

Sitka, gaily painted with totems, to the squalid shak with mud floor, in the middle of which burns the fire kindled to serve the three-fold purpose of warming the filthy apartments, cooking the viands, and smoking the winter supply of fish that is suspended on frames where the smoke will find it on its way to the opening in the roof left for it to escape. The odor of an Indian village is something never to be forgotten. The refuse of fish lying about everywhere accounts partially for it.

Alaskan Indians are at home on the water, but avoid the mountains. When it is necessary to go hunting, a canoe loaded with dogs and men (every Indian hut harbors at least a score of dogs) is rowed to the desired place, the dogs are sent up into the mountains to drive down the game which is then shot by the waiting huntsmen.

There are numerous white settlements in Southern Alaska. Sitka, the capital, and Juneau, the metropolis, are chief among them. Sitka is interesting as the seat of government, for its extremely beautiful location, for its quaintness and history, for the Greek church, the old cannon marked with the double-headed eagle, and the ancient log-houses, relics of Russian America, and for its traditions, but it is unique, and in no way characteristic of modern Alaska. Juneau, on the other hand, is typical of the numerous mining towns of mushroom growth that perch upon the mountain sides, wedge their way into valleys, and hang upon the reluctant and inhospitable coasts of that country whose surface will not allow towns to nestle and look at home. It is a compact little hamlet between the sea and dark towering mountains. Across the bay lies Douglas Island, where the famous Treadwell mill is situated, the largest stamping mill in the world. The waters in the harbor of Juneau are rough and discolored by the water brought down

from the mines. The lofty mountains, with dark green mantles and ermine caps, rising immediately behind the city would bury it with snowslides were it not for the protection of intervening hills built by avalanches. The village is saved from ugliness by the kindly Alaskan moss which has a wonderful way of softening down plain, graceless outlines, and concealing the newness and commonness of its mean little frame buildings. An old skid road and two or three mud ways, churned where much used to a perfect broth, are all that Juneau has to show in the line of roads, for vehicles are little used in that rough country, and rubber boots are cheaper than pavements.

No permanent improvements are attempted, as Juneau's citizens are there for gain, not to spend; to get rich and go back to their homes in the States.

There are about three thousand whites in Juneau and as many Indians, but it is not an incorporated town and municipal affairs take care of themselves. Stores are open Sunday, the innumerable beer saloons are open seven days in the week and twenty-four hours in the day; music, dancing, and drinking seem never to cease. Whiskey is prohibited by the government, and home-brewed beer is the only drink sold. The miners are a rough class of men, the Indians are evil and sinister looking, and Juneau is pronounced a wicked little town. But it is not wholly bad. It has its mission, churches, and schools, and many of the homes, though small and snug, give evidence of refinement and luxury. Soft carpets, draperies, electric lights, fine china, musical instruments, pictures, books, and polite children are not rare. The stores have a large assortment of goods, quite up-to-date in all departments, offered at prices very little in advance of those demanded in Seattle.