

XVIII — *Russian America, or "Alaska:" the Natives of the Youkon River and adjacent country.* By FREDERICK WHYMPER, Esq.

Read April 21st, 1868.]

IN the paper I have the honour to lay before your distinguished society, I propose to treat exclusively of the natives of the Great Youkon river, and those of the coast immediately adjacent. In my recent stay in this northern country, in the service of the W. U. Telegraph Expedition, I had opportunities of becoming tolerably well acquainted with the natives, as we had to employ, travel with, and sometimes dwell among them. In my previous travels in Vancouver Island and British Columbia, with visits paid to the coasts of Kamchatka and Eastern Siberia, I also had some chance of studying the habits and character of the natives of those countries, but in a much more cursory and superficial manner. As I hope to have shortly the pleasure of laying before the Royal Geographical Society some general account of my trip, I shall only allude to the country, its productions, or climate, so far as seems necessary in connexion with the subject in hand.

On the 30th September, 1866, after a lengthened voyage, in which we had visited Petropaulovski, the Anadyr river, and Plover Bay (as Port Providence has always been called by the whaling ships, since Captain Moore, in H.M.S. *Plover*, wintered there in 1848-9), I went ashore to the Russian post of St. Michaels, in Norton Sound, Russian America, and the season being then late, started immediately for a second Russian post, that at the Unalachleet river, in the northern part of the Sound, for the purpose of travelling thence by a direct route, mainly by land, to the Youkon river. On arrival, we found the river almost completely frozen up. This place, according to Zagoskin, one of the few authorities we have on this part of Russian America, is in lat. 63° 53' 33" N.

To the north-west of the Russian trading-post is a large village of Malemute and Kaveak Indians, a race of tall and stout people, many of them over our standard of height, but in other respects much resembling the Esquimaux. The men, very generally, shave the crown of the head, and wear the ornaments known as the "to-took",—pieces of bone run through holes on either side of the face, immediately below the

mouth. The women are generally tattooed on the chin, and wear ornaments of beads from the hair, and leaden or iron bracelets; all adopt skin clothing; the true Malemute coat or shirt is square cut at the bottom, of but moderate length, and almost invariably has a hood. The woman's dress is longer, and has a rounded shape at the lower edge. Into the composition of these dresses, many furs may enter: the hood is almost invariably wolfskin, the long hairs of which shelter and half cover the face. Inside is sometimes a lining of soft, white Arctic hare. The body is generally reindeer-skin, but it may be of the wild or of the domesticated animal,—it may be the thick fur of an old buck, or the thin, half-developed *skin of a fawn that has never lived*. The Tchuktchis of the opposite Asiatic coast trade with these people extensively; and as they are well known to have large herds of domesticated reindeer (some of which I have seen at the Anadyr river, and elsewhere), *whilst the animal is never met with in Russian America but in a wild state*, the commerce is largely for tame reindeer-skins, which are exchanged for bone, oil, and the furs of smaller animals, by the natives of the American side. I shall have to allude to this trade in a subsequent paragraph.

Dresses of mink, marten, seal, and in fact of all the furs taken by them, are more occasionally seen. Fur pantaloons are also worn in winter by both sexes; the women's often have the socks attached, and in one piece. Their boots for winter use usually have reindeer-skin sides, and sealskin, with the hair removed, is used for the soles. The Malemutes and Kaveaks intermingle a good deal, but speak different dialects, and inhabit different parts of the country. The former extend from the Island of St. Michael's to Sound Golovin; whilst the latter occupy a still more northern country, adjacent to Port Clarence, near Behring Straits. I made a brief vocabulary of the Malemute dialect, which I should wish to deposit in your library. These natives use urine almost exclusively for washing and cleansing purposes. They tan with the same liquid, and soften the sealskin used for boot-soles with it. The seal is, perhaps, their most useful animal, not merely furnishing oil and blubber, but the skin is used for their "baidarres" and "baidarkes",—the former an open canoe built over a well constructed wooden frame, and exactly resembling the "oomiak" of the Greenlander; the latter is the same as the Greenland "kyack", but more often constructed with three holes than with one. Thongs, nets, lassoes, and boot-soles, are all made of the same skin. It is prepared by spreading fermented fish-spawn over the hairy side of the skin until the hair rots off. It is then stretched on a frame and saturated with urine, when

it becomes translucent. The fat is removed with bone or stone knives, metal being considered liable to cut it.

In spite of the Russian posts in Norton Sound, a large part of the Indian trade is carried on with the American whaling vessels who visit Port Clarence, Kotzebue Sound, etc., annually, and pay much larger prices than the tariff fixed by the Russian American Fur Company. Another part of the commerce of importance leaves by the hands of the Tchuktchis, before mentioned, who cross from the coast of Siberia by the narrow part of Behring Straits, and generally meet the Malemutes and Kavaaks in Port Clarence. It is said, also, that the natives, from either side, meet sometimes on the Diomedé islands; but of this I have no positive proof. Inter-tribal commerce goes on to such an extent, that clothing worn hundreds of miles up the Youkon, and in the interior of Russian America, is of Tchuktchis origin, and is made up by the coast Indian women, who sew better than those of the interior. By constant inquiry, I found that American sable (stone marten), beaver, and fox skins, taken high up on the Youkon, traded to the co-Youkons, from them to the coast natives, and again from the coast natives to the Tchuktchis, eventually reach Russian traders on the Anadyr river, and other parts of the interior of Eastern Siberia, or the American vessels on the coast.

A large proportion of these natives have guns,—both flint-lock and percussion cap, obtained from the traders; and the bow and arrow are not much used. The smaller animals, marten, mink, hares, grouse, etc., are generally snared.

