

of the sick boy, then nearly well, I took a fee of some finely carved spoons made from horns of the mountain goat.

At this camp I found traces of a custom which prevails to some extent in Central Africa and is said to obtain throughout the interior of Alaska. When a stranger of rank visits a chief, the latter presents his guest with a wife from among the women of his household. In morals the Alaskans are much inferior to most Indian tribes of the plains. Avarice is their ruling passion. They are the most knavish and cunning of traders. Theft, if successful, brings no disgrace. The detected thief is laughed at and ridiculed. I saw old Cocheen look with fond admiration on Kastase-Kúch, his son, when the latter drew from under his robe some articles he had purloined from the village where we had lodged for the night. Their gratitude seemed small and they have no expression for "I thank you." Flaws in gifts were always carefully examined and critically pointed out to the giver. An Alaskan who shot at some decoy ducks near Sitka, went to the owner of the decoys and demanded the return of his wasted ammunition. Two Alaskans were driven to sea in a canoe. A schooner picked them up, but would not or could not take their canoe as it was still blowing a gale. The rescued demanded payment for the lost craft. Another fellow came to the doctor of the post at Sitka and begged for medicine for his brother and then asked the doctor to pay him for carrying it to the brother. I lent Tah-ah-nah-klékh a goat-skin robe of mine and at the end of our voyage asked him to clean it. He did so and demanded full payment. We did not lose much by theft, because our crew knew very well the value would be deducted from their wages. Thlinkit virtues are hospitality, good-nature, peaceableness, filial obedience, and, after their own code, a respect for solemn contracts or engagements. Even when very angry they only sulk. They are demonstrative only in the expression of surprise. My host, the old Hoonáh chief, was disinterested kindness itself. At his bountiful board I had a seat between his youngest and prettiest wives. They prepared seal-flipper for me with a celery-like dressing of some plant. We lived in ease and luxury and a little necessary grease and dirt. When the fire was stirred, and the spears and paddles were put away for the evening, my host smoked his pipe and told tales of the land of the Tinneh, where all the best furs were and where the mountains were bleak and merciless. His youngest son, a sturdy little fellow of five, shared the pipe with his father, and they passed it from one to the other with amusing solemnity. I told of a

wonderland where the *yahks* were as large as islands and moved against the wind without the help of hands; of great horned animals giving milk; of other great animals on which men rode; of thousands of great stone-houses; of the vast multitude of white people. The Thlinkits received my stories, as they do every statement, with courteous deference. When I rose to go to my own camp the chief selected the handsomest bear-skin from a pile of them, and bade his youngest wife present it to me. When next he came to my camp I gave him, among other things, a fine woollen blanket. He folded it about him and said he would not use it as a hunting blanket. When he went away he would leave it at home, and when he died it should not go with his other effects to his wives and children, but he would be burned in it and it would go with him to the Unknown. A niece of the Chilkáht chief, one of the comeliest of her race, who had married a hideously ugly, but very rich old Hoonáh, the second man in the village, mended my clothes and my sealskin boots, and sang songs or chants for my entertainment that were quite wonderful, I thought, for their flowing measure and rhythm. This is one which I learned to understand the best, called "The Song of the Salmon Fishing":

Why is the young man sorrowful?
Oh why is the young man sad?
Ah-ka. His maiden has left him.
The long suns have come,
The ice now is melting;
Now comes the salmon
He leaps in the river,
In the moon's gentle twilight
He throws up a bow—
A bow of bright silver.
Lusty and strong he darts through the water,
He sports with his mate;
He springs from the water.
All the dark season
He has lain hidden.
Now he comes rushing,
And ripples the river.
Purple and gold, and red and bright silver
Shine on his sides and flash in his sporting,
How he thrashes the net!
How he wrenches the spear!
But the red of his sides
Is stained with a redder;
The maid of the young man leans o'er the salmon
White laugh her teeth,
Clear rings her laughter;
Which passes canoes all busy and happy,
Which outstrips the noise of the many mixed voices
And pierces the heart of her sorrowful lover.
She has forgot him,
She joys with another.
All for another she chases the salmon,
Ah-ka. Your sweetheart has left you.
So do they jeer him,
Ah-ka—your sweetheart is here at the fishing!
Ah-ka—how like you this gay salmon season?

*The crabs I saw at this village were wonderful for their size. Two crabs were brought