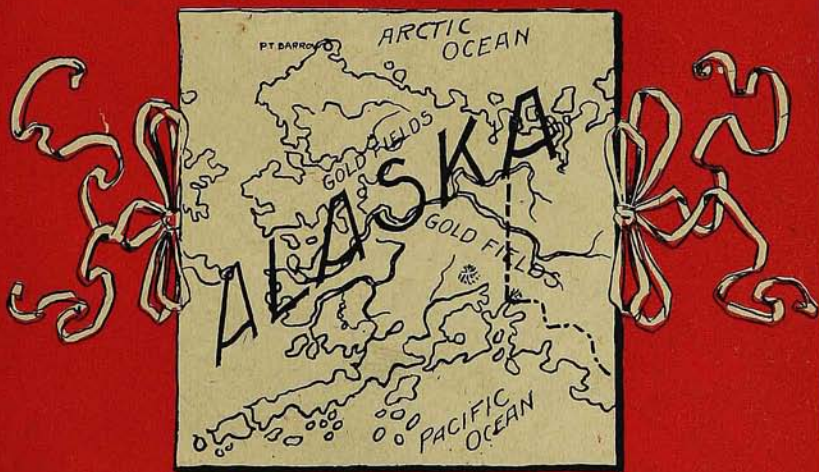


KLONDIKE GOLD FIELDS

ON THE

YUKON



WITH COMPLETE PRACTICAL INFORMATION CONCERNING

HOW, WHEN AND WHERE TO GO.

MYERSON PRINTING COMPANY.
ST. LOUIS, MO.

THE PRACTICAL GUIDE TO AMERICA'S NEW EL DORADO.

KLONDIKE GOLD FIELDS

... BEING A ...

COMPENDIUM OF RELIABLE INFORMATION

... BEARING UPON THE ...

GOLD REGIONS OF ALASKA.

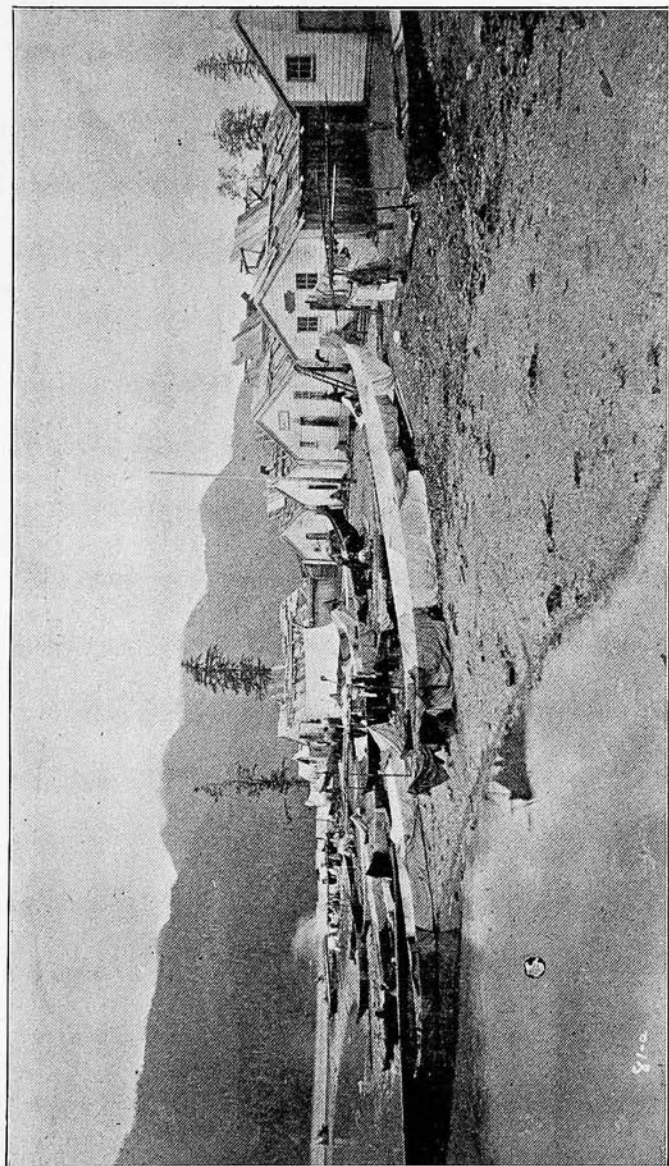
A Book of Personal Reminiscence, Adventure and Practical Instruction to the Intending Gold Seeker; Containing also the Latest Official Reports to the Government, as made by the Geological Survey, and the Full Written Opinion of the Director of the Mint.

COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY

H. H. PARAMORE.

ST. LOUIS, MO.,
SAM'L F. MYERSON PRINTING CO.,
1897.

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AUKE VILLAGE.

Photo by P. Moll.

Ho, For The Klondike!

The spirit of '49 lives again!

Like a call to arms the mere announcement of the rich finds in the Yukon country has aroused the youth and energy of the land, and summons them to enlist in the fight for fortune.

Later reports are adding fuel to the flame. Every account seems to verify the earlier rumors, and intensifies the desire to know more of this new El Dorado, from whence comes news of fabulous fortune-making that reads like a series of tales from the Arabian Nights.

In answer to the demand for complete and authentic information concerning the district, this book has been carefully and conscientiously compiled from every known reliable source.

One Way to Go.

A representative of the Northwestern Trading Company thus describes the journey by water from Seattle to the heart of the gold fields:

Leaving Seattle on a large and well appointed steamer, which proceeds up Puget Sound, passing Port Townsend and Victoria and out through the Straits of San Juan Del Fuca to the beautiful Pacific, where you have an uninterrupted voyage on a comparatively smooth and placid ocean

of about 2,000 miles, to Dutch Harbor, which is the first stop. Here we find located a coaling station and stores operated by the North American Commercial Company, and it is also the supply point for the naval vessels and the Behring Sea fleet of whalers and sealers. After a short stop at this place we proceed on our way north, through Behring Sea, past the Seal Island of St. George and St. Paul and up through Norton Sound to Fort Get There, on St. Michaels Island, where is located the transfer and supply station for the Yukon River. Here also you will find a good many natives or Esquimaux. Here passengers and freight are transferred direct to large and commodious river steamers, which then proceed down the coast sixty miles to the north mouth of the great Yukon, a river larger than the Mississippi, that can be navigated with large steamers 2,300 miles without a break, and which abounds in fish, the salmon being noted far and wide for their fine flavor and large size, and no one knows better than our steamboat cooks how to prepare this excellent fish in the most appetizing manner.

As you proceed up the river you will see innumerable Indian villages and small settlements, inhabited by traders, missionaries and Indians, all of which are of interest to the traveler in a new and until lately a comparatively unknown territory. The first two or three hundred miles is through a low, flat country, after which the mountainous country is reached, and the constant change of magnificent scenery, as you proceed up the river, is beyond description, as nowhere on the American continent is there anything to equal it.

At Old Fort Yukon, which is inside of the Arctic Circle, you will see, during the months of June and July, the sun for twenty-four hours without a break, and all along the river during these months you can read a book or paper at any time during the day or night without a lamp, as it is continuous daylight during this time.

After leaving here the next point of interest is Circle City, the metropolis of the Yukon country. Here you find a large frontier town, the houses all built of logs, and while they have no pretensions to beauty, they are warm and comfortable. Circle City has a population of nearly two thousand people, and some of the best placer mines in the country are located near this place, and prospects are that this will be one of the best placer mining camps on the American continent, as it is steadily increasing in population, and the miners and prospectors are continually finding new and richer placer ground, and as the country around here has been comparatively little prospected, we look for a big increase in population and in the amount of gold taken out.

From here you proceed on up the river for two hundred and forty miles further, where you find Fort Cudahy, at the mouth of the celebrated Forty-Mile Creek. Here is a thriving town, very similar to Circle City, but not as large. This is the supply point for the mines in the Forty-Mile district. This district has been a very prosperous one for the last four years and has turned out a great quantity of gold, this being the first important district where coarse gold was discovered.

Twelve Times the Size of New York State.

The name "Alaska" is a corruption of Al-ay-ek-sa, the name given by the native Islanders to the mainland, and signifies "great country." It contains nearly 600,000 square miles of territory, or is nearly one-fifth as large as all the other states and territories combined. It is larger than twelve states the size of New York.

There are probably few people on the Pacific slope, or elsewhere for that matter, aware of the fact that San Francisco is several hundred miles east of midway between the eastern and westernmost shores of the United States; yet

such is the case. It is nearly 4,000 miles from the longitude of the most western of the Aleutian Islands directly east to San Francisco, while it is not over about 3,500 miles from San Francisco directly east to the longitude of the east coast of Maine.

How, When and Where to Go.

Perhaps no better instructions for reaching the Yukon gold fields, and for equipping one's self for the journey, can be given than by quoting from the reports made by miners lately returned. The stories told by these men vary only in detail. In substance they corroborate each other, and what they have to say may in almost every instance be accepted as literally true.

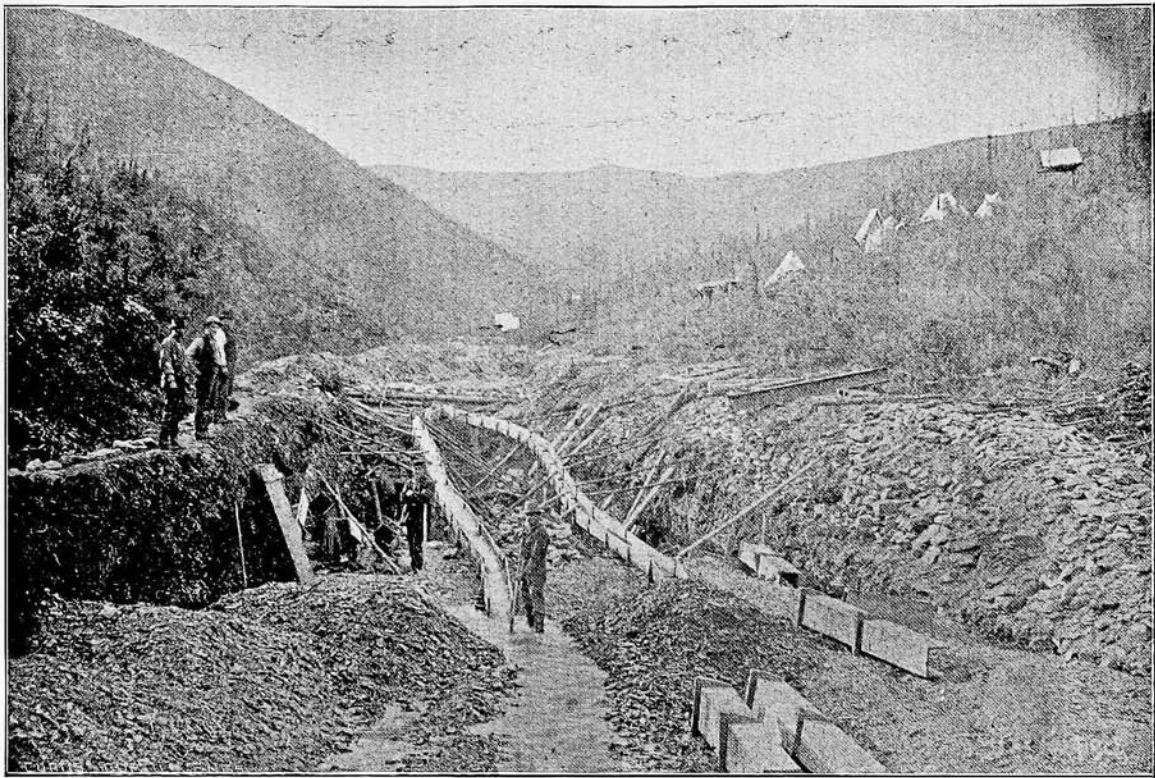
OVER CHILKAT PASS.

Graphic Description of the Overland Route, as Told by Alex. Wilson.

A well-known citizen of St. Louis, Mr. Alex. G. Wilson, recently wrote to his family an interesting detailed description of a trip to the gold fields by what is commonly called the "overland route," by way of Chilkat Pass and Lake Bennett to the headwaters of the Yukon. Following is Mr. Wilson's letter in full:

Dawson, on the Yukon, Mouth of the Klondike }
 River, Northwest Territory, Alaska, }
 June 4, 1897. }

Dear Folks:—Here I am at last at what is called, and truly so, the greatest gold camp the world has ever known. We arrived here from Dyea after seventy days of the hardest travel I ever experienced. I presume you got my last letter, dated at Sheep's Head Camp. Well, the next day we broke camp and started over the summit—Chilkat



PLACER GOLD CLAIM ON MILLER CREEK, YUKON DISTRICT, ALASKA.

Pass. We had all our provisions in cache there, after a week's packing of fifty-pound bundles through the pass. We loaded everything on three sleds and turned them loose after pointing them in the right direction, and you ought to have seen them fly down the three-mile declivity.

Nature's Toboggan Slide.

A mile a minute was nothing. They landed all safe, however, at the bottom on the Yukon side. Then we followed, sliding and tumbling after. In going down, however, one of my partners was nearly killed. Gibbons, who was half way down the mountain side, was struck by the last sleigh we let go and knocked about fifty feet. I thought we would have to bury him there where we picked him up, but he was simply stunned, and after a half hour's rubbing and frequent doses of whisky he revived and was able to continue the journey. It was lucky it was the light sled that struck him, or there would have been only two of us to float down the mighty Yukon.

Through the Snow Crust.

Well, we crossed Lake Lindermann on the ice all right at foot of the mountains, and got safely to the head of Lake Bennett (twenty-six miles long), April 6. By this time the weather was getting warmer and the snow melting. The snow-crust on the lake would support the sleds, but we broke through at every step, and as there was about a foot of slush under the crust, those twenty-six miles looked mighty big to us. After wading this way for two days, and having traversed but four miles, I informed the boys I had had enough of it, so we went into camp to wait for a cold snap or more of a thaw to break up the ice.

Building the Boat.

We lay in camp three days, and then there came a cold spell, the wind blowing a gale. We broke camp once and

hoisted sails on our sleds, but while we didn't have to pull a pound we were compelled to walk by the side of our sleds in order to guide them. Well, we made the other twenty-two miles easily enough that day. We next crossed Two-Mile River on to Lake Tigsh (thirteen miles long), which we got over in four days; then came Six-Mile River, the first open water we had seen on the trip, on whose banks we pulled our sleighs for two days till we came to Marsh Lake (twenty-two miles long).

When we struck the lake this weather had become warm again, and it took us three days to make seven miles through eight inches of slush; so we waded into a good patch of timber and remained there fourteen days, building a boat. It took us six days to fell the trees and saw the boards out. We made a splendid boat, for your humble servant had not forgotten how to handle the tools, with which we were well equipped. We had a nice camp—one tent to cook in and one to sleep in. Altogether, we enjoyed our fourteen days' respite from travel while building our ark, and Gibbons essayed a few times to fetch in some fresh moose meat, but always came back with a hard-luck story.

Drifting Down the Yukon.