The berries (so abundant, as far as my experience goes, all over this part of the country) are eagerly sought by the native women, and, mixed with seal-oil, are looked on as a luxury. Raw reindeer fat is also considered a treat; and they cannot better show esteem for a visitor than by presenting him with a piece of "back fat."

Their houses are usually underground, the roof only rising above the surface. The entrance is through a kind of passage or tunnel, by which you crawl into the room. A hole in the roof lets out the smoke, and this, when the fire burns low, is covered with a skin. Nearly every dwelling has a stage for hanging fish and furs, and a small wooden house, or *cache*, on four poles, with a notched log serving as the ladder to it. These are used to stow away supplies and keep them from their dogs, or from wild animals prowling round the village. Canoes, not in use, are generally raised above the ground on tressels.

We saw the Indians, at this place, engaged frequently in fishing through holes in the ice, and catching a small kind of

“white fish” very readily. If we gave a fish-hook to a native, he usually tried to cut off the barb. They take such quantities at this season that they can afford to lose a few off the hook.

In this village, as at most others on the coast, there are buildings set apart for dances and gatherings of the people; they may be regarded as their town-halls. I witnessed several of their public festivals, in some of which they burlesque the motions of birds and quadrupeds. To one dance we were especially invited. Arrived at the doorway, we found a narrow subterraneous passage two feet and a half in height, crawling through which we at last reached the room itself, partly underground, and dimly lighted by blubber-lamps. The Indians to be concerned, chiefly young men, were dressing and bathing themselves in urine when we entered. All were nude to the waist, and wore sealskin, reindeer-skin, or cotton pantaloons, with the tails of wolves or dogs hanging from their posteriors, feathers and cheap handkerchiefs round their heads. The elders sat on a bench, or shelf, running round the entire building, and looked on approvingly, whilst they *consumed their own smoke* (as is also the manner of the Tehuktchis) by swallowing all they made, and getting partially intoxicated thereby. Their pipe-bowls are on the smallest scale; and they even dilute their tobacco with willow shavings cut very finely. Meantime, the women were bringing in contributions of berries and fish in large “contogs,” or wooden bowls, varying in shape from a deep dish to an oblong soup-tureen. The performance commenced by the actors therein ranging themselves in a square, and raising these dishes of provisions to the four cardinal points successively, and once to the skies, with a sudden noise like “swish!” or the flight of a rocket. May be it meant an offering to the seasons, and to the Great Spirit. Then came the feast, and that over, a monotonous chorus, with an accompaniment of gongs, was started. These gongs were made of seal gut stretched on a circular frame, and are struck with a flat stick. The words of the song consisted of “Yung-i-ya, i-ya, i-ya,” many times repeated. Then a boy sprung out on the floor; he was speedily joined by a second, and a third, and so on, till a circle of twenty was joined. Now they appeared violently attracted together, and now as much repelled; now they were horrified at one another’s conduct, and held up their arms with warning gestures; and again, all were friends and made pantomime of their happiness. In this performance, there was nearly as much done by arms and bodies as with the feet. When there was a lull in the entertainment, small presents were brought round to all the strangers; mine was a pair of soles of sealskin. So decided an odour, at length,

pervaded the ballroom, that we, one by one, dropped off from the festive scene: the Indians kept it up for hours afterwards.

Leaving Unalachleet on the 27th of October, we commenced our sledge journey by the short land route to the Youkon, and at only twenty-five miles from the coast, found the Ingelete tribe,—a people speaking a totally distinct dialect from the Indians just mentioned, but one, as we afterwards found, very closely allied to the co-Youkon. At their first village of Igtigalik (or New Ulukuk, as called by the Russians), we found two varieties of their houses. On the right bank of the Unalachleet river, we found a number of *summer* dwellings, simply consisting of shanties on the surface, with a very small hole, sometimes circular, for doorway, and a hole in the roof for the outlet of smoke. Behind them, on posts, were the fish-houses, or *caches* on posts, as before described. On the left bank were a few winter *underground* houses, similar to those already described. When the fire burns low, the embers and sticks are thrown out of the smoke-hole in the roof, which is then covered with a skin, effectually shutting in all warmth, with a good deal of smoke and carbonic acid gas. The entrance-hole is also covered in the same way; and the mixture of smells inside, arising from stale fish or meat, smoke, and dirt, is very sickening, although we were often glad to avail ourselves of their shelter. The dogs, scrambling over the roof, will sometimes tumble through the smoke-hole on to the fire below, scattering cooking arrangements to the winds, and themselves retreating with great alacrity. The Ingeletes are a fine, tall, stout race, with countenances generally expressive of good humour, and a fair amount of intelligence. Many of the men are six feet in height, and some few are over that standard. They were busy, when we saw them, making sledges and snow-shoes; some of the latter of which we obtained for our own use. They do not differ in dress or habits much from the Malemites. The little children are plump and good tempered, suck a stick of ice as though it were barley-sugar, and are totally unacquainted with the use of the pocket handkerchief. They seem to be, in trifles, very cowardly. If a strapping youngster tumbles down and bruises or scratches himself, the women gather round, gesticulating, and making a great fuss, and hide their eyes from the sight of blood. Both men and women smoke; the latter, especially, very sparingly. They also use snuff of Russian leaf-tobacco, rubbed up in a kind of wooden pestle and mortar. They have small oval snuff-boxes, and sniff the powder into their nostrils through a small, short wooden tube. Their honesty, both here and elsewhere, was tried, and not found wanting. I cannot recall a single proven case of dishonesty

among these people; who frequently had our stores of flour, tea, molasses, ham, etc., besides powder and implements, lying unguarded in their houses, during our absence, for weeks together.

