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INDIANS OF THE YUKON AND TANANA VALLEYS

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The Indians of The Yukon and Tanana Valleys, Alaska

By
Matthew K. Sniffen
and
Dr. Thos. Spees Carrington

Indian Rights Association
995 Drexel Building, Philadelphia
1914

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Taken 12.15 A. M., June 23, 1914.

THE MIDNIGHT SUN
Near Fort Yukon, Alaska

The Indians of The Yukon and Tanana Valleys, Alaska

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To The Executive Committee:

In company with Dr. Thomas S. Carrington I left Seattle, Washington, by steamer on June 2d. We made close connections at all transfer points, and arrived at Eagle, Alaska, June 12th—the first town west of the border line. It was exceedingly difficult to get any satisfactory information in Seattle, or elsewhere in the States, as to what we should take with us in the way of an outfit, but we were strongly advised to purchase a boat and ship it up to Eagle. This we did, together with an overboard gasoline motor and such other supplies as seemed to us necessary for ordinary comfort. We made our final preparations at Eagle, and then proceeded in our 18-foot open boat, on a trip of about 1600 miles, stopping at all towns and settlements and many fish camps and wood camps along the Yukon River from Eagle to Holy Cross, and on the Tanana River from Fairbanks to Fort Gibbon. To have undertaken the trip by the regular steamers would have meant a great waste of time, much inconvenience, and considerable expense; the steamer schedule is infrequent and uncertain, and it would have been necessary for us to have waited a week in some small place before we could get away, when we could not profitably have spent more than a half-day there.

We did not reveal our identity, except on one or two occasions, but traveled as tourists, in order that we might see conditions as they were, and especially observe the attitude of the whites toward the Indians. We were hospitably received throughout the trip, and the people whom we met—and we endeavored to overlook none—expressed themselves freely on all topics that were brought up for discussion.

Usually we camped along the shores of the river, or on a bar in the middle of the river (to minimize as much as possible the mosquito plague), when our day's run was com-

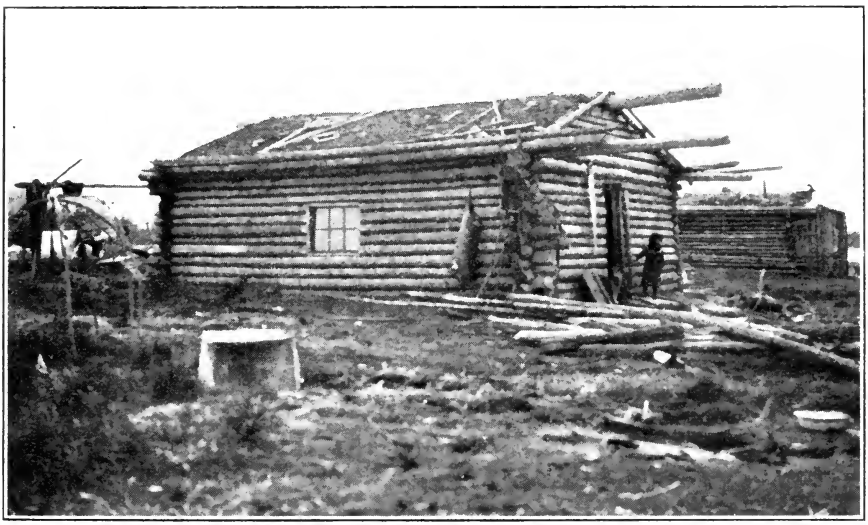
pleted; but if we reached a town where fairly decent accommodations could be had, we stopped at the local hotels or road houses in order to meet and converse with the inhabitants. It was continuous daylight, and we could travel until we felt like stopping.

It should be noted that the area of Alaska is one-fifth the size of the United States, and that its coast line extends a distance of 25,000 miles or more. Manifestly, it would have been impossible for us, in one short open season, to cover the entire Territory. This report, therefore, deals only with conditions in the Yukon and Tanana Valleys, and two coast points—St. Michael and Nome.

Scattered along the Yukon and Tanana Rivers, in small villages, there are upward of 5000 Indians. From Eagle down to Nulato there is practically no difference in their customs and habits; the condition of the people and the village as found at one place was typical of nearly all the rest. All these natives are, and have been, self-supporting. In winter they go back into the hills for game. They eat the meat and sell the furs—and some of them realize a goodly sum from their winter's work. In the summer the Indians scatter along the river in small camps, for the fish (mostly of the salmon variety) that run up the river. Their catches are cured by a smoke and air process and then packed in bales. The king salmon forms an important part of their food supply, while the "dog salmon" is kept for their own animals or sold to the whites. All winter travel is by dog team, and dried fish is the principal canine diet. Where an Indian makes a good catch of fish and has more than is needed for his own dogs, he can find ready market for his surplus stock, at an average price of 20 or 25 cents a pound. The fish are mostly caught in the large net-wheels, which work automatically by the swift current, once they are properly set in motion. All that the Indian needs to do after that is to "harvest his crop" and hold it for the demand that is sure to come.

Between hunting and fishing these Indians can make a comfortable living, and it would be unwise to take any

The Boat in which Messrs. Carrington and Sniffen Traveled 1600 Miles on the Yukon and Tanana Rivers.



Indian Cabin, Eagle, Alaska.

steps that would destroy their self-reliance. It is of the utmost importance, however, to see to it that they are protected in their fishing and hunting rights, and given at least "an even break." At present, with the exception of Fort Yukon and Tanana, these Indians have no right to their homes other than those of squatters. The same is true of the sites where their fish camps have been for years located.

The greatest danger-point just now is the valley along the Tanana River. This past summer that section was being surveyed by the Government with a view to determining the best route for a railroad from Fairbanks or some interior town to the Yukon River, and it is believed that the most feasible line is through that portion of the valley where the Indians have their homes. Should the projected railroad be built, it will doubtless mean the establishment of town sites; and the location of some of the Indian villages is such that "the march of progress" is apt to cause trouble for the natives unless prompt steps are taken to have their land rights respected. Should the railroad be built, it will undoubtedly bring into Alaska many people who have been deluded by the seductive literature of the transportation companies regarding the "great opportunities" opened up, etc.; and even though these newcomers do not remain longer in the country than they can possibly help, they can cause a great deal of trouble for the Indians, as matters now stand.

It would be impractical to attempt to establish game preserves for the sole benefit of the Indians, but the existing law prohibiting the use of poison in catching fur-bearing animals should be more rigidly enforced. It is claimed in all directions that white men resort to this method of increasing their season's catch, but so far as I could learn the Indians have not been accused of so doing. There is a game warden whose duty it is to stop this practice, but the territory he has to cover is so extensive and the allowance for necessary expenses so small that he cannot be expected seriously to interfere with this class of law-breakers. If this abuse is not checked, the supply of fur-bearing animals

is sure to become very scarce, if not extinct. Then the problem of support for the natives will become a serious one.

EAGLE.—This village is three miles above the town. It has a population of 50. The Indians have just about held their own in numbers. They live in small cabins, mostly one room. The health conditions are poor; much tuberculosis in one form or another. The government has a day school there, and the teacher, Miss Graves, has full charge of the village. She acts as educator, sanitary inspector, nurse, physician, and policeman. Owing to lack of funds the Bureau of Education paid her ten months' salary for a year's work. There was formerly a military post at Eagle (Fort Egbert), but there is but a small detail in charge of the wireless station.

