PRICE SIXPENCE

The KLONDIKE GOLDFIELDS and How to Get There

By FRED. JAMES

1897

London and New York
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, Ltd.

Yet UNCOMMON!

FOR SOME WISE CAUSE,

'It is the little things that rule this life;'

OR, IN OTHER WORDS,

'Sow an Act, and you Reap a Habit;
Sow a Habit, and you reap a Character;
Sow a Character and you Reap a Destiny!'
—THACKERAY.

'And such is human life, so gliding on;
It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!'

MORAL:—'In Life's Play the Player of the other side is Hidden from us. We Know that his play is Always Fair, Just, and Patient, but we also know to our Cost that He Never Overlooks a Mistake.—*It's for you to find out WHY YOUR EARS ARE BOXED.*
—HUXLEY.

HOW TO AVOID THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS.

THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF LIVING—partaking of too rich foods, as pastry, saccharine, and fatty substances, alcoholic drinks, and an insufficient amount of exercise—frequently deranges the liver. I would advise all bilious people, unless they are careful to keep the liver acting freely, to exercise great care in the use of alcoholic drinks; avoid sugar, and always dilute largely with water. Experience shows that porter, mild ales, port wine, dark sherries, sweet champagne, liqueurs, and brandies are all very apt to disagree; while light white wines, and gin or old whisky largely diluted with pure mineral water charged only with natural gas, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' is PECULIARLY ADAPTED for any CONSTITUTIONAL WEAKNESS of the liver; it possesses the power of reparation when digestion has been disturbed or lost, and PLACES the INVALID on the RIGHT TRACK to HEALTH. A world of woes is avoided by those who keep and use ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Therefore NO FAMILY SHOULD EVER BE WITHOUT IT.

THE STOMACH AND LIVER AND THEIR TRIALS.—"Permit me to say that I have suffered much from a Stomach and Liver complaint. Having consulted Doctors and tried many medicines, but found that none of them relieved me of this unhappy condition, one doctor told me to try ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' I acted upon his advice at once, and it is now nearly a year since I began to use it. Its great value has not been overstated, and I wish to say that by its use I am enabled to follow my daily occupation and to enjoy the pleasures of life. I have recommended ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' to others.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully, 'TRUTH.'"

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THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT where it has been taken in the earliest stages of a disease, it has, in innumerable instances, PREVENTED what would otherwise have been a SERIOUS ILLNESS. The effect of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' upon a disordered and feverish condition of the system is SIMPLY MARVELLOUS. It is in fact NATURE'S OWN REMEDY and an UNSURPASSED ONE.

CAUTION.—Examine each Bottle, and see that the Capsule is marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Without it, you have been imposed on by a WORTHLESS, *and occasionally poisonous imitation.* PREPARED ONLY BY

J. C. ENO, LTD., 'FRUIT SALT' WORKS, LONDON, by J. C. ENO'S patent.

THE KLONDIKE GOLDFIELDS

AND HOW TO GET THERE

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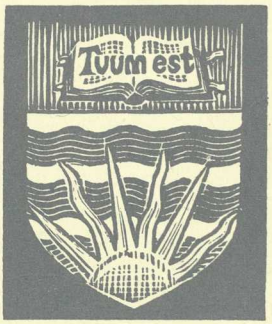

THE UNIVERSITY OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA

MAP OF KLONDIKE DISTRICT.

THE KLONDIKE GOLDFIELDS

AND

HOW TO GET THERE

BY

FRED. JAMES

WITH A MAP

LONDON AND NEW YORK
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & SONS, LIMITED
1897

EDMUND EVANS,
ENGRAVER AND PRINTER,
RACQUET COURT, FLEET STREET,
LONDON, E.C.

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THE
KLONDIKE GOLD-FIELDS,

AND HOW TO GET THERE.

THE great auriferous lands of the North-West roughly occupy the district lying between the Mackenzie River and Rocky Mountains on the East, the Porcupine and Rat Rivers on the North, the 60th Parallel on the South, and the 145th W. Meridian on the West.

The Western boundary between Canadian and American territory runs in a line parallel to the 140th W. Meridian from Demarcation Point on the shores of the Arctic Ocean to Mt. St. Elias, the highest volcanic peak, 18,000 ft. high, situated a little north-west of the point of intersection of the 140th W. Meridian and the 60th N. Parallel.

In all this district, gold has been known to exist, for several years past, but it was generally thought, not in sufficient quantity, or so easily worked, as to be worth the trouble of getting. In the Report on the Population and Resources of Alaska in 1890 by Mr. Potter, the U.S. Gov. Agent, we find: "Mining cannot be called a success on the Yukon up to the present time. Since the first excitement in 1886 there have been few instances of individuals taking out of the country more than 2,000 dols. for two or even three seasons of privation and hardship; though there have been, however, isolated cases of more being

taken out." The Report goes on to state that miners work on prospects and are heavy debtors to the stores. The prices rule very high at these stores, but are barely remunerative, owing to the difficulty and cost of transport, which is carried on chiefly (on the Yukon) by the stern-wheel steamers of the Alaska Commercial Company. The miner finds great obstacles in the hardships of the road to prospects, the short season and the frozen grounds; and although the miners have made an entrance to the country, and large areas have been run over, only placer and bar-diggings have been found, but no gold-bearing quartz ledges. "Unless," says Mr. Potter, "some rich developments should yet be made, the mining interests will never assume very large proportions."

This Report of course refers specifically to that district of the Yukon within American jurisdiction, that is, Alaska—and there is no doubt the Alaskan miners have crept onwards towards the headwaters of the great river until they overran the boundary line between American and Canadian territory, and found themselves in the district indicated above.

The two principal sources of the Great Yukon are Lewis and Pelly Rivers in the south, and the Porcupine River in the north. Besides these, innumerable smaller rivers and creeks go to swell the waters of the Yukon, and render it a noble stream navigable for 2,500 miles from its embouchure in Norton Sound, an inlet of Behring's Sea. It is deltoid at its mouth, and its northern arm, the Kwichpak, affords the best entrance for navigating purposes; and it is through this waterway, that the many who will rush to this

new Eldorado, will find an entrance jealously guarded from November to May by the grip of King Frost.

The contingency suggested by Mr. Potter's Report has happened. Towards the end of last year rumours of the discovery of new placer mines of extraordinary richness, reached the outside world, in a letter from the Dominion Surveyor, who was stationed at Fort Cadahy for the purpose of defining the Alaska boundary. In this letter he states that £800 was obtained in two days from the Bonanza Creek which runs into a tributary of the Yukon, called by the Innuk or Esquimaux Indians, Tron Diuck (Plenty of Fish)*, and mispronounced by the miners Klondike—spelt also Klondyke and Klondak. The Bonanza Creek possesses five branches, all of which are exceedingly rich in gold. At once time, Uncle Sam, who is never above laying claim to anything lying handy, was inclined to assert that the district lay within his jurisdiction, but it is beyond a doubt that the whole area lies well within the boundary of the Dominion of Canada, the Government of which has already taken steps to insure law and order by drafting to the spot a number of their admirable Mounted Police, and should occasion arise these can be, and will be, rapidly reinforced.

I think I may safely say, you will search in vain for any definite names in ordinary existing maps. To the west of the great Mackenzie River, the country is unmapped, unknown save to the hunter or trader in-pelts, and the miner. While South-East Alaska is the resort of the summer tourist and the Alpine

* Another authority gives the meaning as Reindeer

climber, the great stretch of country north of British Columbia, extending over hundreds of thousands of square miles, is *terra incognita.* It is true you will find scattered here and there names like Rampart House, Fort Cudahy, Fort Reliance, Fort Selkirk, and so forth, but between these lie hundreds of miles of territory, difficult to traverse, almost impossible to dwell in, save for robust men inured to toil and hardship and extremes of temperature.

Fort Selkirk stood at the juncture of Pelly and Lewis Rivers, and was the head-quarters of the Hudson Bay Company in that district—and is now a deserted ruin, or was two years ago. Little did the hardy hunters, who faced the rigours of the winter, dream of the gold lying in the districts all around them. No doubt they found riches enough in the splendid furs so much more easily obtained then, than now. In has been asserted in some articles recently appearing that the temperature in the newly-discovered region falls to 80 degrees below zero, but this is, I think, an exaggeration. The coast temperature varies from 70 degrees Fahr. in summer to 40 or 50 degrees below zero in winter, and the snowfall varies from 3 to 5 feet on the level—while the late summer and fall are usually stormy and wet. Navigation is closed to the outside for seven months in the year by heavy ice on the sea, and as I stated before, the Yukon is unnavigable from Nov. to May. The comparative mildness of the coast temperature arises from the influence of the warm stream of the Kuro Suvo of Japan—the Gulf Stream of the Pacific—which extends under the title of the North Pacific

Drift Current to the shores of Alaska, according to Krusensee. In the interior the climate is drier and warmer in summer, reaching 80 to 85 degrees. In the winter the thermometer frequently stands at 60 degrees below zero. The snowfall is excessive, but since there is less wind than on the coast, it does not pile in paralyzing drifts as in the gullys and valleys there.

The absence of humidity, however, makes the intense cold more bearable than it would be otherwise, and only wants a little forethought to be combated successfully. With the narratives of Franklin, Parry and others before him, Nansen was not only able to exist during the long Arctic night in the "Fram," but he found existence enjoyable—because before he started he sat down and counted the cost; and that is precisely what my readers must do before they enter on the struggle with the wilderness for the red gold that Nature hides, and only yields to man after much toil and labour, and infinite patience and sacrifice—but none want to enter on the fight unless he is assured that spoils are to be won. And here I can only adduce evidence which each intending prospector must weigh and estimate for himself. Such evidence of the wealth existing, method of seeking it, surroundings of the spot, means of reaching, cost of living, etc., as I have been able to collect I place before my readers.

Naturally one turns first and instinctively to official sources, and what immediately follows is extracted from the Canadian Blue Book containing the Report of Mr. William Ogilvie, Dominion Land Surveyor,

who accompanied the Expedition sent by the Minister of the Interior under Dr. Geo. Dawson, to explore that portion of the North-West Territory drained by the Yukon. As Mr. Ogilvie was engaged for two years in the district, he had ample opportunity for judging its possibilities. He it was who named the White Pass, which bids fair to become the chief road to the auriferous country. He says:—

"While at Juneau I heard reports of a low pass from the head of Chilkoot Inlet to the headwaters of the Lewes River. During the time I was at the head of Taiya Inlet, I made inquiries about it and found that there was such a pass; but could learn nothing definite about it from either whites or Indians. As Capt. Moore, who accompanied me, was very anxious to go through it, and as the reports of the Taiya Pass indicated that no waggon-road or railroad could ever be built through it, while the new pass appeared, from what little knowledge I could get of it, to be much lower and possibly feasible for a waggon-road, I determined to send the captain by that way, if I could get an Indian to accompany him. This I found would be difficult to do. None of the Chilkoots appeared to know anything of the pass, and I concluded that they wished to keep its existence and condition a secret. The Tagish or Stick Indians, as the interior Indians are locally called, are afraid to do anything in opposition to the wishes of the Chilkoots, so it was difficult to get any of them to join Capt. Moore; but after much talk and encouragement from the whites around, one of them, named 'Jim,' was induced to go. He had been through this

pass before and proved reliable and useful. I have named this pass 'White Pass,' in honour of the late Hon. Thomas White, Minister of the Interior, under whose authority the expedition was organized."

The transport work in these regions is done by Indians, and they appear to have given Mr. Ogilvie considerable trouble. Their laziness and avarice he is constantly reverting to:—"Of all the Indians who came to the summit with packs, only four or five could be induced to remain and pack down to lake, although I was paying them at the rate of 4 dols. per 100 lb. After one trip down only two men remained, and they only in hopes of stealing something. One of them appropriated a pair of boots, and was much surprised to find that he had to pay for them on being settled with. . . . . I had with me a white man who lived at the head of the inlet with a Tagish Indian woman. This man had a good deal of influence with the Tagish tribe; . . . and I sent him to the head of the inlet to try and induce the Tagish Indians to undertake the transportation, offering them five dollars per hundred pounds. . . . The Tagish are little more than slaves to the more powerful coast tribes, and are in constant dread of offending them in any way. One of the privileges which the coast tribes claim is the exclusive right to all work on the coast, or in its vicinity, and the Tagish are afraid to dispute this claim. When my white man asked the Tagish to come over and pack, they objected on the grounds mentioned. After considerable ridicule of their cowardice . . . nine of them came over, and in fear and trembling

began to pack down the lake. After they were at work for a few days some of the Chilkoots came out and also started to work. Soon I had quite a number at work, and was getting my stuff down quite fast. But this good fortune was not to continue. Owing to the prevailing wet, cold weather on the mountains, and the difficulty of getting through the soft, wet snow, the Indians began to quit work for a day or two at a time, and to gamble with one another for the wages already earned. Many of them wanted to be paid in full; but this I positively refused, knowing that to do so was to have them all apply for their earnings and leave me until necessity compelled them to go to work again. I once for all made them distinctly understand that I would not pay any of them until the whole of the stuff was down. As many of them had already earned from twelve to fifteen dollars each, to lose which was a serious matter to them, they reluctantly resumed work and kept at it until all was delivered."

On the subject of mining in 1887 Mr. Ogilvie had little of a cheerful nature to impart. Coal was found, but not in very large quantities; while reports concerning gold were vague and contradictory. But, writing at Cudahy in the winter of 1895-96, he has information of a much more definite character to impart:—"There are many mining camps now in the country; and, besides, the miners find it pays well to have what they call 'drift'—that is, quarry out the frozen gravel during the winter, pile it up, and wash it during the spring and summer. . . . Coarse gold and excellent prospects have been found on the Hoota-

linqua (Teslin), and there will likely be a rush there next spring. . . . They (Glacier and Miller Creeks) are the two richest creeks yet found on the Yukon, and are both tributaries of Sixty-Mile River. Both creeks are fully located and worked, each claim being 500 ft. along the creek and the width of the valley or creek-bed. There are nearly 100 claims, all of which pay well. One on Miller Creek, I understand, will yield seventy-five to eighty thousand dollars this season, and the owner will net, it is said, between 40,000 and 50,000 dollars. . . . There are many other creeks in this vicinity yet to be prospected, and some will, I have no doubt, pay well. Gold is found all along the valley of Sixty-Mile River, and under more favourable circumstances, both mercantile and climatic, it would yield good results to large enterprises. The mercantile conditions will improve ; the climate is a serious difficulty, but will be surmounted in time, I believe."

