15,000 were gathered from the ground upon which many millions of fur-seals were found forty years ago resting and breeding.

The government of Buenos Ayres has from the first protected and cared for a small rookery of fur-seals under the bluffs at Cabo Corrientes, on its coast, where some 5,000 to 8,000 are annually taken, but the seals here have no hauling-grounds like those on Saint Paul; they are taken with much labor under the high cliffs of this portion of the coast. This is the only government aid and care that the seals have ever received outside of Bering Sea. The following extract shows the way in which the fur-seals of the south came into notice:

“Soon after Captain Cook's voyage in the *Resolution*, performed in 1771, he presented an official report concerning New Georgia, in which he gave an account of the great number of elephant-seals and fur-seals which he had found on the shores of that island. This induced several enterprising merchants to fit out vessels to take them; the former for their oil, the latter for their skins. Captain Weddell states that he had been credibly informed that during a period of about fifty years not less than 20,000 tons of oil were procured annually from this spot alone for the London market, which, at a moderate price, would yield about £1,000,000 a year.

“Seal-skins are very much used in their raw state as articles of apparel by the natives of the polar zones; when tanned, they are used extensively in making shoes; and the Eskimo have a process by which they make them water-proof, (?) so that, according to Scoresby, the jackets and trousers made of them by these people are in great request among the whale-fishers for preserving them from oil and wet. But the skins are not only used in this raw and tanned state as leather; on account of their silky and downy covering, they constitute still more important articles connected with the fur-trade. Thus considered, seal-skins are of two kinds, which may be distinguished as *hair-skins* and *fur-skins*; the former are used as clothing and ornament by the Russians, Chinese, and other nations, and the latter yield a fur which we believe exceeds in value all others which have been brought into the market. Many seals supply nothing but hair, while others in different proportions produce both the hair, and underneath it soft and downy fur. The majority, we believe, are to be considered merely as hair-skins, similar to the bear or sable, and of these some are excellent of their kind and much prized.”—*Hamilton's Amphibious Mammalia*, Edinburgh, 1839.

With regard to the manner in which the business was carried on down here we find in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the following facts: “From about the year 1806 till 1823 an extensive trade was carried on in the South Seas in procuring seal-skins; these were obtained in vast abundance by the first traders and yielded a very large profit. The time was when cargoes of those skins yielded five or six dollars apiece in China, and the present price in the English market averages from 30 to 50 shillings per skin. The number of skins brought off from Georgia cannot be estimated at fewer than 1,200,000; the island of Desolation has been equally productive, and, in addition to the vast sums of money which these creatures have yielded, it is calculated that several thousand tons of shipping have annually been employed in the traffic.”

An English writer in 1839 calls attention to the deplorable and ruinous management of affairs on the great rookeries of the South Pacific in the following strong terms:

“It may be considered superfluous to read a lecture to the trader upon a matter so nearly touching his own interest; and yet there is one point, at the same time, which forms so essential a part of my subject, that we cannot withhold a word or



two. These valuable creatures (fur-seals) have often been found frequenting some sterile islands in innumerable multitudes. By way of illustration, I shall refer only to the fur-seal as occurring in South Shetland. On this barren spot their numbers were such that it has been estimated that it could have continued permanently to furnish a return of 100,000 furs a year; which, to say nothing of the public benefit, would have yielded annually a very handsome sum to the adventurers. But what do these men do? In two short years, 1821 and 1822, so great is the rush that they destroy 320,000. They killed all, and spared none. The moment an animal landed, though big with young, it was destroyed. Those on shore were likewise immediately dispatched, though the cubs were but a day old. These, of course, all died, their number, at the lowest calculation, exceeding 100,000. No wonder, then, at the end of the second year the animals in this locality were nearly extinct. So is it in other localities, and so with other seals, and so with the oil-seals, and so with the whale itself, every addition only making bad worse. All this might easily be prevented by a little less barbarous and revolting cruelty, and by a little more *enlightened* selfishness.