By this time all the snow had melted and drained off the ice of the lake, so that we had no trouble in going the ten miles to open water, which took us a day and a half. We put the boat on two sleighs and our provisions in it.

When we got to the great Yukon, we launched our little craft (after emptying it of our goods, though, you may be sure) and tried her in the swift current of the mighty river (a river as large as the Mississippi) and found she would answer our purpose very well after a little more oiling and plugging.

After dinner we loaded her with our outfit and started on our long journey down the Yukon with Chris steering

and Gibbons and I at the oars. We hadn't gone five miles when Chris stuck us on a sand bar and we had to get out and drag her off. Chris, who has been a sailor, may be all right on the "briny deep," but as a river pilot he is "N. G.," for we had hardly got off the bar when he ran us into some fallen trees and bowlders, nearly capsizing the boat and wetting some of our grub. As I had the most to lose, I took the steering paddle and kept it all the way through.

The Rapids of Miller's Canyon.

The next day we came to a canyon called "Miller's Canyon," the most dangerous place on the river, and where many a party have lost all they had, and their lives, too. It is as deep a cut through the mountain range as the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, perpendicular walls on each side 200 feet high, a mile long. The water rushes through with frightful speed and boils and bubbles like the rapids below Niagara. There is a long, devious way around the canyon by land, which requires four days' hard work to get over, while to shoot the canyon only takes two and one-half minutes.

Well, we halted at the danger line, a half mile above the canyon, and walked down to take a look at it. I asked the boys what they thought of it. Gibbons wanted to pack around it. Chris suggested that the sleds, bedding and some of the grub bags be taken out and he thought we might make it, and if we lost the boat we would have something left. I called his attention to the possible fact that if we lost the boat we would also lose our lives and be independent of both grub and blankets, for no swimmer could live in that torrent. My suggestion was to reload the boat and put all the heavy stuff in the stern, so as to throw the bow up and ride the waves better, and to take nothing out; Gibbons to walk around, for one man at the oars and another to steer was enough; besides, Gibbons,

with what grub he could carry, might be needed to report us in case of failure.

How He Shot the Rapids.

Well, my plan was decided upon and we went back to the boat feeling mighty queer and solemn, and Gibbons very blue. On our way back we met a party of men packing around the canyon, and they asked us what we intended to do. When we replied we would "shoot her," they tried to dissuade us, but we had had enough of packing and dragging, and Chris and I were willing to take chances to escape any more of it.

Well, we got everything fixed, and shoved off, with Chris at the oars and myself steering. We dropped leisurely down the bank to within 100 yards of the canyon, and then Chris pulled out to the center with all his might and main to get a fair start at the canyon's mouth, and the last thing I saw before entering the canyon was Gibbons running as hard as he could up the mountain side so he could keep us in sight.

So soon as the boat entered the canyon she seemed to shiver, and then plunged head-foremost into the first wave, and about a half a barrel of water came over the bow; then she straightened out and rode through the rapids without shipping a drop more of water, and we had no trouble in keeping her head with the current. After we hit the first wave I knew we were safe, for I had perfect control of the boat; then I enjoyed the ride, short as it was; it was like coasting down hill on a sled. The canyon, like a great many other things, looked dangerous until you tackled it, and then it seemed easy.

Sailing Sleds on a Glassy Lake.

Along in the evening Gibbons hove into sight, then we continued on down the river to Lake Labarge, thirty-five miles. There our boat riding ended for the present,

the lake being still frozen solid. This lake is thirty miles long. We arrived at Lake Labarge, May 10th. The ice was smooth as glass, so Chris rigged up two sails on the boat (which we had deposited on two sleds), while I put my wits to work to devise a means of steering her so we could ride. I made a bolster, like that used on the front of a wagon, and put it on the forward sled; then a tongue; then a lever from the tongue to the boat. Then we waited for favorable winds, which materialized the next morning. In the meantime three outfits went by us using dogs to drag their sleds.

Back to the Friendly Yukon.

After we got started, with the sailor at the ropes and myself at the tiller, Gibbons on the lookout, we soon caught up to the other outfits and went past them like thoroughbreds, everybody shouting and waving their hats. But our pride soon had a fall; for we had scarcely got out of sight of the other fellows when we struck a side wind, and before Chris could let go his rope we went head over heels, spilling everything out of the boat, damaging the provisions some and straining the boat pretty badly. After gathering up our scattered effects we got started again, and reached open water at the end of the lake, leaving the other outfits so far behind that they never caught up to us. The next day we spent in repairing our craft, and then once more launched her into the friendly Yukon, thankful that the worst of our trip was over, for we had no more lakes to cross, and floated calmly down the river to Klondike, a distance of 400 miles from the last lake. We floated the 400 miles in eight days.

In the Diggings At Last.

This is a great camp, and a conservative estimate of its richness sounds like exaggeration. I have been here now twelve days and cannot get a hold of anything. Cannot even

buy a foot of ground in the town, not to mention the diggings, values are so extremely high. Every foot of ground in this district is claimed, and there are hundreds of prospectors in the adjacent country looking for other rich ground. The gravel must be very rich in gold or nobody wants it. From the amount of gold dust and nuggets I have seen in Klondike, and the mad hunt for it, the district must be all they claim for it. Both of my partners have left me and gone to Circle City to get work, for there is no work here on the Klondike to amount to anything till the fall, when they will work all the men they can get, for these are winter diggings, while Circle City is worked in the summer.

First Job at \$15 a Day.

At Circle City wages are \$10 to \$12 a day, while here on the Klondike wages are \$15 a day for all kinds of labor. I have been at work seven days for a saloon man, making round poker tables, faro and crap tables. He pays me \$15 a day and grub. It looks big, but when you take into consideration the cost and hardship in getting here it isn't so much. They pay principally in gold dust at \$16 an ounce.

A Clever Deal in Provisions.

I sold part of my stock of provisions. You remember I brought with me a full year's supply, and as I intend to return home in the fall I retained but enough to last me. I have made enough on the provisions I sold to pay all my expenses in getting here and also my return home. Even if I am not lucky enough to strike it rich (and I have great hopes of success) I cannot lose.

I sold one gallon of whisky that cost me, in Seattle, \$8, for \$25. Bacon that cost me 11c I sold for 75c per pound. I sold a 150-pound sack of flour for \$30; tea that cost me 25c per pound for \$2 per pound. Sugar I sold for 60c per pound. One suit of underwear I sold for \$12; a pick that



STEAMER ARCTIC. 2,100 MILES UP THE YUKON RIVER.

cost me \$1.50 I sold for \$9. All of these goods I could easily spare and would have no use for. If I had only known, I would have brought in \$1,000 or so worth of goods. If I go out this fall I will come back next spring with a big stock of goods to sell, as I now know the "ropes" and will be able to make the next trip easier.

No Danger of Starvation.

The stock I have saved for my own use consists of 125 pounds of flour, 40 pounds cornmeal, 4 pounds tea, 35 pounds apricots (canned), which are worth their weight in gold almost, judging by the longing looks cast at them and which I set aside as not for sale; 10 pounds dried apples, 3 pounds baking powder, 8 cans condensed milk, 50 pounds beans, 35 pounds sugar, 50 pounds bacon, 7 pounds salt, 20 pounds dried potatoes, 5 pounds dried onions, 25 pounds oatmeal—so you will see I won't starve this summer; in fact, this is luxurious chuck for this country.

"This Country is Teeming With Gold."

I am not going to work for wages but for a very short time. I intend to do a lot of prospecting on my own hook as soon as the conditions are more favorable, for this country is teeming with gold; but if I were to tell you all the stories of fabulously rich claims, etc., since being here, you would not believe them. I have to doubt some of them myself. There are about 2,500 people here now, and more coming in every day. About 1,500 wintered here last year. Don't think I would like to winter here unless it paid big.

Letters, \$1.00 Each.

This letter, among hundreds of others, is going out by special carrier, who charges one dollar per letter. You may write me here. Address Dawson, Klondike River and Yukon, Alaska, Northwest Territory.

ALEX. G. WILSON.

SAID GOOD-BYE TO HIS PICK.

Story of William Stanley, Who Brought Out \$112,000.

When we had taken out the last of the \$112,000 I threw down my pick and, turning my eyes heavenward, said: "Good-bye, old friend, I will never pick you up again," and I spoke the truth.

I love gold and I have it. Many times in my life the wolf has been close to the door. Now I have riches and will never work again, but in March I will go back and manage our properties.

These were the words which William Stanley used in closing an interview. Stanley is one of the fortunate ones who returned from the Klondike on the Portland. In addition to his present fortune he is interested with his son and two New Yorkers in claims which he says will yield \$2,000,000.

Was a Poor Man at Seattle.

Stanley is a married man. He lives in an humble little place in the southern part of Seattle; he has a wife and several children. During his absence in the far North his family struggled to eke out an existence, for everything that Stanley had went to pay his expenses to the gold fields. Stanley is well on in years. His hair is gray and when he left Seattle he looked as though a few more years would find him sleeping beneath the sod. He was not accustomed to hardships; for years he conducted a little book store in an out-of-the-way business corner.

To-day people who used to help him out by giving him ten or fifteen cents cannot realize that he is wealthy. Here is his story:

Went as a "Tenderfoot."

I went to Yukon as a last resort. I was getting old and I had no money and I knew that I would never get any unless I took it out of the ground. It was a year ago last March that I left Seattle. I am free to confess that my family was at that time in destitute circumstances. I made for the Yukon. I had never before been there. I knew nothing of mining and nothing of the hardships of the country, and, in fact, was as great a "greeny" as ever set foot in the great gold country of the Northwest. My son, Samuel Stanley, went with me. He was as ignorant as his father.

While we were on the steamship Alki, which took us to Dyea, we met two young men, Charles and George Worden. They were residents of Sackett's Harbor, N. Y., and had come west in search of gold. Their mother lives back in the old home, so they informed me. We became very intimate with the Wordens. They knew little, if anything, about the country, and one day in conversation one of us suggested that we form a company and do our work on the syndicate plan, each man to share share and share alike. We wandered through the Yukon districts for several months and were getting discouraged, because there seemed to be nothing for us. We met other men who were getting rich, but we grew poorer as the days came and went. Once we had about concluded to go back.

Gets a Friendly Tip.

It was in the latter part of last September that we befriended a man who gave us a tip as to the riches of the Klondike. We were willing to believe anything, and made for the Klondike at once. At that time we were en route for Forty-Mile Creek. We were then at Sixty-Mile.

The first thing we did when we reached the Klondike was to spend a little time at the mouth of the stream. We

were there just twenty-four hours when the little steamer Ellis arrived, with 150 miners aboard. They had just heard the good news and on their arrival they made a rush for the richest spot on Bonanza and El Dorado Creeks.

\$112,000 in Three Months.

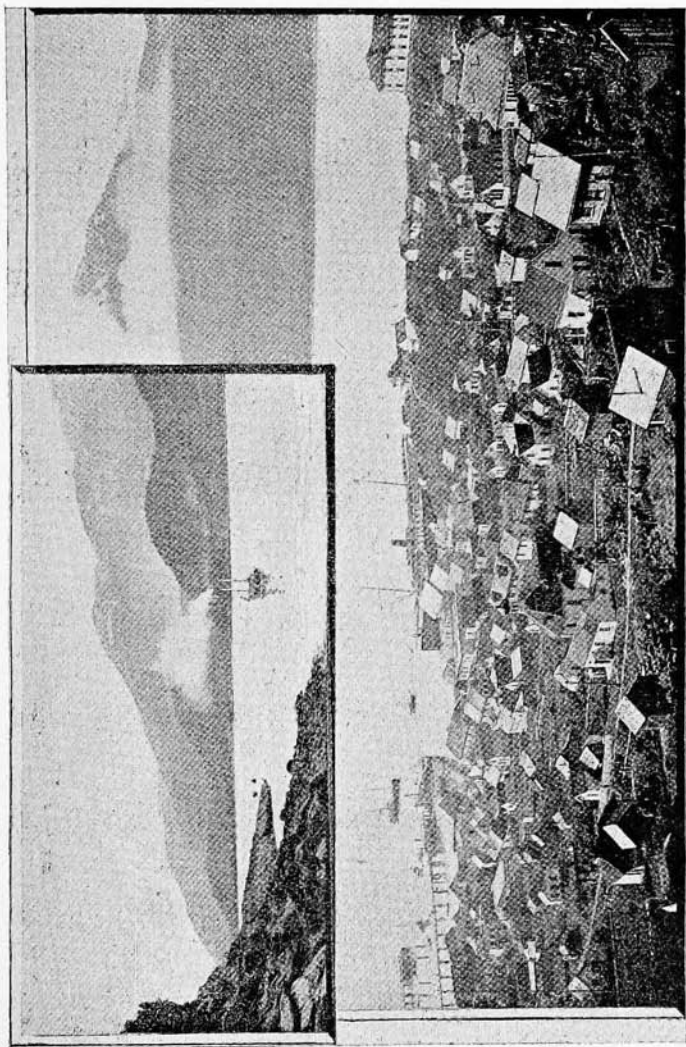
We went to El Dorado Creek and made locations on what were called Claims Twenty-five, Twenty-six, Fifty-three and Fifty-four. I think it was in October that we made our locations. We worked Claims Twenty-five and Twenty-six, and were very soon satisfied that we had a fine thing, and went to work to make preparations for a long winter of experiences and hardships. We got all we wanted before spring. Every man put in his time sinking prospect holes in the gulch.

I tell the simple truth when I say that, within three months we took from the two claims the sum of \$112,000. A remarkable thing about our findings is that in taking this enormous sum we did not drift up and down stream, nor did we cross-cut the pay streaks.

Gold in Every Creek.

Of course, we may be wrong, but this is the way we are figuring, and we are so certain that what we say is true that we would not sell out for a million. In our judgment, based on close figuring, there are in the two claims we worked, and Claims No. 53 and 54, \$1,000 to the lineal foot. I say that, in four claims we have at the very least \$2,000,000, which can be taken out without any great work.

I want to say that I believe there is gold in every creek in Alaska. Certainly on the Klondike the claims are not spotted. One seems to be as good as another. It's yards wide and yards deep. I say so because I have been there and have the gold to show for it. All you have to



TREADWELL MINES, DOUGLAS ISLAND.

JUNEAU, ALASKA.

do is to run a hole down, and there you find plenty of gold dust. I will say that our pans on the El Dorado claims will average \$3, some go as high as \$150, and, believe me, when I say that, in five pans, I have taken out as high as \$750 and sometimes more. I did not pick the pans, but simply put them against my breast and scooped the dirt off the bed rock.

Bear Gulch as Rich as Klondike.

Of course the majority of those on the Klondike have done much more figuring as to the amount of gold the Klondike will yield. Many times we fellows figured on the prospects of the El Dorado. I would not hesitate much about guaranteeing \$21,000,000, and should not be surprised a bit if \$25,000,000, or even \$30,000,000, were taken out.