Early in September last year Mr. Ogilvie reported an important discovery of gold on a creek called Bonanza Creek, which is an affluent of the river known as the Klondike. From Mr. Ogilvie's reports it is evident that the prospect appears to him an exceedingly rosy one :—

"I may say that every report that comes in from Bonanza Creek is more encouraging than the last. Prospecting has only begun, and up to date of mailing (November 22nd, 1896) very rich prospects have been found on the few claims prospected on ; from one dollar to the pan of dirt up to twelve dollars are reported, and no bedrock found yet. This means

from 1000 dols. to 12,000 dols. per day per man sluicing. . . . 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 on one of the claims on Bonanza and found 14 dols. 25c. in it. Of course, that may be an exceptionally rich pan; but 5 dols. to 7 dols. per pan is the average on that claim reported, with five feet of pay dirt and the width yet undertermined, but it is known to be 30 feet; even at that figure the result at nine to ten pans to the cubic foot and 500 feet long—nearly 4,000,000 dols. at 5 dols. per pan; one-fourth of this would be enormous."

And here is another extract taken from an equally reliable source, which seems to indicate that reports as to the wealth of the Klondike have scarcely been exaggerated:—

"The reports which have lately come to hand concerning the richness of these claims seem absolutely fabulous. Pans of dirt yielding 207 dols., 243 dols., 319 dols., are, of course, most exceptional, but the average returns on the ground now being worked vary from 1 dol. to 12 dols. per pan, and at nine pans to the cubic foot, 5 ft. of pay-dirt, and the width from 30 ft. to 100 ft., a 500 ft. claim would yield, at the lowest estimate (30 ft.), from 675,000 dols. to 8,100,000 dols. to the fortunate owner.

"These pans are about 18 in. in circumference and 4 in. to 5 in. in depth, and such phenomenal richness in so small a portion of gravel would lead one to suppose that the quartz matrix cannot be far distant. This was the supposition of the miners who washed

the gravels of Williams and Lightning Creeks at the time of the Cariboo excitement in the early sixties, but no rich quartz lodes were discovered then or subsequently, causing many to believe that the original ledges had been disintegrated and entirely pulverized by the action of the water. From the latest official reports and more recent letters from private sources it is established beyond doubt that in these high northern latitudes, on the outskirts of the Arctic circle, are found some of the most highly auriferous deposits that have yet been discovered. Had the placer discoveries on the lower reaches of the Yukon occurred in a more accessible region, and where the natural conditions gave better opportunities for speedy development, the country would have been thronged with thousands of eager gold-seekers twenty years ago. Bonanza Creek alone is computed to have room for 1,000 claims each 500 ft. in length, and in breadth extending the full width of the valley, and each successive creek from Bonanza to the sources of the Klondak, including 'Too Much Gold' Creek, where the miners humorously assert the 'dust' is so rich that it has to be mixed with dirt before they can wash it, will furnish claims to some of the thousands who are now rushing into the mines from the Western States, regardless of the grave possibility of a dearth of food during the eight months of semi-darkness which is approaching. Leaving the Klondak itself, which will pour many millions of gold into the world's treasury, there are other gold-bearing tributaries of the Yukon—Indian Creek, Stewart River, with its many branches to the south, in which prospecting has

been done and good indications found. Rich pay-dirt has been reported on all the streams joining Pelly River, and on the Hootalinque, in a direct line with these discoveries. Further south are the Carsian Goldfields, which will be developed by an English company under a charter recently granted by the British Columbian Government.

"It will be seen, on reference to a map, that there is thus a gold belt along the easterly watershed of the Yukon of indefinite width, and over 300 miles in length, all of which is in British territory. On the western side of the Yukon, from Fort Selkirk to the headwaters of the Mackenzie, so little prospecting has been done that it is not possible to state definitely that the creeks are gold-bearing, though coarse gold has been washed on a creek for forty miles below Selkirk. Lode mining will not be undertaken until the country has been much more opened up, and although copper ledges of value are said to exist on White River, and good quartz in the hills round Bonanza Creek, it is open to doubt, unless they prove to be of extreme richness, whether they will ever be worked in face of so many natural obstacles. Cariboo was practically deserted on account of the inclemency of the climate and the excessive cost of supplies as soon as the easily-accessible gold had been stripped from the surface, although it was openly recognized that the deep gravels contained the richest and coarsest dust. In a letter now before the writer, dated from Circle City, and penned by a typical Western miner, the extreme hardships incurred by gold seekers in those latitudes are apparent if we

read between the lines. The trading companies—both American—give no credit to those working in the remote creeks. He came in over the trail from Juneau, thence by water to Dyea, and from there by sleigh to the river—waited until the ice broke, built a boat with a whipsaw and hatchet, and floated down to the diggings. All supplies have to be packed on the back over the trails, unless the miner can afford to buy dogs, and the cost of feeding these animals is very considerable, for salmon is unobtainable from the Indians; bacon is given, costing 1*s.* 8*d.* per lb. In the remoter camps flour fetches 48 dols. per 100 lb., cigars 2*s.*, a glass of whisky the same. The winter lasts eight months, during which time, except for the Northern Lights, there is semi-darkness. In the middle of summer they enjoy twenty-four hours of sunshine, and myriads of mosquitoes. The temperature in winter is as low as 80 degrees below zero. The ground is continually frozen a few feet from the surface, and fires are employed to thaw the pay-dirt prior to washing. It has been officially stated that timber is already becoming scarce in some parts. It is obvious that in face of such difficulties gold-washing is a slow and laborious process, and at the present cost of supplies, unless the gravel is exceedingly rich, they cannot afford to work it.

"There is an urgent necessity for steps to be taken by the Government to regulate the liquor traffic which has already demoralised the Indians in the vicinity of the camps, and may lead to serious trouble between American and Canadian miners, the former being in the majority, and containing among their number

many well-known desperadoes from the Western States. Recent reports state that feeling already runs high between the two nationalities, and it is high time that the police force was considerably strengthened, unless it is desired that some of the worst scenes of the '49 excitement should be re-enacted in these wilds. A southern entrance to the Klondak mines should be constructed as soon as possible for many reasons. It would traverse British territory, reduce the price of food supplies, and prevent the possibility of a famine. There would be a saving in distance of fully 2,000 miles between Klondak and Vancouver, and the Government could easily reimburse itself for its outlay by levying a small toll on freight and bullion. The Dominion Government was recently asked to grant a charter for the development of this district to an English syndicate. The two American trading companies already referred to, have a practical monopoly of the entire trade of these goldfields at present, and should an English company obtain a monopoly with a shorter and cheaper route, the miner might not be much better off. There are two routes—one *viâ* the Chilcot Pass, and the other through the White Pass—which, if properly opened up by wealthy English companies under competent management, the resulting competition would be of advantage to the miner, but there would be ample margin of profit to pay handsome dividends to the shareholders. It may be broadly laid down that in the present state of the country the only ventures in which English capital can be embarked with any probable chance of remu-

nerative results are those which combine trading and transportation, and even here, so rugged is the country and so great will be the cost of building and maintaining waggon roads, bridges, scows, etc., that it will require men of exceptional ability to successfully conduct the affairs of such an enterprise."

The following is taken from the issue of July 17th of the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, published in Seattle, a city of nearly 43,000 inhabitants, in Washington, U.S.A., from whence steamers ply to Juneau, Dutch Harbour, and St. Michael, places of which I shall have to speak later. The correspondent of *The Intelligencer* boarded the ss. *Portland* at Seattle on its return from St. Michael's, carrying miners bound for home after a visit to the Klondike Goldfields:—

"At three o'clock this morning the steamship *Portland*, from St. Michael's for Seattle, passed up Sound with more than a ton of solid gold on board and 68 passengers. In the captain's cabin are three chests and a large safe filled with the precious nuggets. The metal is worth nearly 700,000 dols., and the most of it was taken out of the ground in less than three months of last winter. In size the nuggets range from the size of a pea to a guinea hen's egg. Of the 68 miners aboard hardly a man has less than 7,000 dols., and one or two have more than 100,000 dols. in yellow nuggets.

"One peculiar feature to be noticed is that the big strikes were made by tenderfeet, while the old and experienced miners of many years' experience are suffering indescribable hardship and privation in Alaska and the North-West Territory, and have

only a few thousand dollars to show for their labour.

"Fortune seemed to smile on the inexperienced men who went into the mining districts last year, as nearly all of them were the most fortunate. The stories they tell seem too incredulous and far beyond belief. Instances are noted where single individuals have taken out, in two months and a half, gold to the value of over 150,000 dols.

"Clarence Berry, of Fresno, Cal., went to the Yukon in 1890 and prospected several years without success. He returned home last autumn, was married, and took his bride to the Klondike last November. He is now on the *Portland* with 150,000 dols., the result of a winter's work and fortune's smile.

"Frank Phiscator, of Baroda, Mich., is another lucky miner. He went to the Klondike last autumn, and is now returning with 96,027 dols., having worked two claims with nine men three months, and he still owns the claim. He was one of the original discoverers of the Eldorado district.

"Although most of the passengers are returning home with plenty of gold, they all advise and urge people who contemplate going to the Yukon not to think of taking in less than one ton of grub and plenty of clothes. While it is a poor man's country, yet the hardships and privations to be encountered by inexperienced persons unused to frontier life is certain to result in much suffering during the winters. They should go prepared with at least a year's supplies.

"The rush to the Klondike region commenced late last year, and the claims were staked out and worked all winter. Labour was worth 15 dols. a day last winter. Flour sold for 60 dols. a sack, and other provisions were proportionately high. Some of the mine owners attempted to lower the wages to 10 dols. without success. By burning the ground to thaw the gravel, which was hoisted up about twelve feet to the dumps, where it was sluiced and washed in the spring, miners were able to work during the entire winter. In the early part of last month the thermometer ran up to 85 degrees in the shade, and in January it was 58 degrees below zero.

"The steamer *Portland* was reported passing Cape Flattery at 4.30 o'clock yesterday afternoon. The news despatches from San Francisco announcing the arrival of the *Excelsior* at that port with many miners and a large quantity of gold has created a public demand for the latest and most authentic news from the goldfields of Alaska.

"Realising the impossibility of the *Portland* arriving in Seattle before 8 or 9 o'clock this morning, the *Post Intelligencer* telegraphed to Manager Libby, of the Puget Sound Tugboat Company, at Port Townsend, and chartered the tug *Sea Lion* (Captain C. W. Sprague) to intercept the *Portland* in the Straits, so that this paper's representative could interview the returning miners and lay their stories before the public at the earliest moment.

"At 2 o'clock this morning the *Portland* was stopped in the middle of the Straits, abreast of Fort Angeles, by the *Sea Lion*. As the reporter went

over the steamer's side, and was met by Captain Kidston, a crowd of miners gathered about, eager to hear the latest local news. Entering the captain's cabin, the skipper pointed to a corner in which was piled three boxes and a large safe.

"'There, you see those boxes and that safe, well, they contain in round figures about 700,000 dols. in gold, and that metal weighs nearly a ton and a half,' was the captain's response to the reporter's question as to the amount of gold that was on board. He continued—

"'Out of the 68 passengers there is hardly a man on board who has less than 5,000 dols., and one or two have over 100,000 dols.'

"The captain then went below and awakened one or two of his passengers, who came to the cabin and chatted a few moments about the Klondike and its mines.

"Clarence Berry is regarded as the luckiest miner in the Klondike. With a miner it is all luck, nothing else. Ten months ago Mr. Berry was a poor miner, and to-day he is in Seattle on his way to his home in Fresno, Cal., with 130,000 dols. in gold nuggets. He said, rather modestly—

"'Yes, I've been rather fortunate. Last winter I took out 130,000 dols. in 30 box lengths. A box length is 12 by 15 feet, and in one length I found 10,000 dollars. Another time, the second largest nugget ever found in the Yukon was taken out of my claim; it weighed 13 ounces, and was worth 231 dols.'

"'I have known men to take out 1,000 dols. a day

from a drift claim. Of course, the gold was found in pockets, and those finds, you can rest assured, were very scarce.'

"'I would not advise a man to take in an outfit that would cost less than 500 dols. He must expect to be disappointed, and the chances are that he may prospect for some years without finding a paying claim, and again he may be lucky enough to strike it rich.'

"'The country is wild, rough, and full of hardships for those unused to the rigors of Arctic winters. If a man makes a fortune he is liable to earn it by severe hardship and sufferings. But, then, grit, perseverance, and luck will probably reward a hard worker with a comfortable income for life.'

"Inspector Strickland, of the Canadian Mounted Police, is en route to Ottawa on official business. His statements were guarded and conservative. He said there were only two mining districts in what is known as the Klondike section and they are called the Hunker and Bonanza districts. He added:—

"'When I left Dawson City a month ago there were about 800 claims staked out, and there were between 2,000 and 3,000 people in there. We can safely say that there was about 1,500,000 dols in gold mined last winter. The wages in the mines were 15 dols. a day, and the saw-mill paid labourers 10 dols. a day.'

"'The claims now staked out will afford employment for about 5,000 men, I believe. If a man is strong, healthy, and wants to work, he can find employment at good wages. Several men worked on

an interest, or what is termed a 'lay,' and during the winter realised from 5,000 dols. to 10,000 dols. apiece. The mines are from 35 to 100 miles from the Alaska boundary.'

"William Stanley, of Seattle, is among the passengers. He left his son in charge of his interests in a couple of claims. He went to the Klondike last year, and is now returning with nearly 90,000 dols. in gold.

