

lowed by half a hundred armed soldiers. The plotters were handcuffed and sent back to Siberia.

There was something inexcusably cruel in the termination of Baranof's services with the fur company. He was now over seventy years of age. He was tortured by rheumatism from the long years of exposure in a damp climate. Because he was not of noble birth, though he had received title of nobility, he was subject to insults at the hands of any petty martinet who came out as officer on the Russian vessels. Against these Baranof usually held his own at Sitka, but they carried back to St. Petersburg slanderous charges against his honesty. Twice he had asked to be allowed to resign. Twice successors had been sent from Russia; but one died on the way, and the other was shipwrecked. It was easy for malignant tongues to rouse suspicion that Baranof's desire to resign sprang from interested motives, perhaps from a wish to conceal his own peculations. Though Baranof had annually handled millions of dollars' worth of furs for the Russian Company, at a distance from oversight that might have defied detection in wrong-doing, it was afterwards proved that he had not misused or misappropriated one dime's worth of property; but who was to believe his honesty in the face of false charges?

In the fall of 1817 Lieutenant Hagemeister arrived at Sitka to audit the books of the company. Concealing from Baranof the fact that he was to be deposed,