Some people will tell you that the Klondike is a marvel, and there will never be a discovery in Alaska which will compare with it. I think that there will be a number of new creeks discovered that will make wonderful yields. Why, Bear Gulch is just like El Dorado. Bear Gulch has a double bed rock. Many do not know it, but it's a fact, and miners who are acquainted with it will tell you the same thing.

The bed rocks are three feet apart. In the lower beds the gold is as black as a black cat, and in the upper bed the gold is as bright as any you ever saw. We own No. 10 claim, below Discovery, of Bear Gulch, and also Nos. 20 and 21 on Last Chance Gulch, above Discovery. We prospected for three miles on Last Chance Gulch, and could not tell the best place to locate the Discovery claim. The man making a discovery of the creek is entitled by law to stake a claim and take an adjoining one, or, in other words, two claims; so you see he wants to get in a good location on the creek or gulch. Hunker Gulch is highly

looked to. I think it will prove another great district, and some great strikes have also been made on Dominion Creek. Indian Creek is also becoming famous.

What Do We Do with the Money.

What are we doing with all the money we take out?

Well, we paid \$45,000 spot cash for a half interest in Claim 32, El Dorado. We also loaned \$5,000 each to four parties on El Dorado Creek, taking mortgages on their claims, so you see we are well secured.

No, I do not want any better security for my money than El Dorado claims, thank you. I only wish I had a mortgage on the whole creek.

We had a great deal of trouble in securing labor in prospecting our properties. Old miners would not work for any price. We could occasionally "rope" in a greenhorn and get him to work for a few days at \$15 a day. Six or eight miners worked on shares for us about six weeks, and we settled. It developed that they had earned in that length of time \$3,500 each. That was pretty good pay, wasn't it? We paid one old miner \$12 for three hours' work and offered to continue him at that rate, but he would not have it, and he went out to hunt a claim of his own. My son, Samuel, and Charles Worden are in charge of our interests in Alaska. George Worden and I came out and we will go back in March and relieve them. Then they will come out for a spell. George goes from here to his home in New York state to make his mother comfortable.

I am an American by birth, but of Irish parents. I formerly lived in Western Kansas, but my claim there was not quite as good as the one I staked out on the El Dorado Creek.

AT DAWSON CITY.

Good Order Prevails and Town Lots Bring as Much as \$10,000.

Dawson City is only a few months old. Descriptions given by the returned miners make it a typical mining town, with everything but guns. The use of firearms is prohibited by the British Government, which enforces its laws by the use of mounted police, whose Captain is the civil authority. Comparatively few houses have been erected, though there is a population of 5,000 persons. Lumber costs \$1,000 a thousand feet, and most of the miners live in tents during the summer months, and either return to St. Michaels at the beginning of winter or board with someone owning a house.

Prices at Dawson.

Building lots are said to be in demand at \$5,000, with prices going as high as \$8,000 and \$10,000.

In summer the weather becomes warm and tent life is comfortable. Mr. Bowker observed, the day of his departure, that the thermometer registered 88 degrees in the shade. The winters are long and cold, the mercury going down to 40 and even to 60 degrees below zero at times, but the snow seldom is more than a foot and a half deep. Very sudden changes from one extreme to the other are the most troublesome features of the climate.

Laborers Paid \$90 a Week.

Laborers, it is asserted, are paid as high as \$90 a week, but the advice is given that no man can afford to go to the new camp without from \$500 to \$1,000, with which to support himself and insure the possibility of returning in case of adversity.

Living, of course, comes high. The region produces little or no fruit or vegetables. The meat of the caribou and the moose sometimes is scarce. There are seasons when salmon can be obtained.

This is "High Life," Sure Enough.

Here is the list of prices that prevailed in Dawson City during the past season:

Flour, per 100 pounds, \$12; moose ham, per pound, \$1; caribou meat, per pound, 65 cents; beans, per pound, 10 cents; rice, per pound, 25 cents; sugar, per pound, 25 cents; bacon, per pound, 40 cents; butter, per roll, \$1.50; eggs, per dozen, \$1.50; better eggs, per dozen, \$2; salmon, each, \$1 to \$1.50; potatoes, per pound, 25 cents; turnips, per pound, 15 cents; tea, per pound, \$1; coffee, per pound, 50 cents; dried fruits, per pound, 35 cents; canned fruits, 50 cents; canned meats, 75 cents; lemons, each, 20 cents; oranges, each, 50 cents; tobacco, per pound, \$1.50; liquor, per drink, 50 cents; shovels, \$2.50; picks, \$5; coal oil, per gallon, \$1; overalls, \$1.50; underwear, per suit, \$5 to \$7.50; shoes, \$5; rubber boots, \$10 to \$15.

Yankees Get Fair Treatment.

Although the new mining district is in British territory, the miners all declare that Americans are treated as fairly as Englishmen. Captain Constantine, at the head of the mounted police, is the Magistrate, and Gold Commissioner Fawcett has jurisdiction over all mining disputes.

One of the most influential men in the Alaskan party is J. Ladue, founder of Dawson City. He staked out the town, applied to the Dominion Government for a patent, and is selling town lots at \$2,000 apiece.

MRS. LIPPY'S STORY.

Experience of the First White Woman on the Creek.

Mrs. Lippy, who went with her husband to the gold fields, thus tells some of her experience:

"Of course, we did not know exactly what we had to face; no one can who has not been there and experienced it. I could talk to you all day and you would not really understand without seeing for yourself. But we learned everything we could about the Alaska gold fields, the ways of traveling and what we would need before we started. We went rather better prepared than many of the others; we had a year's outfit. We went from St. Michaels by steamer and by trail from the landing to the creek, where Mr. Lippy worked his claim. I had 16 miles to walk, so the hardships of the trip were not really so great.

Only White Woman in the Camp.

"I am not the first white woman to cross the divide; there are nine or ten at Forty-Mile post," she explained, with deprecating modesty.

"Yes, I guess I was the first white woman on the Creek," she admitted, "and the only one in our camp. There was another a mile from us, a Mrs. Berry. She was the only white woman I had to speak to while we were at the camp.

"When we got to El Dorado Creek, we lived in a tent until Mr. Lippy got our house built—a log cabin. It is 12x18, eight logs high, with a mud and moss roof and moss between the chinks, and has a door and a window. Mr. Lippy made the furniture, a rough bed, a table and some stools. We had a stove. There are plenty of stoves in that country, and that was all we needed. The cabin was cozy and warm. I looked after the housekeeping and Mr. Lippy after the mining.

Living On Canned Goods.

“Everything we had to eat was canned. Things were canned that I never knew could be canned before. Of course, we missed fresh food dreadfully, but we kept well and strong. We had no fresh milk or meats or fruits or eggs. I used egg powder; it's not a good substitute in omelettes, but it makes good gingerbread.

“Amusements? Well, nobody bothered much about amusements. Everybody was busy and kept busy all the time. I did my work. The mining is hard work. One does not pick gold off the ground. It is genuine toil, and when Mr. Lippy finished he wanted to rest. All the men were about alike on that point.

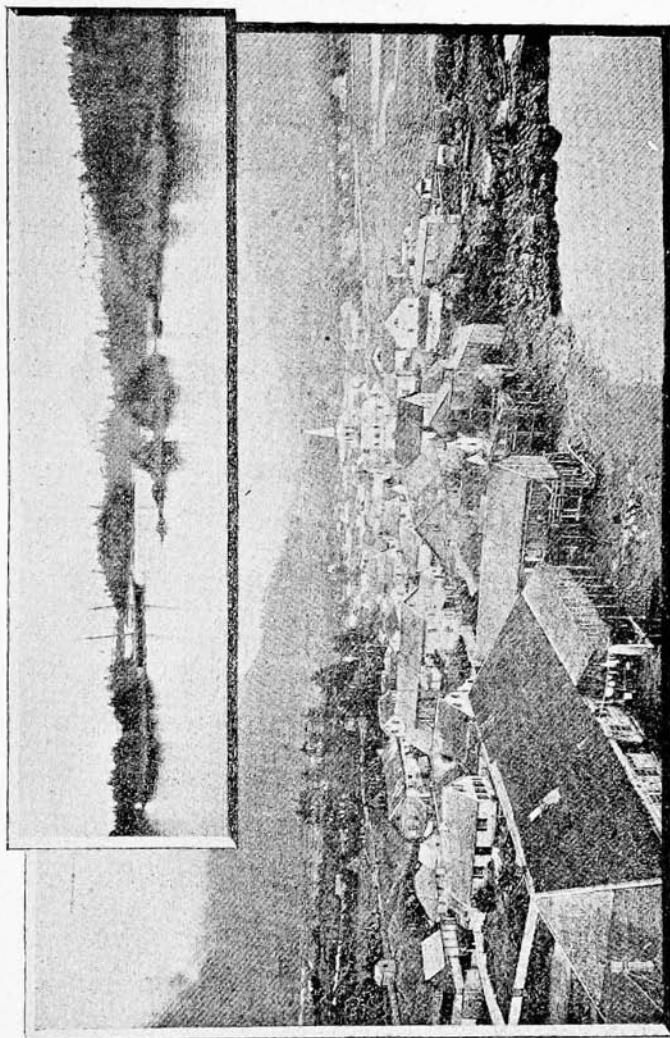
Health and Fashion in the Frozen North.

“I wasn't ill all the time we were there, except with a headache or a toothache. We were very fortunate in every way. The country is beautiful and quite warm in the summer. In winter it's different, with the mercury away below zero. Still, I went out every day, but when the snow was on the ground I did not go far from the cabin.

“Fashion? Well, we were not entirely cut off from the fashionable world. New people were coming in all the time. We got the fashion papers, a few months old, to be sure, but still they kept us fairly up to time. Why, a trader brought shockingly old-fashioned cloaks to the camp and we would not look at them. He had to sell them to the Indians.

Need Never Work Again.

“I did not change my way of dressing particularly. I dressed more warmly, to suit the climate, of course, and wore fur boots and cap constantly during the cold weather, and in summer dressed very much as I do at home.”



SITKA.

Mt. Edgecumbe.

Photo'd at 10 P. M.

"It was a hard experience?"

"Yes, it was; but, then, we expected that."

"And you were well repaid for it?"

"Yes, we were lucky."

"You made enough in one year to keep you in comfort the rest of your life?"

"Well, yes, I guess so."

Supplies and Tools Needed.

Here is a list of the supplies needed, according to a careful estimate made by several returned miners:

The necessities for one man for one month are 20 pounds of flour, with baking powder; 12 pounds of bacon, 6 pounds of beans, 5 pounds of dried fruits, 3 pounds of desiccated vegetables, 4 pounds of butter, 5 pounds of sugar, 4 cans of milk, 1 pound of tea, 3 pounds of coffee, 2 pounds of salt, 5 pounds of cornmeal, pepper, matches, mustard, cooking utensils and dishes, frying pan, water kettle, tent, Yukon stove, 2 pairs of good blankets, 1 rubber blanket, a bean pot, 2 plates, a drinking cup, tea pot, knife and fork, 1 large and 1 small cooking pan. The following tools for boat-building will be necessary, if the mountain trip is made: One jack plane, 1 whip saw, 1 hand saw, 1 rip saw, 1 draw knife, 1 ax, 1 hatchet, 1 pocket rule, 6 pounds of assorted nails, 3 pounds of oakum, 5 pounds of pitch, 50 feet of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch rope, mosquito netting, 1 pair of crag-proof hip boots, snow glasses and a chest of medicines.

NOT ONLY GOLD.

Coal and Oil Fields of Alaska to be Developed.

A late dispatch from Seattle, says:

The Alaska Development Co. has been organized here to develop the coal and oil fields recently discovered in Southwestern Alaska by R. C. Johnston, of Los Gatos,

Cal. The report made to the company by Mr. Johnston and Mr. T. J. Hamilton of this city, experts who made a thorough examination of the property, show that the discovery is really the most wonderful find the world has ever known.

Dipping Oil Up in Buckets.

The oil fields are located within a few hundred feet of tidewater, 350 miles west of Juneau. The statement is made in good faith that the oil is dripping directly from the oil rock and in places can be dipped up in buckets, while the surrounding coal beds are inexhaustible.

Building the Refinery.

Thirty thousand feet of pipe already has been ordered from Pittsburg, and as soon as received here a steam schooner will be chartered to carry it and tank material to the discovery.

A prominent oil man has given a guarantee of all the capital necessary to build a refinery at this point as soon as necessary to handle the product. The oil is pronounced of the best quality ever seen and the quantity is unlimited.

MR. OGILVIE'S OFFICIAL REPORT.

The Canadian Officer Furnishes New and Interesting Information.

The Alaska Mining Record, a paper published at Juneau, prints a great deal of news concerning the almost fabulous richness of the new Klondike. In this paper appears the official report of Dominion Surveyor Ogilvie, from which we quote some important statements:

Origin of the Name "Klondike."

The name Klondike is a mispronunciation of the Indian word, or words, torondak or duick, which means plenty of fish, from the fact that it is a famous salmon stream. It is marked Tondak on our maps.

After telling of the discovery of gold there in 1887 by G. W. Carmach, Mr. Ogilvie presages considerable trouble and confusion in the near future from the lack of system in marking out claims. He says:

When it was fairly established that Bonanza Creek was rich in gold there was a great rush from all over the country adjacent to Forty-Mile. The town was almost deserted. Men who had been in a chronic state of drunkenness for weeks were pitched into boats as ballast, taken up to stake themselves a claim, and claims were staked by men for their friends who were not in the country at any time.

First Method of Recording Claims.

All this gave rise to much confliction and confusion, there being no one to take charge of matters. The miners held a meeting and appointed one of themselves to measure off and stake the claims and record the owner's names, for which he got a fee of \$2, it being, of course, understood that each claimholder would have to record his claim with the Dominion agent and pay his fee of \$15. I am afraid that a state of affairs will develop in the Klondike district that will worry some one. Naturally many squabbles will arise out of those transactions when the claims come to be of considerable value and are worked, and these, together with the disputes over the size of the claims, will take some time to clear up. Many of the claims are said to be only 300 and 400 feet long, and, of course, the holder will insist on getting the full 500, and it is now practically impossible that they can without upsetting all the claimholders on the several creeks. Many of them will be reasonable

enough to see things in their proper light and submit quietly, but many will insist upon what they call their rights.

The Stampede to the Klondike.

In reference to the richness of the Klondike field, Mr. Ogilvie says that rich fields in that district, such as Miller, Glacier and Chicken Creeks, have been practically abandoned for the Klondike. Men can not be prevailed upon to work for love or money, and the standard of wages is \$1.50 per hour. Some of the claims are so rich that every night a few pans of dirt is sufficient to pay all the hired help.

"The extent of the gold-bearing section here," Mr. Ogilvie continues, "is such as to warrant the assertion that we have here a district which will give 1,000 claims of 500 feet in length each." Now, 1,000 such claims will require at least 3,000 men to work them properly, and, as wages for workmen in the mines are from \$8 to \$10 a day, without board, we have every reason to assume that this part of our territory will within a year or two contain 10,000 souls at least, so far as the news has gone out to the coast, and an unprecedented influx is expected next spring.

Possibilities of Indian Creek.