"Harry Anderson, a native of Sweden, and well-known on the Sound, sold a one-half interest in his claim on Eldorada creek, and is coming back to Seattle with 45,000 dols. spot cash, the proceeds of the sale.

"T. J. Kelly and son, of Tacoma, went in last year and made 10,000 dols. The son is in charge of the claim, and the father is among the *Portland's* passengers.

"Richard Blake, of Dungeness, has been successful, and is coming back to the place where he was born and raised with a big sackful of nuggets.

"William Sloan, formerly a dry goods merchant of Nanaimo, B.C., sold his claim for 52,000 dols., and with the gold he took from the mine has come back to civilisation.

"Another man by the name of Wilkenson, of the same city, sold his claim for 40,000 dols., and is back to stay.

"Bob Strong, of Port Townsend, has a good claim, and is in a fair way to make a good fortune, but his brother, William G. Strong, is not so fortunate. They are both working on the Eldorado river.

"Jack Horne, of Tacoma, formerly a well-known light-weight pugilist, of Puget Sound, went to the Klondike last fall, and worked on a 'lay.' He is returning with something over 9,000 dols., which is probably more than he could have realised in the 'ring.'

"Frank Kellar, of Los Angeles, is on board the *Portland* with 35,000 dols. He went in last year, mined during the winter, and last month sold the claim for that sum.

"Briefly, such is the story of nearly every miner on board. They all have gold, and it is piled about the state-rooms like so much valueless hand baggage. They attribute their success to 'lucky strikes,' and aver that thousands of people will rush to the Yukon valley in the next year or two, and after undergoing great hardships and privations will probably return broke in health and finances. All of the miners lay great stress on the necessity of taking in plenty of supplies, and say that the proper outfit will cost not less than 500 dols. to each man, and that it is advisable to purchase provisions and clothing in Seattle.

"There can be no doubt that the late strikes in the Yukon Valley are the richest ever known. Instances are common where pans of gravel have yielded over 100 dols., and occasionally much more. It is generally conceded, though, that all of the territory where the rich strikes were made has been staked and that so far as those districts are concerned it is useless for any one to think of making locations.

"But, then, there are other streams, all of which are known to have gold-bearing bars, but it is extremely doubtful as to whether their richness will equal the

famed Eldorado and Bonanza creeks of the Klondike."

The *Intelligencer* follows these details with a list of passengers' names, as if to add weight to its statements as here given.

Here is an extract from a letter written by Capt. Higgins of the s.s. *Excelsior* to a friend in California who got his information from miners on board.

"The Klondike empties into the Yukon fifty miles above the Big river. The geographical position of the junction is 76 degrees 10 minutes north latitude, 138 degrees 50 minutes west longtitude. Bonanza Creek dumps into Klondike about two miles above the Yukon. Eldorada is a tributary of the Bonanza. There are numerous other creeks and tributaries, the main river being 300 miles long. The gold so far has been taken from Bonanza and Eldorado, both well named, for the richness of the placers is truly marvellous. Eldorado, thirty miles long, is staked the whole length, and as far as worked has paid.

"As each claim is 500 feet along the creek bed, there is half a million to the claim. So uniform has the output been that one miner who has an interest in three claims told me that if offered his choice he would toss up to decide. One of our passengers, who is taking 100,000 dols. with him, has worked 100 feet of his ground and refused 200,000 dols. for the remainder, and confidently expects to clean up 400,000 dols. and more. He has in a bottle 212 dols. from one pan of dirt. His pay dirt, while being washed, averaged 250 dols. per hour to each man shovelling in. Two others of our miners who worked their own

claims, cleaned up 6,000 dols. for the day's washing. There is about 15 feet of dirt above bed rock, the pay streak averaging from 4 to 6 feet, which is tunnelled out while the ground is frozen. Of course the ground taken out is thawed by building fires, and when the thaw comes and water rushes in they set their sluices and wash the dirt. Two of our fellows thought a small bird in the hand worth a large one in the bush, and sold their claims for 45,000 dols., getting 4,500 dols. down, the remainder to be paid in monthly instalments of 10,000 dols. each. The purchasers had no more than 5,000 dols. paid. There were twenty days thawing and getting out dirt. Then there was no water to sluice with, but one fellow made a rocker, and in ten days took out the 10,000 dols. for the first instalment. So, tunnelling and rocking, they took out 40,000 dols. before there was water to sluice with.

"Of course, these thing read like the story of Aladdin, but fiction is not at all in it with the facts at Klondike. The ground located and prospected can be worked out in a few years, but there is still an immense territory untouched, and the labouring man who can get there with one year's provisions will have a better chance to make a stake than in any other part of the world."

In 1887 an expedition was despatched by the Canadian Government to the Yukon district, under the personal charge of Dr. Geo. Dawson, after whom Dawson City is named, and who is now Director of the Geological Survey of the Dominion, and his exhaustive report contained in the proceedings of the Survey, contains the most authentic information at

present available on the geology, topography and general characteristics of the district. I refer my readers to this report, which can be obtained of Mr. Edward Stanford, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross.

But for the benefit of those concerned I give the following extract. Cassiar Bar on the Lewis (or Lewes) River, with rich deposits, was discovered early in 1886, while in the autumn of that year the sensational reports of the discovery of "Coarse Gold" on Forty-Mile Creek drew off nearly the entire mining population to that place in 1887. The extract is a summary of Dr. Dawson's report on gold discoveries to that date. He writes :—

"Taking a general view of the gold discoveries so far as made in the Upper Yukon country, we find that, though some small bars have been worked on the upper part of the Lewes, and 'prospects' have been obtained even in the streams flowing into Bennett Lake, paying bars have been found on this river only below the mouth of the Tes-lin-too. The best of these are within a distance of about seventy miles below this confluence, and the richest so far has been Cassiar Bar. This is reported to have yielded, in some cases, at the rate of 30 dols. a day to the hand, and gold to the value of many thousand dollars has been obtained from it, chiefly in 1886. In 1887 only three or four men worked here. All along the Lewes below the Tes-lin-too, many bars occur which, according to the reports of prospectors, yield as much as 10 dols. a day ; and the same is true of the Tes-lin-too itself, both below and above Tes-lin Lake.

Bars of this kind are, however, considered scarcely remunerative at present.

"Gold has also been found for a long distance up the Big Salmon River, and on the Upper Pelly so far as it has been prospected. The Tes-lin-too, Big Salmon, and Pelly have each already afforded some good paying ground, but in consequence of the rush to Forty-Mile Creek only about thirteen miners remained in 1887 on the first-named river, four on the second, and two on the Pelly. On the Stewart River, as much as 100 dols. a day to the hand was obtained in 1885 and 1886, and probably over 100,000 dols. worth of gold has already been obtained along this stream. It has been prospected for a distance of 100 to 200 miles from its mouth (according to varying statements), and the gold found furthest up is said to be somewhat 'coarser' than that of the lower part.

"Forty-Mile Creek is reported to be a river of some size,* but more rapid than most of those in the district. It has, according to miners, been prospected for about 100 miles from its mouth, gold being found almost everywhere along it as well as in tributary gulches. The gold varies much in character, but is quite often coarse and nuggety, and very large amounts have been taken out in favourable places by individual miners. Few of the men mining here in 1887 were content with ground yielding less than 14 dols. a day, and several had taken out nearly 100 dols. a day for a short time. The amount obtained from this stream in 1887 is reckoned by some as high as 120,000 dols., but I believe it would

* 300 miles long, and 150 miles wide at its mouth.

be safe to put the entire output of the Upper Yukon region for the year at a minimum of 75,000 dols., of which the greatest part was derived from this stream.

"The number of miners in the whole Upper Yukon country in 1887 may be stated at about 250; of these, 200 were on Forty-Mile Creek, and it was estimated that at least 100 would winter on the creek to be ready for work in the spring.

"Forty-Mile Creek is what the miners term a 'bed-rock creek'—*i.e.*, one in which there is no great depth of drift or detrital deposits below the level of the actual stream. It is so far the only locality which has been found to yield 'coarse gold,' but from the extremely wide distribution of 'fine gold,' it may safely be predicted that many more like it remain to be discovered.

"Mining can scarcely be said to have begun in the region more than five years ago, and the extent of country over which gold has been found in greater or less quantity is already very great. Most of the prospecting has been confined to the banks and bars of the larger rivers, and it is only when their innumerable tributary streams begin to be closely searched, that 'gulch diggings' like those of Dease, McDame, and other streams in the Cassiar district, and possibly even on a par with Williams and Lightning Creeks in Cariboo, will be found and worked. The general result so far has been to prove that six large and long rivers—the Lewes, Tes-lin-too, Big Salmon, Pelly, Stewart, and White—yield 'fine gold' along hundreds of miles of their lower courses. With the exception of the Lewes, no part of the headwaters of

any of these have yet been prospected or even reached by the miners, and scarcely any of their innumerable tributaries have been examined. The developments made up to this time are sufficient to show that when means of access are improved, important bar-mining will take place along all these main rivers, and there is every reason to anticipate that the result of the examination in detail of the smaller streams will be the discovery of much richer auriferous alluviums. When these have been found and worked, quartz mining will doubtless follow, and the prospects for the utilisation of this great mining field in the near future appear to me very promising."

"The rich promise furnished by the foregoing summary of the present Director of the Geological Survey has been confirmed by subsequent events. Placer mining has steadily developed, notwithstanding the disadvantages arising from the short mining season and the enormous difficulties in forwarding supplies to the miners. Everything has had to be packed in by the route already referred to, the alternative route by the Yukon River being quite unsuitable for the richer southern districts where mining has been most successful. In 1895, the Canadian Government decided to establish a Police post on the region for the maintenance of law and order among the mining population, and for purposes of revenue. Inspector Constantine, of the North-West Mounted Police, was despatched with a body of men from Regina on this service; the journey occupied from June 1st to July 24th. A site for a fort was selected at the mouth of Forty-Mile Creek, on the Yukon River, and the

necessary buildings erected. The conditions and prospects of the mining industry in that region have been reported upon to the Canadian Government by Inspector Constantine, and his statements on the subject, taken from his reports for 1895 and 1896, are reprinted below.

Extract from Inspector Constantine's Report, January 20th, 1896.

"'Mining up to the present has been done with the pick, shovel, rocker and water. No capital invested in machinery at present. A quartz ledge has been opened up near Fort Cudahy, on the Forty-Mile Creek. A couple of tons of the quartz were sent out this summer for a final assay, and if the result sustains the trial test made here by a local assayer, it is stated that a small stamp-mill will be put up next season. This will in a measure determine the future of the country. The test here was good. The quantity of this quartz in sight is large—larger than the "Treadwell Mine," near Juneau. The country is full of quartz ledges, more or less valuable, and it only requires a short way of getting in from the south, with the assurance of a certainty of supplies, in order to develop them. This is the reason that the south-east part of the country and upper rivers and lakes have not been worked. In a country where a man has to pole up a rapid river for some hundreds of miles in summer, then pack his food, clothing, camping and working tools on his back, or in winter either haul them himself or with dog, consideration as to where he can get his food and clothing is of

vital importance to him, and he is governed accordingly. This accounts for the number of men working on the Forty-Mile and creeks emptying into it. Even here food has to be packed on men's backs in the summer at a charge of 30 cents per pound, and in winter by dogs at 10 cents per pound. This is for about 85 miles. The outlook for the coming year is more promising than that of last year.

"'A conservative estimate of the amount of gold taken out last summer and winter is about 250,000 dols., and from the present outlook it should be increased by fifty per cent. A great deal will depend on Glacier Creek, which was worked for the first time last summer. Very little was done on account of the claims not being in proper shape for working. Many of the claims are quite deep, and will pay better to work by drifting during the winter, which has been hindered up to the present by the mild weather. The work done so far has shown up a large yield of gold. There is still a little 'snipping'—*i.e.*, working old bars —on Forty-Mile Creek, but it does not pay much. There are a great number of creeks which have never been prospected, which undoubtedly would pay good wages if properly worked, and which will be before long. In fact, there is hardly a creek within 300 miles south-east or north-west of here in which more or less gold is not found. The true value of the mineral wealth of this part of the country will not be known for many years to come, as new discoveries are being made each season.

"There will be a great deal of drifting done on Miller Creek this winter. This creek has been worked

for the past four years, and up to the present time has been the richest one here, and is good for some time to come. On claim 3 below 'Discovery,' there has been taken out in the last three years 55,000 dols. in 500 feet of ground; this has been the best paying claim. Davis and Poker Gulches are each good for a limited number of men. There has not been taken from these gulches any large fortune, but they have yielded good steady profit to the owners. Franklin Gulch, one of the first discovered, is still paying well, and has been worked for the past nine years.

About 200 men are working on Glacier Creek, of which number two-thirds are working for wages; on Miller Creek, about 150, of which 100 are working for wages. The lower ends of these two creeks are supposed to be in the North-West Territories. Brown Creek has been worked this winter. Bear Creek and Clinton Creek, on the west side of the Yukon, are gold-bearing and in the Dominion. Gold has also been found on Indian Creek, Squaw Creek, and other small streams flowing into Yukon from the eastward."

Extract from Inspector Constantine's Report, November 20, 1896.

"The running of the boundary line last winter determined the fact that gold-bearing creeks which hitherto were supposed to be in American territory are wholly, or in part, in Canada; the two principal ones being Miller and Glacier. Notice was sent the miners that these, as well as certain other creeks specified in the notice, were in Canada, and subject to her jurisdiction and laws. This was cheerfully

accepted, and mining regulations adhered to and all the necessary Government fees paid.

"A few miners denied Canada's jurisdiction and right to collect fees, on the ground that there was no joint survey and a possibility of error in the work. However, I went up to Miller and Glacier Creeks, and all dues were paid without any trouble, except that of a hard trip; but as all trips in this country are of that nature, it was part of the bargain. On Glacier Creek, a number of the miners undertook to run matters in accordance with their ideas of justice, and set themselves up as the law of the land. The trouble ended, however, by the Canadian law being carried out.

