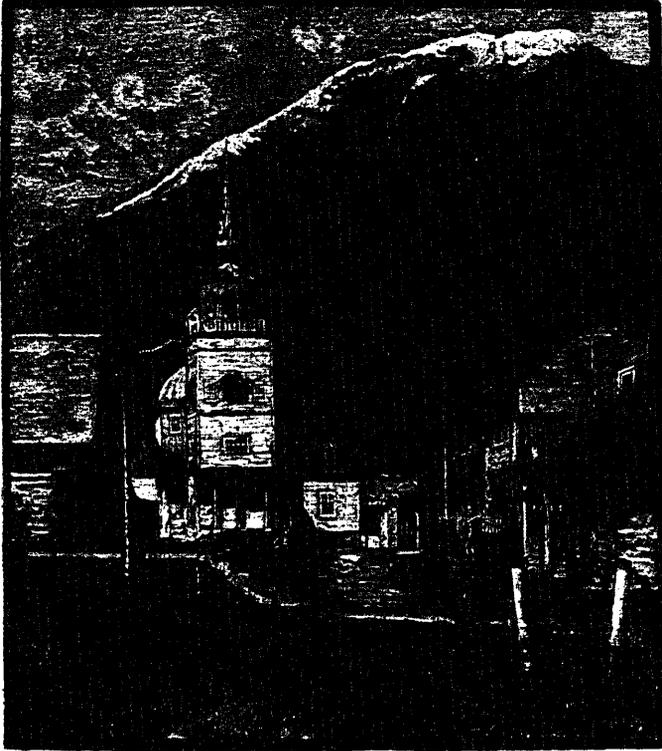


opened and received her into the bosom of the earth. That hole [the crater] is where she went down. Ever since that time she has held the earth above the water. The earth is shaped like the back of a turtle and rests on a pillar; Ah-gish-ahn-akhon holds the pillar. Evil spirits that wish to destroy mankind seek to overthrow her or drive her away. The terrible battles are long and fierce in the lower darkness. Often the pillar rocks and

We passed a succession of evergreen islands with steep, rocky shores, and in the distance we could see the jagged alps of the main-land. The trees were principally fir, hemlock, and cedar. The evergreen underbrush was so dense and so matted with ferns and moss as to be almost impenetrable. The accumulation of moss was frequently ten or fifteen feet deep. Peat-bogs and coal-fields were common features of the islands, but the



THE MAIN STREET OF SITKA.

sways in the struggle, and the earth trembles and seems like to fall, but Ah-gish-ahn-akhon is good and strong, so the earth is safe. Chethyl lives in the bird Kunna-káht-eth. His nest is in the top of the mountain, in the hole through which his sister disappeared.

"He carries whales in his claws to this eyrie, and there devours them. He swoops from his hiding-place and rides on the edge of the coming storm. The roaring of the tempest is his voice calling to his sister. He claps his wings in the peals of thunder, and its rumbling is the rustling of his pinions. The lightning is the flashing of his eyes."*

* Bishop Veniaminoff, Wrangell, and Dall have given versions of this legend.

coal was found to be sulphurous and bituminous. Clams were abundant and good. The smallest, when opened, were about the size of an orange. The largest shells were used as soup-plates by the natives. The waters of the archipelago at all seasons are alive with halibut. They are caught with a peculiar hook, fastened to a thick line made of twisted cedar-root fiber. Our bill of fare in Alaska included clams, mussels, herring, herring-roe, codfish, salmon, porpoise, seal, ducks, geese, and halibut—eternally halibut. Venison and wild goat and bear's flesh were to be had only occasionally, and the craving for good warm-blooded meats was incessant with us whites. Another intense craving was for sweets. We devoured our

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