And this is not all, for a large creek called Indian Creek joins the Yukon about midway between Klondike and the Stewart River, and all along this creek good pay dirt has been found. All that has stood in the way of working it heretofore has been the scarcity of provisions and the difficulty of getting them up there even when here. Indian Creek is quite a large stream, and it is probable it will yield 500 or 600 claims.

Farther south yet lies the head of several branches of Stewart River, on which some prospecting has been done this summer and good indications found, but the want of provisions prevented development.

Four Million Dollars in Each Claim.

Since my last trip the prospects in Bonanza Creek and tributaries are increasing in richness and extent, until now it is certain millions will be taken out of the district in the next few years. On some of the claims prospected the pay dirt is of great extent and very rich. One man told me yesterday that he washed out a single pan of dirt in one of the claims on Bonanza Creek and found \$14.25 in it. Of course, that may be an exceedingly rich pan, but \$5 to \$7 per pan is the average on that claim, it is reported, with 5 feet pay dirt, and the width yet undetermined, but known to be 30 feet. Even at that figure the result at nine to ten pans to the cubic foot, and 500 feet long, is \$4,000,000 at \$5 per pan. One-fourth of this would be enormous. Enough prospecting has been done to show that there are at least fifteen miles of this extraordinary richness, and the indications are that we will have three or four times that extent, if not all equal to the above, at least very rich.

Mr. Ogilvie complains of the need of some kind of a court to settle the various claim disputes that are continually arising between the miners. He says that the force and virtue of the miners' meeting prevailed until the mounted police made their appearance, after which sneaks had full sailing.

Morals of the Klondike.

The morality of the Klondike would seem to be of a much higher order than is usually found in new mining camps, the presence of the mounted police seeming to have a most salutary effect. Mr. Ogilvie seems to regret it, for he says:

“The man who was stabbed here in November has quite recovered, but may never have the same use of his back as of old, having received a bad cut there. His assailant is out on bail, awaiting the entrance of a judge to try him. As the police are here, there will be no lynching. It is almost a pity there will not.”

To Regulate Liquor Traffic.

Mr. Ogilvie takes up the subject of the liquor traffic also, saying:

“The impression of the best men here, saloon men and all, is that the liquor trade should be regulated and no one but responsible parties should be allowed to bring liquor in. Now, any loafer who can gather enough money to secure a few gallons and a few glasses and wants to have an idle time, sets up a saloon.”

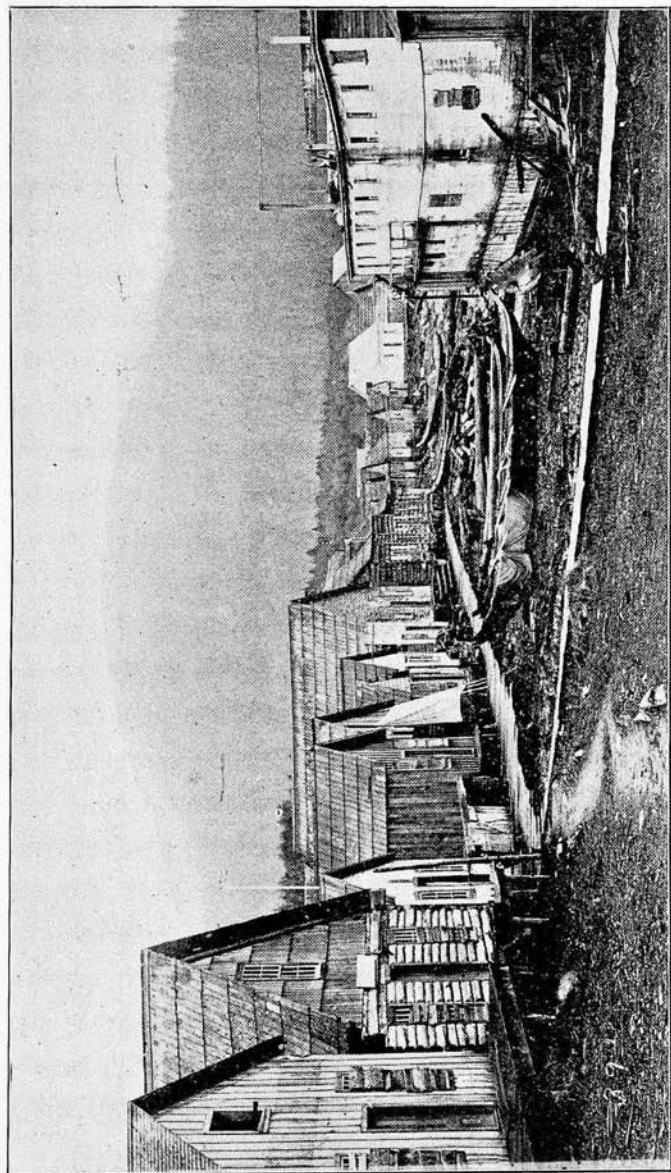
Free Gold Along the Creeks.

Mr. Ogilvie announces the location of a quartz lode showing free gold in paying quantities along the creeks. The quartz has tested over \$100 a ton. The lode appears to run from 3 to 8 feet in thickness and is about nineteen miles from the Yukon River. Good quartz has been found also at the head of a branch of the Alsek River, near the head of the Chilkat Inlet, inside the summit of the coast range, in Canadian territory; also, in Davis Creek, in American territory. The hills around Bonanza Creek also contain paying quartz. Copper in abundance is found on the southerly branch of the White River, and silver ore has been picked up in a creek emptying into Bennett Lake. Mr. Ogilvie says that the placer prospect continues to be more and more encouraging and extraordinary.

It is beyond a doubt, he says, that three pans of different claims on El Dorado turned out \$204, \$212 and \$216, but it must be borne in mind that there were only three such pans, though there are many running from \$10 to \$50.

How the Dirt Pans Out.

It is stated on good authority that one claim yielded \$90,000 in 45 feet up and down the stream. Clarence Berry bought out his two partners, paying one \$35,000 and the other \$60,000, and has taken up \$140,000 from



MAIN STREET, WRANGEL.

Photo by P. Moll.

the winter dump alone. Peter Wiberg has purchased more ground. He purchased his partner's interest in a claim, paying \$42,000. A man by the name of Wall has all he thinks he wants and is coming out. He sold his interests for \$50,000. Nearly all the gold is found in the creek bed on the bed rock, but there are a few good bench diggings.

First Grave at Dawson.

Birch Stickney died at the foot of Lake Labarge. His partner offered \$200 for a man to accompany him to Dawson with the body, and getting no assistance, made the trip alone, the journey requiring five days. Stickney's was the first body buried in Dawson.

Many interesting letters are published in the *Mining Record* from men in the Klondike to friends in the Yukon. All tell of a plethora of gold and a scarcity of provisions and supplies. One of these enthusiasts says he fears gold will have to be demonetized, while another described Klondike as a great country for a poor man, aside from the mosquitos and poor grub. These letters are from Casey Moran, Burt Shuler, Andy Hensley, Oscar Ashbey and Fred Brewster Fay.

JUNEAU TO DAWSON.

The Founder of Dawson City Lays Out the Route.

James Ladue, the founder of Dawson City, tells how the Bonanza may be reached, as follows:

Leaving Juneau, go to Dyea, by way of Lime Canal, and from there to Lake Lindermann, thirty miles on foot, or portage, as we call it. The lake gives you a ride of five or six miles and then follows another long journey overland to the headwaters of Lake Bennett, which is twenty-eight miles long. On foot you go again for a number of

miles, and the Cariboo Crossing River furnishes transportation for four miles to Tagish Lake, where another twenty-one miles' boat ride may be had. This is followed by a weary stretch of mountainous country, and then Marsh, or Mud Lake, is reached. You get another boat ride of twenty-four miles, and then down a creek for twenty-seven miles to Miles Canyon to White Horse Rapids.

Dangers of the Rapids.

This is one of the most dangerous places on the entire route, and should be avoided by all strangers. The stream is full of sunken rocks, and runs with the speed of a mill race. Passing White Horse Rapids the journey is down a river thirty miles to Lake Labarge, where thirty-one miles of navigable water is found. Another short portage and Lewis River is reached, when you have a 200-mile journey, which brings you to Fort Selkirk. At this point the Pelly and Lewis rivers come together, forming the Yukon. From that point on it is practically smooth sailing, though the stranger must be exceedingly careful.

The most dangerous part of the trip is that crossing Chilkat Pass. Even as late as May and June snowstorms occur, and woe to the traveler who is caught. Chilkat Pass is itself 3,000 feet high, but is the only opening in a mountain range whose peaks reach an average altitude of 10,000 feet.

CAME HOME RICH.

Statements Made by Four Men Who Found Fortunes.

Here are the experiences related by four of the men who came home on the steamer Portland in July. All brought back gold in abundance, and their stories merit careful perusal:

Mr. Orr, a Veteran Miner.

Alexander Orr said:

"I have been mining in the West the last thirty years, but never saw any country so rich in gold as Alaska. The development of the country has just begun. When the miners first went there they were handicapped by the difficulty in getting supplies to the camp. Transportation was exceedingly expensive, and many winters the supply of food was so scarce that the men often were hungry. Little progress could be made during the winter, as the men could not go far from the camp. All that could be done was to work where gold could be found in the immediate vicinity and wait for spring.

Eight Years in Alaska.

"I went to Alaska eight years ago, and for the first seven years made little more than a living. I spent the time prospecting, and eight months ago located the claim near Dawson City that proved so rich. Before we had hardly begun drifting from the main shaft my partner and I obtained about \$5,000 in gold. Then the fame of the new diggings and the value of the claims increased tremendously.

"We had an offer to sell for \$20,000, and as my partner and I were both old men and had been laid up with rheumatism nearly all winter, we decided to sell. We sold our claim, 5,000 feet square, to Jack McQuestern, Louis Ellis and a man named Belcher.

\$18,000 in Fifty Square Feet.

"They paid \$2,000 down last March and promised to pay the remaining \$18,000 July 20. When the time came to make the final payment they had made enough money, working fifty square feet, to pay it and only two-thirds of the dumps had been worked. It can be imagined, there-

fore, how much gold there is in the whole claim, assuming that it is all as rich as that which has been worked.

“When a man goes to the mines it is customary for him to buy his entire year’s supplies and have them carted away to the camp. As a year’s supplies weigh about 1,200 pounds, and the cost of transportation 10 cents a pound, the cost of shipping one’s goods is about \$120.

Take Your Winter Furs Along.

“In winter the weather is extremely cold at Dawson City, and it is necessary that one be warmly clad. The thermometer often goes 60 or 70 degrees below zero. Ordinary woolen clothes would afford little protection. Furs are used exclusively for clothing.

“Dawson is not like most of the large mining camps. It is not a “tough” town. Murders are almost unknown.

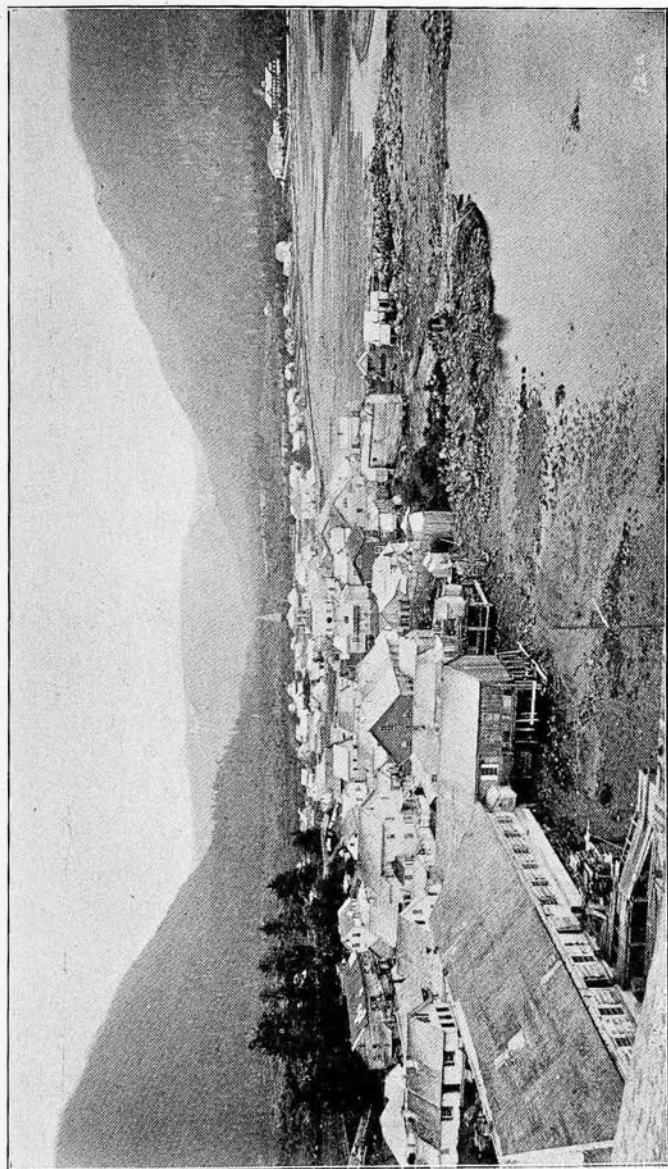
Big Poker Games at Dawson.

“The miners are a quiet and peaceful class of men, who had gone there to work and are willing that everybody else shall have an equal chance with themselves. A great deal of gambling is done in the town, but serious quarrels are an exception. As a gambling town I think it is equal to any that I have ever seen; and this, by the way, is always the test of a mining camp’s prosperity. Stud poker is the usual game. They play \$100 and often \$200 or \$500 on the third card.”

“Go Well Fixed,” Says Mr. Cook.

Thomas Cook said:

“It’s a good country, but if there is a rush there’s going to be a great deal of suffering. Over 2,000 men are there at present, and 2,000 more will be in before the snow falls. I advise people to take provisions with them, enough for eight months at least. If they have that it is all right.



BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF SITKA.

Photo by P. Moll.

Reports Are Not Exaggerated.

“The country is not exaggerated at all. I’ve been at placer mining for years in California and British Columbia, and the mines at Dawson are more extensive and beyond anything I ever saw. I could scarcely speak of the average yield, but the results are all good. Wages have been \$15 a day. I was in the Yukon country for six years, but I did not do much the first five. Last year I did very little at Dawson. I have claims worth about the average, they say, from \$25,000 to \$50,000, on Bear Creek, across the divide from the Bonanza.

The World’s Richest Strike.

“The area of these gold fields is—well, who knows? The land is not prospected except along a few creeks, and that is very small in comparison with the territory that may be full of gold. Even Bonanza and El Dorado are only partially prospected. The dust I brought down will average about the same as the rest, \$10,000 or more. I know they all have pretty good sacks. It is a big strike and you can count it among the biggest of the world in richness and extent.”

Good Times on the Bonanza.

Fred Price said:

“I was located on the Bonanza, with Harry McCullough, my partner. I brought down \$50,000 in gold dust, and made \$20,000, which is invested in more ground. There were good stakes on the boat coming down, from \$5,000 to \$40,000 among the boys. I refused \$25,000 for my interest before I left. My partner remains, and I shall return in spring, after seeing my family at Seattle. I was in the mines for two years.