"As far as I can learn, the amount of gold taken out this season is about 300,000 dols., or 17,647 oz., chiefly from Miller and Glacier Creeks. This is a slight increase on last year.

"In August of this year a rich discovery of coarse gold was made by one George Cormack on Bonanza Creek, a tributary to the Klondike or Trondec River, which flows into the Yukon river about fifty miles from here, entering from the south-east. His prospect showed 3 dols. to the pan. As usual, such a prospect created a stampede for the new diggings. Men left their old claims, and with a blanket, axe, and a few hard-tack prospected on the new creek, staked, and registered their claims, which in all cases gave better prospects than any other heretofore. Many old miners state that this creek is fully as rich as any found in California in the early days. New creeks are being found daily, all prospecting well. Three

hundred and thirty-eight claims have been registered to date, and there still remain about 150 to be entered.

"The country between Hunker Creek and McQuesten River, which empties into the Stewart River, is full of small creeks and gulches, which on being prospected have all given good results. It is probable that the gold belt will in time be found to extend from the Klondike to the Cassiar, and that the whole of this to the Divide will prove to be rich in gold. Without doubt before long rich quartz will be found, but not worked until some means of transporting the necessary heavy machinery is provided and supplies can be got in at reasonable cost. The gold-bearing creeks in Canadian territory on the west side of the Yukon are as follows:—Gold, Miller, and Glacier Creeks, all but one mile of bedrock; Moose and the first fork of Moose Creek, one mile of the three heads of Smith Creek, and of the several heads of Canyon Creek, about one mile of the Poker and Davis branches of Walker Creek, one and a half miles of Walker Creek.

"On the east side of the Yukon are the following creeks:—Bonanza, Boulder, Adams, Eldorado, Victoria, Carmack, Bear, Last Chance, Hunker, Gold Bottom, and Baker Creeks. These latter creeks are all of a fair size, with a good supply of water for mining purposes, and easy of access.

"Bonanza is a large creek, and it is possible there may be too much water to be easily worked in the spring.

"A new post should be built in the spring at the

mouth of the Klondike River, which flows into the Yukon on the east side about 53 miles south-east of Forty-Mile. This point will be the base of supplies for the new diggings, and will in all probability be the largest camp in the country. Nearly 350 claims have been already registered in this district. As the average number of men required to work a claim is five, it means a camp of nearly 2,000 workers, as well as the usual number of camp followers."

On January 7th, 1897, Mr. Ogilvie, whom I have quoted before, reports to his government: "The reports from the Klondike regions are still very encouraging, so much so that all the other creeks around are practically abandoned, especially those on the head of Forty-Mile Creek, in American territory; and nearly 100 men have made their way up from Circle City, hauling their sleds themselves many of them. Those who cannot get claims are buying in on those already located. Men cannot be got to work for love or money. One and a-half dollars *per hour* is the wage paid the few men who hire for work, and work as many hours as you like. Some of the claims are so rich that every night a few pans of dirt suffice to pay the hired help, when there is any. Claim owners are now very reticent about what they get, so you can hardly credit anything you hear; *but one thing is certain, we have one of the richest mining areas ever found with a fair prospect of not having yet discovered its limits.* Miller and Glacier Creeks, at the head of Sixty-Mile River, were thought to be very rich, but they are both poor in quality and quantity compared with Klondike. Chicken Creek on the head of Forty Mile, in Alaska,

discovered a year ago, and rated very high, is to-day practically abandoned."

On January 23rd, 1897, he again reports: "A quartz lode showing free gold, has been located on one of the Creeks. The quartz, I understand from a reliable source, is rich, as tested over 100 dols. to the ton. The lode appears to run from three to eight feet in thickness, and lies about 19 miles from the Yukon River. Coal is found on the upper part of Klondike, so that the facilities for working are good and convenient.

"*Placer prospects continue more and more encouraging.* It is beyond doubt that three pans on different claims on Eldorado Creek turned out 204 dols., 212 dols., and 216 dols., but it must be borne in mind that there were only three such pans, though there were many running from 10 dols. to 50 dols."

It will be noticed that these reports are later in date than those I previously quoted as emanating from Mr. Ogilvie, on p. 9. But alas! Authorities differ as to the possibilities of Klondike.

Colonel Domville says: "The Yukon and its branches undoubtedly contain an almost unlimited area of the richest goldfields in the world, known to the Canadian Government through its geological explorers." Another authority—a former British Columbian Gold Commissioner—tells a different tale. He reminds us of how the Canadian Government was deceived by the reports of geologists on the Fraser River Goldfields, forty years ago, when there was a similar rush there to that now taking place to the Yukon. This authority does not

dispute that gold is to be found in the Yukon ; he only doubts the permanence of the yield. No gold-bearing quartz has been discovered there yet. Many men made lucky finds on the Fraser River, as they have done on the Yukon, and as they may do on every stream in the North-Western territories. At the Cariboo fields one man washed out 170 oz. of gold in a single day. But no reef was discovered, although a reward of 5,000 dols. was offered to the first man who would bring in a piece of gold-bearing quartz broken off the "live rock" in British Columbia. The reward has never been claimed. Unless gold-bearing quartz is discovered on the Yukon, the yield may soon give out.

But according to Mr. Ogilvie, as quoted above, a gold-bearing quartz-reef has been found. The intending emigrant must decide for himself. Anyhow the "placer" diggings may be looked upon as "Poor Men's Mines," for the reason that the work is done without machinery, while the implements required 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. The great Klondike strike was made nine months ago, but nothing was known of it in the United States until June 15, when 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 this doubtless adds to the "rush," since a clerk, or a telegraphist, or an actor out of a "shop" (always provided they are robust enough to stand the climate) stand as good a chance of striking it rich as the miner of experience. Indeed the great discovery of gold on the Klondike was made by "tenderfeet," and it seems as if the auriferous district grows richer and richer as it recedes from the Eastern Alaskan boundary and approaches the Mackenzie and the Rocky Mountains, though possibly the extreme limit will be reached on touching the sources of the many creeks and rivers that have their origin between the Rockies and the Yukon.

It may be considered then that sufficient evidence, official and other, has been adduced to prove the existence of gold in sufficient quantity to enable miners to make money, with the possibility of making a fortune with more or less rapidity. It remains to be seen how intending prospectors can get to Klondike, the nature of the road, the outfit necessary, and the cost. All these I shall deal with in turn.

First then, how to get there (and, of course, I am thinking of the Britisher) is easily answered up to a certain point. The Canadian Pacific Railway will take him from Liverpool to either Vancouver, in British Columbia, or Seattle, in Washington, U.S.A., at the following rates:—

First Class, £25 2s. 10d., Saloon on Steamer, 1st Class on Rail; Second Class, £17 18s. 9d., Second Cabin on Steamer, "Colonist" on Rail, and

Free Ticket London to Liverpool; Third Class, £15 18s. 9d., Steerage Steamer, "Colonist" Rail, Free to Liverpool.

Children (when accompanied) on Rail:—Under 12 years and over 5 years, Half-fare; under 5 years Free. On Steamer:—Under 12 years and over 2 years, Half-fare, all classes. Under 2 years Free "Saloon." Under 1 year Free "Intermediate;" 10s. "Steerage."

First-class on the C.P.R. corresponds to the "Pullman" in England, but is said to .be superior if there is sleeping accommodation, but if none, then it more nearly corresponds with our second class, while the "Colonist" is equivalent to our third class, but much more comfortable and capable of being transformed into sleeping cars at night. All the carriages are capitally ventilated, have adequate lavatory accommodation of every kind, and are warmed with hot-water pipes in winter.

Since, as I assume, most travellers who intend going out would travel "Colonist," here are a few facts they should know beforehand.

The cars devoted to the use of Colonists are taken upon the same fast trains with the first class cars, and every one is a sleeping car, going through with only one change from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, or to St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth and Chicago. No other road in America can do this. These colonist cars are similar in size, warmth and ventilation to the first class cars, but are not upholstered. No extra charge is made for these Colonist Car sleeping accommodations. Second Class passengers, however,

must provide their own bedding. If they do not bring it with them, a complete outfit of mattress, pillow, blanket and curtains may be bought of the Agent of the Company at the point of starting, at a cost of 2.50 dols. (about ten shillings). (These articles become the property of the purchaser.) The curtains may be hung around a berth at night, thus securing complete privacy. Men travelling alone are cut off from families by a partition across the car near the middle ; and smoking is not permitted in that part of the car where the women and children are.

At convenient intervals the train stops at stations where hot coffee and tea and well-cooked food may be bought at a lunch counter ; or hot meals procured at 25 cents (1 shilling) each ; and hot water for making tea and coffee can also be procured on these cars during the winter months.

The cars are not allowed to become overcrowded, and the safety and welfare of Colonist, or Second Class, passengers are carefully attended to. The baggage arrangements are the same as for First Class, and every possible care is taken that in a new land the Colonist does not go astray, lose his property or suffer imposition. Where a large number of Colonists are going to the Far West together, special fast trains of Colonist Sleeping Cars will be dispatched, accompanied by an official conductor.

This then takes us as far as Vancouver say. It then becomes a question which of the only two routes he chooses, and I am assuming of course that he is travelling at the proper season when both are practicable. The C.P.R. officials, whom I have consulted,

strongly advise the sea-route. This, which they describe as the best, because the easiest and cheapest, goes via Mission Junction, after leaving Vancouver, to Seattle, on Puget Sound, from which the steamers of the N. American Transportation and Trading Coy. sail via the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, north-westerly across the Pacific to Dutch Harbour on one of the Aleutian Islands, a group spreading westwards like stepping stones to Asia from the westermost point of Alaska Peninsula. From Dutch Harbour the steamer goes through Behring Sea and Norton Sound to Fort Get There, on St. Michael's Island. Here a transfer is made to the same Company's river steamers, these steam down the coast to the Kwichpak or north mouth of the Yukon, which is navigable for large craft for over 2,000 miles. The steamboat service terminates at Fort Cudahy, which is just inside the line of demarcation. The cost of this journey from Seattle is £30 16s. 6d. So that assuming as before, a miner goes "Colonist," the whole journey from London to Fort Cudahy costs £48 15s. 3d. This is the route recommended by the officials of the C.P.R.

The river voyage should be very enjoyable according to information derived from the *Pall Mall Gazette.* The Yukon, a river larger than the Mississippi, abounds in fish, the salmon being noted far and wide for their fine flavour and large size.

As one proceeds up the river one sees innumerable Indian villages and small settlements inhabited by traders, missionaries, and Indians, all of interest to the traveller. 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 is beyond description. At old Fort Yukon, which is inside of the Arctic circle, during the months of June and July the sun is above the horizon without a break, and all along the river during these months one can read a paper at any time during the day or night without a lamp. It is continuous daylight during this time.

After leaving here the next point of interest is Circle City, the metroplis of the Yukon country. Here is 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. From here the traveller proceeds up the river 240 miles farther, and finds Fort Cudahy at the mouth of Forty-Mile Creek. This is a thriving town, similar to Circle City, but not so large. It is the supply point for the mines in the forty-mile district. Prosperous for the last four years, it has turned out a great quantity of gold, this being the first important district where coarse gold was discovered. A little farther on is Dawson City and sixty-five miles over the hills are the Klondike placer mines.

This route, however, is long, and must be taken when the sea and river are both free of ice—and this condition would probably result in letting in other miners ahead of you through the Chilcoot and White passes, a route which we shall next proceed to consider. Possibly the very best plan would be to

proceed to Vancouver, remain there for the winter gathering information, buying stores, clothing, etc., and so be ready to proceed at the earliest moment, by either route to the goldfields, and this is the plan I should be inclined to recommend.

Let us suppose the intending prospector is arrived at Vancouver, if he intends proceeding by the St. Michael's route he knows now how he must act, and the nature and aspect of his voyage, but if he feels he would care to risk the overland journey he cannot do better than consider a letter addressed by the well-known traveller Mr. Harry de Windt to *The Times*, which I here reproduce :—

"Sir,—The discovery in Alaska within the past few months of gold in large quantities has attracted considerable attention, not only throughout the United States, but also in Canada and British Columbia. The auriferous deposits are of extraordinary richness, 40 pounds to the pan has been obtained on Bonanza Creek, which is equal to the best records of California or Cariboo; and although the output of gold throughout the Yukon district in 1895 amounted to only 3,000,000, dols. these figures show an increase in 1896 of 1,670,000 dols., while further important discoveries have been made since the publication of these statistics. It is possible that the very favourable report of Inspector Constantine (published in the *Standard* a few weeks ago) may attract capital and labour from this country, but although the inspector very rightly dwells upon the possibilities offered by this new Eldorado he does not mention the difficulties that at present attend the journey to the goldfields—

difficulties which should not be overlooked by intending prospectors. The report concludes, 'A route from the South to the headwaters of the Yukon is required,' but this scarcely conveys a correct impression of the hardships, and even perils, that at present encompass the voyage into the interior of Alaska from the sea.

"There are two ways of entering Alaska—one by sea from San Francisco, Vancouver, Victoria, and other southern ports to St. Michael's in Behring Sea; the other, which I chose, and is taken by fully 90 per cent. of the gold-seekers, by crossing the mountains further south and descending a chain of lakes and rapids to the headwaters of the Yukon River. The distance saved by adopting the overland journey is no less than 2,500 miles. The difficulties of this voyage are only realized at Dyea, 100 miles from Juneau, where the land journey commences and where a bad anchorage frequently compels the traveller to wade knee-deep for a considerable distance before landing. Dyea consists of a rude log store and a movable town of tents occupied by diggers bound for the goldfields. A delay of several days occurs here while Indians are procured to carry tents and baggage to the lakes 24 miles distant over the Chilkoot Pass, nearly 4,000 feet high. Provisions must be brought from Juneau, for there is nothing to be had here, or indeed anywhere this side of Forty-Mile City, 600 miles away.