“With regard to this seal-fishery of the south, the English and Americans have exclusively divided it between them, and with very great profits. It has lately been stated (1839) that they together employ not fewer than sixty vessels in the trade, of from 250 to 300 tons burden. These vessels are strongly built, and have each six boats, like those of the whalers, together with a small vessel of 40 tons, which is put in requisition when they reach the scene of their operations. The crew consists of about twenty-four hands; their object being to select a fixed locality from which to make their various *batteaus*. Thus it is very common for the ship to be moored in some secure bay and be partially unrigged, while at the same time the furnaces, try-pots, &c., required for making the oil are placed on shore. The little cutter is then rigged and manned with about half the crew, who sail about the neighboring islands and send a few men here and there on shore where they may see seals or wish to watch for them. The campaign frequently lasts for three years, and in the midst of unheard-of privations and dangers. Some of the crew are sometimes left on distant barren spots, the others being driven off by storms. They are left to

perish or drag out for years a most preearious and wretched existence."\*

This gives a very fair idea of the manner in which the business was conducted in the South Pacific. How long would our sealing interests in Bering Sea withstand the attacks of such a fleet of sixty vessels, carrying from twenty to thirty men each? Not over two years. The fact that these great southern rookeries withstood and paid for attacks of this extensive character during a period of over twenty years speaks eloquently of the millions upon millions that must have existed in the waters now almost deserted by them.

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\* Robert Hamilton, *Amphibious Mammalia*, Edinburgh, 1839.

THOUGHTS UPON POSSIBLE MOVEMENTS OF THE  
FUR-SEALS IN THE FUTURE.

As these animals live and breed upon the Prybilov Islands, certain natural conditions of landing-ground and climate appear from my study of them to be necessary to their existence and perpetuation. From my surveys made upon the islands to the north, Saint Matthew's and Saint Lawrence, and the authentic corroborating testimony of those who have visited all of the mainland-coast on our side as well as the islands adjacent, including the Peninsula and the Aleutian Archipelago, I have no hesitation in stating that the fur-seal cannot breed on any other land than that now resorted to within our boundary-lines; the natural obstacles are insuperable. Therefore, so far as our possessions extend, we have in the Prybilov group the only eligible land on which the fur-seal can repair for breeding, and on Saint Paul alone there is still room enough vacant for the accommodation of ten times as many as we find there now.

But we know that to the westward, and within the jurisdiction of Russia, are two islands—one very large—on which the fur-seal regularly breeds also, and though, from the meager testimony in our possession, we are told that it is in small numbers only, still, if the land be as suitable for the reception of the rookeries as is that of Saint Paul, then what guarantee have we that at some future time the seal-life on Copper and Bering Islands may not be greatly augmented by a corresponding diminution of our own with no other than natural causes operating? Certainly, if the ground on either Copper or Bering Island is as well suited for the wants of the breeding fur-seal as is that on Saint Paul, then I say that we may at any time note a diminution here and find a corresponding augmentation there, for I have clearly shown, in my chapter on the habits of these animals, that they are not particularly attached to the respective places of their birth, but that they land with an instinctive appreciation of its fitness as a whole. The want of definite knowledge in regard to the character of the Russian islands is a serious drawback to any correct generalization as to the limit of migration, and they ought to be examined intelligently with this view, for if these Russian islands do not present any considerable area of eligible breeding-ground as on Saint Paul, then we know that they will never be resorted to

by any great numbers of the fur-seal, not at least while so much good rookery-ground on the American side is vacant as is the case now.

If we, however, possess virtually all the best-situated ground, then we can count upon retaining the seal-life as we now have it, and in no other way; for it is not unlikely that some season may occur when an immense number of the fur-seals which have lived during the last four or five years on the Prybilov Islands should be deflected from their usual feeding-range by the shifting of schools of fish, &c., so as to bring them around quite close to the Asiatic seal-grounds in the spring, and the scent from those rookeries would act as a powerful stimulant for them to land there, where conditions for their breeding may be as favorable as desired by them. Such being the case, this diminution which we would notice on the Prybilov group would be the great increase observed here, and not due to any mismanagement on the part of the men in charge of these interests. Thus it appears to me necessary that definite knowledge concerning the Commander Islands and the Kuriles should be possessed; without it, I should not hesitate to say that any report made by an agent of the Department as to a visible diminution of the seal-life on the Prybilovs, due, in his opinion, to the effect of killing, as it is conducted, was without good foundation; that this diminution would have been noticed just the same in all likelihood had there been no taking of seals at all on the islands, and that the missing seals are more than probably on the Russian grounds.