Ten Miles of Rich Claims.

“One cannot realize the wealth of that creek. There are four miles of claims on the El Dorado, and the poorest

is worth \$50,000. The Bonanza claims run for ten miles and range from \$5,000 to \$90,000. A man would need at least \$500 to go in. There is no credit in the stores at Dawson City, positively none, and there is much of the bitter to mingle with the sweet. All is not gold in those diggings."

The Gold-Lined Rock.

L. B. Rhoads said:

"I am located on claim 21, above the Discovery on Bonanza Creek. I did exceedingly well up there. I was among the fortunate ones, as I cleared about \$40,000, but brought only \$5,000 with me. I was the first man to get to bed rock gravel and to discover that it was lined with gold dust and nuggets. The rock was seamed and cut in V-shaped streaks, caused, it is supposed, by glacial action. In those seams I found a clay which was exceedingly rich. In fact, there was a stratum of pay gravel four feet thick upon the rock, which was lined with gold, particularly in these channels or streaks.

Alaska Investments Good.

"The rock was about fifteen feet from the surface. That discovery made the camp. It was made October 23, 1896, and as soon as the news spread everybody rushed to the diggings from Circle City, Forty-Mile and from every other camp in the district.

"There was a lack of food. We had nothing but what was sledged from Forty-Mile. Flour sold as high as \$45 a sack, and shovels at \$18. I invested my money in another claim, a two-third interest in claim 23. If I hadn't bought it I could have brought down at least \$35,000, but an investment there is the best security."

DIRECTOR OF THE MINT.

Mr. R. E. Preston Submits a Carefully Prepared Opinion.

Mr. R. E. Preston, Director of the Mint, was asked the following questions:

1. What do you think of the reported gold discoveries in Alaska?
2. Do you consider the newspaper reports exaggerated?
3. What effect will these discoveries have on the gold production of the United States?
4. How do these recent discoveries compare in results to those of the Transvaal in early days?

Mr. Preston furnished the following replies over his signature:

Newspaper Reports Confirmed.

The information I have received confirms the truth of the telegrams to the daily papers concerning the richness of the newly discovered gold fields. I learn from the San Francisco Mint that \$1,000,000 of gold has been received in that city from the Klondike district, and from Helena, Mont., that \$200,000 from the same source has been deposited at the United States Assay Office in that city.

To question the report of rich gold discoveries in the Klondike would be to question the reliability of all the news agencies of the United States, from Alaska to San Francisco and New York.

Must Be Quartz Gold, Too.

Now, while one may reasonably question whether there was really a ton of gold on board the steamer arriving last Saturday, and whether there are still four millions of gold dust to be shipped from St. Michaels through the Wells-

Fargo Company, of this there can be no doubt that a large amount of gold was produced in the Yukon and Klondike districts during the past winter, and that a new gold field of considerable importance has been discovered in that region. The gold there discovered is placer gold, but the existence of gold in the sands of the Klondike points unmistakably to the fact that the quartz gold must exist in the vicinity of that river.

It is too early, however, to yet claim that the Klondike is a new El Dorado. That only the future reveals.

New Mines Need Little Capital.

Now, as to their probable effect on the gold production of the United States. So far as the newly discovered gold has been found within United States territory it will, of course, go to increase the total product of the country in 1897. I do not see how the opening of the new gold fields can decrease the gold product of any other of our States or Territories. It may, indeed, attract some of our prospectors and workmen, but there never has been and never will be any lack of these in the United States. The places of those who really leave the United States will be readily filled. The new gold mines there are placer mines, and need comparatively little capital to develop them. I expect, therefore, that for years to come the gold production of the United States will be continually increasing.

Will Klondike Equal South Africa?

The best answer that can be given to the question how these recent discoveries compare with those of the Transvaal in its early days is, that as far as mere results are concerned they are greater. There is scarcely a possibility, however, that the production of the newly discovered gold fields will ever reach the gold output of the South African Republic in recent years. No single gold

field ever reached it before, and the chances are that none will in the future. It is the unanimous opinion of all mining experts that the wealth of the mines, especially of the Witwatersrandt, is assured for some decades at least, and they have been led to this conviction through investigation and by the evidence afforded by the practical development of the mines themselves.

It has been demonstrated that the gold contents of this mine increase with the depth. The difficulty that lay in the fact that the pyrites occurring at a certain depth could not be treated, has been practically solved by the successful application to them of the chlorination process. By the introduction of this process it has become possible to obtain almost the last traces of the gold in the tailing, which had hitherto been considered worthless.

We Can't Have Too Much Gold.

What influence the production of gold in the Klondike district, if it should prove to be very large in the next succeeding years, will have on prices and in the money market, it is impossible to say. Supply and production of gold has doubled in the last ten-years, while the demand for it and the employment of it in the wholesale trade has been more and more decreased by the clearing-house system. The large central banks of Europe have a gold stock far greater than would have been supposed some time ago. And although the production of gold has kept on increasing, it has not been able to stop the decline of the prices of commodities.

This is the best refutation that can be given of the contention that the decline of prices has been caused by the scarcity of gold.

Look For Further Discoveries.

The history of gold production in Alaska hitherto would prepare the mind for the acceptance of a belief in

the likelihood of further gold discoveries in that region or its proximity. Our accurate knowledge of the production of gold in Alaska dates back to 1870. It was known in that year that gold in limited quantities abounded in Kadiuk. This gold occurred in veins of quartz, and yielded about \$5 per ton in gold and silver. The mineralogical character of the specimens was the same as that of the most productive veins known.

Gold has been found in the bay on which the Taku villages are situated, and in the streams in the vicinity. For many years quartz prospecting has been vigorously carried on in this locality, and quantities of gold have been taken to San Francisco.

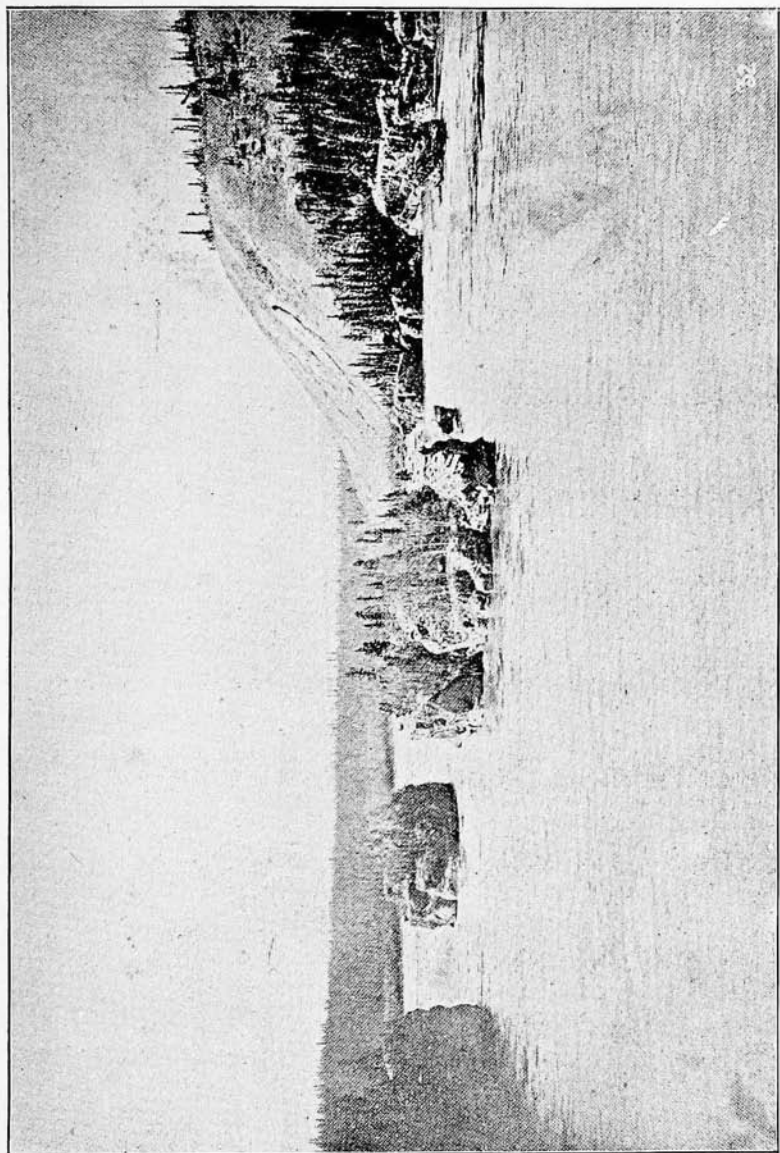
Development Only Begun.

The development of the wealth of Southern Alaska may be said to have begun only recently. The first steps were taken by placer miners, who washed the sands of the streams and the debris from the hillsides.

The mineral belt of Alaska has, according to Prof. Emmons, of the Geological Survey, a longitudinal survey of about 100 miles in a northwestern and southeastern direction. It is said to be only a few miles wide.

The drawbacks in the Klondike district will necessarily partake of the nature of those in Asiatic Russia. The severity of the climate there will, as in Siberia, reduce the labor year to about 100 days. The sands can only be washed in summer, and the production is thus reduced to about one-third of what it would be in another latitude.

R. E. PRESTON.



FIVE FINGER RAPIDS OF THE YUKON RIVER.

FROM THE WASHTUB.

Mrs. J. T. Willis Moves Into the Millionaire Set of Klondike.

The pioneer woman gold-hunter of the Yukon, Mrs. J. T. Willis, of Tacoma, has struck it rich on the Klondike. Only a few weeks ago she was taking in washing, and now she is worth \$250,000.

"I have gone through death," she writes to Mrs. Frank P. Hicks, "and a fight has been made against me to take possession of my claim, but I will stand by my rights if it takes five years."

For two years she made little money, and was almost disheartened, when the Klondike bonanzas were discovered. She immediately joined a party of cattlemen and hurried to the new diggings, and was among the first to secure claims. She then went to work as cook for the Alaska Commercial Company mess at Dawson City, and is receiving \$15 per day for her services. While doing washing Mrs. Willis introduced the first "boiled shirt" into the Yukon gold camp, and paid \$2.50 for the box of starch with which she starched the first shirt. Her first assistant in the laundry was an Indian squaw, whom Mrs. Willis paid \$4 per day and board. Her little log cabin cost her \$35 per month, and her supply of wood for the winter cost her \$225. A 25-cent washboard cost her six times that amount.

SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE.

Streams Full of Trout and Woods Full of Moose.

Capt. J. E. Fairbairn, of San Francisco, formerly master of the steamer Florence Henry, who went to Alaska in April and returned with a party of Klondike miners on

the steamer Portland, says the Yukon country is a sportsman's paradise. Trolling in a boat down the lakes one can catch trout weighing from two to thirty pounds, while he can go anywhere in the woods and kill moose. The country abounds in the finest of bunch grass he ever saw.

"Dawson City," the Captain continued, "lies on low, marshy ground. There are about fifty log cabins in the town and innumerable tents. Some of the miners live in the latter all winter. It is one of the few places where honesty is the best policy.

"One can hang a sack of gold dust outside of his cabin and it is perfectly safe. One saloonkeeper has \$160,000 in gold in a little shack and he never locks his door."

GREAT LAWYER GOES FOR GOLD.

A Fair Sample of the Gold-Hunting Parties Forming All Over the Country.

Marshall F. McDonald, of St. Louis, one of the well-known criminal lawyers of the West, is going to the Klondike country.

This will be surprising information to those who never knew that he has dug for gold in California, for silver in Leadville and for anything the Black Hills could turn out.

He has roughed it all over the West and knows the law of the mine and the camp as well as he does the law of bench and bar.

Nine in the Party.

"I am not going to Alaska alone," said Mr. McDonald to a reporter, "nor am I going without the completest preparation and familiarity with whatever dangers and difficulties are to be encountered.

"Our party will consist of nine persons, with myself in command of the expedition. The arrangements are all

perfected and a start will be made this fall by four of the company, the remaining five to follow in the early spring.

“Each of us will put up \$5,000 in cash, to cover the expenses of travel and maintenance. We have five practical miners who are under contract to work at so much per day and a percentage of all the property yield. Four of these men are to start for the Klondike country in September and get themselves located for the winter as convenient to the gold fields as the character of the country and their judgment may dictate. There they will collect the supplies sent overland and be ready to enter the mines in the spring.

They Go Well Fixed.

“One of our party is a physician and skilled metallurgist, at present in one of the departments at Washington.

“Another, also employed in Washington, is an expert surveyor.

“There are with us in the enterprise several prominent politicians, not only of State but of National reputation. They are not ready just yet for the publication of their names, but they will be later.

“I expect to accompany the four miners to Juneau this fall, return to St. Louis and then leave with the rest of the party early in the spring. We shall have a professional cook, and there are three of us who can cook when necessity requires. So, you see, we are fortifying against hunger. Provisions, drugs, medicines, etc., will be among our supplies.

Not Afraid of Cold Weather.

“From all I can learn the trip from Juneau can be made overland quicker than by boat up the Yukon. The severity of the weather will have something to do with our determination of the route.

“So far as the hardships, dangers and privations are concerned, they are no worse than those incident to every

mining camp and every mining country. Why, when I was in Deadwood, a bunch of us went on a fool's errand into the Big Horn, where it was declared gold could be found.* We soon ran out of grub, and I have lain at night sick and starving beneath a blanket of six inches of snow. That was terrible hardship and danger, but it was just as common in Colorado as in the Black Hills and as in Alaska. These hardships are necessary accompaniments of mining life.

"So far as the cold weather is concerned, I venture to say that a steady, dry cold of 50 degrees below zero is not nearly so dangerous as the sloppy slush and alternating zero weather we have right here in St. Louis.

Richest Ever Discovered.

"The Alaskan country promises to be one of the richest gold fields ever discovered. Wait until you hear from the next steamer, and you will find the half has not been told.

"There are physiological reasons why this should be true. Alaska has no intensely hot weather, and during the four months of temperate summer there is no shifting of sand, and the long freezing leaves the gold packed into the earth thickly.

"The trouble in California and Colorado is that the weather becomes so warm and the summers are of such duration that the gravel and sand are shifted all through the valleys, scattering the gold everywhere. In Alaska all this is held in check by the frozen condition of the ground. Hence the gold, which is found in the hills and small streams, is necessarily in great quantities. Where free-milling ore runs down into the valleys, as in California, and expensive machinery is necessary to materialize it, a man's chances for making money are limited. In Alaska no machinery is required to get gold from the 'tarnal hills.'

No Thieves Among Miners.

“Talk about starvation. No man ever starves in a mining camp unless he gets lost somewhere and cannot find another human being. Every man’s supply of provisions is free as air to any and every man who requires food. No matter what the hour of day or night, the larder is open.

“There are no thieves among miners. One may get into a fight and shoot another, but the one who steals a shovel or any other valuable thing, gets a quick rope and a short shift. The law of the camp is swift and deadly in this respect. So, all provisions are somewhat in common when necessity comes, and starvation is altogether improbable.

