

too, as an Ainu would be to hold libations in honour of Yoshitsune; for after all, the said libations are neither more nor less than a drinking of *saké*. The real god worshipped is the person's own stomach.

"Such then are my reasons for dissenting from the generally received opinion on this subject. On the contrary, I believe that Yoshitsune is merely honoured by the people. And this opinion rests, not upon the argument of question and answer, but upon that together with actual observation and spontaneously given information. It is, indeed, a wonder that the Ainu do not worship him as a god, and perhaps a few of the rising generation may yet do so; but I hope not."

A second point of interest, is that relative to the bringing up of young bears by the Ainos. The bear, which in Yezo closely resembles the cinnamon bear of the Western States, if, indeed, he is not the same species, is an object of worship among these people. Whenever the young can be captured, they are kept in close cages until of a certain age, when they are sacrificed with great ceremony. Every Aino village and hamlet has at least one such cage, and a traveller usually finds them occupied. The belief is common among the Japanese—and it has also been freely accepted by foreigners—that when these bears are captured very young they are nursed by the Aino women as they would their own babes. That such could be the case, has always appeared to the writer as highly improbable, but in view of the difficulty of gaining trustworthy testimony, it has heretofore been impossible to satisfactorily deny the truth of the common assertion. Mr. Batchelor has now brought forward the result of evidence obtained during his residence among these people, and his statements are sufficiently conclusive to justify us in asserting our original opinion. His communication to me is as follows:—

THE REARING OF BEARS BY THE AINU.

"It appears to be thought by many people, both English and American, that the Ainu women are in the habit of bringing up bear cubs at the breast as they do their own children. This opinion has received so much credence be-