If we find, however, that the character of this Russian seal-land is restricted to narrow beach-margins under bluffs, as at Saint George, then we know that a great body of seals will never attempt to land there when they could not do so without suffering, and therefore, with this correct understanding to start on, we can then feel alarmed with good reason should we observe a diminution to any noteworthy degree on Saint Paul.

I do not think, however, that we will be called upon to look into this question for an indefinite time to come, though it may come soon; but the seals undoubtedly feed in systematic routine of travel from the time they leave the Prybilov Islands until their return, and therefore, in all probability, unless the fish upon which they feed suddenly become scarce in our waters on soundings, they (the seals) will not change their base as mat-

ters now progress, but it cannot be considered superfluous to call up this question for discussion and future thought.

In the mean time the movements of the seals upon the several breeding-grounds of Saint Paul and Saint George should be faithfully noted and recorded every year, and the question of their increase or diminution will be soon settled beyond all theory or cavil. This action on the part of the Government agent up there is of the first importance. The counting of the skins is done alike twice over, by the company in the presence of the natives, and then again in San Francisco by the custom-house officials there, and heavy bonds and self-interest would prevent any attempt at transgression of law, even if an apparent chance was offered; but the company is not bound to submit a report every year to the Treasury Department upon the condition of the seal-life there, and although it does take intelligent cognizance of this matter, still no weight could be attached to any statement that it might make, for the simple reason of the cry that would be raised of interested machination if so done.

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AN ACT to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That it shall be unlawful to kill any fur-seal upon the islands of Saint Paul's and Saint George's, or in the waters adjacent thereto, except during the months of June, July, September, and October, in each year; and it shall be unlawful to kill such seals at any time by the use of fire-arms, or use other means tending to drive the seals away from said islands: *Provided,* That the natives of said islands shall have the privilege of killing such young seals as may be necessary for their own food and clothing during other months, and also such old seals as may be required for their own clothing and for the manufacture of boats for their own use, which killing shall be limited and controlled by such regulations as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That it shall be unlawful to kill any female seal, or any seal less than one year old, at any season of the year, except as above provided; and it shall also be unlawful to kill any seal in the waters adjacent to said islands, or on the beaches, cliffs, or rocks where they haul up from the sea to remain; and any person who shall violate

either of the provisions of this or the first section of this act, shall be punished on conviction thereof, for each offense, by a fine of not less than two hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months, or by both such fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction and taking cognizance of the offense; and all vessels, their tackle, apparel, and furniture, whose crew shall be found engaged in the violation of any of the provisions of this act, shall be forfeited to the United States.

SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted*, That for the period of twenty years from and after the passage of this act the number of fur-seals which may be killed for their skins upon the island of Saint Paul's is hereby limited and restricted to seventy-five thousand per annum; and the number of fur-seals which may be killed for their skins upon the island of Saint George's is hereby limited and restricted to twenty-five thousand per annum: *Provided*, That the Secretary of the Treasury may restrict and limit the right of killing, if it shall become necessary for the preservation of such seals, with such proportionate reduction of the rents reserved to the Government as shall be right and proper; and if any person shall knowingly violate either of the provisions of this section, he shall, upon due conviction thereof, be punished in the same way as is provided herein for a violation of the provisions of the first and second sections of this act.

SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted*, That immediately after the passage of this act the Secretary of the Treasury shall lease, for the rental mentioned in section 6 of this act, to proper and responsible parties, to the best advantage of the United States, having due regard to the interests of the Government, the native inhabitants, the parties heretofore engaged in the trade, and the protection of the seal-fisheries, for a term of twenty years from the 1st day of May, 1870, the right to engage in the business of taking fur-seals on the islands of Saint Paul's and Saint George's, and to send a vessel or vessels to said islands for the skins of such seals, giving to the lessee or lessees of said islands a lease duly executed, in duplicate, not transferable, and taking from the lessee or lessees of said islands a bond, with sufficient sureties, in a sum not less than \$500,000, conditional for the faithful observance of all the laws and requirements of Congress and of the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury touching the subject-matter of taking fur-seals and disposing of the same, and for the payment of all taxes and

dues accruing to the United States connected therewith. And in making said lease the Secretary of the Treasury shall have due regard to the preservation of the seal-fur trade of said islands, and the comfort, maintenance, and education of the natives thereof. The said lessees shall furnish to the several masters of vessels employed by them certified copies of the lease held by them, respectively, which shall be presented to the Government revenue-officer for the time being who may be in charge at the said islands, as the authority of the party for landing and taking skins.

SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That at the expiration of said term of twenty years, or on surrender or forfeiture of any lease, other leases may be made in manner as aforesaid for other terms of twenty years; but no persons other than American citizens shall be permitted, by lease or otherwise, to occupy said islands, or either of them, for the purpose of taking the skins of fur-seals therefrom, nor shall any foreign vessel be engaged in taking such skins; and the Secretary of the Treasury shall vacate and declare any lease forfeited if the same be held or operated for the use, benefit, or advantage, directly or indirectly, of any person or persons other than American citizens. Every lease shall contain a covenant on the part of the lessee that he will not keep, sell, furnish, give, or dispose of any distilled spirits or spirituous liquors on either of said islands to any of the natives thereof, such person not being a physician and furnishing the same for use as medicine; and any person who shall kill any fur-seal on either of said islands, or in the waters adjacent thereto, (excepting natives as provided by this act,) without authority of the lessees thereof, and any person who shall molest, disturb, or interfere with said lessees, or either of them, or their agents or employes in the lawful prosecution of their business; under the provisions of this act, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall for each offense, on conviction thereof, be punished in the same way and by like penalties as prescribed in the second section of this act; and all vessels, their tackle, apparel, appurtenances, and cargo, whose crews shall be found engaged in any violation of either of the provisions of this section, shall be forfeited to the United States; and if any person or company, under any lease herein authorized, shall knowingly kill, or permit to be killed, any number of seals exceeding the number for each island in this act prescribed, such person or company shall, in addition to the penalties and forfeitures aforesaid, also forfeit the whole

number of the skins of seals killed in that year, or, in case the same have been disposed of, then said person or company shall forfeit the value of the same. And it shall be the duty of any revenue-officer, officially acting as such on either of said islands, to seize and destroy any distilled spirits or spirituous liquors found thereon: *Provided*, That such officer shall make detailed report of his doings to the collector of the port.

SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That the annual rental to be reserved by said lease shall be not less than \$50,000 per annum, to be secured by deposit of United States bonds to that amount, and in addition hereto a revenue tax or duty of two dollars is hereby laid upon each fur-seal skin taken and shipped from said islands during the continuance of such lease, to be paid into the Treasury of the United States; and the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby empowered and authorized to make all needful rules and regulations for the collection and payment of the same, for the comfort, maintenance, education, and protection of the natives of said islands, and also for carrying into full effect all the provisions of this act: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Treasury may terminate any lease given to any person, company, or corporation, on full and satisfactory proof of the violation of any of the provisions of this act or the rules and regulations established by him: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby authorized to deliver to the owners the fur-seal skins now stored on the islands, on the payment of one dollar for each of said skins taken and shipped away by said owners.

SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted*, That the provisions of the seventh and eighth sections of an act entitled "An act to extend the laws of the United States relating to customs, commerce, and navigation over the territory ceded to the United States by Russia, to establish a collection-district therein, and for other purposes," approved July 27, 1868, shall be deemed to apply to this act; and all prosecutions for offenses committed against the provisions of this act, and all other proceedings had because of the violations of the provisions of this act, and which are authorized by said act above mentioned, shall be in accordance with the provisions thereof; and all acts and parts of acts inconsistent with the provisions of this act are hereby repealed.

SEC. 8. *And be it further enacted*, That the Congress may at any time hereafter alter, amend, or repeal this act.

Approved, July 1, 1870.



BY-LAWS OF THE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

I. The corporate name of this company is the Alaska Commercial Company, and its affairs are under the control of five trustees, who shall hereafter be chosen by the stockholders of the company on the second Wednesday of June in each year, and who shall hold office until their successors are elected. The annual meetings of the stockholders shall be held at the office of the company. At all elections of trustees by the stockholders each stockholder shall be entitled to one vote for every share of stock held by him on the books of the company. Stockholders may vote by proxy. All proxies shall be signed by the party owning the stock represented.