"The Chilkoot Pass is difficult, even dangerous, to those not possessed of steady nerves. Towards the summit there is a sheer ascent of 1,000 feet, where a

slip would certainly be fatal. At this point a dense mist overtook us, but we reached Lake Lindemann—the first of a series of five lakes—in safety after a fatiguing tramp of 14 consecutive hours through half-melted snow. Here we had to build our own boat, first felling the timber for the purpose. The journey down the lakes occupied 10 days, four of which were passed in camp on Lake Bennett during a violent storm which raised a heavy sea. The rapids followed. One of these latter, the "Grand Cañon," is a mile long, and dashes through walls of rock from 50 to 100 feet high, six miles below are the "White Horse Rapids," a name which many fatal accidents have converted into the "Miner's Grave." But snags and rocks are everywhere a fruitful source of danger on this river, and from this rapid, downward, scarcely a day passed that one did not see some cairn or wooden cross marking the last resting-place of some drowned pilgrim to the land of gold.

"The above is a brief sketch of the troubles that beset the Alaskan gold prospector—troubles that, although unknown in the Eastern States and Canada, have for many years past associated the name of 'Yukon' with an ugly sound in Western America.

"The journey to the Alaskan goldfields is a hard one for the well-equipped explorer, who travels in light marching order. The gold-prospector, on the other hand, must carry a winter's supplies, dearly purchased at Juneau, to be transported at ruinous prices over the Chilkoot Pass. He must construct his own boat (often single-handed) on Lake Lindemann, and, assuming that he arrives at his destination,

must secure lodgings at a price that would startle a West End landlord. And all this on, perhaps, a capital of 1,000 dollars, not including a ticket to Juneau from the Golden Gate or elsewhere. No wonder that the annals of the Alaska Commercial Company bear witness to the fact that, within the past five years, hundreds of starving miners have been sent out of the country at the company's expense, and these, as I can testify, are but a percentage of those who have perished from actual starvation in the dreary purlieus of Circle City and Forty-Mile Creek.

"There is, however, a brighter side to this gloomy picture, for there are fortunately other approaches to the Yukon Valley besides the dreaded Chilkoot. The chain of mountains of which the latter forms a part is cut by three other passes—the Taku, the Chilkat, and the White Pass. Of these the two former may be dismissed as being, on account of their length and other difficulties, almost as impracticable as the Chilkoot, over which it would be quite impossible to lay a bridle-path; but the White Pass offers no serious obstacles to the construction of a railway. The White Pass is at least 1,000 feet lower than the Chilkoot, and, unlike the latter, is timbered the entire length. The salt water terminus of this pass is in Skagway Bay, 85 miles from Juneau. Here ocean steamers can run up at all times to a wharf which has been constructed in a sheltered position, and there is an excellent town site with protection from storms. The pass lies through a box cañon surrounded by high granite peaks and is comparatively easy. It has already been used by miners who report very favour-

ably upon the trail, and when it is considered that the adoption of this route obviates the dangers and expenses of the Chilkoot, avoids Lakes Lindemann and Bennett (the stormiest and most perilous of the whole chain), shortens and greatly diminishes the expense of the journey to the Yukon Valley, and, above all, can be used throughout the year (the interior of Alaska is now completely cut off from the world for nine months in the year), there can be little reasonable doubt that the White Pass is the best and most practicable route to the Yukon goldfields.

"It is said that a scheme is now in progress to open up the White Pass and facilitate the transport of miners and stores to the mining settlements, and this is earnestly to be wished. An English company, the British Columbia Development Association (Limited), has already established a landing wharf, and are erecting a store and sawmills at Skagway, whence it is proposed (as soon as may be feasible) to lay down a line of rail some 35 miles long, striking the Yukon river at a branch of the Teslin Lake, about 100 miles below Lake Lindemann, which is the *débouchure* of the Chilkoot Pass. By this means the tedious and difficult navigation between these two points will be avoided, and the only dangerous parts of the river below—viz., the Grand Cañon and White Horse Rapids—will be circumvented by a road or rail portage. Light draught steamers will be put on from Teslin Lake to the cañon, and from the foot of the latter to all the towns and camps on the river. Arrangements will also be made for direct communication with Skagway by the existing lines of steamers,

which now only call at Juneau, whence transhipment is necessary.

"It is stated that this route will be open for use and traffic in a few months' time, when the cost of transporting freight and passengers will be very considerably reduced and the difficulties of the transit practically eliminated. Much, however, depends upon the Canadian Government, which, in view of the increasing rush of miners to the Yukon Valley (many of whom must, under existing conditions, inevitably starve during the coming winter), should lose no time in constructing a waggon road over the White Pass.

"When the above scheme has been carried out the prospector (even of limited means) may reasonably hope to reach his claim in safety and at a comparatively moderate outlay. At present I should certainly recommend all those intending to try their luck in Alaska to defer their journey until a less hazardous route than that via the Chilkoot Pass is open to them. It is with the object of warning Englishmen, who may be deceived by the alluring advertisements of unscrupulous agents, that I have addressed you this letter. That there is gold in large quantities on the Yukon has been conclusively proved, but the wealth of the Indies would not compensate the risks now attendant on the journey. As an old Yukon miner remarked to me at Juneau, '1,000 dols. a day would not fetch me over the Chilkoot again, but open up the "White Pass" and we will soon have another Johannesburg at Forty-Mile Creek.'

"I am, Sir, yours truly,

"HARRY DE WINDT."

As an appendix to this letter I add the following list of stations and their distances, taken from "Appleton's Guide Book to Alaska," which may be obtained from Mr. W. Heinemann, 21 Bedford Street, Strand, W.C.

Stations with their distances from Juneau to Haines Mission.

		Miles.
To	Haines Mission	80
„	Head of Canoe Navigation	106
„	Summit of Chilcoot Pass	115
„	Lake Linderman	124
„	Head of Lake Bennett	129
„	Boundary Line	139
„	Foot of Lake Bennett	155
„	„ Caribou Crossing	158
„	„ Taku Lake	175
„	Takish House	179
„	Head of Mud Lake	180
„	Foot of Lake Marsh	200
„	Head of Canon	225
„	White Horse Rapids	228
„	Takuna River	240
„	Head of Lake Barge	256
„	Foot of Lake Barge	287
„	Hootolinqua	320
„	Cassiar Bar	347
„	Little Salmon River	390
„	Five Fingers	451
„	Pelly River	510
„	Stewart River	630
„	Forty-Mile Creek	750

From the same source I cull the following, though in view of the "rush" prices are probably in advance of those now quoted; still they will serve as a guide.

Private steamers can be hired at Victoria or Seattle at rates varying from 200 dols. to 300 dols. a day—but pilots are scarce and navigation dangerous. For overland work dogs can be had but they are very dear, feeding them is difficult and expensive. A few vegetables can be purchased at most places, as also fish and game in abundance. Fresh beef can only be got at Juneau after leaving Victoria, Seattle or Vancouver. Indian canoes cost 2 dols. a day and upward, with pay for each oarsman by the day in addition. It is well to make provision for heavy rain by taking good mackintoshes, lined rubber boots, etc. Take other thick boots, with thick woollen socks, thick stout serviceable leggings, and all-wool underwear, woollen gloves, flannel shirts, etc. U.S. money is current everywhere, and the natives prefer silver money, to either paper or gold.

Suppose any reader should elect to proceed to Vancouver or Seattle, and remain there to be ready for the early spring, the hotels recommended at Seattle are the Ranier and Denny, where the rates are 3 dols. a day and upward. The stations there are on the water front close to Yeater's and Commercial Wharf, where the steamers land. At Vancouver the rate of the Hotel Vancouver is 3 dols. to 4 dols. 30 cents, and the Metropole 2 dols. 50 cents to 3 dols. The show place of Vancouver is Stanley Park, a great domain saved from the primeval forest. The town is illuminated by electric light, and cable and

electric cars run everywhere. There is plenty of amusement.

Before deciding which route to take I should like to set before any reader who thinks of trying his fortune, what other information I have got together for and against either route. First the Yukon route and the nature of it:—

By steamer from Vancouver or Victoria along the coast of British Columbia and Alaska territory to the mouth of the Yukon River, and thence by stern wheeler. This route, known as the St. Michael's route, is long and uncertain. As a rule vessels cannot enter Norton Sound until July 1st. The voyage up the river, 1,800 miles, occupies from eighteen to twenty days; two trips at the most in the season can be relied upon.

If the water is open the trip from Seattle to St. Michael's will occupy from 12 to 14 days, and if conditions are still favourable the trip to Dawson City another 15. The voyage up the Yukon is characterised after the stream has been well entered by magnificent scenery, the banks here and there being dotted with Indian Villages. These Indians do not resemble the "Red" savages found farther east, but consist of several tribes of the Innuk or Esquimaux peoples. Their manners and customs are not attractive though some who have been brought into connection with the Russian and other missions have become a little more civilized. I refer those who may be interested in them to Mr. Potter's eleventh census report, mentioned in my opening paragraphs, where they will find full details of each tribe and their singularly repellent customs.

Since alcoholic liquors have been introduced among them other unattractive attributes have been added to them. There is, I believe, in the neighbourhood of the missions, an occasional demand for, and a reluctant application of, soap. The upper reaches of the river are picturesquely studded with numerous islands, which amongst other things give harbour to swarms of mosquitoes of aggravated dimensions, and exaggerated aggressiveness. Horse flies, and other winged torments, are not wanting to add to the traveller's discomfort. No doubt the same spirit which prompts a man to rush where gold may be had for the finding, sustains him under these and other drawbacks. I am divided in my belief as to the quantity of game to be found, at any rate in Alaskan districts—for Mr. Potter states: "Game is scarce, considering the great stretches of uninhabited country, and the Indian knowing every game sign, and with no impediments, can scour over the country and live, where a white man would starve." On the other hand, from a leaflet issued by a transport company lying before me, I read: "The Yukon basin is an incomparable game country, an important factor to the miners, in a land where provisions naturally command high prices. The upper portion abounds in moose, caribou, bear and small game, and the rivers and smaller streams are alive with salmon, white fish, trout, and other species. The lower country is the breeding-ground of innumerable geese, ducks and other fowl." Thus the company, but of course they have an axe to grind, and, remember, we are now talking, not of the Klondike district, but of Alaska, and it is not probable that on the

trail of gold anyone would turn aside for game; but there may be causes in the journey up the river due to breakdown or what not, and a little fresh game would be a very welcome addition to the canned and preserved provisions forming the staple of travellers' food. With regard to the fish I think there can be no doubt, as all these northern rivers teem with them. I have already given the cost of the journey from Vancouver to Fort Cudahy, the present terminus, though in the spring the route will be completed to Dawson City. Now then, reckon that it takes 8 weeks to get from London to Klondike and costs roundly £50, for fares and food only, outfit and provisions will come later, and remember also that if you decide on this route you cannot possibly go this year, since the navigation of the river closes early in September, unless indeed you go prepared like Nansen to boldly face all the rigours of an Arctic winter, and make the frozen river your highway, triumphing by dogged courage over rough packed ice, 50 degrees of frost, scanty food and shelter, and all the other grim obstacles of Arctic travel. It may be done perhaps by someone. It is always the dauntless one who achieves. Even in the fairy tales, it is the prince, who dares the lions chained on either side, to enter the treasure-holding castle, who faces the giant to win the incomparable princess, and this is the spirit roused by lust for gold that animated the daring miner—himself often uncivilized, though white—latest pioneer of civilization. Before I quit the Yukon here is a pen picture of its two seasons.

"Here the summer is of the briefest. It endures

only for ten or twelve weeks, from about the middle of June to the early part of September. Then an unending panorama of extrordinary picturesqueness is unfolded to the voyager. The banks are fringed with flowers, carpeted with the all-pervading moss or tundra. Birds countless in numbers and of infinite variety in plumage, sing out a welcome from every tree top. Pitch your tent where you will in midsummer, a bed of roses, a clump of poppies and a bunch of blue bells will adorn your camping. But high above this paradise of almost tropical exuberance giant glaciers sleep in the summit of the mountain wall, which rises up from a bed of roses. By September everything is changed. The bed of roses has disappeared before the icy breath of the Winter King, which sends the thermometer down to eighty degrees below freezing point. The birds fly to the southland, the white man to his cabin, the Indian to his hut, and the bear to his sleeping-chamber in the mountains. Every stream becomes a sheet of ice, mountain and valley alike are covered with snow."

We will however suppose that on reaching Vancouver you elect to go via Juneau, and the Lynn Canal overland. As I said before, the American strip of South-Eastern Alaska, from Mount St. Elias down to British Columbia, is a resort for summer tourists, on account of the magnificence and unusual character of the coast scenery, so that with steamers already plying and a number of private boats, launches and other vessels, already in service, there will be no difficulty in providing for the enormous numbers of gold-seekers which are certain to be on the

move there at the first favourable moment, and the North American Transport Co. will doubtless be found equal to the occasion.

I have given the distances along the various stages from Juneau, and it remains to give you an idea of the journey from that point. After Juneau, Healy & Wilson's trading stores may be reached without a very great deal of difficulty, but at Healy's all traces of civilization are practically left behind, and the real tug of war begins. Going up the Dyea River five miles on the ice will bring one to the mouth of the cañon. Here in the woods a comfortable camp can be easily arranged. The tent is pitched on top of the snow, the poles and pins being pushed down into it. While some are busily engaged in building a fire and making a bed, the best cook of the party prepares the supper. The camping place beyond the cañon is a strip of woods some three miles long known as Pleasant Camp. Its name is something of a misnomer, for there is not even a log shanty there; some woods to give a kind of shelter, and, as everywhere else along the route, plenty of snow. From here the ascent is gradual, and the next and last camp in timber before crossing the summit is known as Sheep Camp, where the summit towers above you about 3,500 feet, but the pass is some 500 feet lower. No further progress can be made until a clear day, and sometimes the weather continues bad for two or three weeks, the mountain top hidden in thick clouds, and icy winds hurling the new-fallen snow in every direction, or driving the sleet in the face of anyone bold enough to stir out of

camp and peep up at that almost precipitous wall of snow and ice. But sunshine comes at last, and the wind grows still.

