

DOMESTIC INDUSTRY AND ARTS.

We know that in general, as far as the raw materials are to be obtained, each family fabricates its own utensils and other necessaries itself. It is stated that in Alaska not only Indians but also some Eskimo tribes know how to fabricate cooking vessels out of baked clay. If this assertion is correct, it might seem to be of interest in one respect, in as much as the art of making pottery has by some ethnologists been fixed as one of the chief points designating an advance in culture. But in the entire remainder of the Eskimo territory this art is quite unknown, and even if tried, the want of fuel as well as the nature of the soil generally would interfere with its practice. The ordinary material used by the Eskimo for culinary vessels and lamps is the well known potstone whose occurrence is confined to certain localities scattered throughout the Arctic Regions. In connection with a few other commodities it has been the chief object of ancient intertribal trade.

The art exhibited by the Alaska Eskimo in ORNAMENTING THEIR WEAPONS AND UTENSILS is often mentioned in travellers' reports from the time when they were first visited by Europeans. To their skill in carving and engraving we must join the taste displayed in the same way in making their clothing. Again when we pass from Alaska to the East, we see this relish for the fine arts declining, and in Western Greenland proofs of it have been rather scarce. But the latest expedition to the East-coast of this country has discovered, that a small isolated tribe here in the vast deserts of the extreme East almost rivals the Alaska artists with respect to carving in bone and ornamenting their weapons and utensils. The chief difference is, that in Alaska engravings illustrating human life and the animals of the country are the most popular objects of the artist, whereas the East Greenlanders excell in small reliefs representing for