(At each point we visited Dr. Carrington made an inspection of the sanitary conditions of the village, held clinics, and advised the teachers what course of treatment to follow in given cases. He has made a separate report on this subject.)

The Episcopal Church has a mission at Eagle, in charge of Rev. Mr. Burgess. He was on his vacation at the time of our visit, and we did not have an opportunity of conferring with him.

The Indians at this village will drink whenever they can get liquor, but they are probably a little better off because of their isolation.

CHARLIE'S VILLAGE was located about 90 miles below Eagle. When the ice broke up last spring the river rose higher than at any time on record and overflowed the high banks. Huge boulders of ice were swept in various directions and did a great amount of damage. The flood completely destroyed Charlie's village, where 40 Indians made their homes, and they have since scattered up and down the river.

CIRCLE was our next stop. A Government wireless station is located at this point, with a detail of nine men from the United States army. The town itself was once a thriving place, but now it is barely alive. Just below it is

the Indian village of about 80. The Government has a day school there in charge of Mrs. E. E. Eby. There are three saloons in the white part of the town, and the Indians get considerable liquor in one way or another—usually from the "Hootch pedlars," or "boot-leggers," as they are called in the United States. The Indians are unmoral. Some of the men will peddle their wives to the class of whites who come in on the steamers for a few days, or the "drifters" who travel down the river in small boats.

Tuberculosis, in one form or another, is prevalent. The only medical attention received by the Indians is that administered through the school teacher. She endeavored to have the people live in tents during the summer, but most of them prefer the stuffy cabins, without ventilation.

Missionary work was undertaken at this point by the Episcopal Church, but has been temporarily abandoned, but an Indian lay reader, Joe Preacher, holds services regularly.

The spring flood did great damage at Circle. It occurred just one month prior to our visit, but the effects were everywhere visible. The water rose six feet or more above the high banks, and flooded the lower part of the buildings that were not on the higher ground.

Fort Yukon is probably the largest Indian village on the river. It was established by the Hudson Bay Company about 1847, and is yet the main fur center of the interior of Alaska. The Indian population is 300, with 25 whites who can be regarded as permanent residents. The Government has a day school at this point. The headquarters of the Episcopal mission work are also at Fort Yukon, it being the home of Archdeacon Stuck and Dr. Grafton Burke, the medical missionary.

At the time of our visit it was a hostile camp, due to the recent controversy in the courts in connection with the effort to prevent whites from having the Indian women as their mistresses, and also on account of the proceedings instituted to restrain one of the traders from locating his store in the Indian village. In the latter case the court

issued a permanent order of restraint and the store was built outside of the village proper. Shortly after this controversy came up the President issued an executive order setting aside a small tract of land embracing the village as a reservation, under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Education, for the exclusive use of the Indians living thereon; so they are now safe from the intrusion of whites who wanted to build cabins in their midst. This result is undoubtedly due to the very effective efforts of Archdeacon Stuck.

It should be noted that a moral wave has been sweeping through Alaska; open gambling is no longer carried on; the saloons are closed on Sunday, and in some sections the existing law prohibiting continuous cohabitation is being enforced, and where such violations are reported, it usually results in the man marrying the woman (either white or Indian) or else leaving for parts unknown. A certain white man at Fort Yukon had been living with an Indian girl. Complaint was made before Dr. Burke, the United States Commissioner, who then had to issue a warrant. The man was bound over for the grand jury, which met last winter in Ruby. It appears that two of the traders went on the man's bond. The mission workers are blamed for what followed, but I was informed that the United States District Attorney's office at Fairbanks made a private investigation and submitted evidence to the Grand Jury indicating that the two bondsmen were both guilty of the same offense —one of them living with an Indian woman and the other with a white woman. All three were indicted and the trial came up in Fairbanks. One of the indicted bondsmen pleaded guilty and married the woman in question. The other one stood trial and was acquitted. Later he married the Indian girl with whom he had been living, although he frankly says when he is ready to leave Alaska he will desert her. In the case of the original cause of the trouble he was not prosecuted because he promised to marry the Indian girl—which he failed to do, although he left Yukon.

Because of his connection with the case as United States Commissioner, the element that has not taken kindly to the

enforcement of the law sought to have Dr. Burke indicted. All sorts of absurd and trivial charges were brought up, and a most determined effort was made to have a true bill returned, but it failed largely because of Dr. Burke's defense by District Attorney Crossley. It is significant that on that grand jury were five men who were under investigation by the legal authorities.

As a result of this trial an intense and bitter feeling grew up toward the missionaries, and nowhere was it more pronounced than at Fort Yukon. In many respects it was unfortunate that some one other than Dr. Burke could not have been selected as United States Commissioner; this is admitted by all interested in the mission, but there was nobody else available, and he was forced to take the place. The mission people have been severely criticized for the part they had to take in the matter, but it was a case of having an element tearing down what they were trying to build up, and so they did police work that belonged to others.

On our way down the Yukon River we heard all sorts of extravagant and slanderous stories about Dr. Burke, and investigation proved them to be either grossly exaggerated or absolutely without foundation. Dr. Burke had been through an intense strain, and he was on the verge of a nervous collapse. He is "going out" for his vacation none too soon.

It is admitted by all who know (the missionaries included) that these Yukon River Indians are absolutely unmoral. Their sexual relations are promiscuous, and begin at an early age. One of the missionaries "called the roll" of the Indian women in the village, and out of 50, there were only three named who could be regarded as virtuous, and with doubt as to one of the three.

We mingled very freely with the whites at Fort Yukon, and they talked very frankly to us on all these matters. A number of them have good traits, but the majority have a "free and easy" standard of morals, and according to their code the Indian women are regarded as the legitimate game of the whites. They say that these women have

been debauched by their own people, and that the whites cannot spoil anything that is already bad. They likewise bitterly resent Archdeacon Stuck's assertion that the white men at Fort Yukon are degenerates. The missionary view of the matter is that the promiscuous mixing of Indians and whites is very different when it is confined to the Indians alone; for with the Indian, his moral standard is entirely different from that of the white race; and he has not yet risen above the old tribal customs. In the case of the white man these relations bring whisky and disease.

There are no saloons at Fort Yukon, but when the crowd becomes thirsty a good supply of liquor is brought down the river from Circle, and "a good time" usually follows. There are about a dozen white men married to Indian women. Under the law the latter take the status of their husbands. Consequently they have the right to use as much liquor as they can get hold of. It is suspected that some of it reaches the village Indians through this source.

Of course, it is the duty of the deputy United States marshall stationed at any point to prevent, if possible, the giving or selling of liquor to Indians. The former incumbent of that office at Fort Yukon, it is claimed, not only drank heavily and gambled, but was too familiar with some of the Indian women. Just before he left Yukon he got beastly drunk, went to Dr. Burke's house, where he became so abusive and insulting that Dr. Burke was obliged to use force, and with good effect, to dispose of the belligerent deputy. Later, this deputy was removed by the marshall at Fairbanks. His successor is a man who was trained as a gentleman and a scholar, but his own habits are such that he is hardly likely to exert himself very strenuously to keep liquor away from the Indians.

