

## PREFACE

**M**ANY books have been written on Alaska. In nearly all of them something has been said about the natives, or aborigines, of the country. In some they are merely alluded to, while in others they are treated more or less comprehensively. While some are reliable so far as they go, others abound with errors and contain statements about the natives which are not true. The same may be said about many articles that have appeared in various periodicals.

It is evident to those who are intimately acquainted with the natives, that some writers have come to their work with little or no preparation. In truth, several of the books extant on Alaska, as well as scores of articles which have appeared in periodicals, have been written by tourists who had but limited opportunities of studying the natives and their customs.

Some of the books, and not a few of the articles, were written on "hurry-up" orders, and by persons who had merely glanced at the country from the deck of a passing steamer. Hearsay and idle rumour furnished much of their contents. Some of them contain fake stories. Had their authors been more intent on publishing facts than on breaking into print such stories would never have been set up in cold type. A novelist may have some license in printing fiction, but he who purports to be telling the truth should know whereof he speaks.