

PUBLIC EDUCATION

**Annual Report of the Department of
Education for the Year End-
ing June 30th.**

Facts and Figures Relating to the Training and Teaching of the Young.

In the annual report of the educational department, presented to the house yesterday, it is shown that the

EARLY ALASKA DAYS.

What Was Seen By Explorers Thirty Years Ago.

Prof. Mark W. Harrington, now president of the Washington state university located in this city, was a member of the scientific corps attached to

the memorable Western Union expedition, which in 1865 started out to locate the telegraph route through the interior of the North Pacific territory through the new territory of Washington, through British Columbia and across the plateaus of Alaska to Behring sea, and thence across the wilder reaches of Siberia to Europe. The project was abandoned, however, this was at a time when the great scheme of Cyrus W. Field to lay a submarine Atlantic cable looked gloomy and doubtful. How much the North Pacific cost lost by the final triumph of the Atlantic can properly be estimate. The success of the Atlantic cable struck the death knell of the Western Union project and some of its supplies are to this day rusting away on the black slopes of Kamchatka. It no doubt put the country through a quarter of a century and yet in the brief thirty years since the day that expedition sailed a great change has come over the country. The country of Henry H. Dall, president of the philosophical society of Washington, was the leader of the scientific corps, and in an annual address delivered before the society last December recounted a great fund of in-

Richard Kennicott, an enthusiastic young naturalist from Chicago, led the expedition, but died while in the Northwest from over-exertion and excitement. The expedition was at Sitka in July of 1895 and continuing up the coast as far as the Yukon. The Yukon explorers embarked for the Yukon, while the fleet of vessels prospected the coast line in Behring sea seeking for landing places for the short submarine cable that was to stretch across the sea between Siberia and Alaska. The next winter, San Francisco returned north in the summer of 1896 to continue work, but Kennicott having died, Profs. Dall, Harrington and others landed and took the trail into the interior of Alaska. The winter of 1896 was spent on the Middle river and the next summer they ascended to Fort Yukon. Descending to Fort Yukon, the party reached the coast, to learn that the Atlantic cable was a success and the great Western Union project abandoned.

Prof. Dall remained the next year to carry on his scientific work, begun under such promising circumstances, and then, when the word came of seeing the upper river, many natives clad in their wildest and most fantastic dress before it had been broken up by the embouchment of the Caucasians.

The natives living on the upper river in the early days were in the habit of congregating from all quarters upon an island in the river for the purpose of barter and trade among themselves and the early Russians.

"Never again," says Prof. Dall, "will it be possible for an ethnologist to see upon the Yukon such a body of absolutely primitive Indians, untarnished by the least breath of civilization."

The Tauna Indians, being most removed, were perhaps the most primitive and interesting. Delegations of them came into the great fair or barter ground in full native dress of painted shirts and trousers of dressed deerskin, adorned with black and white beads. The nasal septum was pierced and a

their long, black hair formed into bundles, was stiff with tallow and wound with beads and dusted with powdered hematite and cut swan's down.

found 4100 fawn skins hanging up to dry and at one time at Fort Yukon were shown 300 silver grey fox skins by a Russian trader, which alone would represent a considerable fortune.

and tea, had not been tasted by some of the poor people for seven years. People lived almost exclusively on game and fish. Caribou were plentiful and moose fairly so, millions of water fowl and Arctic rabbits. Ptarmigan were on the river, and in its waters were innumerable varieties of food fishes, salmon, burbot, grayling, pike and the great red sucker. The king salmon was caught in the river in 150 pounds weight. Millions of these were in the open air for food for dog and native. The writer believes that but for the work done by the old Western Union expedition and the interest it excited and knowledge it disseminated, the great Alaska pur-

phase would have failed to materialize.
Seattle Times.

The glorious charge of the Light Brigade,
By Tennyson famously sung,
Is nothing to that which my doctor made
For taking a look at my tongue.

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