Thinking that we were tourists and ready for experiences, we were invited to accompany this deputy marshall on a trip 45 miles below Fort Yukon, to arrest a man for whom a warrant had been issued. The man in question was believed to be insane. We joined the posse, went down the river, helped to find the man, and then had to wait on a

small island for five days until the steamer came along to take us back to Fort Yukon. During this time we had ample opportunity to study these men at close range. We took our turn in guarding the prisoner, cooking, and anything else that was necessary in camp life. It was interesting in many ways, but the weather was hot and the mosquitoes thick and very aggressive, and it was a relief to leave the place. The prisoner was formally tried before Dr. Burke, as the United States Commissioner, and adjudged insane. Dr. Burke handled the case in a direct and business-like manner, and showed clearly that he understood his duties—contrary to some of the statements that had been made on the subject.

Health conditions among the Indians are deplorable. It is estimated that 75 per cent. of the village have tuberculosis of some sort. The mission expects to erect a hospital at Fort Yukon of sufficient size and equipment to do more effective medical work for the natives. It is certainly greatly needed, for unless the ravages of disease can be checked, it will not be long before the need for schools and missionary work will be a thing of the past—there will be practically no Indians to educate or Christianize.

Dr. Burke and his wife have done much to improve the sanitary conditions of the village. A better grade of cabins is being built by the Indians, with two rooms instead of one; and most of the cabins now have some form of ventilation. In the summer the Indians are encouraged to live in tents, and quite a few had temporarily abandoned their cabins. For three months, at least, the weather is very warm. While we were at Fort Yukon the mercury was over 90 in the shade, and it was more comfortable sleeping in the open, or under canvas, than in the stuffy cabins.

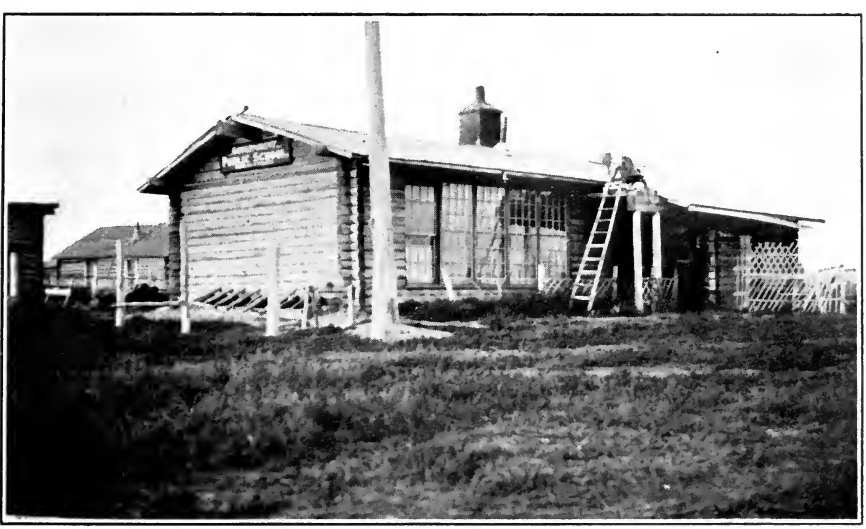
It is claimed by the missionaries that there is now less drinking among the Fort Yukon Indians than a year ago; that the natives themselves seem to be striving for better things. They have a Council of seven members, elected annually, that endeavors to deal with petty offenses, but its powers are purely those of moral suasion. From the

time of the Hudson Bay Company's establishment of this post there has been at least nominal missionary work among this band, but the results do not give one a feeling of very great enthusiasm. The Episcopal Church did not assume charge of this field until about ten years ago. There has undoubtedly been some aggressive work done, sufficient to make an *impression* on the minds of these people; they are apparently devoted to the Church and its workers, but probably in the majority of cases their religion is a mixture of Christianity and paganism. To accomplish definite results time will be required; it cannot be done in the twinkling of an eye. It is my opinion that whoever is responsible for the maintenance of the mission work should realize the conditions that exist and so support its representatives in the field that they will not often be compelled to spend the best part of their time in routine drudgery, but be able to give their undivided attention to real missionary effort. All the Protestant mission stations that we visited in the Alaska interior are greatly undermanned and the workers inadequately paid—this, too, in a country where everything in the way of living or traveling is extremely high. The army, for instance, realizes this, and when men are detailed for service in Alaska they are given extra pay and an additional allowance.

The Yukon Flats is a section of the river about 300 miles long, and in some places the water spreads out over a width of 10 miles or more. It was the most tedious part of the river. The current is very swift,—a normal flow of seven miles an hour,—and when it spreads out in various directions, each branch seemingly strong, it is somewhat difficult to follow the main channel. By studying the river and its various "ear-marks" we learned pretty well how to avoid the shallow water and were able to cover the entire distance without the aid of a pilot. Occasionally we got on a bar, but it was not a difficult matter to step in the water and push the boat off into one of the deeper channels.

Stephens Village was our next main stop. There are 140 Indians at that point, living in the usual type of cabins.

Indian Cabin, Fort Yukon, Alaska.



Government School, Fort Yukon, Alaska.

The Government had a school there for some years, but it was burned and never rebuilt for lack of funds. Now such schooling as the children receive is from Miss Jackson, the Episcopal missionary. Incidentally, she is the only white woman in the place. The Indians had just erected a new chapel, built of logs, of which they are proud. Bishop Rowe promised them the necessary door and window sashes, and they are looking forward with much eagerness to his coming.

The conditions as to tuberculosis, whisky, morals, etc., are the same as exist elsewhere along the river.

RAMPART was once a large and prosperous mining camp; now there are not more than 125 white inhabitants there. The Indian population is 50. There is no school nor any mission work at present being conducted there. At a recent election the town went "dry," and the saloons were closed. As to morals, it is the same story as up the river.

ON THE TANANA RIVER.

At Tanana we put our boat on the steamer and went up to Fairbanks, a distance of 280 miles; fare, $32.00 each. We spent two days with Rev. C. E. Betticher, Jr., who has had supervision of the Indian work in the Tanana Valley, and then continued our journey down the river. I had hoped to see the United States District Attorney, Mr. Crossley, but he was on his way back from Washington. The vigorous manner in which he has been prosecuting the law-breakers has earned for him the enmity of the liquor element, and they were doing their utmost to have him removed.

CHENA.—This is a town 12 miles from Fairbanks. We stopped there to see Rev. G. H. Madara, who has succeeded Mr. Betticher as supervisor of the Indian work in that section. Mr. Madara has been in the field for seven years, and is familiar with conditions. He admitted that these Indians were unmoral. The work in the Tanana Valley was only begun eight years ago, but he thinks there is a slight improvement in conditions. About 15 of the Indians have taken up homesteads of 160 acres, and Mr.

Madara is encouraging this plan, in the absence of any other protection for their holdings. There is no physician along the Tanana River.

CHENA VILLAGE was practically deserted when we stopped there, the Indians being spread out along the river in fish camps. The population is 30.

NENANA is the main Indian settlement along the Tanana River, with a population of 300. A better grade of cabins is being built, but tuberculosis is prevalent, and conditions as to whisky and morals are about the same as in other villages.

The Episcopal Church has a mission at Nenana, formerly in charge of Miss Farthing, who died there a few years ago. In accordance with her wish she was buried in the Indian cemetery, on the opposite side of the river. We visited her grave, taking along a party of the Indian girls, who picked wild flowers and placed them at the foot of the monument erected to Miss Farthing's memory. The present local head of the station is Miss M. S. Grider, a former social worker in Philadelphia. A boarding-school is maintained at this point by the Church. There is also a small hospital in charge of a trained nurse, Miss Bolster. When the services of a physician are needed, it means sending to Fairbanks for one, and, owing to the uncertainty of travel, this involves considerable time.