A propos of their dirtiness, I must relate a short anecdote. The previous winter an Indian had applied for medical assistance to one of our expedition, stating that he had something the matter with his chest. A powerful blister was prescribed, put on, and left on all night. In the morning it was expected his bosom would be nearly raw, but the only effect it had on him was to leave a clean space on it the exact impression of the blister. The man got well immediately!

Leaving the village, after about fifteen miles travel, we arrived at the Ulukuk River. Rapids here keep the water open for a large part of winter, and the village of (old) Ulukuk is situated immediately by them. This is also an Ingelete settlement: they have many weirs and fish traps by the river, and it is the paradise of this part of the country in regard to salmon and trout. I prefer salmon cooked in the native way, by roasting it on a stick set by the fire and continually turned, to any more civilised mode usually adopted.

The Ingeletes extend to the Youkon, and dwell on a part of its banks. Passing over all details of our journey, I would say a few words on this great river itself.

On the 11th November, about noon, from a slight eminence we could see a faint streak of blue over the trees: we travelled hard to reach it, and at sundown broke from the woods, shot down a steep bank, and stood on an immense snow covered field of ice, the mighty Youkon! Hardly a patch of "clear" ice was to be seen, though large hummucks in places had been forced on the surface, all was covered by a wintry mantle; the river in but a few places still open and running swiftly. From bank to bank was certainly not less than a mile, and several islands were visible in either direction. A quarter of an hour's travel on its frozen surface, brought us to a third Ingelete village, that of Coltog, where we stopped some days in one of the largest underground houses we had seen, one inhabited by several families. The owner of the house, old "Stareek", received us well, and produced Arctic grouse and berries. He harangued his satellites by the hour together in our favour, and they were glad to trade with us for meat, etc. The poor old man, probably the "oldest inhabitant" of this part of the country, with his shrivelled form, wrinkled face, long thin hair, stubby chin, and toothless mouth wagging in a spasmodic and eccentric manner, was a painful sight; but we made his heart rejoice by giving him cotton drill, powder and balls, and other small presents.

A few days after this our journey was completed; we had arrived at Nulato, the most interior post of the Russian-American Company, and at this place spent a large part of the remainder of the winter. As the Indians come to it from a distance of several hundred miles, we had much intercourse with them.

The largest tribe on the river is the Co-Youkon, a people much feared by the surrounding natives. They extend virtually from below the confluence of the Co-Youkuk River to Nuclukayette, at the junction of the Tanana and Youkon. Although some of the intervening tribes have local names, they speak one dialect and may fairly be considered as one people.

In general appearance they somewhat resemble the Ingeletes, but have a wilder and more ferocious cast of features. The true Co-Youkon dress is a double-tailed coat, one tail before and one behind, and this fashion, with various modifications, extends to Fort Youkon, and beyond. The women's garment is more squarely cut, and they adopt a long ornament of Hyagua shells (*Dentalium entalis*), obtained by trade from the Russian-American Company. This is worn on the nose, and runs through a hole made in the cartilage between the nostrils. Curiously, higher up the river it is the men exclusively who adopt the same ornament. These people in the early history of the Fort at Nulato gave the Russians much trouble, and in 1851, one brave Englishman, Lieutenant Barnard, of our navy (a member of Captain, now Admiral, Collinson's expedition), who had travelled thus far in the interior, met his death at their hands. At the same period they killed the head trader of the Fort, and wreaked their vengeance on the Nulato Indians; then a very small tribe, now almost extinct. At the date of this occurrence, about forty Nulato Indians were congregated in some underground houses near the mouth of the Nulato River, and about a mile from the Russian Post. The Co-Youkons surrounded these dwellings, heaped wood, broken canoes, paddles, and snow shoes, over the entrance and smoke holes, and set the whole on fire. All of the unfortunate people below were either suffocated or shot in attempting to escape. We heard of recent brutal murders among themselves; and, although we got along peaceably with them, they are undoubtedly a wilder and more savage race than those of the coast.

These people mourn for the dead one year, and the women during that time often gather together talking and crying over the deceased. At the expiration of that term, they hold a feast or "wake"! and the mourning is over. Their graves are simply oblong boxes raised on posts, sometimes decorated with strips

of skin hanging over them, sometimes with the possessions of the deceased (as a skin boat, or birch bark canoe, with paddles) on the top of the box. It is, in fact, a four-post coffin!

They have certain superstitions with regard to the bones of animals, which they will neither throw on the fire or to the dogs, but save them in their houses or *raches*. When they saw us careless in such matters, they said it would prevent them from catching or shooting successfully. Also, they will not throw away their hair or nails just cut short, but save them, hanging them frequently in packages on the trees.

The Russians have adopted from the Indians of the river a style of fishing through the ice, which yields good returns for their labour. Early in the winter large piles or stakes are driven down through the ice to the bottom of the river, to which are affixed traps of wicker-work, not very unlike the eel-pots to be seen on the Thames. Oblong holes above them are kept open through the ice by frequent breaking, and the baskets raised periodically.

These Indians catch deer in the mountains sometimes by an ingenious device. A kind of "corral", or enclosure, elliptical in shape, and one end open, is built on a deer trail, generally near the outlet of a wood. The further end of this corral is barricaded, while all round the sides stakes are placed with slip loops, or nooses between them. Herds of deer are driven in from the woods, and in trying to break from this enclosed space, they usually run their heads into the nooses, struggle, and get irrevocably entangled. They are then easily despatched, whilst some are shot by natives hidden behind erections of snow with holes through them, like the portholes of a vessel.