“I know enough about this sort of business to be thoroughly satisfied with the practical character of the enterprise I will have in charge, and you will hear from me next in Alaska.”

A SCIENTIFIC VIEW.

J. Edward Spurr, of the Geological Survey, Makes His Report.

J. Edward Spurr, of the Geological Survey, is considered one of the best experts of gold deposits. He was sent to Alaska by the director of the survey and given two assistants to make a special investigation for the government of the gold resources of the Yukon. The party visited all of the creeks and gulches of that region known to be productive of gold. The area reconnoitered embraced over 30,000 square miles. Mr. Spurr’s report has just been completed. It contains the following of special interest at this time in regard to the gold placers:

“Since the formation of the veins and other deposits of the rocks of the gold belt, an enormous length of time

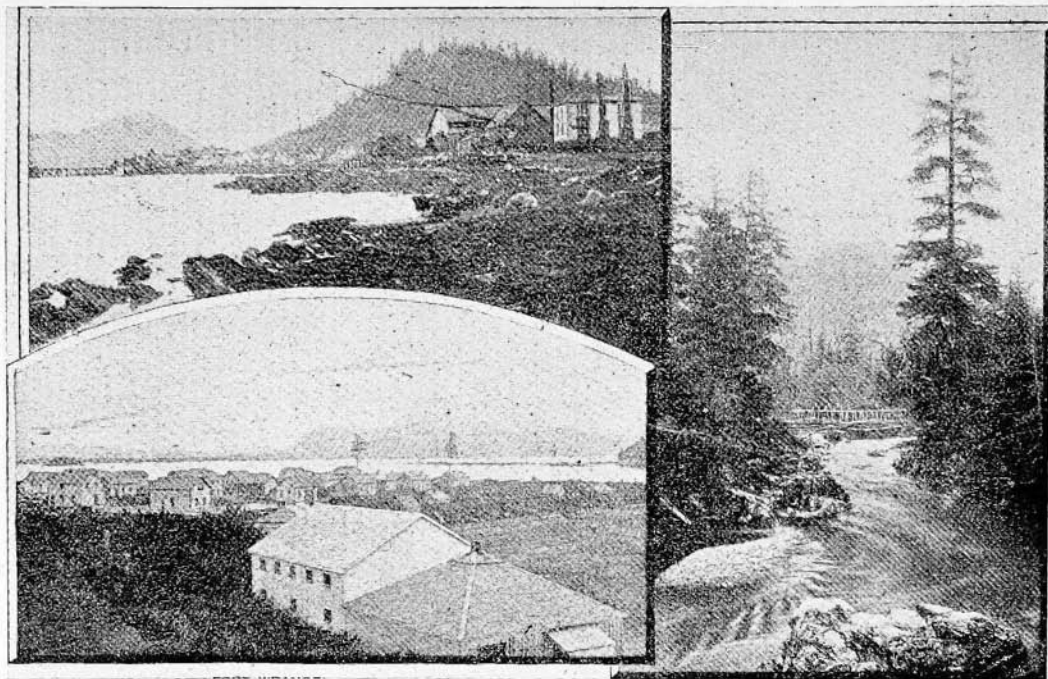
has elapsed. During that time the forces of erosion have stripped off the overlying rocks and exposed the metalliferous veins at the surface for long periods, and the rocks of the gold belt, with the veins which they include, have crumbled and been carried away by the streams, to be deposited in widely different places as gravels or sands or mud.

What the Running Water Does.

“As gold is the heaviest of all material found in rock, it is concentrated in detritus which has been worked over by stream action; and the richness of the placers depends upon the available gold supply, the amount of available detritus and the character of the streams which carry the detritus away.

“In Alaska the streams have been carrying away the gold from the metalliferous belt for a very long period, so that particles of the precious ore are found in nearly all parts of the territory. It is only in the immediate vicinity of the gold-bearing belt, however, that the particles of gold are large and plentiful enough to repay working under present conditions. Where a stream heads in a gold belt the richest diggings are likely to be at its extreme upper part.

“In this upper part, the current is so swift that the lighter material and the finer gold are carried away, leaving in many places a rich deposit of coarse gold, overlaid by coarse gravel, the pebbles being so large as to hinder rapid transportation by water. It is under such conditions that the diggings which are now being worked are found, with some unimportant exceptions. The rich gulches of the Forty-Mile district and of the Birch Creek district, as well as other fields of less importance, all head in the gold-bearing formation.



FORT WRANGEL.
METLAKHTLA, ALASKA.

INDIAN RIVER, NEAR SITKA.

Finer Gold Deposits.

“A short distance below the head of these gulches the stream valley broadens and the gravels contain finer gold more widely distributed. Along certain parts of the stream this finer gold is concentrated by favorable currents, and is often profitably washed, this kind of deposit coming under the head of ‘bar diggings.’ The gold in these more extensive gravels is often present in sufficient quantity to encourage the hope of extraction at some future time, when the work can be done more cheaply and with suitable machinery.

“The extent of these gravels which are of possible value is very great. As the field of observation is extended farther and farther from the gold-bearing belt, the gold occurs in finer and finer condition, until it is found in extremely small flakes, so light that they can be carried long distances by the current. It may be stated, therefore, as a general rule, that the profitable gravels are found in the vicinity of the gold-bearing rock.

The Gold Belt.

“The gold-bearing belt forms a range of low mountains, and on the flanks of these mountains to the northeast and to the southwest lie various younger rocks, which range in age from carboniferous to very recent tertiary, are made up mostly of conglomerates, sandstones and shales, with some volcanic material. These rocks were formed subsequent to the ore deposition, and, therefore, do not contain metalliferous veins. These have been partly derived, however, from detritus worn from the gold-bearing belt during the long period that it has been exposed to erosion, and some of them contain gold derived from the more ancient rocks and concentrated in the same way as is the gold in the present river gravels.”

Mr. Spurr says further in his report that there were probably 2,000 miners in the Yukon district during the

season of 1896, the larger number of whom were actually engaged in washing gold. Probably 1,500 of them were working in American territory, although the migration from one district to another is so rapid that one year the larger part of the population may be in American territory and the next year in British. As a rule, however, the miners prefer the American side on account of the difference in mining laws. These miners, with few exceptions, are engaged in gulch diggings.

Overland Route Suggested.

The high price of provisions and other necessities raises the price of ordinary labor in the mines to \$10 a day, and, therefore, no mine which pays less than this to each man working can be even temporarily handled. Yet, in spite of these difficulties, there was probably taken out of the Yukon district the season of which he reports, mostly from American territory, approximately \$1,000,000 worth of gold.

Mr. Spurr suggests that an overland route should be surveyed and constructed to the interior of Alaska. He says all the best routes that can be suggested pass through British territory, and the co-operation of the two governments would be mutually beneficial, since the gold belt lies partly in American and partly in British possessions. At the present time Mr. Spurr thinks that the best route lies from Juneau, by way of the Chilkat Pass overland to the Yukon at the junction of the Pelly. This is the Dalton Pass. The Chilkat Pass is considerable lower than the Chilkoot, over which the geological survey party of 1896 passed.

Wagon Road Wanted.

If a wagon road, or even a good horse trail, could be built, as indicated, the cost of provisions and other supplies would be greatly reduced, many gravels now useless could

be profitably worked, and employment would be afforded to many men. With the greater development of places of diggings would come the development of mines in the bed-rock.

The report says that in summer the climate is hardly to be distinguished from that of the Northern United States, Minnesota or Montana, for example, and although the winters are very severe, the snowfall is not heavy. Work could be carried on under ground throughout the whole of the year quite as well as in the mountains of Colorado.

Mr. Spurr says gold is known to occur in the great unexplored regions south of the Yukon because its presence in the wash of the streams, and it is quite probable that the Yukon gold belt extends to the north and west, but this can be determined only by further exploration. That a second California gold belt exists in Alaska, he states, may not be probable, but the prospect of a steady yield of gold is certain.

WHITE PASS RAILROAD.

An English Company Puts a Promising Project on Foot.

Mr. C. H. Wilkinson, Canadian representative of the British Yukon Mining, Trading and Transportation Company, which company received incorporation at Ottawa a few weeks ago, says it is the intention of his company to proceed at once with the construction of a railroad connecting the Yukon with the coast. The road will be built from deep-sea water at the head of the "Lynn Canal," an arm of the Behring Sea, across the White Pass to the headwaters of the Yukon River, a distance of fifty miles.

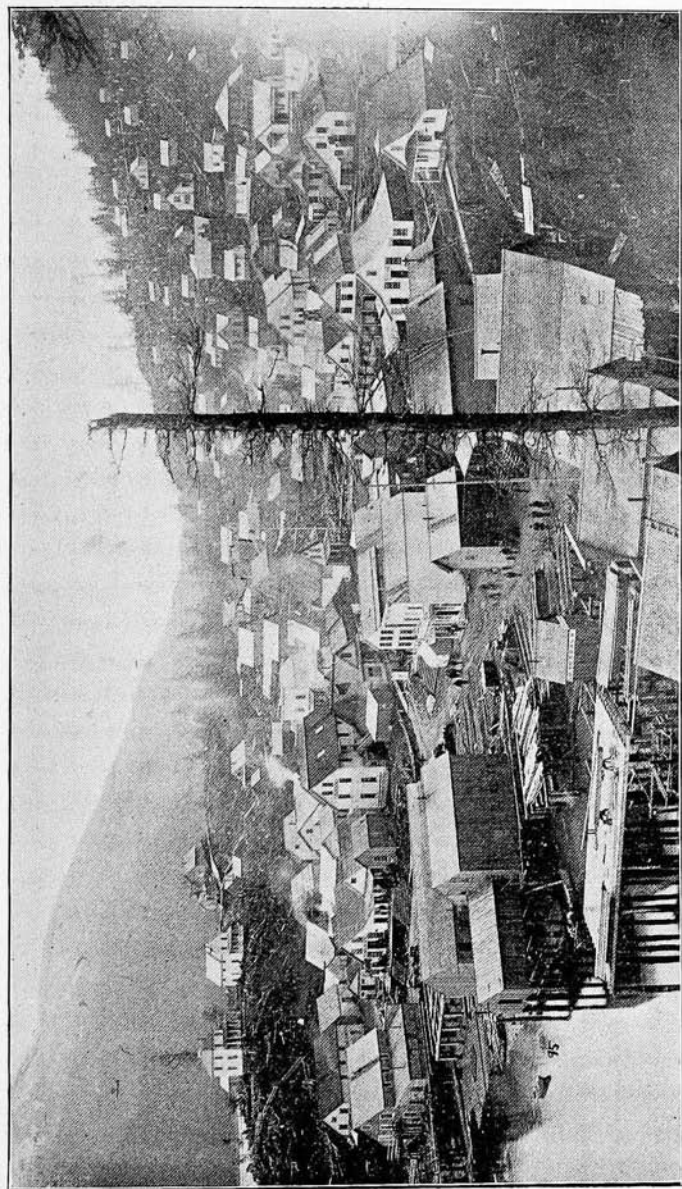
Will Build Next Summer.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that engineers of the British Yukon Company are now surveying the proposed route through the White Pass, and that the construction of a wagon road, the preliminary to the building of the railroad, will be begun early next summer. From the point on the Yukon River which will be the interior terminus of the road to the Klondike region the distance is 650 miles. This is easily navigable by boats and canoes in summer, and in the winter the driving on the ice affords a satisfactory means of communication.

The British Yukon Mining, Trading and Transportation Company was organized in London about two years ago. Its capitalization is £1,000,000, and the shareholders are wealthy Englishmen, including prominent bankers and fifteen members of the British House of Commons. Mr. Wilkinson stated that the company had asked the Dominion Government to guarantee 3 per cent. interest on its debentures to the extent of \$1,500,000, which amount is the estimated cost of the construction of the road through the White Pass. The government has not yet returned a definite reply to the request, desiring first to obtain certain data as to the proposed route. Mr. Wilkinson, however, anticipates a favorable reception of his proposition.

Grade of Twelve Feet to the Mile.

At all events, and irrespective of any action that the Dominion Government may or may not take, Mr. Wilkinson declares that his company is going ahead with the work, and will start to build the wagon road as soon as the season opens next spring. The company already has a pack trail over the White Pass from the "Lynn Canal" to the Yukon, but the trail, of course, does not permit of wagon transportation, and the "packing" of mining material and provisions is very expensive.



OUTFITTING POINT FOR GOLD FIELDS, JUNEAU.

Photo by P. Moll.

The construction of a railroad from the coast to the Yukon through the White Pass, it is declared, would not present many engineering difficulties. The engineers who have been surveying the route say that the gradient will be only about 300 feet, spread over a distance of twenty-five miles, or twelve feet to the mile, not by any means an excessive grade. Mr. Wilkinson does not think, however, that the road could be built, except at extravagant cost, in less time than two years, on account of the shortness of the summer season, when operations could be economically conducted.

Miners Work all the Year Round.

Mr. Wilkinson is enthusiastic as to the future of the Klondike. He believes that the country up North is richer in gold than any other fields of ancient or modern times, and that richer deposits will yet be found than any so far exploited. As to the statement quite frequently made that for nine months of the year the country is frozen up and mining impossible, he says that such is most emphatically not the case. In the first place, the river is open from five to seven months of the year, and secondly, there is nothing to prevent miners from working all the year round, as, indeed, they have been doing.

In the winter time all that has to be done is to build a fire and thaw the sand till it is easily workable. The wood supply in that part of the country is not very extensive, but a substitute is provided ready at hand in the large deposits of coal which abound in the region, much of it right on the surface.

It is assumed here that there does not exist the slightest doubt as to the Klondike region being well within Canadian territory. Indeed, it would appear that such has all along been recognized as being the case, even by Americans, for the Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Transportation and Trading Company, both

United States concerns, have paid customs duties to the Canadian authorities since 1894. Miners on creeks very much nearer the boundary than the Klondike have accepted this interpretation of the line, and have quietly paid their fees to the Canadian Government.

Buying Horses for Klondike Trade.

Cattlemen of the Northwest are realizing fortunes buying horses for the Klondike trade. Horses that could not be sold at any price a short time ago are now snapped up at from \$20 to \$40. Some of the horse dealers and cattlemen have cleared up over \$10,000 on horses already, and it is stated the rush for pack horses has only started. Heretofore horses in the Northwest have been so plentiful that they were bought in by the thousand at \$1 to \$2 a head, and were killed and canned in order to get them out of the way to save the grass. Now they are to be used for packing supplies to the Klondike, and, after the snow renders them valueless for packing purposes, they will be killed and sold for dog meat at 10 cents per pound.

LETTER FROM FRANK LORY.

Miners at Dawson Spend Their Money Like Dirt.

The parents of Frank Lory, of Petersburg, Ind., have received a letter from him written at Dawson City, June 14. He says:

“I am contented to remain here until I can take things easy when I return. I am working in a tin shop at \$15 a day, and yet it seems small in comparison with those who have claims, where they take out \$1,000 a day. I am going to buy grub for the winter and then go up the Stewart River 300 or 400 miles. I will come home next winter if I can, get married and return.