It is difficult to hold the girls a sufficient length of time to mold their characters. They usually marry at a very early age—thirteen or fourteen. The alliance of white and Indian in most instances is one of convenience for the former, who deserts the woman at his own pleasure. Frequently these women become prostitutes, or else form an alliance with an Indian, which has to be winked at by the mission as the lesser of the two evils. It would cost $500 to secure a divorce, which is prohibitive for this class of Indians.

The good women at this mission are compelled to spend much of their time in routine drudgery. The fact that they do not complain does not alter the situation that the

station is so undermanned. They should be in a position to do the real work for which they were sent if the best results are to be expected.

TOLAVANA is a small village below Nenana, containing 40 Indians. It is just below the white town. Conditions are no different from those already described.

CROSS JACKET is a new settlement. Many Indians are leaving Tanana for this site, and they are building a better grade of cabins.

YUKON RIVER CONTINUED.

TANANA is the "Hub" of the interior. The Tanana River empties into the Yukon there, and transportation starts up or down the Yukon from that point. The town itself is made up of stores, a few small hotels, and five or six saloons. Below is Fort Gibbon, where a company of United States troops is stationed. Three miles above is the Indian village, where the Episcopal Church has a station—the Mission of Our Saviour. The plant is the best we saw in the interior. The chapel is a beautiful one—commodious and well arranged, a memorial to Mary Golden King, of New York. The hospital was totally destroyed by fire in January, 1914, but plans have been made for rebuilding it as soon as possible. The work is now in charge of Rev. Mr. Maloney, with Deaconess Pick and Miss Tait, a trained nurse, as helpers. The mission has no physician, but the army surgeon, Dr. Pierson, who was stationed at Fort Gibbon for the past three years, took a great interest in the work and was ready at all times to give his services for surgical or medical cases. Dr. Pierson has since been transferred elsewhere, and whether his successor will be as helpful remains to be seen. In my judgment it is a mistake for the churches to construct hospitals and not supply competent physicians, especially in a country where the medical needs are so great. It is to be hoped that when the hospital at Tanana is completed the way will be open to put a high-grade physician in charge.

Title for the ground occupied by the mission and the

village is vested in the Church; the Indians live there really as the mission's guests. There are about 200 natives. The moral and physical conditions are similar to those existing elsewhere along the river.

Delegates from the villages within a radius of 100 miles from Tanana had a meeting at that point July 2–6. There is a feeling among some of them that they ought to be citizens, with all the rights and privileges of such; and that they also should have a representative in Washington to look after their interests. They are beginning to realize that protection is needed for their land and fishing rights, since some of them have had trouble with the whites, who sought to crowd them away from their fish camps—sites which they had occupied for many years. These Indians are mild mannered, and rather than take an aggressive stand for their rights when any controversy arises, they ordinarily yield to the white man.

We had several interesting interviews with Father Jette, a Roman Catholic priest who has been stationed along the Yukon and interior points for seventeen years. He is not very optimistic as to the future of these natives.

Kokrines is a village of about 140 Indians. There is a Government school-house, but it has been without a teacher for over a year, owing to a lack of funds. Some missionary work is attempted by the Roman Catholics, under the direction of Father Jardines, who is stationed at Ruby, about 40 miles below. I visited the chapel, but it did not look as though services were held very often. These Indians, like the others, are unmoral, and they manage to get considerable liquor, directly and indirectly, from Ruby; some of them have been known to return from that place with five or ten gallons at a time. Everywhere it is stated that when a "hootch peddler" is arrested by the authorities it is almost impossible to secure a conviction, since the Indian testimony will not be accepted by the average jury.

Ruby was once a thriving and populous mining town, but now there are only about 200 whites living in it. We met some of the old-timers, who were well informed regarding

general conditions. It was their opinion that the Indians could get all the liquor they wanted at Ruby, for which they usually paid extravagant prices. Stationed in the town was a special officer for the suppression of the liquor traffic among the Indians, whose duty it was to patrol the Yukon River for a radius of 50 miles up and down the stream. He had no launch in which he could cover the river points, and most of his time was spent in watching the beach and the main street of the town. He had several suspects bound over by the United States Commissioner, but one-third of the jury selected to try these cases are saloon-men. This liquor suppression work is entirely under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Alaska.

YUKAKACAT, 24 miles below Ruby, is a settlement of 30 Indians. They are fairly industrious for indefinite periods, but too much of their earnings is spent for whisky. There is no school or mission at this point. The usual conditions as to health and morals were evident.

LOUDEN is a small village on the hillside, with 25 cabins and a population of 100 Indians. A Government telegraph station is located here. The Bureau of Education has a school-house in the village, but it has been without a teacher for over a year on account of insufficient funds. The mission work is under the Roman Catholic Church. A priest is supposed to visit the town twice a month. There is no improvement on what we found all the way down the river as to health, drink, and morals.

KOYUKUK was the next point we visited. The Indian population is 100. There are five white men (storekeepers, etc.) living there, but not one white woman. The Bureau of Education has a school-house there, but it has been without a teacher for more than two years for lack of money. Mission work is under the direction of the Roman Catholic Church, but no religious service has been held for a year. The sanitary conditions are bad; the moral atmosphere is similar to the other points, and it is "wide open" in the use of whisky. A man who ought to be well informed told us of one case where an Indian spent $500 for one load of

whisky brought down from Ruby by a white man. What followed the introduction of this liquor can well be imagined. There is also a Government telegraph station at Koyukuk. It is the junction point for travel up the Koyukuk River to the mining section.

NULATO has an Indian population of 300. There is considerable Russian blood among these people, and they seem more sturdy physically. The village is badly congested, and the sanitary conditions are very unwholesome. The Bureau of Education has a neat-looking hospital at Nulato, with an equipment for some effective work, but the physician in charge seemed to us so lazy and indifferent that very little was being accomplished. The Indians were much opposed to him; they said that when the people are sick he would not visit them, but insisted that they should come to the hospital, regardless of the nature of the illness. They preferred to go to the Hospital Steward of the wireless station and pay for treatment rather than go to this doctor without cost. We learned before reaching Nulato how he had been intoxicated at Tanana, and in a very quarrelsome mood, and heard things that did not speak well for his ability. This was pretty well confirmed by what we saw and learned at Nulato. (Later on we took the matter up with the District Superintendent and the chief of the Alaska Division in Seattle, and the man was promptly displaced.)

The Government school work is conducted through an arrangement with the Roman Catholic Mission at Nulato. The mission building is used for the purpose, and the Bureau pays the salary of Sister Winifred, who acts as teacher. The Bureau also furnishes the necessary school supplies.

At one time there was a saloon at Nulato,—which has a white population of 25,—but the license was not renewed. It is claimed that there is less drinking than formerly, because the source of the supply is not so accessible, and the people must largely depend on the "hootch peddlers." The present United States Marshall has been very active

and energetic, and has kept the liquor traffic pretty well in hand.

There is much tuberculosis of one kind or another, and no improvement in the moral life of the people.