We experienced cold as low as minus 58° Fahr., or 90° below freezing. Whilst eleven days during winter showed a temperature below the freezing point of mercury, and accordingly we had to dress very much in the native manner, with reindeer coats or shirts. As soon as the great river broke up, in itself a grand sight after the monotony of the winter, we started up in a skin boat, accompanied by a number of Indians in a regular fleet of birch-bark canoes, their owners all bound for the regular trading meetings of the spring season. The canoes vary in length from eight to fourteen or more feet, according as they are intended for one or more persons. They are built over a light, but well constructed frame of wood; the seams of the birch bark are sewn with the finer roots of spruce fir, caulked with spruce gum. When a leak is discovered, an event of constant occurrence, the native goes ashore, lights a small fire, warms the gum, of which each man carries a supply, turns the canoe bottom upwards, and rubs it into the leak until the place is once more

water tight. Single paddles are commonly used; but double ones, like those used by the Greenlander in his "kyack", are occasionally seen.

About one hundred and twenty miles above Nulato, the trading village of Newicargut is found, a place where the Russians annually obtained a large number of furs. Here we met one hundred and fifty Indians, nearly all wearing the double-tailed coat much adorned with beads and trimmings, fur bags, and knife belts, etc. Many were painted on the face with spots and stripes of colour. It was now summer, and very hot. In the shade the thermometer stood at 72° (later it stood at 78°), and we found the Indians living in open booths, constructed of poles set up roof fashion, and covered with branches and boughs or pieces of birch bark. Some of them had small tents composed of cotton drill, obtained from the traders.

While the Russians who had accompanied us so far were trading for furs, we laid in a large stock—some 250lbs.—of dried deer and moose meat and pemmican. We were not over well provided with trading goods, and in common with all the men of our expedition, I had at times to give away my shirts, socks, pocket knives, etc. The chief at this village took a great fancy to my towel and soap, and as my companion Dall was well provided in this matter I gave them to him. At this juncture he caught sight of my tooth brush, and immediately asked for that. I need not say he did not get it; but I would recommend any future traveller to take nothing but absolute necessaries, or else take all the little luxuries of civilisation by the dozen, as whatever they are unaccustomed to and see you make use of they immediately want. When they do hanker very much after any trifle, they will give a much better price for it; and this matter is of great importance, as the traveller in this country must mainly depend on trade for his provisions.

Whilst there we had an opportunity of seeing "Larrione", a Co-Youkon, make medicine over a sick man. A group of Indians encircled the invalid; in their midst burnt a dim fire. A monotonous chorus in an undertone was kept up, whilst this man went through an elaborate performance: some details of which are absolutely revolting, and cannot be mentioned. Now he appeared to draw the evil spirit from the sick man, and wrestling with it, threw it on the fire, and then repelled, ran wildly from it with mock terror and affright. Now it had possession of him, and he gesticulated, groaned, and frothed at the mouth; the whole accompanied by a recitative, artistically managed in connection with the chorus. The whole affair was not unlike a weird scene in a sensation drama, taking into consideration the accessories, the over-hanging trees, the twilight, the low fire.

At last the performance assumed a gayer tinge, the chorus grew louder and livelier; the man was supposed to be dispossessed, and he hobbled from the scene. I should judge that the Indians were very divided in opinion on Larrione's merits: some, doubtless, thinking he was a great doctor, and others, from the expression of their faces, that he was a great humbug.

A hundred miles further up the river, and we reached the great trading ground of Nuclukayette, at the junction of the Tanana with the Youkon. We saluted this, and in fact every principal village on the river, with a miscellaneous discharge from revolvers, carbines, and shot-guns, and the Indians on shore returned it with zeal.

This place is the furthest point on the Youkon ever reached by the Russian traders. Hither come Indians from all quarters: their gatherings have numbered six hundred souls. The Tananas had not arrived, but we saw a number afterwards. I believe them to be the most unsophisticated natives to be met with at the present day. Painted faces, feathers in their long hair, a patch of red clay on the back of their heads covered with small fluffy feathers, double-tailed coats and pantaloons of buckskin much adorned with fringes and beads, elaborately worked fire-bags and belts, all combined to make them more like the ideal North American Indian I had read of, but hitherto had never seen.

On landing at this village, a ceremony had to be gone through, possibly to test whether we had "strong hearts" or not. The Indians already there, advanced whooping, yelling, and brandishing their fire-arms till they reached us, then discharged them in the air. We, with the Indians just arrived, returned the compliment, and then the chief whose acquaintance we had made during winter came forward and welcomed us. This man brought us a small present of sweet fat; but the village generally was bare of provisions, the Indians dancing and singing all the same, knowing that the season for moose hunting was at hand. The upper part of the Youkon abounds in moose, and myself and the Indians shot several. At this season the musquitoes are a terrible scourge, and even the moose finds them inconvenient. He leaves the wood, plunges into the water, and wades or swims, as the case may be, often making for the islands. In some cases the Indians surround these, when known to have moose or reindeer on them, and a regular *battue* ensues. In winter it is said that the Indians can by following the moose in the woods on snow-shoes tire them out, and so get near enough to kill them. In the water they are very clumsy animals, and the natives do not always waste

powder and shot over them ; but get near them in their birch-bark canoes, and stab them repeatedly till killed, then haul them ashore.

Passing over all details of a rather tedious trip through mountain gorges, and afterwards through an interminable number of islands and sand banks in the river, we arrived on the 23rd of June, 1867, at our destination, the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Youkon, at the confluence of the Porcupine with the Youkon. Here we met the representatives of many tribes, numbering five hundred during part of the time, and all awaiting the opportunity to barter their furs with the commander of the post. They were camped outside the Fort, in tents, open booths, and "lodges." The latter are composed of poles and moose hides, and are generally placed two together ; the entrances of each facing the other, and a small fire burning between them. Each man, on arrival at the Fort, received a present of a plug of tobacco and a pipe ; and those who had no provisions, drew a daily allowance of moose meat during their stay from the supplies of the post. We here got into the buck-skin and mocassin country ; but we found the Indians wearing every variety of clothing, including those of a civilised kind, shirts, coats, "capotes", and pantaloons, obtained in the Company's store. The chiefs wore mock uniforms presented to them by the Company ; and one of them, the stout and jolly old "Red Leggings", was gorgeous in one with brass buttons, epaulets of overwhelming size, and a cap from which hung as many streams of ribbon as would set up ten recruiting sergeants for life.