II. The principal place of business of the company is San Francisco, California.

III. The regular meetings of the board of trustees will be held at the office of the company on the first Wednesday in each month, at 12 o'clock m., and no notice of such meeting to any of the trustees shall be requisite. Other meetings of the board of trustees may be held upon the call of the president, by notice, signed by him, of the time and place of meeting, personally served on each trustee residing within this State, or published in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco for ten days successively next preceding the day of such meeting. Special meetings may be held upon notice, signed by three trustees, stating the time and place of meeting, and the purpose for which the meeting is called, having been duly served on each trustee, or published in a newspaper of general circulation in San Francisco for ten days successively next preceding the day of meeting, and no business other than that specified in the notice shall be transacted at such special meeting. At all meetings of the board any three of the trustees being present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the company. Adjourned meetings may be held in pursuance of a resolution of the board adopted at any regular or general meeting of the board. Any three trustees elected at any annual meeting of the stockholders of the company, and being present at the close of such stockholders' meeting, may, on the same day, without notice to any of the trustees, meet and organize the board by the election of officers, and

may transact such other business as may come before the board at such meeting.

IV. The officers of the company shall consist of a president, a vice-president, and a secretary, who shall be chosen by the board of trustees at their first meeting after the annual election of trustees; such officers to hold office one year, or until their successors are elected.

V. The president, or in his absence the vice-president, shall preside at the meetings of the board. In case neither are present, the board may appoint a president *pro tempore*.

VI. All vacancies in the board may be filled by the board at the next meeting after the existence of such vacancy, and it shall require the affirmative vote of three trustees to elect. In case of any vacancy occurring among the officers or agents of the company, the same may be filled at any meeting of the board.

VII. All certificates of the capital stock of the company shall be signed by the president and secretary, attested by the corporate seal of the company, and can be issued to the parties entitled thereto or their authorized agent. All transfers of stock shall be made on the books of the company by the secretary, upon surrender of the original certificate or certificates, properly indorsed by the party in whose favor the same was issued. No stock shall be transferred to any person not a stockholder of the company at the time of such transfer, unless the same shall have been offered for sale to the company, or stockholders of the company, and the purchase at the fair cash or market value refused, except by authority of a resolution of the board of trustees permitting such transfer.

VIII. The corporate seal of the company consists of a die of the following words: "Alaska Commercial Company, San Francisco, California."

IX. The corporate seal, and all property, securities, interests, and business of the company, shall be under the control and general management of the president, subject to the direction of the board of trustees. The funds of the company shall be deposited (from time to time, as they are received) to the credit of the company, with a bank doing business in San Francisco, to be designated by the president, and the said funds can be drawn from such bank only by proper checks or drafts, signed by the president or vice-president of the company. The books of the company shall be kept by the secretary, who shall

also keep a correct record of all the proceedings of the board of trustees had at their meetings, and perform such other duties as the board of trustees may require.

X. The pay and salaries of all officers of the company shall be determined, from time to time, by the board of trustees.

XI. The president of the company shall have power to appoint and employ such general business agents, factors, attorneys, clerks, and other employés as he may deem proper and requisite for conducting the business and affairs of the company; and he shall fix the pay, commissions, or salaries of all such agents, factors, attorneys, clerks, and other employés, from time to time, as circumstances shall require.

XII. All transfers of the capital stock of this company made to persons not citizens of the United States, or made for the use or benefit of any citizen or citizens of any foreign government, are absolutely void.

XIII. Dividends from the net profits of the company may be declared and paid by order of the board of trustees, in accordance with law.

XIV. These by-laws may be altered or amended by the board of trustees in the manner prescribed by law.

## REGULATIONS.

OFFICE ALASKA COMMERCIAL COMPANY,  
*San Francisco, January, 1872*

The following regulations are prescribed for the guidance of all concerned :

1. The general management of the company's affairs on the islands of Saint Paul's and Saint George's is intrusted to one general agent, whose lawful orders and directions must be implicitly obeyed by all subordinate agents and employés.

2. Seals can only be taken on the islands during the months of June, July, September, and October in each year, except those killed by the native inhabitants, for food and clothing, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

Female seals and seals less than one year old will not be killed at any time, and the killing of seals in the waters surrounding the islands, or on or about the rookeries, beaches, cliffs, or rocks, where they haul up from the sea to remain, or by the use of fire-arms, or any other means tending to drive the seals away from the islands, is expressly forbidden.

3. The use of fire-arms on the islands, during the period from the first arrival of seals in the spring-season until they disappear from the islands in autumn, is prohibited.

4. No dogs will be permitted on the islands.

5. No person will be permitted to kill seals for their skins on the islands, except under the supervision and authority of the agents of the company.