At Nulato, as is the case elsewhere, quite a few of the Indians earn a goodly sum from their winter's trappings, but they are largely improvident, and much of their money is soon dissipated by "potlatches," or feasts, to which everybody is invited. All who come are given presents. Some of the Indians will spend as much as $500 or $600 on one "potlatch." It develops into a contest of lavish entertainment, with each one trying to surpass his neighbor's party.

There is a Government wireless station at Nulato, with a detail of nine soldiers.

KALTAG is a village of 100 Indians. There is no school for the children. The Indians are industrious, but the usual conditions as to morals, liquor, and health were found.

ANVIK was the last village we visited coming down the Yukon River. There is a population of 200. A missionary of the Episcopal Church, Rev. John W. Chapman, has been located at this point for twenty-seven years. He conducts a boarding-school and has 20 pupils. Health conditions are poor on account of bad sanitation. There is said to be less drinking, because the source of supply is so far distant. There is much tuberculosis among this band, and mortality is very high with the children. The young people are without morals, but Mr. Chapman thinks that there is an improvement in the older natives. When he began his work the Indians lived in dugouts, or "holes in the ground." Now they have cabins. Personal cleanliness was not then known; there has been much improvement along that line. It took much time and persistent effort to make any impression on the people. In the absence of any physician within reach Mr. Chapman has had to act as the "medicine man." Under Mr. Chapman's supervision are a number of outlying villages, which he visits regularly—within a radius of 50 miles.

Holy Cross was the end of our river trip in the small boat. We reached there one Friday evening, expecting to have several days before the steamer came along for St. Michael, which would have allowed us time to get in personal touch with the school work at this point as conducted by the Roman Catholic Church. Early the following morning, however, there was a vigorous cry of "steamboat!" There are no telegraphic lines at Holy Cross, and the White Pass agent does not know until a boat actually arrives anything about the transportation service. His advice to us was to act on the Alaska slogan to "take the first thing going your way," that anything else was pure speculation. There was also much uncertainty regarding the boats sailing from St. Michael to Seattle, and we were informed that if we missed the "next" one it would probably mean a wait of weeks; there were usually only two sailings a month. Naturally we decided to board the "Washburn," which was going down the Yukon River.

However, at St. Michael we had the pleasure of meeting Father Sifton, in charge of the work at Holy Cross. The mission plant is well located and presents a fine appearance from the river.

Father Sifton told us that the village around the mission contained 175 people, half Indians and half Eskimos, Holy Cross being the dividing line between the two classes of natives. The boarding-school has an enrolment of 120 children. The mission has eight sisters and a number of lay brothers, in addition to the priest in charge. The school takes care of many orphan children, and the pupils come from any section of the Territory. The Bureau of Education pays the salaries of two teachers for eight months in the year, and also furnishes the necessary school supplies. The mission provides the building.

Father Sifton said the greatest trouble among the people was whisky and the "Yukon Hobo"—the disreputable scum that drifts down the river. Many of that class of whites, he said, regarded the native women as being raised for their particular benefit. One man came to the school

Indian "Fish Wheel" for Catching Salmon, Tanana River, Alaska.

Indians Curing Fish, near Kaltag, Alaska.

and said he wanted a certain girl. He was asked, "Do you want to marry her?" His reply was, "Well, I don't know about that, but I want to live with her for a few months."

St. Michael.—We had to spend a full week at this point, waiting for the boat for Seattle. We found that the Bureau of Education was conducting a school for the Eskimos living in a village at the edge of the town, and we made several visits to the two camps. The day school is in charge of Mr. Allen, a bright, energetic young man, who, with his wife, seems well qualified for the work. The Bureau has a very capable nurse, Mrs. Jordan, with whom we got acquainted. There were a number of cases on which she wished advice, and Dr. Carrington visited them with her.

St. Michael is a military reservation at which is stationed a detachment of United States soldiers, and the town is under military rule. There are no saloons, and the natives (of whom there are 150) do not get very much liquor. The commanding officers of the post have maintained strict discipline, and dealt severely with any cases that came to light of the soldiers going with the native women; consequently the conditions are fairly decent in that respect.

Dr. Thomas L. Fernbaugh, the army surgeon at the post, is greatly interested in the natives. He was formerly stationed at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and was well acquainted with most of the former Apache prisoners of war. He has been ready at all times to do what he could for the cases brought to his notice by Mrs. Jordan, but there are no facilities at the post to take them in the army hospital. Recently a small cabin has been secured by the Bureau as a dispensary, but it is hardly large enough to permit of any surgical work.

We also met at St. Michael Mr. A. W. Evans, the Bureau's supervisor for the district along the upper coast and up the Yukon River as far as Nulato. He admitted that the conditions on the Yukon were very unsatisfactory, and stated that his Bureau had been unable, for lack of funds, to make proper provision for the field. The health conditions had been fully investigated by a physician detailed from the

Public Health Service, and funds ($125,000) were asked to cope with the situation. Congress refused to appropriate any money for this purpose, and the Bureau was therefore helpless.

Mr. Evans recognized the need for some action to protect the land and fishing interests of the Yukon River Indians. The matter had been taken up, but the Land Office was hostile to setting aside the land described for the benefit of the natives. Nothing has yet been accomplished.

Archdeacon Stuck reached St. Michael the day before we left, and we had a number of long conferences with him.

The toal cost of our boat, motor and fittings, laid down in Eagle, Alaska, was $241.50. At the second place we stopped we arranged to sell the outfit for $200. When we ended our trip at Holy Cross we shipped the boat and the motor up to the purchaser and received the money, by wireless authority, when we reached St. Michael.

We boarded the S. S. "Senator" Sunday evening, August 2d. The following morning we arrived at Nome, where the boat remained at anchor in the harbor until about 10 o'clock P. M. We went ashore in the tender to visit the Eskimo village on the "Sand Spit."

NOME.—In company with Dr. D. S. Neuman, the contract physician of the Bureau of Education, we visited the Eskimo village. The summer population is close to 1200, as many natives come in from King Island and elsewhere to dispose of their handiwork—moccasins, beads, and ivory carvings. In winter the number is about 500. Dr. Neuman is a scientific, high-grade man, who apparently takes a deep interest in his work for the natives. He knows nearly every one of them by name, and the condition of the cabins and tents we visited showed his activity and influence with these people.

We left Nome on August 3d and arrived at Seattle on the twelfth of that month.

I feel that I owe a great deal to Dr. Carrington for his help in making our trip a success. He is an experienced traveler and investigator, a good companion, a competent

physician and surgeon, resourceful and ingenious in a mechanical way, with a thorough knowledge of gasoline engines. No matter what the hardships or discomforts, Dr. Carrington shared them with philosophic good nature. He did his full share of the work involved on the trip.

The Alaska Division of the Bureau of Education exercises jurisdiction of the natives of the Territory. It is a pleasure for me to bear testimony to the splendid work that Bureau is attempting to do for the 30,000 Indians and Eskimos under very adverse circumstances. Over 70 schools are maintained, and several hospitals have been established. When it is realized that Alaska is one-fifth as large as the United States, and that the entire coast line is probably a matter of 20,000 miles, the extent of the Bureau's work may be understood. Then consider that for this vast field the Bureau has but $200,000 annually, and some of its difficulties can be appreciated. For a country where extravagant prices are charged for *everything* it is necessary to economize to the quick in every direction, even to paying some of the teachers eight or nine months for a year's work. The army gives its soldiers extra pay and additional allowance for Alaska service, but many of the Bureau's employees do not receive a normal wage. To do the work required in Alaska the appropriation should be at least $500,000.