We here met a large number of the "Kotch à Kutchin" (or lowland people), the Indians of the immediate neighbourhood. They are divided under two chiefs, and dwell on the Youkon itself and on Black River, a stream falling into the Rat or Porcupine River. They usually wore buckskin clothing with many fringes and ornaments, and all adopted mocassins. In winter they wear moose-skin robes or coats, with the hair turned inwards.

We met, also, examples of the An Kutchin tribe, who dwell higher on the Youkon (or Pelly, as it has sometimes been called at this part of the river), and are known by the *voyageurs* of the Company by the flattering epithet of "gens de foux." The Tatanchok Kutchin tribe, or "gens de bois," from the upper Youkon, the "gens de bouleau," or Birch river Indians, and the "gens de Rats," or natives of the Rat or Porcupine river, were all represented at this meeting. It is said that the leading men of some of these tribes having bought all the guns, blankets, knives, etc., they needed, had purchased and

accumulated immense piles of beads, of which they made no use, but simply secreted, miser like, in the woods.

But, as I have stated, the Tananas, or “gens de butte,” the “Knoll people,” or mountain men, as they have been termed, were the most primitive tribes we had seen at all, and large numbers of them mustered on this occasion. They were a highly decorated and painted race, and wear the nose ornament before spoken of, as do many of the other Indians here. A very high value is set on the *hya-qua* shells by them, and both the Fur Companies on the river traded in them largely. I have seen fringes and head ornaments which contained so large a number of these long shells, that they represented a value of several hundred marten in trade. Of the great river on which the Tananas dwell, next to nothing is known; but from information that I obtained at Fort Youkon, it is certain that its head waters are not very far from the Upper Youkon; and from the diminished volume of water in the Youkon, *above* its confluence at Nulukayette, it is also an undoubted fact that the Tanana is a very large stream indeed.

The women of all these tribes, curiously enough, dress in a plainer manner than the men, and appear to do more drudgery than among the Lower Youkon and coast peoples. They adopt a loose “sack” garment, plainly cut, with large loose sleeves. In the Fort, many of the Indian women have adopted European clothing.

On the river below Fort Youkon, a people almost extinct, the “Gens de milieu” once lived; but the ravages—in this case, of scarlet fever—have hardly left one to tell the tale.

During our stay, the Rev. Mr. MacDonald, a missionary of the Church of England stationed there, held several services, addressing the Indians sometimes directly, and sometimes through the Fort interpreter. They listened with apparent attention, and joined in singing and chanting with great zest. This gentleman has taught some of the younger ones to read a little English. My friend the late Major Kennicott, when he visited Fort Youkon, from the Atlantic States, made a vocabulary of the principal tribe in this neighbourhood, and it would be worth printing in connexion with this paper.

Leaving Fort Youkon, and descending the river, we found the Indians everywhere camped by the banks, engaged in catching and drying fish. The Youkon salmon of two—and I am inclined to think three—varieties is very abundant in the summer. One large kind, measuring sometimes four and a half or five feet in length, is very rich and oily. They are taken in weirs set in shallow places, in hand-nets of circular

form, and by spearing. I have seen, on the Lower Youkon, below Nulato, fishskin boots, the soles being, as usual, of seal-skin.

At the Ingelete village of Anvie, at the mouth of the river of the same name, a tributary of the Youkon, we saw native pots and jars of clay, well-fashioned, and used by them for cooking purposes. The Indians of the Lower Youkon, including the Primoske and Kwif-pak-ske, who dwell at and near the mouths of the great river, are of miserable appearance, and worse clothed than any others we had seen in the country. It is a fact that, owing to the shallow water of the Youkon or Kwich-pak mouths, free traders had not as yet entered that part of the country, and the Indians were, therefore, exclusively indebted to one or two badly supplied posts of the Russian-American Company. I am inclined to think that by this time, in the hands of its new owners, the United States Government, private traders are already thinking of sapping the fur-trade of this part of Alaska.

The natives of the lower river merge gradually into those of the coast, and do not call for any special remark after what has gone before. Fortunately for us, being short of goods, they were so unsophisticated that they always accepted what we offered in payment for fish, etc. ; and needles, which they could not obtain from the Russian-American Fur Company, were of great value. We could buy a salmon for five needles, ducks and geese at about the same rate. Eggs are so abundant at the mouths of the Youkon, that one of our men, employed in taking sounding there, told me he bought ten eggs for one needle, and could obtain hundreds at the same price. On the lower river, also, is the "seat of manufacture" of the wooden bowls, or "contogs," used for hundreds of miles round.

Should this paper appear to you superficial and meagre in nature, it should be remembered that it is the fruit of rapid travel through a very large section of country. My journey from St. Michael's to Nulato, and subsequently to Fort Youkon made by the shortest known route, was 825 miles in length ; whilst the return journey, exclusively by the Youkon and sea-coast, was nearly 1,300 miles in length. I believe that this country, so little known or visited, will repay a detailed examination, and it is quite within the possibilities that I may again travel in it ; and if so, may again have the pleasure of laying something further before you.

