



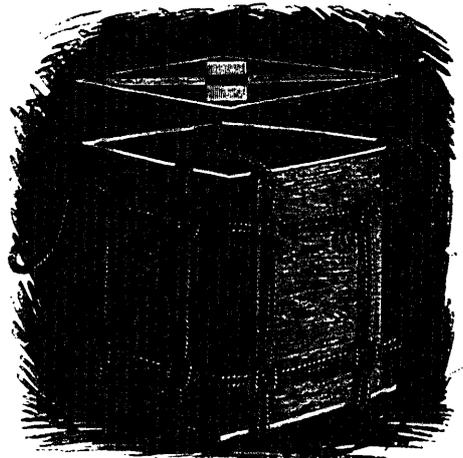
BONE STAKES FOR MARTEN TRAP. (INTERIOR OF ALASKA.)

ordinarily very quiet. Even their large meetings are subdued and orderly. They are undemonstrative. The mothers do not fondle nor play with their children much, but a stranger can win their hearts by kindness to their little ones. They consider corporeal punishment a disgrace, and I did not see a child struck during the time I was among them. A rebuke, a sharp tone, or exclusion from the cabin seemed to be the only punishments. Even the dogs are curiously exempt from punishment and abuse, and a more wolfish, starved, mangy lot of curs it would be hard to find. Good bear-dogs they will not sell at any price. With all their gentleness of voice and manner, and their absolute respect for the rights of the smallest and youngest of the family, their love and affection seemed of the coolest sort. Etiquette required only about forty days of ostensible mourning. The loss of children seemed to cause the greatest grief. They have a curious habit of blacking the face with a mixture of seal-oil and lamp-black, or burnt pitch, but I believe this custom, whatever its origin, is now merely a kind of toilet, to be used according to the whim of the individual.

From this Asónque village I went, with a party of mountain goat-hunters, up into the Mount St. Elias alps back of Mount Fairweather—that is, to the north-east of that mountain. For this trip our party made elaborate preparations. We donned belted shirts made of

squirrel skins, fur head-dresses (generally conical), seal-skin bootees fitting very closely, and laced half-way to the knee. We carried spears for alpenstocks, bows and arrows, raw-hide ropes, and one or two old Hudson Bay rifles. The climbing was very laborious work. The mountains, where not covered with ice or snow, were either of a crumbling schistose character or ice-worn limestone, and sometimes granite. The sides were terribly rugged; some of the face walls were about eight hundred feet sheer, with a foot slope of shell-rock or *débris* of two hundred or three hundred feet more. Ptarmigan were seen on the lower levels where the ground was bare, but I saw nothing on which they could feed. The goats kept well up toward the summit, amid the snow-fields, and fed on the grass which sprouted along the edges of melting drifts. They were the wariest, keenest animals I ever hunted. The animal is like a large white goat, with long, coarse hair and a heavy coat of silky underfleece. The horns, out of which the natives carve spoons, are short, sharp, and black.

After crossing this coast range the country seemed much the same—rugged, bleak, and impassable. The Indians with me, so far as I could understand them, said it was an exceedingly rough country all the way over, and that the Chilkáht River had its rise among just such alps as those around us, only it was warmer in the Chilkáht mountains, and there was more grass and plenty of wild goats,



THLINKIT TRAVELING CHEST.

sheep, and bears. We found a bear that, so far as I know, is peculiar to this country. It is a beautiful bluish under color, with the tips of the long hairs silvery white. The traders call it "St. Elias's silver bear." The skins are not common.

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