OUR COUNTRY: WEST

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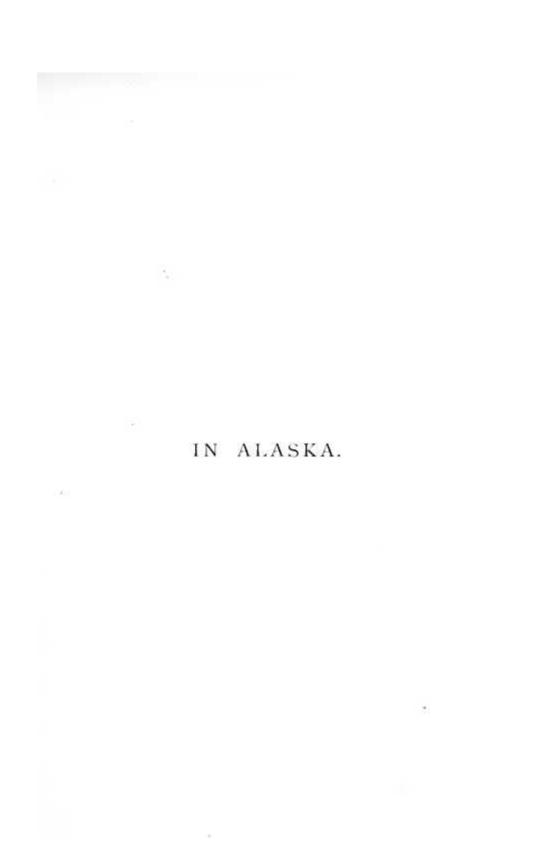
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Our One American Castle.

Away up in Alaska, the northwesternmost part of our country, lies the strange old tumble-down, sleepy, little mossgrown town of Sitka, where stands our one American castle.

Crowning a rocky headland that rises precipitously from the water on three sides and descends with a steep slope to the town on the other, is the castle, with a small but somewhat forinidable-looking battery at the foot of the terrace on the seaside.

The castle is one hundred and forty feet long and seventy wide, and is built of heavy cedar logs. Copper bolts, piercing the walls, rivet it to the rocks.

The Russian governors of the colony held residence in the castle, and traditions of the social splendor that reigned there still cling to the weather-beaten building.

With the Alaskans all things date back to the transfer of Alaska to the United States. Here, in the days before this transfer, princes and barons ruled. Something like regal splendor prevailed in Baranof Castle, as the palace was called in honor of the first governor.

Travellers in the early part of the present century give charming pictures of social life at Sitka. State dinners were given once a week, and a constant round of balls and festivities was kept up.

Baroness Kupreanof crossed Siberia on horseback to Bering Sea in 1835, in order to be with her husband at Sitka. There she made the castle a place of rendezvous for all classes of society, extending to each a charming and gracious hospitality.

A big brass samovar, or tea-urn, was always boiling in the dining-room, and by day or night a glass of the choicest caravan tea was served to every visitor. Beautifully wrought