The Public Health Service loaned Dr. Krulish, one of its physicians, to the Alaska Bureau to go over the Territory. He made a thorough investigation and a report on health conditions of the natives, showing a deplorable situation calling for urgent action. Congress was asked for an appropriation to enable the Bureau to do effective medical work, but not a dollar was granted for this great need. If the ravages of tuberculosis, trachoma, and kindred diseases are to be effectively checked or eradicated, favorable action should be promptly taken by Congress on the recommendations of Dr. Krulish. Otherwise the number of natives of Alaska in need of education and Christianity will be a diminishing quantity.

To summarize the situation, in my judgment the present urgent needs of these Indians are:

1. Protection for their homes and fish camps.

2. Better enforcement of liquor laws by men free from local influence—by a force similar to the Northwest Mounted Police.

3. Enforcement of game laws prohibiting the use of poison in catching fur-bearing animals.

4. Increased appropriation for the Bureau of Education.

5. The establishment of a number of small hospitals in charge of competent physicians.

6. That the churches conducting missionary work in Alaska should properly equip their stations with a sufficient number of workers more effectively to deal with existing conditions.

Respectfully submitted,

August 31, 1914. M. K. Sniffen.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG THE ALASKAN INDIANS ALONG THE YUKON AND TANANA RIVERS.

Report of Dr. Thomas Spees Carrington.

To the Executive Committee, Indian Rights Association, Philadelphia, Pa.

Gentlemen: Before Mr. Sniffen and I made the survey of the Indian villages along the Yukon and Lower Tanana Rivers in Alaska it was understood that, should we agree upon the general conditions observed during the investigation, I would indorse Mr. Sniffen's report to your Committee, and also write a special report on the health of the Indians and the sanitary conditions under which they are living.

During our journey Mr. Sniffen and I discussed every phase of the investigation, and after each visit to a settlement reviewed together the material collected. A large

part of the information was obtained through interviews with officials, missionaries, traders, trappers, squaw men, and Indians. When we noticed a cabin or camp on the banks of the rivers between the villages we usually stopped for a chat with the owner. After these interviews the information obtained was discussed by us until we came to an agreement as to the probable causes of existing conditions observed in the district. For these reasons I feel that I can heartily indorse Mr. Sniffen's report to your Committee.

In making my investigation I endeavored to obtain information on four special subjects, as follows:

A. The sanitary condition of the villages and camps.

B. The hygienic conditions of the individual.

C. The health of the individual.

D. The increase or decrease in the population.

In order to obtain this information I made a careful sanitary survey of about 20 villages and probably as many or more summer encampments, inspecting the interiors of such dwellings as could be tactfully entered. Further, with the assistance of either the Government teacher, the visiting nurse, or a missionary I held free clinics in the school-house or dispensary of the larger villages, and after the clinics visited the homes of patients who were too ill to come to the dispensary. In this way we obtained invitations to enter dwellings which, otherwise, probably would not have been open to us. The clinics, besides helping us to obtain a welcome and courteous treatment from the Indians, gave me a good opportunity to study the prevailing diseases and draw out through questions the medical history of many of the families in the settlements.

A. The Sanitary Condition of the Villages and Camps.

The sanitary condition of both the permanent and temporary settlements is much alike, and the remarks and description that follow apply to all we visited unless otherwise stated.

1. *Drainage.*—The ground in Alaska is usually frozen to a

great depth. This is shown in the mining operations, for dirt and gravel must be thawed before it can be removed, even when 100 feet or more below the surface. In the river valleys during the summer months the top layers of the soil thaw out, generally to a depth of two or three feet. This causes the surface of the ground to become wet and swampy, with many pools of standing water that do not dry up dotted over it. These pools become the breeding places for swarms of mosquitos, and in other ways cause unhealthy conditions on the sites of settlements. Many of the permanent villages are built on ground of this character, and these conditions can be greatly improved without much effort or expense by draining with ditches. I particularly noticed pools of dirty, stagnant water on both permanent and temporary sites of settlements which might be drained in less than an hour by the work of two or three persons.

2. *Toilet Facilities.*—In none of the settlements, either permanent or temporary, did I notice a privy or other shelter for toilet purposes. In many places the inhabitants use the ground behind their dwellings, or at best a nearby clump of bushes.

3. *Water Supply.*—Drinking-water and water for domestic purposes is usually obtained from the river in front of the settlement, and during the summer months there is probably no danger from a polluted water supply. However, after the river freezes the water is obtained from holes in the ice. We were told that it is a custom to throw refuse over the bank and onto the ice in order that it may be carried away when the "breakup" comes in the spring. Dead animals and heavy offensive material, when not left around the cabins, are also hauled out upon the ice. As the weather moderates the top of the ice begins to melt, and the resulting water from around refuse often drains into the holes from which the water supply for the village is obtained.

4. *Dog Kennels.*—Many large dogs are kept in every settlement. In general, they are tied up in front of the owner's dwellings, or are at large in and around the buildings. During the winter, at the permanent villages, in

many instances they are housed in kennels placed to the rear or between the cabins. So far as I was able to observe there is no effort made to keep the ground clean where the animals are tethered. I was informed that during the winter months frozen urine accumulates at the corners of the kennels in large cakes, often two or more feet in height, and not being removed, melts as the weather moderates, causing offensive and unsanitary conditions.

5. *Dwelling Interiors.*—The cabins are built of logs. The older ones consist of a single room, and both sexes of all ages sleep crowded together in them. These single-room cabins and the tents without interior partitions are considered by the social workers to be one of the causes for the unmoral condition of the Indian. In most of the villages overcrowding is a common condition. During the seasons when all the inhabitants are at home, and especially when a "potlatch" is in progress, we were told the cabins are crowded to their utmost capacity, the inmates sleeping in rows and occupying the entire floor area. Through the influence of the missionaries in some of the communities two-room cabins are now being built, in order that the women and children may have more privacy.

6. *Ventilation of Dwellings.*—The Indian does not seem to notice overheated or foul air in his dwelling, and the problem of ventilating his cabin, particularly through the winter months, is hard to solve. The temperature during this season ranges from zero Fahrenheit to 70° below zero, and warmth and comfort are obtained by excluding fresh outside air. Closing every opening tightly has become such a habit that it seems impossible to teach him to open up his cabin even in warm weather. Our visits were generally made in the middle of the day, at a season of the year when the temperature out-of-doors ranges around 70° and delightful atmospheric conditions prevail. Still we found practically all the cabins tightly closed, and in many of them women cooking over hot stoves that made the interiors stifling. While we were with the missionaries or teachers in some villages, they urged the Indians to move into their summer

camps. It was already late in the season for this change, but the Indians did not seem to have any great desire to leave their cabins for life in the open air.