“Anybody can get work here. Everybody has a little sack of gold, and when you buy anything you pay for it in gold. The miners spend their money like dirt. They will go into a saloon and call everybody up to drink. Those who have rich claims will stand in a faro game and lose thousands of dollars before they leave. I saw one man yesterday lose \$3,000. He was drunk. He had sold his claim for \$50,000, and was crying because he was afraid he would not live to spend it.

“The climate now is fine. The sun shines twenty-two hours out of twenty-four, and it is never dark. You cannot tell when dark comes.

“You do not see any money less than a 50-cent piece. There is nothing in a store that sells for less. We were offered \$160 a hundred for our bacon. The boat came up to-day, but had no meat. Eggs are worth \$17 a dozen. It costs me a dollar to send this letter, as it did for the other two I wrote you. I have had seven jobs offered me since I came here to go to Circle City at \$12.50 a day and board.

“There are thousands of mosquitoes here. We have to keep nets over our faces and gloves on our hands all the time. Do not try to send me any newspapers, as they do not carry them through the mails up here.”

PROPOSED TELEGRAPH.

Californians Propose to Lay a Wire From Juneau to Dawson City.

One of the latest Alaskan enterprises formulated is that of the Alaska Telegraph and Telephone Company, which proposes to incorporate for the purpose of constructing temporary telegraph lines from Juneau to Dawson City. The capital stock to be subscribed is \$50,000, and the company is to be incorporated under the laws of the

State of California. At the head of the enterprise are J. W. Wright, a local real estate dealer; C. W. Wright, of Larkspur, and D. E. Bohannon. The last named is to act as the advance agent and chief constructor for the company.

Mr. Bohannon explained the details of the construction of the new telegraph line: "Our method is very simple," he said. "The line is to be constructed on the same plans as the ordinary military line used by armies for war purposes. We have a wire a quarter of an inch thick and covered with a kerite insulation, which has proved able to stand the rigorous climatic conditions prevailing in Alaska. The wire is wound upon large reels, the same as an ordinary telegraph wire, and these coils are to be placed on dog sleds and dragged over the ice and snow. As we go along the reels will simply pay out the loose wire and run it along the ground, and thus our line will be through in something like six weeks, the time consumed in the ordinary tramp over the country."

Mr. Bohannon expects to leave for Juneau in the near future, and will commence operations immediately upon his arrival there.

"PAPA" COBB'S DISCOVERY.

An Old Harvard Man the Finder of El Dorado Creek.

El Dorado Creek, where lie the richest placers in the fabulously rich Klondike district, was discovered and named by a Harvard man. The Harvard man was none other than F. W. Cobb, who was a famous quarter-back in the Harvard eleven in the early 90s. He came to the Pacific coast in 1894, and, after drifting around about a year, working on newspapers at the pittance of \$7 per week, left in March, 1895, for Alaska. Cobb was well known all over the East. He was one of the best of Har-

vard's quarter-backs, and was considered a splendid all-round athlete.

Worked for \$7 a Week.

Cobb's life on the Northern Pacific coast and in Alaska reads like a romance. From straitened circumstances he has followed his streak of luck, till now he is independently rich and amply able to gratify all the luxurious tastes of his nature. Cobb was known here as "Papa" Cobb. He struck Seattle in 1894, and, after trying to gain employment in various lines, became a member of the Seattle Athletic Club. He was not successful in procuring a permanent position, but his judgment and ability as a foot-ball player made his position in society secure. Finally, he was employed on an afternoon newspaper to contribute sporting matter at \$7 per week.

"Dead Broke" in the Frozen North.

Cobb is a man of considerable spirit and independence. He could not stand this sort of thing for long, and finally determined to seek his fortune in Alaska. He secured enough funds from Eastern and New York relatives to purchase an outfit and provisions, and sailed, March 17, 1895. Cobb's first experiences in Alaska were similar to those of the average "tenderfoot." He drifted about from place to place, finally reaching Circle City last summer. He was without funds, and looked forward to spending the winter in the frozen North almost dependent upon the generosity of the friends he made in the region. He secured work at living wages until the late fall, and was one of the first to reach the new diggings on the Klondike in September last. The news of the great strike on the Klondike reached Circle City early in September. Cobb hurried up the Yukon, traveling day and night, and carrying only the barest necessities in the way of supplies. He reached the mouth of Bonanza Creek, five miles above

Dawson City, only to find that the best locations had been filed on. His last supplies were almost gone, and there were little or no provisions in the country.

Met Frank Phiscator, of Michigan.

In his emergency Cobb met Frank Phiscator, the Michigan farmer who came out on the Portland Saturday with \$96,000. Phiscator had just reached the new diggings, and was looking for a partner. The two struck up a friendship. Phiscator agreed to prospect up the Klondike from the mouth of the Bonanza, while Cobb followed the latter stream to its confines with El Dorado, nine miles up. Each agreed to share with the other. A week after they parted Cobb had located a claim on El Dorado, and was thereby entitled by right of discovery to twice the amount of ground usually allotted. He hurried down to the mouth of the creek and found Phiscator, returning from a fruitless search after gold. He told Phiscator of his find, and the two men hurried to Cobb's claim. Phiscator located alongside of Cobb. The two men began work at once, the pans running as high as \$10 on the surface.

"We Will Call It El Dorado."

They had struck it rich. Laying down his shovel after the second day's prospecting, Cobb said:

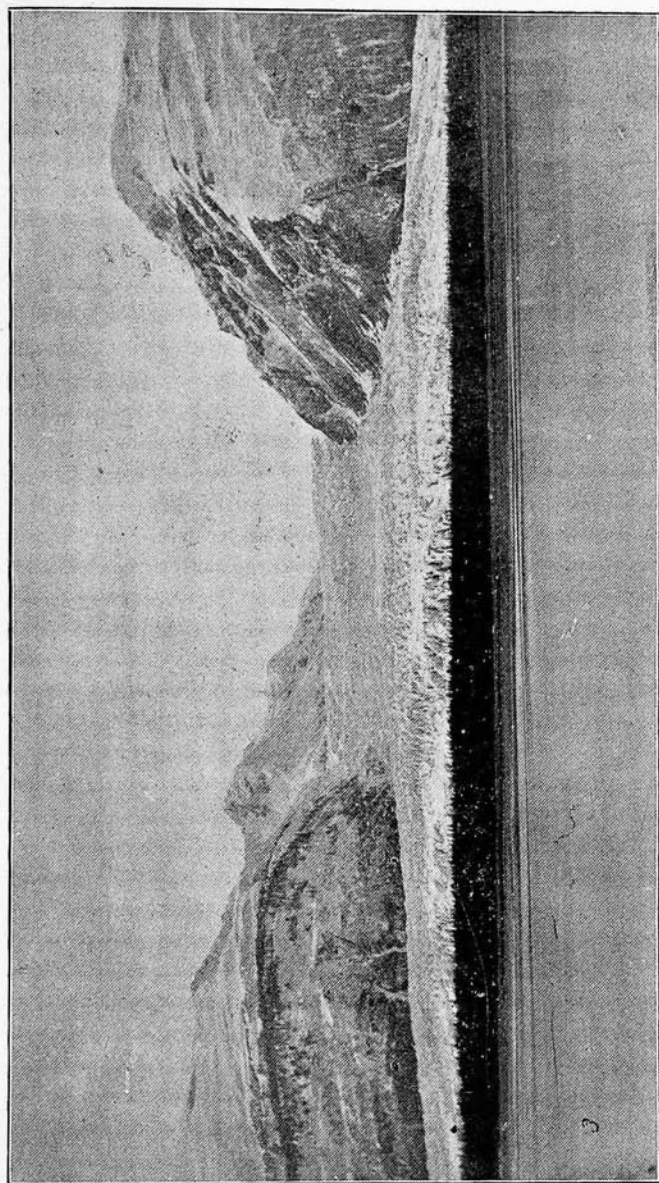
"Frank, this creek is studded with gold from here to headwaters. We will call it El Dorado."

And so it has been known from that time on.

WHOLE SITUATION REVIEWED.

Is it Worth While for a Young American to Take the Chance?

The United States government in 1867 paid Russia \$7,200,000 for the territory of Alaska.



DAVIDSON GLACIER.

Photo by P. Moll.

Alaska has paid back her purchase money in gold four times, having produced during the time it has been a part of the United States about \$30,000,000 of the precious yellow metal.

"The Days of '97."

To-day the eyes of the world are turned toward our frozen acquisition in the North, for within its borders has been discovered an El Dorado, seemingly "richer than Pluto's mine." Ten days ago the word Klondike, literally translated meaning deer river, was known to geographers and a few miners on the Yukon; to-day, it is on every tongue and is known as the designation, if the reports be but half true, for a gold-bearing district, greater in area and richer in character than any the world has known, with the possible exception of California. Klondike is the new open sesame to Aladdin's cave; it supplants "Pike's Peak or bust" in the gold seeker's vernacular. "The days of '97" may become as celebrated a phrase as "the days of '49," for the same fever that seized upon the people and dotted the western prairies with emigrant trains, bound for the Pacific coast, is now claiming victims by the thousands, all eager to brave the perils of the Arctic Circle and wrest a fortune from the frozen zone.

Compared With "the Days of '49."

The reported gold discoveries of the present day in Alaska and the reported gold discoveries of '49 in California afford many parallels. To the average man the treasures of the coast state were seemingly as inaccessible as are the riches of the Yukon and its tributaries. One was more than 2,000 miles across a trackless desert and over snow-bound mountain passes, beset by savages, whose deadly attack marked the trail with bleaching bones across the western states; the other is nearly 7,000 miles by water,

through a rigorous climate, or almost 4,000 miles by land and water, with mountain passes to scale as dangerous as those of the Swiss Alps.

A Panful Worth \$212.

The fabulous tales of wealth sent out by the California pioneers were no less wonderful than those brought back by the men who braved the last cold season in the Klondike mineral belt, and in both cases those who returned brought back with them great nuggets of the precious stuff that left little or no doubt in the minds of the hearer. The California miner in the song who had so many nuggets that he was accustomed to go "a hatful blind" finds his parallel in the Youkon miner who claims to have "washed out \$212 in one panful of dirt—a process that requires ten or twelve minutes.

Poor Man's Mines.

The Alaska and California gold fields are alike also in being placer mines. Placer mining is commonly called "poor man's mining," for the reason that it is done without machinery, while the implements required in the work are few and of small cost. A placer miner can get along very well with a pick, shovel and gold pan. If the dirt is not rich he can accomplish better results by running it through a sluice box, but where the yield is in nuggets instead of fine gold he prefers to "pan" it.

News Nine Months Old.

The great Klondike strike was made nine months ago, but nothing was known of it in the United States until June 15, when a vessel called the Excelsior arrived in San Francisco laden with miners from the Klondike, who in turn were laden with gold.

They told almost incredible tales of the richness of the newly discovered district, where fortunes had been accumulated in a few months. Experienced miners and

“tenderfeet” seemed to have shared good fortune alike, and with some justice, too, for the credit of the discovery of the new gold fields is due to the inexperienced men.

Another vessel brought to Seattle a second party of successful prospectors and a ton and a half of gold. These men had endured peril and undergone great hardships in accumulating the fortunes they brought, and they told a story that had a dark as well as a bright side. To follow their example means a risk of wealth, health and even life, but for those who are willing to take the chances the prospect they hold out is alluring.

Where is the Klondike District?

Where are the richest of the mines in the Alaska region?

They seem to be in the Klondike, a few miles over the British border. They were discovered, as has been said, by a party of “tenderfeet,” who, against the advice of the old-timers in the district, wandered “over yonder in the Klondike” and struck it rich. From Klondike comes much of the gold and from Klondike seems to come all the excitement. A few “tenderfeet,” going it blind, have stirred up the nation. Out of the region of their discovery has come, it is estimated, \$2,000,000 worth of gold during the present summer. Nearly all of that gold has found its way into the United States.

It is hard to tell where the Alaska gold fields are located except that in a general way the best of them are along the Yukon. There are a few “lode” mines near Juneau and along the southeast coast of the territory (the most accessible part of it), but the ore is of low grade and mining is made profitable only by the most careful management.

Region is Little Known.

The placer mines, from which prospectors are said now to be lining their pockets with gold, occupy the prominent

place in the popular mind. These are in the region remote from civilization, little known, and, on account of its uncertainties, dangerously alluring to the average man. This gold-producing country of the interior is in the vicinity of the Yukon near where that great river turns to the west in its course to the sea. Before the discoveries in the Klondike the most productive districts had been along Forty-Mile Creek, partly in British and partly in American territory, and the Birch Creek district, all in American territory.

Along all of the rivers in this region, tributaries to the Yukon, gold diggings exist and in many places pay the prospector well for his trouble.

Broad Belt of Gold Producing Rock.

Cook's Inlet is another place where the rumors of gold has caused crowds of unprepared men to flock, but the district has not exactly borne out the reputation given to it by early prospectors.

In all the immense country over which the placer mining extends it is estimated that up to last year there were 2,000 miners. The districts in which most of them worked were in a broad belt of gold-producing rock, through which quartz veins carrying gold occur frequently. Through the gold-bearing rocks the streams have cut deep gullies and canyons, and in their beds the gold which was contained in the rock is concentrated. The mining of this country consists, therefore, in washing out the gravel of these beds.

We're Just Hearing the News.

So the miners worked, being fairly well paid for their labor, until the "tenderfeet made the Klondike discovery. That was nine months or so ago, and the news of it is just reaching the outside world. It was not long in reaching the miners along Forty-Mile and Birch Creeks, though, and they shouldered their picks and moved forward in a wild

rush at the first word of the new lucky strike. As a result gold dust and nuggets by the ton are turned into the mints out on the coast, and men who never before rose above the level of the commonest of miners have come back to civilization and comfort loaded with gold to last them a lifetime.

Came Home on the Excelsior.

Take as an illustration this list of returned miners who came on the Excelsior:

	Brought from Alaska.	Value of claims.
T. S. Lippy	\$ 65,000	\$1,000,000
F. G. H. Bowker	90,000	500,000
Joe La Due	10,000	500,000
J. B. Hollinseed	25,500	.....
William Kilju	17,000	.....
James McMann	15,000	.....
Albert Galbraith	15,000	.....
Neil Macarthur	15,000	.....
Douglas Macarthur	15,000	.....
Bernard Anderson	14,000	35,000
Robert Krook	14,000	20,000
Fred Lendesser	13,000	.....
Alexander Orr	11,500	.....
John Marks	11,500	.....
Thomas Cook	10,000	25,000
M. S. Norcross	10,000	.....
J. Ernmerger	10,000	.....
Con Stamatina	8,250	.....
Albert Fox	5,100	35,000
Greg Stewart	5,000	20,000
J. O. Hestwood	5,000	250,000
Thomas Flack	5,000	50,000
Louis B. Rhoads	5,000	35,000
Fred Price	5,000	20,000
Alaska Commercial Company	250,000	.....
Total	\$649,850	.....

A Perilous Journey.

