

knees of all of them are bent in consequence of their continual posture on the floor, or sitting in a baidarka (canoe). They walk with the points of their feet turning in, while their heels spread outwards. It is impossible for a Russian to walk in the path made by an Aleut.

These people are good and soft-hearted. In time of want, and during the winters a famine is nothing new with them; should any one of them be able to obtain some food, he will be sure to divide it among them all. They show much attention and love for their parents and elders. They are very hardy and patient. It seems impossible to think of any hardship that an Aleut could not bear, or of any sorrow that would make him melancholy. In time of want it is nothing extraordinary for him to live on water alone for three and four days. In sickness, when suffering excruciating pain, you will not hear him utter a cry nor a sigh.

Up to the time of the arrival of Father John the Aleuts were in a wild condition, and in religious belief they were half idol worshippers. Father John had found but one chapel in Ounalashka on his arrival there, and that was an old wooden one. His first work was to build a new church. Being himself a good carpenter and builder, he began teaching the natives these handicrafts, and as soon as they were sufficiently proficient, he commenced building the church. At that he took a lively personal interest in the work, and made with his own hands the holy table and ikonostasis,* which he gilded. The church was dedicated in honor of the Ascension of the Lord. At the same time Father John Veniaminov undertook a great and difficult task—the study of the native languages. He desired to translate for the aborigines the Gospel and the liturgy, and—

*A screen with the images of our Lord, the Apostles, etc., separating the altar from the body of the temple.