Now comes the tug of war—to get the outfit to the summit. For 600 feet every step must be cut in the ice, and so steep is it that a person with a pack on his back must continually bend forward to maintain his equilibrium. The first load planted on the summit of the pass, a shovel is stuck in the snow to mark the spot; then back for another pack, and fortunate is he who gets his whole outfit up in a single day. Indians may be hired to do the packing, and their rates vary slightly, but the regular price has been five dollars a hundredweight from the second bench to the summit, or fifteen cents. a pound from Healy & Wilson's to the lakes. These prices have been shaded a little the past season, and some outfits were packed over to the lakes at thirteen cents a pound. The reason for this cut in price is that many miners insist on doing their own packing, and that their work has been seriously affected by a tramway device which was operated last season with more or less success by one Peterson, whose inventive genius led him to believe that a simple arrangement of ropes and pulleys would greatly help in getting outfits up the steeper places. The descent for the first half mile is steep, then a gradual slope to Lake Linderman, some ten miles away. But there is little time for resting and none for dreaming, as the edge of timber where the camp must be made is seven miles from the summit. Taking the camping outfit and sufficient provisions for four or five days, the sleigh is loaded,

the rest of the outfit is packed up or buried in the snow, shovels being stuck up to mark the spot. The route now lies seven miles across the lake to its outlet, down the outlet three or four miles in a north-easterly direction to Lake Bennett, down to the foot of this lake, twenty-five miles, then down the river four or five miles the Takou Lake is reached. The lake is some twenty miles long, and empties into Mud Lake through an outlet three miles long.

"Open water will probably be passed before reaching this point in the rivers connecting the lakes, and firm ice at the sides affords good sledding, but at the foot of Mud Lake a raft or boat must be built. Dry timber can be found along the shores with which to build a raft, which will take everything to the Lew River cañon, about forty miles to the north-west. The course down the lakes has been much in the form of a horseshoe, and now bears to the west instead of the east. Before reaching the cañon a high cut bank on the right hand side will give warning that it is close at hand. Good river men have run the cañon safely even with loaded rafts, but it is much surer to make a landing on the right side and portage the outfit around the cañon three-quarters of a mile and run the raft through empty. The sameness of the scenery on approaching the cañon is so marked that many parties have got into the cañon before they were aware of it. Below the cañon are the White Horse rapids—a bad piece of water: but the raft can be lined down the right hand side until near the White Horse, three miles below. This is a box cañon about a hundred yards long and fifty in width, a chute

through which the water of the river, which is nearly 600 feet wide just above, rushes with maddening force. But few have ever attempted to run it, and four of them have been drowned. Of two men who made the attempt in May, 1888, nothing was found save a bundle of blankets. Below the White Horse another raft is built, and the journey continued seventy-five miles to Lake Le Barge. This usually requires three days. After entering the lake solid ice is found perhaps a mile from the inlet. Camp is made on the shore, and as the ice gets soft most of the sledding is done in the early morning, it being sufficiently light in May to start soon after midnight. This lake is about forty-five miles long, and there is an island about midway. Little snow will be found here late in April, but it will be all glare ice. After camping on the island, a day's journey will make the foot of the lake, and the sledding is completed. If one expects to stay in the country the sled should not be thrown away, however, as it will prove useful later on.

A comfortable camp should be made here, and the building of a boat commenced. This will require from seven to ten days, and the method of preparing lumber is novel to all who are unused to frontier life. The trees selected should be sound and straight, and twelve inches through the butt. A saw pit about six feet high is built near the tree, and the tree felled and cut into logs about twenty-five feet long. When all is ready, neighbours are invited to the rolling bee to help in placing the logs on the pit. To make good lumber requires a sharp saw and experience, besides hard work. After the pit is levelled and the log

peeled, a square is made on the smaller end, and an exact counterpart on the other side : the log is then lined both above and below and squared or slabbed, then it is lined for the boards, an eighth of an inch always being allowed for the saw cut. After the boards are sawed, the boat is built, caulked, and pitched, oars and poles made, and the journey resumed. Going down the Lewis River, the Hootalinqua, Big Salmon, and Little Salmon Rivers are passed on the right before reaching the Five Fingers. Here four large buttes stand like giant sentinels of stone to dispute your further ingress into the country ; the water, in five passages, runs swiftly between ; the right hand passage is the only one which is practicable, and though the water is swift, it is safe if the boat be kept in the centre.

A few moments of strong pulling and careful management and the boat is rapidly approaching the Reef rapids, three miles below. Here again the right hand side insures safety, and having gone through them the last dangerous water is passed. Next comes the Pelly River, and the junction of the Pelly and Lewis from the Yukon proper. At this point the first trading post is reached. This is known as Harper's, and is 510 miles distant from Juneau. Continuing the journey, Stewart River is passed on the right ; then the White River on the left, so named on account of its milky-looking water ; the next tributary on the same side is Sixty-Mile Creek, so called on account of its being sixty miles above Fort Reliance. A hundred miles below, on the left side, is Forty-Mile Creek, forty miles below is Fort Reliance.

Here the Yukon is over two miles in width, and on the upper bank of Forty-Mile Creek is the principal trading post of the interior. This is the starting point for all the mines, and is 750 miles from Juneau.

The physical difficulties of this route have been described elsewhere, but necessarily every experience is not alike so far as weather goes; but there is no manner of doubt a man must be prepared for the severest strain of body and mind in traversing these passes, streams and lakes.

A practicable trail is understood to exist from the south, near Teslin Lake, and might be opened up by a waggon road as far as Pelly, whence supplies might be forwarded by boat or scow. Over this trail last year some forty head of cattle were driven without loss. Good bunch grass was found along the trail for a distance of over 150 miles. The height of the pass is 2,800 to 3,000 feet above the level of the sea. The rise is gradual, and the country generally is rolling, with some table-lands, with good fishing along the route, and plenty of large game.

Uninterrupted water communication might also be maintained from the head of Teslin Lake to Circle City, on Yukon River, a distance of 800 miles, 600 of which would be in Canadian territory. Small steamers of 150 tons could ply over this route, and three trips in the season could be made, against one, or at most two, at present.

But it is stated that the Dominion Government intends taking steps to render the journey less difficult. A customs and police post will be established just north of the British Columbia boundary beyond

the head of the Lynn Canal at 60 degrees of latitude. Estimates will be at once obtained for the cost of building a waggon road and of a narrow-guage railway from the coast to this post, over the mountains, a distance of 70 to 80 miles, about 40 of which is over mountains. This post, which will be where the Chilkoot and White Passes converge, will command the southern entrance to the whole territory. Mounted police posts will be established from here on, at distances of 50 miles apart up to Fort Selkirk. These will be used to open up a winter road over which monthly mails will be sent by dog trains, also to give help to travelling parties. If possible, a telegraph line will be constructed over the mountains from the head of the Lynn Canal to the first post. The consent of the authorities of the United States will be asked to a *modus vivendi* under which Canada will have the right of way over the disputed territory from the Lynn Canal to the first mounted police post. No difficulty is anticipated in securing this right of way.

Colonel Domville, a member of the Canadian Dominion Parliament, speaking the other day at a meeting, advocated the use of the Juneau route, and did not consider it a matter of very great difficulty to place men and supplies across the passes, provided no time is lost. But the Colonel is speaking, not of individual prospectors, or even small parties of three or four or more, but of a properly equipped and organized body of men under his own leadership, *but* it is Arctic voyaging all the same.

The press is full of warnings as to the danger and

difficulty to be encountered, and full of forecasts of the gloomiest description, with regard to probable mortality amongst those who reach and remain through the winter in the district. On this latter head I shall have something to say presently. There is one thing it is absolutely imperative to bear in mind, and that is supplies of food and clothing must be taken, indeed the police have already turned back many who had less than one hundred pounds weight of food; it will be suicidal to leave anything to chance. This is what Mr. J. W. Mackay, the "Silver King," says about the advice he would give to anyone going:—

"Prepare for great privations and perhaps utter disappointment. The climate is intensely hot for a few weeks, and dreadfully cold for many months. There is certain to be a scanty supply of food next winter. No one should go who is not provided against Arctic weather and against starvation, nor without ready cash. The well and strong will naturally fare better than the weak. A dozen young men have asked me already about going there. *I told them that if a man had a thousand dollars, a good constitution, and no wife and children, he could go there or anywhere.*"

That I take it puts the matter in a nutshell. With regard to the sort of provisions required there are many admirable preparations in use in the present day, such as our early Arctic voyagers never dreamt of, and their possession makes any expedition of the present day almost a feather-bed affair by comparison. One thing to remember is, that scurvy is always apt

to attack dwellers in the Arctic and close adjacent regions, owing to the scarcity of leguminous food, therefore canned fruits and vegetables should certainly form part of the supplies. Of course the miner can gather moss, which grows plentifully, and boil it down for food, but although this is I believe nourishing, it is also excessively nasty and insipid. I have not tried it in my own proper person so cannot speak from experience. Desiccated soups, meat preparations and their like, biscuits, flour, potatoes and tea should all find a place. I append here a list of market prices at the diggings, and if the prices seem high there is no very great amount of profit derived owing to the cost of transport. The list itself furnishes an idea of what is most in demand. At Vancouver, Victoria, or Seattle, prices would rule a very great deal lower, but even there the great demand would much enhance prices. Here is the list :—

Flour, per 100 lbs.	£2 10s. to £24	Tobacco, per lb.	8s.
Beef, per lb.	4s. to 8s.	Canned Fruit, per can ...	9s.
Bacon, per lb.	3s. 3d.	Coal Oil, per gallon... ...	10s.
Moose Hams, each	£6	Lemons, each	1s.
Moose Hams, per lb. ...	8s.	Oranges, each	2s.
Rice, per lb.	3s.	Liquors, per drink	2s.
Tea, per lb.	12s.	Miners' Picks, each ...	£1 8s.
Coffee, per lb.	9s.	Shovels, each	£3 8s. to £3 12s.
Butter, per lb.	10s.	Shoes, per pair ...	£1 to £1 12s.
Eggs, per doz.	12s.	Rubber Boots, per pair,	£2 8s. to £3 12s.
Potatoes, per lb.	10s.		

There can be no question, however, that next season prices will rule lower, because several enterprises are on foot for the purpose of supplying all needs. I find certain sanguine persons speaking with great confidence as to what will be done in the spring—that the

difficulties of the way and of life there are exaggerated—that the Klondike can be reached in a little over five weeks. In this connection I quote the Canadian Minister of the Interior, speaking under date July 23rd last:—

"I think it only proper to say that any person who contemplates going into Yukon territory should make very careful enquiries as to length of time it will take to go, and as to the means he will have of sustaining himself after he gets there. *The shortest time within which communication has been had with Fort Cudahy is six weeks, and that took place under the most favourable circumstances.* The amount of provisions that can be taken into that country at the present moment is extremely limited, and if any considerable number of people go in without making special provision for their maintenance this fall there is very likely to be starvation during the coming winter. One thing ought to be clearly understood—the Government cannot assume any responsibility whatever for getting provisions into that country to supply any people who may go in there in consequence of the gold excitement and who may find themselves short of food. The difficulty is largely one of transportation, and no means exist of overcoming this difficulty during the present season."

The italics are mine. The impulse to "rush" is intelligible, since no one wants to be last, although I believe there will be room for all and to spare—yet I repeat again, "Look before you leap." I cannot urge too strongly on all intending gold-hunters the necessity of thorough preparedness. The papers publish the

names of those fortunate ones who have been successful and return to live in ease, perhaps luxury, for the remainder of their days—others who next year may return gold-laden will similarly leap into notice like newly-discovered stars—all these can be easily counted, but who shall furnish us with the long roll of those unfortunates who have gone under in the struggle? whose hopes have perished, whose hearts have at last failed them; whose once sturdy frames have succumbed to endless profitless toil? Where do their bones whiten and rot? Ask "Our Lady of the Snows" where she has enshrouded them with her white mantle, or locked them fast in her frost-bound bosom—forgotten. They have paid tribute to the Earth, which refused like a miser to part with its hoards to them. Gold will have its victims, and no voice that can be raised will ever check its eager pursuers; but here, more than in any region of the globe in which it has been found, it is necessary to exercise foresight and caution.

However, we will suppose our miner has reached the nearest point to the Klondike that offers a prospect of shelter and sustenance, called by our relatives across the sea, with that grandiloquence that is half sarcasm, half earnestness, Dawson City. What does he find? Well, accounts differ. Everyone feels he can trust an eminently respectable journal like the *Pall Mall Gazette*. I quote the following from its issue of the ninth.

"Dawson City, the centre of the new mining region, although sixty-five miles distant from the Klondike, it 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 £20 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. 'I am afraid,' said one of the influential miners who returned in 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 ordinarily careful, there is no occasion for any such thing. There are many good things that can be said about Dawson City beside 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. Speculation is already the ruling idea. A purchaser inspects a claim that he thinks he should 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 throught he sluice. That

is a chance one must take, however, and few have lost anything by it this season.

"'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 proprietor 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 much 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.

"'It may be said with absolute truth,' continued the miner, 'that Dawson City is one of the most moral towns of its kind in the world. There is little or no quarrelling, and no brawls of any kind, though there is considerable drinking and gambling. The principle sport with the mining men is found round the gambling table. There they gather after nightfall and play until late hours in the morning. They have some big games, too, it sometimes costing as much as £10 to draw a card. A game of £200 as the stakes is an ordinary event. But with all that there has not been any decided trouble. If a man is fussy and quarrelsome he is quietly told to get out of the game, and that is the end of it. Many people have an idea

that Dawson City is completely isolated, and can communicate with the outside world only once in 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 mails addressed. It is true the cost is pretty high—a dollar a letter and two dollars for 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 shall 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.