In conclusion, allow me to very briefly lay before you a few remarks on the great similarity between the dialects of the natives of Norton Sound, and the Greenland Esquimaux. The first five words of my vocabulary are almost identical. Thus :—

	Malemute, Norton Sound.			Greenland Esquimaux.		
<i>I</i>	...	Wounga	...	is	...	Uwunga
<i>He</i>	...	Oona	...	,	...	Una
<i>We</i>	...	Wurgut	...	,	...	Uwagut
<i>You</i>	...	Itlepit	...	,	...	Illipse
<i>Man</i>	...	Inuet	...	,	...	Angut

and so on. Between the Malemute and the Ingelete and Co-Youkon, a great gap occurs; hardly a word appears to be of the same origin; nor can I again find much similarity between the Co-Youkon and the Kotch-à-Kutchin of the *Upper* Youkon. I would venture to make the suggestion, that the coast natives have gradually spread from Asia to Greenland; whilst, it may be, we must look for some other origin for the natives of the interior.

With regard to the trade across Behring's Straits, I need not remind you that Von Wrangell, and other writers, have constantly alluded to the same subject. The only point I have wished to draw your attention to, is the great distance high up the Youkon, and from the interior, that furs are brought to the Tchuktchis.

That all these people have some belief in a Great Spirit, and also in evil spirits, I have myself no doubt; but have hesitated to say anything on the subject, having never witnessed any religious ceremonies, or even heard of their existence. Indians are always very reserved on these subjects; and without an intimate acquaintance with their dialects, it is almost impossible to get at the truth. It is, too, in these days, even more difficult than formerly, from the simple reason that intercourse with traders, and also with the missionaries, (and there are two on the Youkon of very different creeds,—one representing the Episcopal, the other the Greek church), has, undoubtedly, modified their ideas; and therefore, it is difficult to distinguish between their old and their acquired beliefs. I can positively state, that we found no traces whatever of idolatry.

MALEMUTE VOCABULARY.

NORTON SOUND, RUSSIAN AMERICA.

Made in 1866-7, by Frederick Whympcr, W. U. Telegraph Expedition.

I, wounga
He, oona
We, wurgut
You, itlepit
man, inuet
woman, achanuk

child, kakooshka
brother, ungarunga
sister, hooga
day, obloök
night, niptiga
morning, oblaam

noon, kolwächtook
evening, nakekiluskuk
month, (see "moon")
sun, sickuyuk
moon, tackhut
star, obloat
land, noona
water, imuk
sea, tagaiuk
lake, nasuuk
river, coke
snow, kanik
ice, sekō
rain, ebwinuktuk
head, neakuk
face, keenyuk
mouth, kanuk
teeth, keeütik
arm, tālik
leg, neeyu
hand, ashi-gitē
window, egalook
house, topek
wood, kushuk
canoe, *ship*, omeuk-puk
knife, chowik
spoon, athrotik
cup, culoot
pot, klipseen
tree, napāktuk
gun, shupon
powder, agara
caps, cabiloo
bullet, cagarook
shot, cagariya
(skin) coat, atigee
 „ *trousers*, nellikāk
 „ *boots*, camook
 „ *cap*, nasota
 „ *gloves or mitts*, akatook
hay, eweek, penikiruk
rope, akloonuk
chief, amāleek
pipe, queenuk
tobacco, tabac
needle, mitkin
thread, evaloot
bag, powuskuk
bread, kakook
fish, ekathethlook
bird, ekāshiga
(reindeer) meat, nāga
sugar, kapsitaak
whiskey, tānuuk
berries, asheuk
grease, ookarook

beaver, palouktuk
sable (*American sable or stone marten*),
 kavaitchuk
mink, tagaiakup
bear, aoutkluit
squirrel, chikiruk
reindeer, toontook
dog, camuckter
mosquito, kecktagiuck
whale, akiwik
seal, oogarook
walrus, aiwik
wolf, amaouk
big, ungidooruk
little, mikidooruk
few, ekeektuk
plenty, amalachtook
good, nakuruk
bad, ashuruk
quick, kelūmuk
slow, sikichuk
cold, allopar
hot, allopar peechuk (not cold)
crooked, chakoonaruk
straight, nalooruk
yes, waa
no, *not*, peechuk
what, schuman
where, nāmi
here, māni
now, puk-mummi
bye and bye, atachta
who, keena
how much? *capsenik*
don't know, kiyūmé
come here, cakinee
go away, anee
go on a journey, alachtūk
work, chawitka
see, touk-took
give, aichilunger
buy, etauchsik
sell, keepuchuk
laugh, kachuktuk
talk, ocacttuk
tell, kanucktuk
bring, taishkē
dance, poolaruk
sleep, shineek (used to count time,
 "so many sleeps")
kill, takootka
shoot, shoopega
understand, tooshiruk
steal, tigaliktook
how much for that? chimuk
thank you, koyana.

NUMERALS.

1. Atousik	7. Malounik shepnelik
2. Ipar	8. Peenesheruk shepnelik
3. Peeniuk	9. Kolingniotilik
4. Seetimat	10. Kolit
5. Talemanuk	11. (Ten and one, and so on)
6. Echukerit	20. Enuenuk.

COYOUKON VOCABULARY,

Made by Frederick Whympere.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN ON A LARGE PART OF THE YOUKON RIVER, IN RUSSIAN AMERICA.

<i>Good Spirit</i> , Kanuckertoltoi	<i>forehead</i> , sekāta
<i>Bad Spirit</i> , Tcheklaker	<i>eye</i> , se noya
<i>I</i> , sē	<i>ear</i> , se-tsa
<i>thou</i> , nē	<i>nose</i> , se nee
<i>he</i> , ecossee	<i>mouth</i> , s'alotte
<i>we</i> , seyer	<i>tongue</i> , s'acloula
<i>you</i> , shē	<i>tooth</i> , s'uwyer
<i>they</i> , nun	<i>neck</i> , s'ukugl
<i>man</i> , tenalō	<i>arm</i> , sekāner
<i>woman</i> , saltun	<i>hand</i> , se lur
<i>child</i> , tenaiyusa	<i>body</i> , s'kotit
<i>brother</i> , skitla	<i>leg</i> , sewool
<i>sister</i> , stādsa	<i>foot</i> , se ka
<i>head</i> , se-woiyer	<i>bone</i> , klun
<i>face</i> , senun	<i>heart</i> , se-naiyitz

All the foregoing words, with the prefix "se", meaning here "my", are, in *Ingelete*, changed for the prefix "ten" (the first syllable of "tenalō," man). Thus the Coyoukon says, "senaiyitz" (my heart), while the Ingelites says "tenaiyitz" (a man's heart), when asked for the name of heart in their language; and so on. There is no doubt that the prefix is altered according to the person: thus, "your heart" would be "she-naiyitz.