6. No vessels other than those employed by the company, or vessels of the United States, will be permitted to touch at the islands, or to land any persons or merchandise thereon, except in cases of shipwreck or vessels in distress.

7. The number of seals which may be annually killed for their skins on Saint Paul's Island is limited to seventy-five thousand, and the number which may be so killed on Saint George's Island is limited to twenty-five thousand.

8. No persons other than American citizens, or the Aleutian inhabitants of said islands, will be employed by the company on the islands in any capacity.

9. The Aleutian people living on the islands will be employed by the company in taking seals for their skins, and they will be paid for the labor of taking each skin and delivering the same at the salt-house forty cents, coin, until otherwise ordered by the Secretary of the Treasury. For other labor performed for the company, proper and remunerative wages will be paid, the amount to be agreed upon between the agents of the company and the persons employed. The working-parties will be under the immediate control of their own chiefs, and no compulsory means will ever be used to induce the people to labor. All shall be free to labor or not, as they may choose. The agents of the company will make selection of the seals to be killed, and are authorized to use all proper means to prevent the cutting of skins.

10. All provisions and merchandise required by the inhabitants for legitimate use will be furnished them from the company's stores, at prices not higher than ordinary retail prices at San Francisco, and in no case at prices above 25 per cent. advance on wholesale or invoice prices in San Francisco.

11. The necessary supplies of fuel, oil, and salmon will be furnished the people *gratis*.

12. All widows and orphan children on the islands will be supported by the company.

13. The landing or manufacture on the islands of spirituous or intoxicating liquors or wines will under no circumstances be permitted by the company, and the preparation and use of fermented liquors by the inhabitants must be discouraged in every legitimate manner.

14. Free transportation and subsistence on the company's vessels will be furnished all people, who at any time desire to remove from the islands to any place in the Aleutian group of islands.

15. Free schools will be maintained by the company eight months in each year, four hours per day, Sundays and holidays excepted, and agents and teachers will endeavor to secure the attendance of all. The company will furnish the necessary books, stationery, and other appliances for the use of the schools without cost to the people.

16. The physicians of the company are required to faithfully attend upon the sick, and both medical attendance and medicines shall be free to all persons on the islands; and the ac-

ceptance of gratuities from the people for such services is forbidden.

17. The dwelling-houses now being erected by the company, will be occupied by the Aleutian families, free of rent or other charges.

18. No interference on the part of agents or employés of the company, in the local government of the people on the islands, or in their social or domestic relations, or in their religious rites or ceremonies, will be countenanced or tolerated.

19. It is strictly enjoined upon all agents and employés of the company to at all times treat the inhabitants of the islands with the utmost kindness, and endeavor to preserve amicable relations with them. Force is never to be used against them, except in defense of life, or to prevent the wanton destruction of valuable property. The agents and employés of the company are expected to instruct the native people in household economy, and, by precept and example, illustrate to them the principles and benefits of a higher civilization.

20. Faithful and strict compliance with all the provisions and obligations contained in the act of Congress entitled "An act to prevent the extermination of fur-bearing animals in Alaska," approved July 1, 1870, and the obligations contained in the lease to the company executed in pursuance of said act, and the regulations of the Secretary of the Treasury, prescribed under authority of said act, is especially enjoined upon all agents and employés of the company. The authority of the special agents of the Treasury appointed to reside upon the islands must be respected, whenever lawfully exercised. The interest of the company in the management of the seal-fisheries being identical in character with that of the United States, there can be no conflict between the agents of the company and the agents of the Government, if all concerned faithfully perform their several duties and comply with the laws and regulations.

21. The general agent of the company will cause to be kept books of record on each island, in which shall be recorded the names and ages of all the inhabitants of the islands, and, from time to time, all births, marriages, and deaths which may occur on the islands, stating, in cases of death, the causes of the same. A full transcript of these records will be annually forwarded to the home office at San Francisco.

22. Copies of these regulations will be kept constantly posted

in conspicuous places on both islands, and any willful violation of the same by the agents or employés of the company will be followed by the summary removal of the offending party.

JOHN F. MILLER,

*President Alaska Commercial Company.*

NOTE.—Sections 2 and 7 of the above regulations were based upon the law of July 1, 1870; but since then Congress has given the Secretary of the Treasury the power to fix the ratio for each island upon a more intelligent understanding of the subject—and also to extend the time for taking from the 1st of June up to the 15th of August.—H. W. E.

