

Alaska as It Is.

Alaska Correspondence Chicago Tribune.

Hundreds of people have been to Alaska, have looked, and have gone away despairing. There has been no immigration except of camp-followers, who tumble in after the armies. The population is diminishing, and there has been no improvement under American occupation. Since the withdrawal of the Russian Company the fur business at Sitka has ceased. The Russian population left behind, with a sum of money as a gratuity to each person, has spent the gratuity, and now lives upon the American commissary department. The trade stores, shops and "dead-falls" have decreased. Alaska, in short, is cut off by insurmountable barriers from that class of American pioneers who hitch up their teams and penetrate to the remotest parts. To get to the territory by water requires money in hand, and when one gets there the place is uncongenial to a good class of pioneers. The Indians are of the purest North American type, of savages, and possess villainous traits of character, committing atrocious murders for the sake of plunder and revenge, but they do not scalp and kill for mere bravado. They are larger stalwart, chery, bright and aquatic, eating fish and living at the water's edge, rejoicing in feuds, and their weapons are entirely firearms, chiefly the Hudson Bay flint muskets, and knives. They make hereditary slaves of prisoners. Their houses are built of hewn timber, and are large and well constructed. They are fond of rum. A gunboat is requisite to move into the shallow water among the Indians. The report recommends that the Indian's habitations and canoes be destroyed whenever they become noisy. Sitka can not be maintained without a garrison of 100 men. Sitka has a harbor and can be entered without a pilot, and could easily be taken by a foreign enemy, and it is the only harbor of any consequence.