<i>chief</i> , kooka	<i>kettle</i> , oclock
<i>house</i> , konaugh	<i>axe</i> , mukalkalla
<i>village</i> , zadlecle	<i>flour</i> , klatsmitze
<i>canoe</i> , metau	<i>fire</i> , tacona
<i>paddle</i> , tauoi	<i>water</i> , too
<i>bow</i> , klintun	<i>ice</i> , t'un
<i>arrow</i> , káu	<i>snow</i> , nootaga
<i>gun</i> , eltudla	<i>sun</i> , s'o
<i>caps</i> , onunkadadoi	<i>moon</i> , taltolla
<i>powder</i> , kaukoon	<i>star</i> , k'lune
<i>bullet</i> , kautla	<i>day</i> , k'lut
<i>shot</i> , koon	<i>night</i> , kliltahl
<i>knife</i> , kakikltaun	<i>morning</i> , kadamatona
<i>pipe</i> , koniuk	<i>evening</i> , lalaatsun
<i>tobacco</i> , tabac; tacona (fire)	<i>summer</i> , sāner
<i>(skin) coat</i> , taiak	<i>winter</i> , koidau
„ <i>trousers</i> , kātchee	<i>wind</i> , atse
„ <i>shoes</i> , kakatauch	<i>rain</i> , al'corn
„ <i>cap</i> , kakadalaion	<i>river</i> , suckener (secargut, small river)

mountain, klehl
island, taash
valley, tekalcu-cul ; konakon
stone, rock, l'orna
tree, chooma
wood, kaut
swamp, munacut
birch tree, ki'e
spruce fir, chumā
bowl, kluck
beads, neltilla
blanket, t'suda
needle, klatakona
bag, melketla
berries, keeka
fat, n'kau
reindeer, anoyer
 " *tongue*, kakloulā
moose, tanaiger
rabbit, kaugh
bear, klaousa
marten, carkayousa
mink, tauchkousa
beaver, carka
dog, k'lick
wolf, yes
grouse, telerbucker
duck, nintaal
goose, titsena
fish, telamachkur
mosquito, kl'ë
big, nekau
small, nacoutza
strong, kootclear
old, klokee

young, ataltahai
good, nazoon
bad, zatklaka
dead, tult'lun
alive, toitlala
cold, azoo
hot, azoo micullah (not cold)
yes, ha
no, not, micullah
many, lorn
far, neelot
who, te wa
where, houghtee
yesterday, katona
to-day, autakut
to-morrow, katooman
sleep, littern
sit, litto
give, entar
talk, tini
shoot, teltüdlā
work, konitine
now, atakauch
bye-and-bye, k'lat
quick, tow-wer
all, etedsun
hungry, kutlakat
enough, koodar
come here, orni
go away, antouger
how much? tenaltai
thank you, marci
how are you? koyana
don't know, testini

NUMERALS.

1. Kettleket
 2. Untë
 3. Taunkë
 4. Tinikë

5. Ketsnala
 6. " *five, one, etc.*
 10. Nekoshnala

KUTCH-A'-KUTCHIN VOCABULARY.

Compiled by the late Major Kennicott.

Words from the language of the Kutch-a'-Kutchin,—Natives of the Upper Youkon, in Russian America.

Good Spirit, Ti'h-hü-gun
Bad Spirit, Chu't-saiⁿ.
man, tin'-ji
woman, trin'-jöh
boy, T' tsī-ah
girl, ni-chīt
infant, tri-ny'in'

father, ti'h
mother, hun
husband, kái-ih
wife, at
son (of father), tīn'ji
son (of mother), zūh
daughter (of father), chi