"'The impressions seem 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 dictates. I know of no place in the whole north-west or in the world, for that matter, where a man with a little capital can do so well. There is an opening for every kind of business, and I have no doubt that next season will see the town flooded with men of all callings.'

"Notwithstanding the somewhat rosy picture painted by this miner, Mr. J. Edward Spurr, of the United States Geological Survey, who recently made an expedition through Alaska, advises people to keep

away. 'My advice,' says he, 'to the average man intending to go to the Yukon goldfields is to stay out. Many men go there every year and suffer hardship, failure, loss of capital, and oftentimes loss of health.'"

Compare that with this:—Frank Moss, a miner, of the old Montana boom, who four years ago was one of a party of Americans first to visit the Klondike country, returned a few days ago, and tells a story of horrors and starvation seldom equalled even in modern novels. He describes Klondike as a placer camp seven miles long and thirteen miles wide, located in a sink, walled in by boulders of rock 3,000 feet high. Gold, he says, abounds, but no ordinary man can stand the hardships of the uncivilised region. When Moss left his home four years ago he was a sturdy fellow over 6 ft. tall. From hardships and privations he is a cripple for life and badly broken in health. In three years he saw over 2,000 graves made in the Klondike basin, a large majority of their occupants dying from starvation. The steamship companies bring in all food and allow no private importation, consequently it is not uncommon to go for weeks without food. The gold last week brought in to Seattle, Moss says, does not represent the findings of individual shippers, but a large proportion was confiscated from the effects of these 2,000 miners who fell a prey to the hardships. At the death of a man possessed of dust, his body was buried without a coffin, and the dust divided among those who cared for him.

But I have seen this denied somewhere, and Mr. Moss's statement of the mortality ridiculed.

Assistant-Surgeon A. E. Wills reported in 1895 on the climate, mode of living, and diseases commonly met with. He says:—

"Miners are a very mixed class of people. They represent many nationalities and come from all climates. Their lives are certainly not enviable. The regulation 'miners' cabin' is 12 feet by 14 feet, with walls 6 feet and gables 8 feet in height. The roof is heavily earthed, and the cabin is generally very warm. Two, and sometimes three or four men will occupy a house of this size. The ventilation is usually bad. Those miners who do not work their claims during the winter confine themselves in these small huts most of the time. Very often they become indolent and careless, only eating those things which are most easily cooked or prepared. During the busy time in summer, when they are 'shovelling in,' they work hard and for long hours, sparing little time for eating and much less for cooking. This manner of living is quite common among beginners, and soon leads to debility and sometimes to scurvy. . . . The diseases met with in this country are dyspepsia, anæmia, scurvy caused by improperly cooked food, sameness of diet, overwork, want of fresh vegetables, overheated and badly ventilated houses; rheumatism, pneumonia, bronchitis, enteritis, cystitis, and other acute diseases from exposure to wet and cold; debility and chronic diseases due to excesses. . . . Men should be sober, strong, and healthy. They should be practical men, able to adapt themselves quickly to their surroundings. . . . It is also very important to consider their temperaments. Men should be of

cheerful, hopeful dispositions, and willing workers. Those of sullen morose natures, although they may be good workers, are very apt, as soon as the novelty of the country wears off, to become dissatisfied, pessimistic, and melancholy."

The *Times* of the 2nd, amongst other interesting matter, says :—

"Eight months of semi-darkness in a tent with a sheet-iron stove, and a temperature from 60 deg. to 80 deg. below zero, thawing out the pay-dirt with fires and piling it up to be washed in the summer, is the lot of the industrious gold-seeker, who may add to his comfort by building a log-hut if he feels disposed. The loafers congregate in the towns, Fort Cudahy or Dawson City, in the winter, where they pass the time in a state of chronic drunkenness. On the remoter creeks, where the pay-dirt is so rich, supplies of all kinds are very costly—flour £10 per sack of 100 lb.—and if food runs short or a pack train is delayed food goes to the highest bidder. There is no credit on the creeks and very little in the towns. These are the dangers most to be feared on the Klondike. The climate and the toil are easier things to face, though these should daunt all who have not an overwhelming lust for gold. Excitement and adventure can be had to better advantage in other goldfields.

"It has been stated, probably with much truth, that there will be 30,000 miners on the headwaters of the Klondike before winter. How large a proportion of them will ever return depends in some measure on the steps which the Canadian Government may take during the next few weeks to insure that a sufficient

supply of food—bacon and beans and flour—is taken into the camps before the rivers are blocked, for, although supplies can be got in by trail from Juneau with dog sledges during the winter, a storm or accident to the pack train might mean death by starvation to hundreds, who, by the irony of fate, might possess sufficient wealth to buy food for its weight in gold dust. Another matter demanding the immediate attention of the authorities is the establishment of some tribunal, with a sufficiently powerful body of police to carry out its decrees. The old Cariboo mining camps contained some of the worst scoundrels in America, but owing to the inflexible justice of the late Sir Matthew Begbie, human life was respected in those camps as it had been in no other mining camp of Western America, and the prestige of British law has since stood so high in that province that a strong Judge should be able to uphold it without difficulty in the new diggings. The whisky traffic will have to be controlled with a strong hand, as its effects on the Indian population have already become horribly apparent. Smuggling, unfortunately, is easy, as the international boundary is near by, and the sunless winter days give every opportunity for evading the police. There will probably be some trouble between the Canadian and American miners until the boundary question is definitely settled; but the official reports which have been received up to the present make no reference to any friction. The American element greatly preponderates, and with this new inrush the Canadians will find themselves in a very small minority."

I am not a total abstainer, nor do I advocate total abstinence, but I know if you want to last through the season at Klondike, you must be temperate. Keep off alcoholic liquors. They are the very worst kind of stimulant for this kind of work. The fillip they give is more evanescent than that of good cocoas, or half a dozen other things that can be conveniently carried. Read Nansen's book, and you will learn that alcohol formed a most insignificant item of his supplies. It belonged to the medicine-chest and was resorted to very rarely, yet after experiencing the hardest toil, and in his own sledge journey the most hazardous and continued severe exertions, he and all his companions return strong, sound and healthy. The doctor to the expedition positively lamented that the superb health of his charges left him nothing to do. I don't say this was because they used little alcohol, but this was one of the causes, and not a slight one.

Reverting to life at Dawson City I quote the following from one Mr. Joseph Ladue—take it for what it is worth: I have seen it repeated in many journals, not of the class of the *Times*, *Pall Mall Gazette*, *Globe* and others.

"Dawson is not without its amusements. There is a big dance hall with an orchestra and some 15 or 20 women. No admission fee is charged. "You must go in and dance and patronise the establishment. Everything is 50 cents a drink. The women get a percentage of the receipts for dancing with the miners. Frequently when the miners feel flush they give the women nuggets." There are ten saloons and three restaurants. According to Ladue, the saloons are

lavishly fitted up, and freely decorated with oils and water-colours. One of the bars cost £150 to furnish. The restaurants all do a thriving business, charging 6s. for a meal consisting of bacon, beans, bread, coffee, cheese, and dried fruits. There is already a school at Circle City, and another is now being built at Dawson. Catholic, English, and Presbyterian churches are all being built, and will be finished before winter sets in. Dawson has no theatre, but a travelling company tours the district. According to Ladue, "they are real good." "They give all sorts of plays, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Old Kentucky*, *Camille the Newsboy*, and others of the same character, changing their bill every night. Dawson is to have a theatre this winter. There are two physicians in the place who charge according to a man's financial standing. One miner had a finger amputated, and paid £40 for the operation. Potatoes, barley, oats, turnips, lettuces, radishes, and cabbages can be grown in small quantities, but not enough to support the inhabitants. There is a barber's shop with a zinc bath tub. Several women have sewing machines, and a few pianos are to be found in miners' cabins."

But from Dawson City to the nearest gold claims it is 16 miles, and in many instances very much more. So that if there is any mining to be done at all in the winter these journeys must be seriously reckoned with. I assume, however, that if dogs can be procured and fed (which latter is doubtful) they would soon rattle you over on a decent sledge. During eight months of winter, suppose you are encamped near your claim, your occupation would consist in

thawing "pay dirt" with big fires, and putting it in convenient heaps for washing in summer, and of course it may turn out that a fortune or even two, as you may reckon "fortunes," may lie hidden in those rugged heaps, or it may be—blank. But, of course, chance is part of the game, and helps the optimist and pessimist alike.

> "Hope springs eternal in the human breast,
> Man never is, but always to be—blest."

I have been at some pains to ascertain how, where, and at what price, dogs for sledge hauling can be purchased, but I have been unable to get at anything reliable; one returned miner, who professes to know, sets down the cost of two dogs and their necessary food at £30. They can be got at Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle, and Juneau. All the same it would be wise to arrange beforehand, as I daresay could be done through an agent of the C.P.R., to purchase your dogs in advance, and have them waiting your arrival; for the peculiarities of these dogs I refer my readers to Nansen's book, which I imagine can now be obtained from any public library. He does not devote any special chapter to them, or indeed make any speciality of their treatment, but they interested me greatly, and I lamented with him the necessity he was put to of slaughtering some to feed the others.

I have said elsewhere that some doubt had been expressed as to whether the new fields lay absolutely in Dominion Territory or not. This doubt has been effectively cleared up. In going by the Yukon route, of course the voyager is in American

territory until he reaches that point where the line of demarcation and the river meet, and after leaving Vancouver or Victoria he is in American territory up to Juneau, from either of those two points he is in Dominion territory. I mention this because at one time disputes threatened as between American immigrants and British or Canadians, and difficulties seemed possible if we may judge from the open boast of an American paper that it is the intention of the American miners, as soon as they are numerically strong enough, to hoist the stars and stripes.

The following from the *Financial News* is interesting in connection with this subject. The most sensible view of the subject hitherto expressed by an American paper appears to be that of the *New York Tribune*, which has said editorially:—

"Americans who go to the Klondike must understand that they are going upon British soil and are making themselves amenable to British laws. Nor should this fact be overlooked: that in permitting an army of aliens to swarm over the line and carry away millions of dollars in gold, the Canadian Government is acting with generosity that should be appreciated and reciprocated. One of the chief complaints against the Chinese has been that they come to the country merely to get what they can out of it, and then go back with the proceeds. That is exactly what American miners are doing in the Klondike region. They are entering British territory, getting all they can out of it, and then coming back to the United States with their wealth. That the Canadian Govern-

ment should freely permit this is a manifestation of a kindly spirit towards this country which should facilitate the adjustment of all relations between the two nations upon a friendly and mutually advantageous basis." Something to the same effect has been said by the *Philadelphia Record*, which very reasonably points out that "whatever may be the motives of British and colonial statesmen in holding to their liberal commercial and industrial policy, the contrast between the inhospitality of our laws towards foreigners and the welcome extended to the latter by the legislation of the British Empire should have a chastening effect upon our buncombe orators and jingo editors when they shall next feel tempted to denounce Great Britain as the grabbing power par excellence."

But these expressions of American opinion are in startling contrast with American action. America, in fact, as is common knowledge, does her best to prevent the foreign labourer from competing with the American workman, even to the extent of imposing a tax upon him. The State of Pennsylvania has recently passed a law providing for an imposition of 3 cents per head per day on all companies employing foreign-born unnaturalised mill workmen. The preamble of this measure is a most interesting study, and can be rendered still more instructive if the very slight verbal alterations required to fit it to the condition of Klondike are made, and the resulting suggested enactment printed side by side with that already passed by the Pennsylvania Legislature. We shall then have the American argument against the admission of

American diggers to Klondike put in a very straightforward and forcible fashion. So :—

THE ACTUAL PENNSYLVANIAN PREAMBLE.

"Whereas, it is the duty of the Government to enact such laws as shall protect the citizen labourers of America against the labourers of foreign nations who are brought in direct competition with our own workmen in nearly all the different branches of employment; and whereas, thousands of foreign labourers come to this State for the purpose of obtaining employment, without any intentions of becoming citizens, and who disclaim any allegiance to this State or nation, very few of whom ever pay any taxes for the maintenance of local, State, or natural government, and are thus brought into unjust competition with the tax-paying American labourers, and greatly impair their welfare by depriving them of their employment, or preventing them from receiving fair compensation for their labour."

THE PREAMBLE TO THE PROPOSED CANADIAN ACT.

"Whereas it is the duty of the Government to enact such laws as shall protect the citizen labourers of Canada against the labourers of foreign nations who are brought in direct competition with our own workmen in gold mining in the Klondike; and whereas thousands of foreign labourers come to this district for the purpose of obtaining gold and employment, without any intentions of becoming citizens, and who disclaim any allegiance to this Dominion or to the British nation, very few of whom ever pay any taxes for the maintenance of local, provincial or national government, and are thus brought into unjust competition with the tax-paying Canadian labourers, and greatly impair their welfare by depriving them of their employment, or preventing them from receiving full compensation for their labour."

I think, however, the difficulties here touched upon will vanish by the time things are in working order, in the spring, and as far as law and order in the diggings are concerned, the Mounted Police may be trusted to maintain them, and if accounts to hand are true Dawson City already boasts an orderly community. If anyone falls ill within reach of the settlement, both medical aid and spiritual advice can

be obtained, and although funerals are not conducted with much ostentation, everything necessary is done with respect for the dead by the rough but kindly miners. The tales as to confiscation of the property of deceased miners by friends and neighbours is characterised by Dawsonians as "malicious lying." It is stated to be one of the unwritten laws of the Yukon, that all property so left shall be turned over to the Government and disposed of according to statute laws. It is also asserted that one can hang a sack of gold dust outside his cabin and it is perfectly safe! And that one saloon-keeper has over £30,000 in gold in a little stack (*sic*) and he never locks his door!! Reads prettily doesn't it? I don't think, for the sake of saving the trouble of turning a key in a lock, I should leave £30,000 (if I had it) lying around in a "stack," even if the miners all possessed moral certificates, and Sunday-school references, and were my relatives into the bargain. Be this how it may, Dawson City is apparently a great improvement on the mining camps of earlier years. Though the following is probably the work of a humourist, I am not prepared to say there is not rather more than a grain of truth in it.

