

nity in blankets, adjusted according to an imaginary tariff, or, in the failure of such compensation, secures the death of one or more enemies as an atonement for the injury it has sustained. The enemy captured, whether by superior force or strategy, either receives no quarter, or submits for himself and his progeny to perpetual slavery. It has thus happened that the Indian tribes of Alaska have never either confederated or formed permanent alliances, and that even at this late day, in the presence of superior power exercised by the United States Government, they live in regard to each other in a state of enforced and doubtful truce. It is manifest that, under these circumstances, they must steadily decline in numbers, and unhappily this decline is accelerated by their borrowing ruinous vices from the white man. Such as the natives of Alaska are, they are, nevertheless, in a practical sense, the only laborers at present in the Territory. The white man comes amongst them from London, from St. Petersburg, from Boston, from New York, from San Francisco and from Victoria, not to fish (if we except alone the whale fishery) or to hunt, but simply to buy what fish and what peltries, ice, wood, lumber, and coal, the Indians have secured under the superintendence of temporary agents or factors. When we consider how greatly most of the tribes are reduced in numbers, and how precarious their vocations are, we shall cease to regard them as indolent or incapable; and, on the contrary, we shall more deeply regret than ever before, that a people so gifted by nature, so vigorous and energetic, and withal so docile and gentle in their intercourse with the white man, can neither be preserved as a distinct social community, nor incorporated into our society. The Indian tribes will do here