

# Northern Light

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## NATIVE PROSPECTS

BY

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The Industrial exhibit given by the pupils was complimentary to the intelligence of the pupils and the skill and patience of the teachers. This tends to prove that the educational lines; pastoral, industrial and agricultural, followed by the B. of E. is the correct method of evolving the native from the hunter into the self supporting producer.

The writer distinctly remembers the condition of the native along the Yukon and also the coast, before education had made its influence felt.

The comparison of the unsanitary igloo surrounded by the refuse of years with the present with its little garden is pleasing and encouraging. Then he worked long and patiently making a knife of an old file. Now we see him with his kit of tools capable of doing work much as a white man does. Then he constructed his little kiat. Now he does the same and in addition builds and sails many of the northern schooners.

In that day the women patiently plied the needle. Now she chants a lullaby as she treads a "Singer."

It is indeed wonderful the progress they have made from the stone age of a few years ago to the present advanced condition. A progress that the white race unaided required centuries to attain. The future of the native, no adverse influence intervening, is prom-

ising. The generation of our day is markedly superior in intelligence and knowledge, to the generation of yesterday.

With a better mechanical knowledge than he now has and it is coming he will be able to enter the field of labor and work shoulder to shoulder with mechanics of another race. This mechanical education will benefit him personally and will at the same time add to the wealth of Alaska.

With canneries upon our small streams worked on the co-operative plan the native could supply the local demand, at least, of choice fish.

In the near future the greatest source of wealth to the natives of Alaska is the reindeer industry. At the present time more than thirty thousand deer are owned by the natives. Three fourths of a million dollars. These herds are doubling every three years. The local demand is not equal to the number that could be slaughtered. But in a few years at the present rate of increase there will be enough to make it a paying proposition to have a cold storage vessel plying these waters, stopping at the principal reindeer camps along the coast where the deer could be killed, cooled, and shipped outside at a figure favorable to all concerned. It is only a matter of time when the skins, hair, horns and milk will be utilized in a more paying way than at present.