"Whatever may be the chances for fortune making at the new diggings on the Yukon river, there can be no doubt of the desire on the part of the proprietor of the leading and most luxurious hotel at Klondike to make things comfortable for his guests. The following are the rules and regulations of conduct at that establishment:—

"Board must be paid in advance; with beans, 25 dols.,

without beans 12 dols. Salt free, no extras allowed, potatoes for dinner, pocketing at meals strictly forbidden. Gentlemen are expected to wash out of doors, and find their own water. No charges for ice, towel-bags at the end of the house. Extra charge for seats around the stove. Lodgers must find their own straw; beds on bar-room floor reserved for regular customers. Persons sleeping in the barn are requested not to take their boots off. Lodgers must arise at 5 a.m.; in the barn at 6 a.m. No fighting at table. Anyone violating the above rules will be shot."

Before I proceed to a recapitulation of the information I have been able to glean, I should like to add an extract from the account furnished by Dr. William H. Dall to the *Daily Tribune.*

Dr. Dall is one of the curators of the National Museum, in New York, and a sound geologist. He has conducted more than one Alaskan geological survey, and speaks with the highest authority, and I would draw special attention to his remarks on the scarcity of game, which emphasise the necessity of taking one's own supplies.

"I have no doubt that the facts as told by the press are, in main, strictly correct. The Klondike goldfields, however, are not in Alaska territory. They are in the British possessions, what is known as the North-Western Territory. The Klondike River, which has been on the map for about twenty years,* branches from the Yukon River not far from the boundary between Canada and Alaska. The Canadian

* Dr. Dall doubtless refers to American or Canadian Maps.

territory has lately been divided into districts, a name being given to each, but I do not recall the name of this particular one. The North-Western Territory, however, embraces them all. The nearest way to reach the Klondike River, which is a very small stream, and the goldfields is from Chilkoot Inlet. Steamers run from Sitka there, and from Seattle and Tacoma. The distance from Chilkoot Inlet, or rather the head of it, to the Klondike is about 500 miles. To reach there it is necessary to cross the coast mountains, and then the chain of lakes and short streams which form the headwaters of the Yukon River. It is on these streams that the gold is found. The country is a rolling one covered with grass. There is a short hot summer of about four months, with practically no spring or autumn. The ice begins to break up in the rivers about May 25th, and navigation begins on the Yukon River about the first week in June. It begins to get very cool by the latter part of September, and is almost winter weather by October 1st. The winter is very cold and dry, with not more than three feet of snow. There is only about three inches of rainfall during the winter, and not more than a foot or 15 inches the whole year round. It is a country in which it is very hard to find food, as there is practically no game. Before the whites went into the region there were not more than 300 natives. They have hard work to support themselves on account of the scarcity of game.

"The thermometer sometimes goes down to 68 deg. below zero in January and February. While I was there, I slept, or attempted to sleep, in a tent one

night when the mercury registered this, but it was just a little too frigid for us. The cold, however, is not so intense as may be imagined, and 68 deg. there could not be compared with the same here. The dress is mostly of furs in the winter, that used by the natives, and unless there is a sharp wind blowing one may keep fairly comfortable. When I was there I did not find gold, but knew of it being taken out in profitable quantities for 15 years or more. It was first discovered there in 1866. In 1880, when I was up in that country—my last trip was made two years ago—the first party of prospectors who made the mining profitable started out. The gold is found on the various tributaries of the Yukon, and I have been within a comparatively short distance of the Klondike fields. I made one trip to Circle City, just over the boundary of Canada. The gold bearing belt of North Western America contains all the goldfields extending into British Columbia. The Yukon really runs along in that belt for 500 or 600 miles. The bed of the main river is in the lowland of the valley. The yellow metal is not found in paying quantities in the main river, but in the small streams which cut through the mountains on either side. These practically wash out the gold. The mud and mineral matter are carried into the main river, while the gold is left on the rough bottoms of these side streams. In most cases the gold lies at the bottom of thick gravel deposits. The gold is covered by frozen gravel in the winter. During the summer, until the snow is melted, the surface is covered by muddy torrents. When the snow is all melted, and the springs begin to freeze,

the streams dry up. At the approach of winter, in order to get at the gold, the miners find it necessary to dig into the gravel formation. Formerly they stripped the gravel off until they came to the gold. Now they sink a shaft to the bottom of the gravel, and tunnel along underneath in the gold bearing layer. The way in which this is done is interesting, as it has to be carried on in cold weather when everything is frozen.

"The miners build fires over the area where they wish to work, and keep these lighted over that territory for the space of about 24 hours. Then, at the expiration of this period, the gravel will be melted and softened to a depth of perhaps six inches. This is then taken off, and other fires built until the gold bearing layer is reached. When the shaft is down that far, fires are built at the bottom against the sides of the layer and tunnels made in this manner. Blasting would do no good on account of the hard nature of the material, and the charge would blow out just as out of a gun. The matter taken out containing the gold is piled up until spring, when the torrents come down, and is panned and cradled by these. It is certainly very hard labour. I see many reasons why the goldfields should be particularly rich. The streams which cut through the mountains have probably done so for centuries, wearing them down several hundred feet, and washing out the gold into the beds and gravel. There are two routes by which the fields can be reached, one of which I have mentioned before, from Chilkoot Inlet over the mountains. This is about 500 miles. The other is

up the Yukon River from St. Michael's, on the west coast of Alaska, which is about 1,500 miles in length or three times as far as the other. Flat-bottomed steamers run from St. Michael's. The return trip from the fields is much easier, and has been taken by the miners who have made their piles and recently returned to the United States by way of Seattle. The Pacific Coast Steamship Company runs steamers every five days from Seattle. The only way in which supplies may be transported over the mountains the other way is on mules, taking time and expense. As I remarked before, it is a country in which there is practically no sustenance, and food must be taken to the goldfields. This information, from such a high authority as Dr. Dall, is not a repetition only, it is a confirmation of previous statements and reports.

I think now I have placed before those interested sufficient information to enable them to determine for themselves whether the claim that Klondike is one of the richest gold districts ever discovered is justified or not, the exact situation of the stream itself, which is clearly indicated in Mr. Stanford's map, specially prepared for this little work, the nature of the climate, and the physical aspects of the district, the preparations necessary for a sojourn there, and the two routes by which it is reached and the cost. Suppose I had a son who had made up his mind to take the risks for the sake of a possible fortune. I should first consider whether his physical constitution, his natural combativeness, general health, ready resource, pluck and determination, qualified him to accompany an

explorer or an Arctic expedition. If I were satisfied of this, I would then consider if I could start him with at least £200 to £250. That being settled nothing would induce me to allow him to start from Liverpool before, at the earliest, late March of next year. If he were to argue that he had read in the papers that there are 3,000 miners blocking the passes to Klondike now, I should reply that he would pass most of them in the spring, many of them would remain in the route, but they wouldn't block it, and most of the others would have gone out of the competition before he reached the district. If I could trust him, I might be disposed to start him off to Vancouver now and let him spend the winter there, so as to get partly inured, by shooting and other excursions, to the climate (if I were going myself this is the plan I should follow), and to get an early start as soon as the approach of spring permitted. Then would come the question of choice of routes (*a*) by Dutch Harbour, Fort Get There, the Kwichpak, and Yukon, or (*b*) via Juneau, over the White Pass. The former is easier, but much longer, and the latter, though involving great fatigue, is much shorter, and the preliminary toil would, to a hardy man, be splendid training for the continuous hardships at the actual diggings. At the end of the summer it would be possible to determine whether it would be wise to remain during the winter; could only be determine by himself from experience and results Planned and carried out as I have suggested, no doubt a winter might be hardily and profitably sustained, but to go out *now*, and first face a

hyperborean winter straight off could in my opinion only end disastrously.

I give here a table of fares and of various expenses, absolutely correct to Vancouver or Seattle, beyond that prices will probably vary by next spring. Via Canadian Pacific Railway:—

	£	s.	d.
From Liverpool to Vancouver or Seattle by the cheapest or steerage way, that is (*a*) Steerage on Steamer, Colonist Rail . . .	15	18	9
(*b*) Second Cabin, Steamer, Colonist Rail	17	18	9
(*c*) Saloon Steamer, First-class Rail . .	25	2	10
Seattle to Fort Cudahy (via Yukon Railway)	30	16	6

	£	s.	d.
Total cost in actual fares, Liverpool to Fort Cudahy (*a*)	46	15	3
Ditto ditto (*b*)	48	15	3
Ditto ditto (*c*)	55	19	4
Steamer Fare from Seattle to Juneau .	7	0	0
Total Lvpl to Juneau (*a*)	22	18	9
Ditto ditto (*b*)	24	18	9
Ditto ditto (*c*)	32	2	10

These last include Cabin & Meals.

150 lbs. of personal baggage goes free. No gunpowder, matches or other dangerous articles may be carried. See that all your baggage is fully and clearly labelled and addressed. All luggage is duly and properly checked after examination by the Customs Officers, a brass or paste-board tag being affixed to each piece and a duplicate handed to the owner, so that at the journey's end, each person can rapidly secure his belongings, without chance of loss or mistake. It is the same for all classes.

The fee for the Pullman Sleeper is £4 2s., bedding, &c., being provided. I have earlier given details in the case of other classes with regard to sleeping accommodation.

Meals are served in the dining car for the entire

journey for £3 4s., drinks extra, or at the stations *a la carte.*

The cost of living at Juneau is about 12s. a day upwards.

The overland journey hence will cost about £30.

Provisions for one year (lowest estimate) £40.

Cost of dogs, sledge, &c., about £30.

So that suppose one goes "Colonist," which seems to me the most convenient, the total cost from Liverpool to Juneau, reckoning meals, &c., on cars, will run to £30, and you may set down your expenses to Klondike at from £133 to £140. I think this is pretty accurate. The provisions to be taken should chiefly consist of—

Bacon . . .	200 lbs.	Tea . . .	40 to 50 lbs.
Flour . . .	800 ,,	Cocoa . . .	20 ,,
Assorted dried fruits .	200 ,,	Sugar . . .	75 ,,
Corn meal . .	200 ,,	Beans . . .	150 ,,
Rice . . .	50 ,,	Fresh biscuit bread .	100 ,,
Parched Coffee . .	75 ,,	Condensed Milk .	1 case.

With an assortment of evaporated vegetables and meats. I should add also a small case of the ordinary domestic medicinal remedies, which may be obtained in convenient form at the stores, with a small quantity of good old brandy, purely as a medicine, and a few yards of good flannel. Take also :—

2 suits of Corduroy	4 suits heavy woollen underwear
24 pairs thick woollen socks	6 heavy woollen shirts
4 pairs rubber boots lined	3 pairs ditto, ditto, blankets
3 pairs heavy shoes	1 thick but light coat
½-doz. thick woollen mits	3 or 4 close warm hats
4 pairs thick woollen gloves	2 other suits of warm close woollen material

To this I should add, if I contemplated facing the winter, a sleeping bag of fur. This would enable you

to put up with a certain amount of ventilation in the sleeping hut, a matter which if neglected will carry its own revenge. A rapid change of extreme temperatures is more than anything else conducive to ill-health and breakdown.

Thus prepared a miner ought to be reasonably secure against want, and the climate. The actual implements of his work he would of course easily get at Vancouver, Victoria or Seattle. Wood for all purposes is scarce on the ground, and of course all his findings do not make nett gains. For instance it is stated that the Dominion Government have formulated a new set of mining regulations for the Yukon Gold Fields. One is that every alternate claim is reserved by the Government. It has also been decided to collect a tax or royalty upon the output of the placer diggings. Under the new mining regulations established last May the cost of registering a claim was increased from 5 dols. to 15 dols., while an annual assessment of 100 dols. was to be paid by the holder. What the Government has now decided to do is to charge, in addition to this, a royalty of ten per cent. upon the output of all claims yielding 300 dols. a month and under to each claim, and a royalty of 20 per cent. upon each claim yielding over that amount per month. In some quarters it is anticipated that there will be much difficulty in collecting this royalty, in view of the nearness of the diggings to the Alaska border and other drawbacks. The Minister of the Interior admits that an equitable and general collection will be difficult for some time.

Those who want to know more of the great N.W.

Territory should look up the Official Handbook relating to the Dominion of Canada. If they want to know anything of the Yukon and the districts through which it flows, they cannot do better than read "Along Alaska's Great River" by Schwatka, and the United States' Census—"The Eleventh Census Report on the Population and Resources of Alaska." And a study of Scidmore's "Appleton's Guide Book to Alaska" will give some information that may be of use, and the High Comissioner of Canada, 17 Victoria Street, Westminister, S.W., will be glad to put the knowledge of his office at the disposal of inquirers.

Forms of application for passenger tickets, and full information as to the Canadian Pacific Railway and its arrangements, can be obtained of Mr. F. W. Flanagan, 67 & 68, King William Street, E.C., or at 30, Cockspur Street, Trafalgar Square, S.W., at 7, James Street, Liverpool, and 67, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow.

The Canadian Government Agent in Liverpool is Mr. A. F. Jury, 15, Water Street. Mr. W. L. Griffith, Erskine Arms Hotel, Conway, in Wales; Mr. W. M. Murray, 52, Enoch Square, Glasgow; Mr. W. G. Stuart, Duack Lodge, Nethy Bridge, Inverness, N.B.; Mr. Peter Fleming, 44, High Street, Dundee; Mr. Thomas Duncan, Carnoustie, Forfarshire; Mr. John Webster, 30, Upper Leeson Street, Dublin, all of whom will be found ready to give any information in their power.

I have endeavoured to give as comprehensive a view of the subject as space and time have allowed, and I trust that the information here gathered into one review will be found as correct and as full as necessary. I have been at some pains to make it so.

To those contemplating a start I would say do not be too discouraged by adverse reports, or unduly hopeful when they assume a rosier aspect, be prepared for either fortune. May the best of good luck attend you.

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