

evenings peculiar to the season I have lost myself in admiration of skies adorned with sapphire and gold as richly as those which are reflected by the Mediterranean. Of all the moonlights in the world commend me to those which light up the archipelago of the North Pacific ocean. Fogs have sometimes detained me longer on the Hudson and on Long Island sound than now on the waters of the North Pacific. In saying this, I do not mean to say that rain and fog are unfrequent here. The Russian pilot, George, whom you all know, expressed my conviction on this matter exactly when he said to me, "Oh, yes, Mr. Seward, we *do* have changeable weather here sometimes, as they do in the other States." I might amend the expression by adding, the weather here is only a little more changeable. It must be confessed at least that it is an honest climate, for it makes no pretensions to constancy. If, however, you have fewer bright sunrises and glowing sunsets than southern latitudes enjoy, you are favored on the other hand with more frequent and more magnificent displays of the aurora and the rainbow. The thermometer tells the whole case when it reports that the summer is colder and the winter is warmer in Alaska than in New York and Washington. It results from the nature of such a climate that the earth prefers to support the fir, the spruce, the pine, the hemlock, and other evergreens, rather than deciduous trees, and to furnish grasses and esculent roots, rather than the cereals of drier and hotter climates. I have mingled freely with the multifarious population—the Tongass, the Stickeens, the Cakes, the Hydahs, the Sitkas, the Kootznoos, and the Chilcats, as well as with the traders, the soldiers, the seamen, and the settlers of various nationalities, English, Swedish, Russian, and