Every one of these men has a story to tell of the vast riches of the new gold fields, but they tell another story,

too—a story of hardship, trial and suffering through long winter days, when the sun was smiling on this earth's other pole and leaving them in miserable cold and darkness. They tell a story of prodigious travels, of staggering journeys and the dangers that beset the traveler. They tell what a trip it is to reach the gold fields, and when they get through the faint-hearted prospector who isn't thoroughly convinced that he wants to undergo the trial decides to forego the trip to Alaska and dig up his wealth at home or go without. Some of the gold-mad adventurers, though, rush on unheeding, crowding into the Alaska-bound steamers without anything like enough supplies or enough money to see them through ten days of travel on land. Miners who have been there say that such as those will perish.

The Best Way to Go.

What is the best way to reach the new gold fields from a point in the United States?

There are two general routes to the Klondike district. Both go by way of the Great Northern R. R. to Seattle, and there diverge. One goes by ocean steamer west and a little north, and passes through Dutch Harbor, at the extreme end of the southwest Alaskan peninsula. From there the steamer turns north and continues on to St. Michaels Island, a little above the mouth of the Yukon, in Behring Sea. At that point passengers are transferred to the river steamers to begin the long journey up the Yukon, which winds northward and eastward, and finally brings the traveler to Dawson City, now the principal town in the mining district, although sixty-five miles from the Klondike fields.

Cost of Transportation.

The cost of the trip from Chicago, this way, as prospecting miners usually travel, is \$251.50. It is divided as



NORIS GLACIER.
SITKA HARBOR.



TOP OF MUIR GLACIER.
FLOATING ICE, GLACIER BAY.



follows: From Chicago to Seattle (second class), \$51.50; from Seattle to Dawson City, \$200.

In time the trip requires thirty days—four from Chicago to Seattle, sixteen from Seattle to St. Michaels Island, and ten up the Yukon to Dawson City, by the fast boat. The distance in general figures is 2,250 miles from Chicago to Seattle, 2,500 miles to St. Michaels Island and 1,890 miles up the Yukon to Dawson, a total of about 6,600 miles.

The "Mountain" Route.

The other way to the Klondike, the "mountain route," is shorter in miles, but equally long in the time it requires and a great deal more difficult. By this route the traveler sails more directly north to Juneau, which is 899 miles from Seattle, and then goes by lake and river and over the mountains 1,000 miles to the new mining territory. On arrival at Juneau, the traveler changes to a smaller boat and sails 100 miles north to Dyea. From there he has a portage of twenty-seven miles through the Chilkat Pass. The last half-mile of this pass is over a glacier and the severest of climbing. Chilkat Indians are employed to pack supplies to the top of the pass, but from there on the traveler has to pack his own load.

Buy a Boat for \$75.

After getting through the Chilkat Pass the traveler reaches Lake Lindermann. At that point is a saw mill where boats are sold for \$75 each. Travelers who do not care to pay that price can purchase lumber and build their own boats. The lumber can be bought for \$100 a thousand feet, and about 500 feet are required to build a boat that will answer the purpose. Still other travelers carry whip-saws and get out their own lumber, and a man handy with a saw and hammer can build a boat in three or four days. To continue the trip, though, a boat is necessary, and by some means or other one must be had.

Portages on the Route.

After securing his boat the traveler floats down Lake Lindermann and Lake Bennett and then has half a mile of portage, where his boat has to be moved on rollers. There is any amount of rollers to be had, though, for earlier boaters of the path have left them. This half mile overland brings the traveler to Lake Tagish, through which he goes six miles, and over a quarter of a mile of portage, to Mud Lake and on to the White Horse Rapids. Here there is another portage of three-quarters of a mile, and the traveler brings his boat to Lake Labarge. From there on the journey is through Thirty-Mile River, the Lewis River, 150 miles to Five-Finger Rapids, to the Yukon at Fort Selkirk, and then down stream 250 miles to Dawson.

Expense of This Trip.

The cost of this trip this way cannot be definitely stated beyond Juneau, because after that point it depends somewhat on the bargain made with the Chilkat Indians, who pack supplies through the pass, and the length of time the overland part of the journey requires. The cost from Chicago to Seattle is the same as by the other route, of course, \$51.50 second class, and \$10 more first class. The steamer fare up to Juneau and on to Dyea is \$42. What it costs on the overland trip each traveler determines partially for himself, but the Indians who act as guides and pack supplies do not work without big pay.

Dawson City, Center of the Region.

Dawson City, the Center of the new mining region, although sixty-five miles distant from the Klondike, is said to be a typical mining camp, minus the guns. The British government enforces its laws in Dawson, and those laws prohibit the use of firearms, so, few men carry guns. The laws of the camp are enforced by mounted police, whose

captain is a civil officer. Though there are said to be 3,000 people in Dawson, few houses have been built, for the principal reason that lumber is \$100 per 1,000 feet. The general fear is, of course, that there will be great suffering there this winter, and it will be increased, it is expected, by the rush of unprepared prospectors who sailed for the new fields immediately on learning what luck had befallen those who have but recently returned.

Great Things About Dawson City.

"I am afraid," said one of the influential miners who returned on a San Francisco boat, "that all the talk and excitement will cause such a stampede to the Northwest that there will be great suffering during next winter and spring. Still, if people are only ordinarily careful, there is no occasion for any such thing. There are many good things that can be said about Dawson City besides the gold that has made it famous. In my own way I want to tell the people of some of these good qualities, as well as the business and social conditions, and how matters are conducted there.

How Claims are Sold.

"Speculation is already the ruling idea. A purchaser inspects a claim that he thinks he would like to buy. He offers just what he thinks it is worth. There is no skirmishing over figures, the owner either accepts or refuses, and that is the end of it. With this claim goes the season's work. By that I mean the great pile of earth that may contain thousands or may not be worth the expense necessary to run it through the sluice. That is a chance one must take, however, and few have lost anything by it this season.

Not One Losing Claim.

"I do not know in the whole Klondike region a single claim that has not paid handsomely, and there are still hundreds of claims that have not been worked. In testing

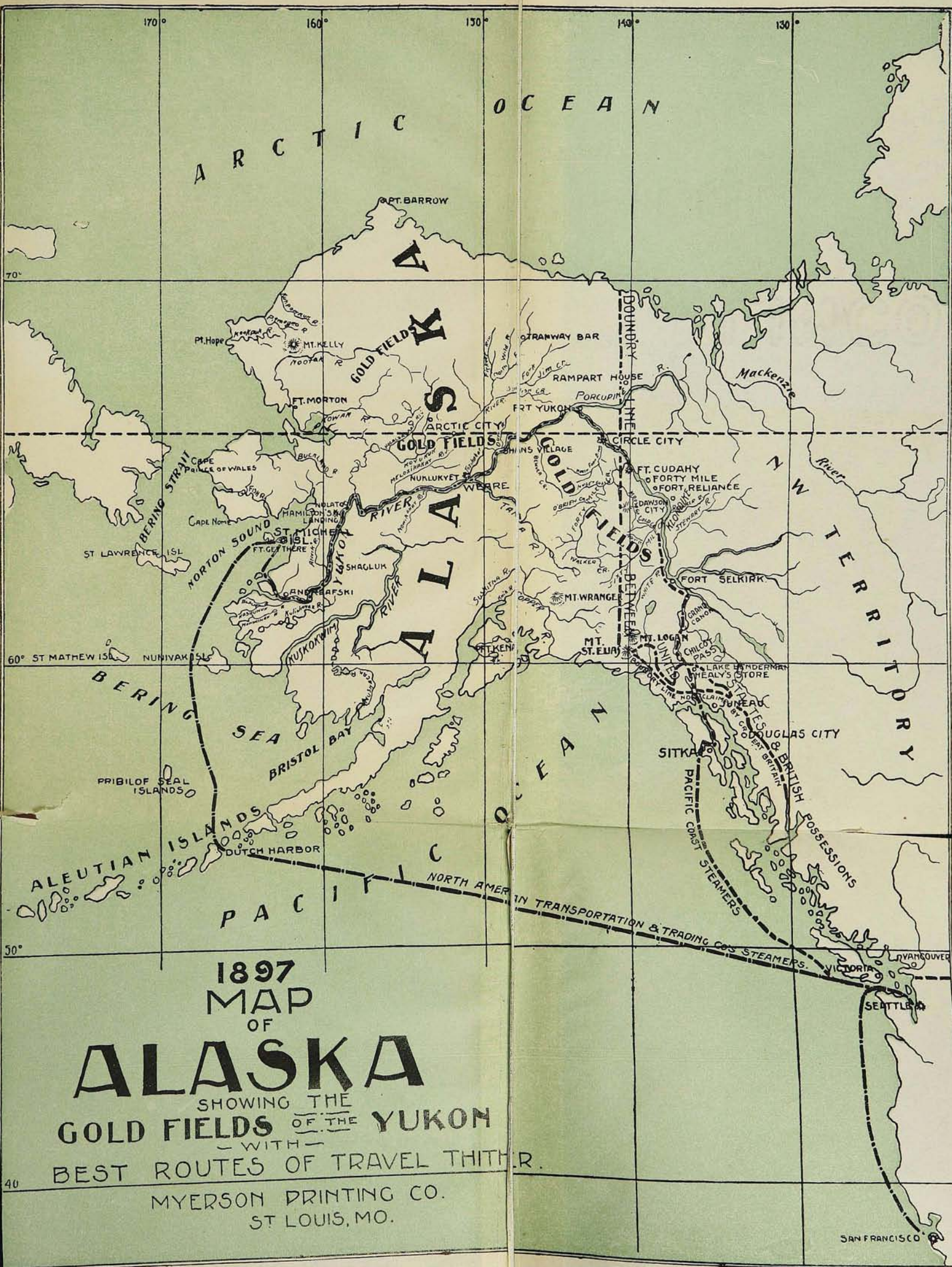
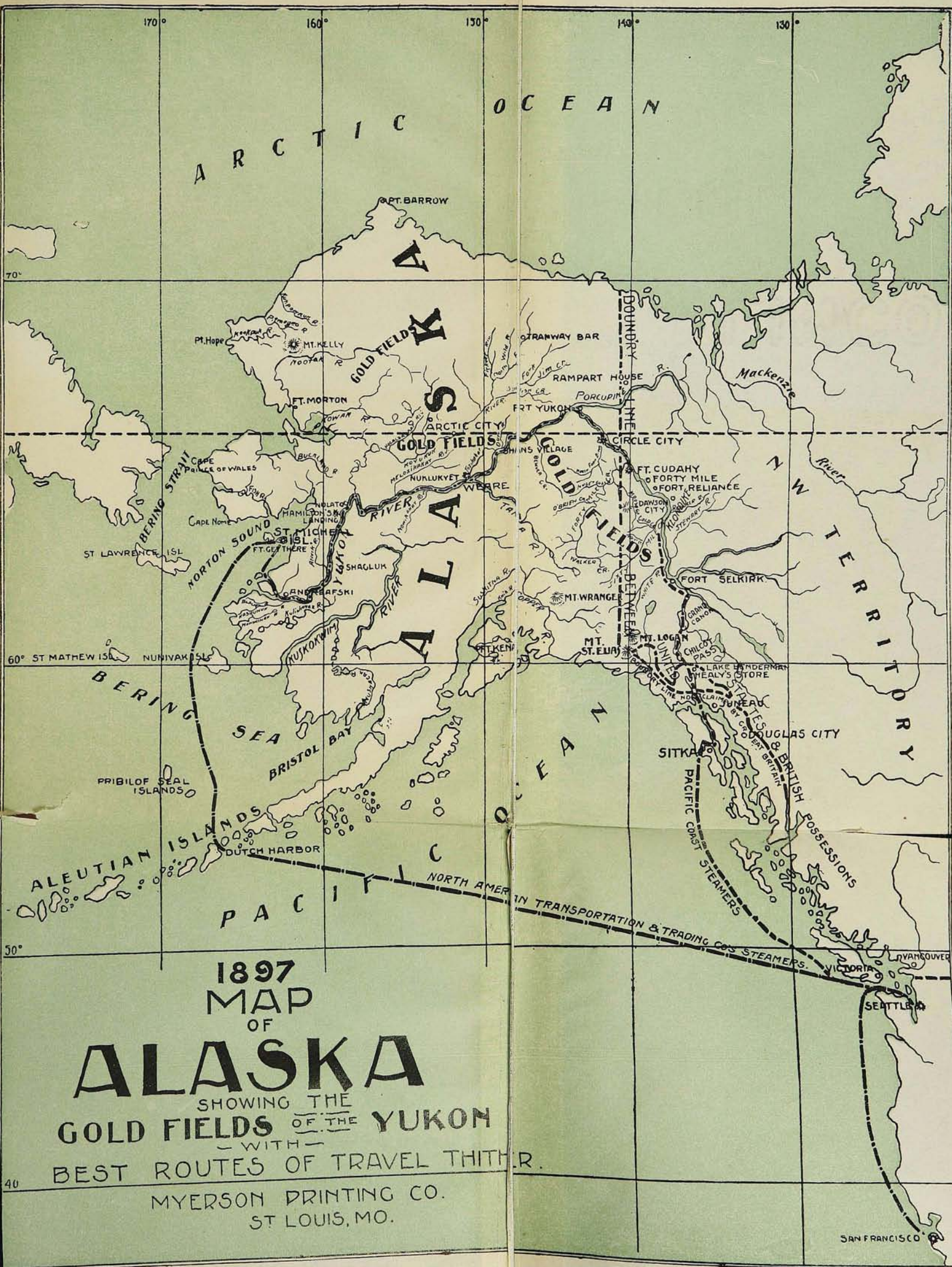
a claim the prospector sinks a hole, say fifteen feet, and then tries a pan of dirt. If the pay streak has been reached he sets to work in earnest to gather in more of the precious metal. This process consists of building a fire around the entire circle, allowing it to burn through the night. The next morning there is enough loose dirt lying about to keep a squad of men busy throughout the day. I have known men to hoist in a day as many as 250 buckets of soil, each weighing 250 pounds. This dirt is not disturbed until spring, when it is washed out, and when a man buys a claim he buys the dump also, but he takes his own chances on the latter.

Not Out of the World.

“Many people have an idea that Dawson City is completely isolated, and can communicate with the outside world only once every twelve months. That is a mistake. Circle City, only a few miles away, has a mail once each month, and there we have our mail addressed. It is true, the cost is pretty high, a dollar a letter and \$2 for a paper, yet by that expenditure of money we are able to keep in direct communication with our friends on the outside. In the way of public institutions our camp is at present without any, but by the next season we will have a church, a music hall, school house and Hospital. This last institution will be under the direct control of the Sisters of Mercy, who have already been stationed for a long time at Circle City and Forty-Mile Camp.

Mines Not at Dawson.

“The impression seems to prevail that the mines are close to Dawson City. That is a mistake. The rich creeks are fifteen miles off, and it is a day’s journey to them. The camp there is as pretty a place as one desires to see. The white tents and huts of the miners are scattered along the banks of the creeks or built on the mountain sides, as convenience or fancy dictated.”



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