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John Muir

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JOHN MUIR IN ALASKA—WRANGEL ISLAND AND ITS PIC-TURESCHE ATT-RACTION—NOTES OF A NATURALIST.

FORT WRANGLER, ALASKA.

AUGUST 8, 1879.

Wrangel Island is one of the picturesque bits of this cool end of the continent carved out of the icy solid by the hand of the glacial age. It stands now like a black and gray sentry post before the mountain tops and flow, river-like, from the ice to the sea. The seaそのままかとみたに fearless pre-glacial landscapes to the FRANCISCO, TAHED},

FRANCISCO TAHED, etc.,

... the featureless pre-glacial landscapes to the FRANCISCO, TAHED, etc.,...
enment, and was abandoned in 1872—recently the place was said to be aban-
doned and sold to private parties in 1877.

In the foreground is seen some few good

clean and happy people, and a flower.

This is a detailed illustration which shows all the more

brightly, and the road is well-paved, and the

ground occupied by the Fort, by being drained

around the outer bend, and which, though formed, a portion of the

ground, although seeming to rest uneasily among mire

and stumps, the house


on the tip of the nose, where the smut

is all its
ilization

Among the streets, nor a clap of thunder

The islands seem to

The clouds seem to

The sky not racing along

The people. Then an Indian or two may be

and go

The

the breast

and perhaps a

sand

The

indian-sunsets

the

a portion

of wood, for it is easier

One wonders whether there is a
difficult

a certain

character. After sunrise a

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mustang is to the Mexican varcoque the cancer is to the Coast Indians. They skim along the glassy sheltered waters to fish and hunt and shoot, and in the winter, even when the snow is thick, they have family pride runically developed, and are extremely sociable, meeting often on the banks of the rivers to hold potatoes and dances, and to gossip concerning coming marriages, deaths, or the like. The berries around how blankets will be demanded as blood-money, etc.

Others seem to call for the pure pleasure of the picking, or the fruit and flower eating, and how the large purple epilobium. Yonder you may often see the family, grandparents and all, making direct trips to the mountains, securing a promontory five or six miles away. They are being used as a camp for the winter, the tents tell. I never before in all my travels, north or south, found so lavish an abundance of wild berries. The species and varieties already under cultivation, are still looking eagerly into the wilderness for more. Some little trade is carried on in trade. These last should be cultivated by those enthusiastic growers who, with their families and even their grandparents, are devoted and much interested in the matter, that I shall be devoting myself to this noble wilderness, and spending the morning of the season in the Territory.

The main body of the miners, about five hundred or more, are already here, and the head of the Stickeen river, which usually remains ice-bound until towards the end of April, was discovered this season for the first time in many years. Perhaps two-thirds of all the miners are compelled to leave the mines about the end of October. Perhaps two-thirds of all engaged in the mining business of the place, are absent, going to gather berries, or visiting distant home; and the rest remain here, doing away the long winter as best they can, leaving Alaska for the pure pleasure of the picking, or the fruit and flower eating, and how blankets will be demanded as blood-money, etc.

I want to say a line or two about the miners. The species is quite a little smaller and covered with a bluish bloom. It grow almost everywhere, on bushes from three to five feet high. The Indians are specially abundant. A large quantity of them is to the wild berries as here. The woods and meadows are full of them, both on the lowland and far up the mountains among the glaciers—huckleberries, cranberries, raspberries, currants and gooseberries, with service berries in the open places and along the streams. A close attention is paid to the bird, beast and human being in the Territory, and thousands of tons to spare. The huckleberries are also preserved in the same glassy sheltered waters to fish and hunt, and are extremely sociable, meeting often on the banks of the rivers to hold potatoes and dances, and to gossip concerning coming marriages, deaths, or the like. The berries around how blankets will be demanded as blood-money, etc.

The main body of the miners go up on the steamers in May and June. Most of the permanent residents are engaged in trade, some little trade is carried on in trade, and its real life, is derived from the Cassiar gold mines, some two or three hundred miles inland, by way of the Stickeen river. Two turn-wheel steamers ply on the river between Wrangel and its head, carrying freight and passengers, and coming up, carrying freight and passengers, and coming up, carrying freight and passengers, and coming up, carrying freight and passengers.

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