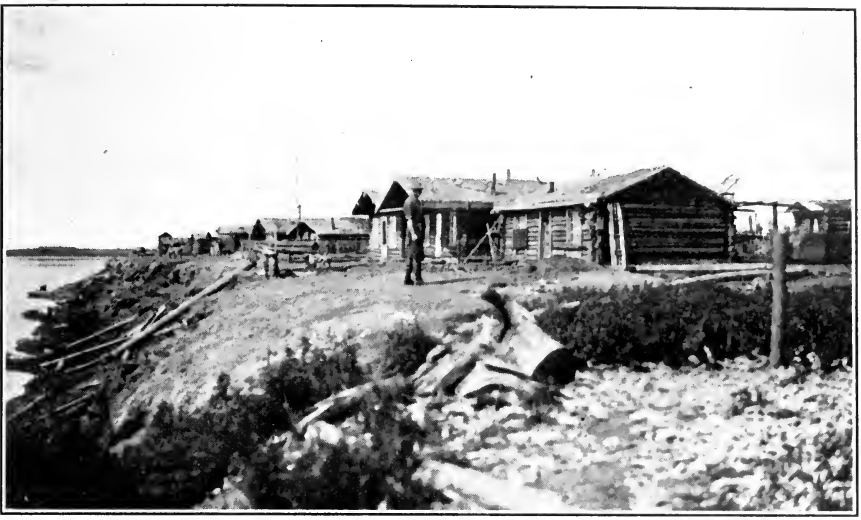
B. The Hygienic Conditions of the Individual.

Under this heading I have grouped together the facts regarding the food, clothing, care of the body, and habits and customs that bear upon the health of the individual Indian. A part of this information was obtained from the whites who have lived among the natives for years, and the balance from my own observations made during visits to the settlements.

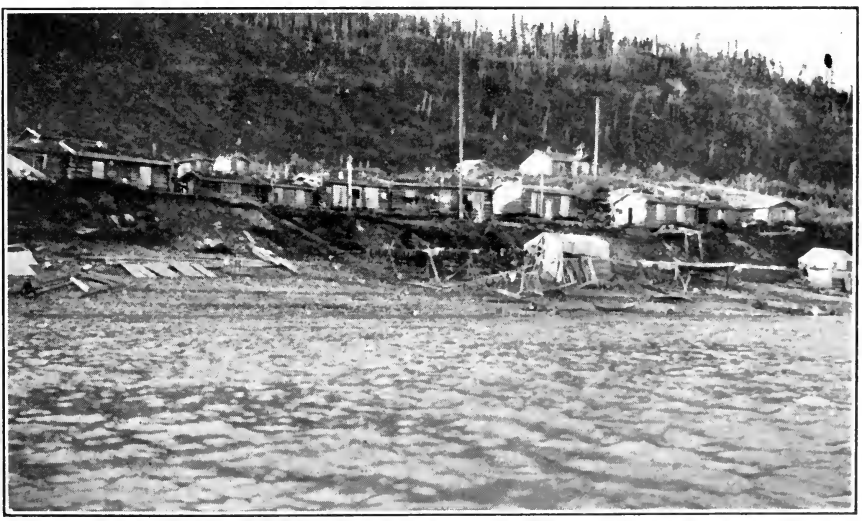
1. *Food.*—The health of the Indian is probably not affected by the quality or variety of his food, for supplies can be obtained without difficulty when money is plentiful. The native in a large measure follows the ways of the white man in making his purchases; however, he holds to a practice called "potlatching," which is objectionable and does affect his health. This custom has many superstitions connected with it, and consists in giving a great feast to one's neighbors, friends, and invited guests from other settlements.

Usually the manner in which the Indian earns his living is such that his money reaches him in lump sums. This is due to the fact that he sells his fish and furs in bulk after the seasons for fishing and trapping are over, or delivers at certain times a specified amount of wood which he has cut on contract. With a goodly sum in hand he becomes uneasy, for he adheres to a community life and does not know how to save money. He therefore prepares to give a "potlatch." Hoping to outshine his neighbors, he will spend all the money he has earned and all he can borrow, as well as any credit he may have at the local stores. These feasts last for days, until all the supplies are exhausted. Then the family giving the entertainment lives on low rations until its members are invited to a "potlatch."

Potlatching, therefore, has forced the Indian into an existence consisting of alternating periods of feasting and



Stephen's Village, on Yukon River, Alaska.



Indian Village on Yukon River—Louden, Alaska.

fasting, during which he is either gorging himself and overtaxing his digestive organs, or is starving himself and drawing on his reserve vitality.

The children appear to be poorly nourished, and in many instances their condition is very likely due to the absence of fresh cow's milk. Except at two or three points, situated at great distances from each other, there are no cows in the interior of the Territory. Even at these points the price of milk would debar it from the Indians. The only milk the native can obtain is the evaporated or condensed variety, and children fed for long periods of time on this kind of milk often suffer from acute intestinal disorders and diseases due to malnutrition.

Alcohol, because of the unusual manner in which it is consumed, is probably one of the causes of malnutrition among the adults. The existing laws prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Indian force him, if he tries to obtain whisky, to purchase it in some underhand way and in large quantities. The impossibility of enforcing the law under existing conditions tends to stimulate a trade in the lowest grade of poisonous whisky between the Indians and a disreputable class of white men. From the information we obtained during our investigation we concluded that practically all the Indians in the Yukon and Tanana valleys are able to secure intoxicating liquors. However, when a supply is brought into a settlement it is usually consumed at once, either through a lack of self-control or because of fear that the supply will be discovered and confiscated by the authorities. This custom causes numerous cases of alcoholic poisoning, and when carried on over a period of time, lowers the vitality of the individual and opens the way to chronic diseases.

2. *Clothing.*—The Indian has entirely changed the manner of clothing his body during recent years. Before the white man came into the country he used skins, furs, and other native products. Now he purchases ready-made clothes from the trader, and these are usually of shoddy or other cheap materials. The women make most of the

clothes for themselves and their children from cotton cloth, and they probably do not have the necessary protection for the arctic winters.

3. *Care of the Body.*—Bathing of the body is not a frequent practice. Possibly this is due to the low temperature and the lack of water and privacy during the winter months. There is a great difference between individuals regarding personal cleanliness. Some of the Indians who have come in contact with the missionaries and teachers have fairly clean habits, but many others are filthy; their clothes inside and out are dirty, and they do not appear to follow any of the personal hygienic customs of civilized society.

4. *Habits and Customs.*—The Indians have numerous habits and customs which are closely related to health and disease, such as the custom of "potlatching," mentioned under the paragraph on Foods. Spitting seems to be a universal habit. Men and boys particularly make a habit of expectorating at frequent intervals upon paths and nearby objects when out-of-doors, and also upon the floors and other selected places in dwellings. This habit is, without doubt, a large factor in the spreading of tuberculosis.

Promiscuous sexual intercourse among the boys and girls is a custom that begins about the time of puberty, and probably is a factor in disseminating venereal diseases throughout the settlements. There are peculiar customs connected with childbirth which, no doubt, cause uterine diseases, and filthy habits relating to the care of children likely to produce intestinal disorders and skin eruptions.

The Indian objects to burning anything which comes from his body, such as hair, bits of skin, or parings of finger-nails, as he believes they contain some of the vital principle upon which his physical welfare depends. This belief extends to old clothes which may be soiled by excretions from the body, and probably spread acute contagious diseases, such as typhoid or scarlet fever and dysentery. As is indicated by many customs, the Indian is still very superstitious, and often when ill or in trouble resorts to the tribal medicine man rather than to a priest or physician.

C. The Health of the Individual.

While the information presented under this heading was largely gathered personally through clinics and visits to patients in their homes, I have also used facts obtained from missionaries, physicians, and trained nurses who are working among the Indians.