<i>daughter (of mother),</i> gē'-tsi	<i>sky,</i> zi'-ē
<i>brother (elder),</i> dē	<i>horizon,</i> zi'-ē-ba ^{uh}
<i>brother (younger),</i> chāh	<i>cloud,</i> k'kōh
<i>sister (elder),</i> chih	<i>sun,</i> drin-ūr'-zih
<i>sister (younger),</i> chidh	<i>moon,</i> tudh-ūr'-zih
<i>an Indian,</i> tin-ji	<i>star,</i> su ⁿ
<i>people,</i> tin-ji	<i>day,</i> drin
<i>Indian fashion, or in the manner of</i>	<i>light,</i> a-t'tri
<i>Indians,</i> tin-ji-zūh	<i>night,</i> hkāh
<i>white man,</i> man-o-tlit	<i>darkness,</i> tudh
<i>head,</i> ti'-chih	<i>morning,</i> vun
<i>hair,</i> e-gēh	<i>evening,</i> nā-chi-ai ⁿ .
<i>face,</i> chi-nēh	<i>spring,</i> tai ⁿ .
<i>forehead,</i> tchun'-t'tsut	<i>summer,</i> s'sin
<i>ear,</i> chē'-tzēh	<i>autumn,</i> hkain'-sun
<i>eye,</i> chin'-dēh	<i>winter</i> hkaih
<i>nose,</i> chin'-tsih	<i>wind,</i> a'kh-traih
<i>mouth,</i> chē-zhik	<i>lightning,</i> nāh-tun'-kun
<i>tongue,</i> chi-chā	<i>thunder,</i> nāh-tun'
<i>tooth,</i> chā-gōh	<i>rain,</i> tsin
<i>beard,</i> chi-tē'-ai-gēh	<i>snow,</i> zāh
<i>neck,</i> chē'-kōh	<i>hail,</i> chin-lūh
<i>arm,</i> chē ki-in	<i>fire,</i> kō ⁿ .
<i>hand,</i> chin-li	<i>Aurora Borealis,</i> yā-kai ⁿ .
<i>fingers,</i> lā'-t'thuk	<i>water,</i> chu ⁿ .
<i>nails,</i> chē'-kaih	<i>ice,</i> t'tun
<i>body,</i> chē'-znh-taih	<i>land, earth,</i> nun
<i>belly,</i> chē'-vut	<i>sea,</i> chō ⁿ -chōh
<i>leg,</i> chi-dhudh	<i>river,</i> hun
<i>foot,</i> chē'-kēh	<i>lake,</i> vun
<i>toes,</i> chē'-kēh-chi	<i>valley,</i> kū-nā'-tri
<i>bone,</i> t'-thun	<i>mountain,</i> d'dhāh
<i>heart,</i> chi'-t'tri	<i>island,</i> njūh
<i>blood,</i> tāh	<i>stone, rock,</i> chi
<i>chief,</i> kāh-kēh'	<i>copper,</i> thē'-tsra ⁿ .
<i>warrior, (no name)</i>	<i>iron,</i> chi-tsih
<i>friend,</i> sē'-chi-āh	<i>tree,</i> tē-chun'
<i>house,</i> zēh	<i>wood,</i> tē-chun' or tsrōh
<i>Indian lodge,</i> nī-vī-āh'zēh	<i>leaf,</i> chit-un
<i>village,</i> zēh-kēh	<i>bark,</i> bā-tri
<i>kettle,</i> ti'-āh	<i>grass,</i> k'klōh
<i>arrow,</i> ki'-ē	<i>poplar,</i> t'tōh
<i>bow,</i> uhl'-tū ⁿ .	<i>birch,</i> hkā'-t'tōh ; <i>alder,</i> kōh
<i>axe,</i> tā'-iuh	<i>willow,</i> kaih-tluk'
<i>knife,</i> rsih	<i>spruce,</i> t'tsi-vēh'
<i>canoe,</i> t'trih	<i>flesh, meat,</i> s'sih
<i>paddle,</i> tāh-ī ^{uh}	<i>dog,</i> hklai ⁿ .
<i>boat,</i> t'trih-chō'h	<i>buffalo (fossil),</i> ah-kih'
<i>raft,</i> hkā ⁿ .	<i>bear (black),</i> s'sōh
<i>Indian shoes,</i> kēh-trih	<i>wolf,</i> zōh
<i>bread,</i> klī'-uth-chū	<i>reindeer,</i> vit-zaih'
<i>flour,</i> klī'-uth	<i>moose,</i> tin-ji-yuk'
<i>ashes,</i> klī'-uth	<i>beaver,</i> tsē
<i>earth,</i> klī'-uth	<i>fox,</i> nā-kudh, or nā-ku ^{uh} dh
<i>pipe,</i> sē-tid-chī	<i>squirrel,</i> k'kluk'k
<i>tobacco,</i> sē-tid	<i>marmot,</i> t'thāh

rabbit, kēh
fly, ti^u.
musquito, chih
bird, tzih'-tsōh or nī'-un
egg, chā'-h'gōh
feather, tsuth
wing, chut-sun
duck, tē-tsun'
goose, hkēh
fish, t'hlūk or chī'-ē-lūk
salmon, thlūk
name, vōr-zih
affection (*I love him*, vat-i'-nī-thun)
white, tā'-kaii
black, tā'-rziⁿ.
red, ta-ts'ik'
blue, no name, they call it "black"
yellow, tā-tsoh'
green, tāh-tlōh
great, nī'-tsih or choh
small, nēt'-tsul or tsul
strong, nīt'táih
old, saiⁿ-yi-dhēlh-hkai
young, kē-chīt-ē'-dhā
good, nīr-zih'
bad, nī-zīⁿ'-kwāh
handsome, mē-go-ná-thlih

ugly, trā-rud'i-udh
alive, kōn'-daii
dead, ehl-chīⁿ
cold, nī-k'kudh
warm, nī-dhā'
I, si
thou, nun
he, tā-tun
we, nākh'-hun
ye, nākh'-hun
they, kā-tā'-t'tun
this, chī
that, tā'hgut
all, tut-thuk'
many, much, laiⁿ.
who? chō'-tī-ēn ?
where? kwē'-ē-chi ?
near, nāh'-k'kōdh
to-day, chūk-dsrin'
yesterday, k'kāh'-taiⁿ.
to-morrow, yih'-kāh
yes, a-hā
no, nō-kwā'
sit, dhīn'-tih
stand, nī'-nē-dhut
come, a-ně.

NUMERALS.

one, chih'-thluk
two, nē'-kai^u.
three, tī'-ik
four, tāng
five, chih'-tluk-ūn'-l
six, nih'-ki-tī'-ik
seven, e'tsē-dē'-tsē-nē-káiⁿ.
eight, nih'-ki-tāng'

nine, mēn'-chudh-nē-kōh'-kwā
ten, chī-thluk'-chō-tī'-in
eleven, chī-thluk'-vi-dá-tuk
twelve, nē'-kai^u-vi-dá-tuk
thirteen, tī'-ik-vi-dā-tuk
twenty, nē-kāiⁿ-chō-tī'-in
thirty, tī'-ik-chō-tī'-in