1. *The General Health.*—The health of the inhabitants in the settlements we visited is below the normal of the whites in the same region. Instead of finding a race in a good physical condition, as might be expected in a healthy country such as Alaska, and among a people whose occupations are largely followed in the open air, we found a majority of both sexes complaining of various kinds of indefinite misery, and showing indications to the trained observer of impaired vitality.

2. *Tuberculosis.*—There are numerous cases of tuberculous disease in practically all the settlements along the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. Every form and stage of the disease can be studied during a journey through the interior of the Territory. However, no figures of value could be obtained regarding the number of persons afflicted in a given community or in the territory inspected. We found there is a great difference of opinion on the subject among the social and medical workers, although nearly every one consulted believes that over half of the population is suffering from the disease in some form. In a few of the smaller settlements where I made an examination of possibly one-third of the inhabitants I found indications of bone or gland infection in nearly every person inspected.

3. *Eye Diseases.*—Eye diseases are prevalent throughout the district, and I saw many cases of partial and total blindness. The patients who came to the clinics complaining of eye trouble usually were suffering from trachoma, and probably most of the blindness is due to that disease or to infection from gonorrhea.

4. *Venereal Diseases.*—It was impossible, on a journey of inspection such as we were undertaking, to make a thor-

ough investigation as to the prevalence of venereal disease. However, I saw unmistakable signs of syphilis in a number of persons who consulted me for other troubles, and was quite often asked to treat patients infected with gonorrhea. These experiences, together with the information I gathered from various sources, led me to believe that venereal diseases are common and are a factor in the degeneration of the Indians of Alaska.

5. *Abdominal Disease.*—Intestinal disorders are very common. Daily I heard complaints of pain and other symptoms, indicating that there is a large amount of suffering from functional diseases, and I also examined many cases where abdominal operations were indicated.

D. The Increase or Decrease in the Population.

So far as I am aware there are no reliable figures to be obtained on this subject. The United States Census Report for 1910 gives the entire native population of Alaska as slightly over 25,000, and shows a decrease of over 4000 in ten years. There seems to be much difference of opinion among the well-informed whites of the interior of the Territory as to the vital statistics of the Indian population. When we came to collecting figures regarding the births and deaths occurring in the villages during a given time in the past few years, we generally found that no figures are kept except at settlements where Government teachers are stationed. In other places our information was obtained by the very unreliable method of questioning the whites and intelligent natives. However, the figures obtained by our efforts showed in almost every instance an increase of births over deaths for various periods of time during recent years. For a while these statistics puzzled me, as there is no doubt the Indians are much less numerically in the Yukon District at the present time than they were fifteen or twenty years ago. After our investigation had been in progress for some time we began to hear about disastrous epidemics of diseases, such as measles and smallpox. These swept the country after the discovery of gold in the Terri-

tory, causing hundreds of deaths, and in some localities wiping out entire villages. Therefore I concluded that the reduction in the population is not due to a steady death-rate higher than the number of births in an average year, but is due to an occasional epidemic, deadly because the ground is prepared by the bad sanitary conditions of the settlements and the unhygienic manner in which the Indians live.

Summary.

The facts gathered during the survey as outlined show—

1. That the native settlements in the Yukon and Tanana River valleys are in a very bad sanitary condition.

2. That the peculiar habits and customs of the Indian are a large factor in causing disease.

3. That disease and misery due to ill health are very common.

4. That the native population is not decreasing except during periods of epidemics.

As the investigation progressed I was more impressed each succeeding day by the large amount of indefinite misery shown by men, women, and children. Practically all gave the impression of having some physical disorder, and often the trouble was in plain view, such as inflamed eyes, enlarged or suppurating glands, skin diseases, or deformities. If one saw an apparently healthy individual, when questioned, he was almost certain to complain of some internal disorder.

This obvious deterioration of the native race in the interior of the Territory of Alaska is, in my opinion, due—

1. To the gradual lessening of the Indian's means of subsistence, such as the fish, the fur-bearing animals, and the game, This, in a large measure, is caused by the white man's vandalism, for he uses "modern" methods in fishing and hunting: he does not preserve the game as the Indian has done for years; and in some instances he uses poison to obtain furs in large quantities.

2. To the change which has occurred during the last twenty years in the Indians' manner of living. Formerly

the natives divided into small family groups, lived nomadically in tepees or tents made of skins. Now, for a large part of the year they live in tightly closed and appallingly overheated cabins, which they arrange in villages without regard to sanitation.

3. To the perpetuation of many of the traditional practices of the race, which apparently have a more harmful effect upon the Indians living under civilized or semi-civilized conditions than upon those existing as savages.

4. To the number of squaws removed from the life of the community. Many white men who have settled in Alaska have married or are living with native women, and they seem to have picked out not only the best-looking squaws, but also the finest physical specimens of the race. This leaves the diseased and weak women to bring into the world the next generation of pure-blooded Indians.

5. To the occasional use, in poisonous quantities, of a very low grade of intoxicating liquors.

Conclusions.

While the sanitary and health conditions of the natives living in the Tanana and Yukon valleys is very bad at the present time, I believe that they can be changed. Considering the semi-nomadic life of the Indian and the unfavorable conditions brought about by the climate and the discovery of gold in the country, the results from the efforts of the missionaries and the Government physicians, nurses and teachers to raise the standards of living among them have been extremely good. Many of the whites we interviewed during our journey declared the belief that all efforts to help the natives are of little value, and that the Indian is poor material to work on. I cannot agree with this opinion, for I think it is caused by a perspective too close to the missionary and educational work in the Territory.

An unprejudiced observer can see that the native race is tractable, desires to follow the white man's customs, and that the individuals given a fair chance have greatly improved within a short time. We heard a number of white

men say that the race is dying out and, therefore, it is unnecessary to provide schools for children who will not live to profit from the education provided for them. On the other hand, I believe that the only way to save the race is through education. Bad as the description of the present state of their life may appear, many of the conditions are such that they can be corrected by the individual with little effort. A thorough education of the children will in a great measure change the living conditions for the next generation, and will also influence the present adult population. I therefore feel strongly that not only the existing schools should be continued, but that the Government should be urged to establish a school in every village, or arrange in some other way to educate all the native children in the Territory.

While the education of the present generation is in progress, the medical and sanitary work in the settlements should also be pushed with vigor. This can best be done, I believe, under the direction of one strong medical man, who should be placed in charge of the whole district, and supplied with sufficient competent assistants. A man with the ability to carry through such constructive work should have the funds necessary to build, equip, and maintain hospitals and dispensaries, and should be given ample facilities for summer and winter transportations.

Respectfully submitted,

THOMAS S. CARRINGTON.

September 28, 1914.

The Indian Rights Association is a non-partisan, non-sectarian organization for promoting the civilization of the Indian and for securing his natural and political rights. To this end it aims to collect and collate facts, principally through the personal investigations of its officers and agents, regarding the Indian's relations with the Government and with our own race, concerning his progress in industry and education, his present and future needs. Upon the basis of facts, and of legitimate conclusions drawn from them, the Association appeals to the American people for the maintenance of such a just and wise policy upon the part of the Executive and Congress in dealing with these helpless wards of the Nation as may discourage fraud and violence, promote education, obedience to law, and honorable labor, and finally result in the complete absorption of the Indian into the common life of the Nation.

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