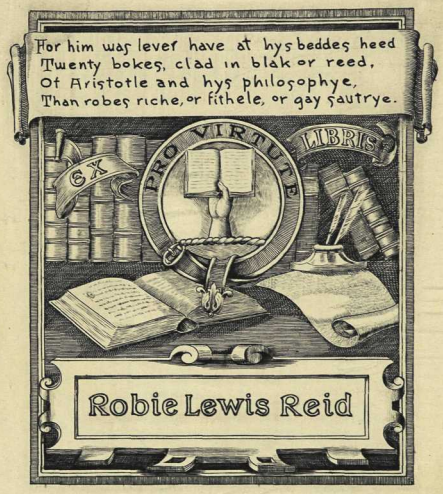
FROM EUSTON TO KLONDIKE

JULIUS M. PRICE F.R.G.S.



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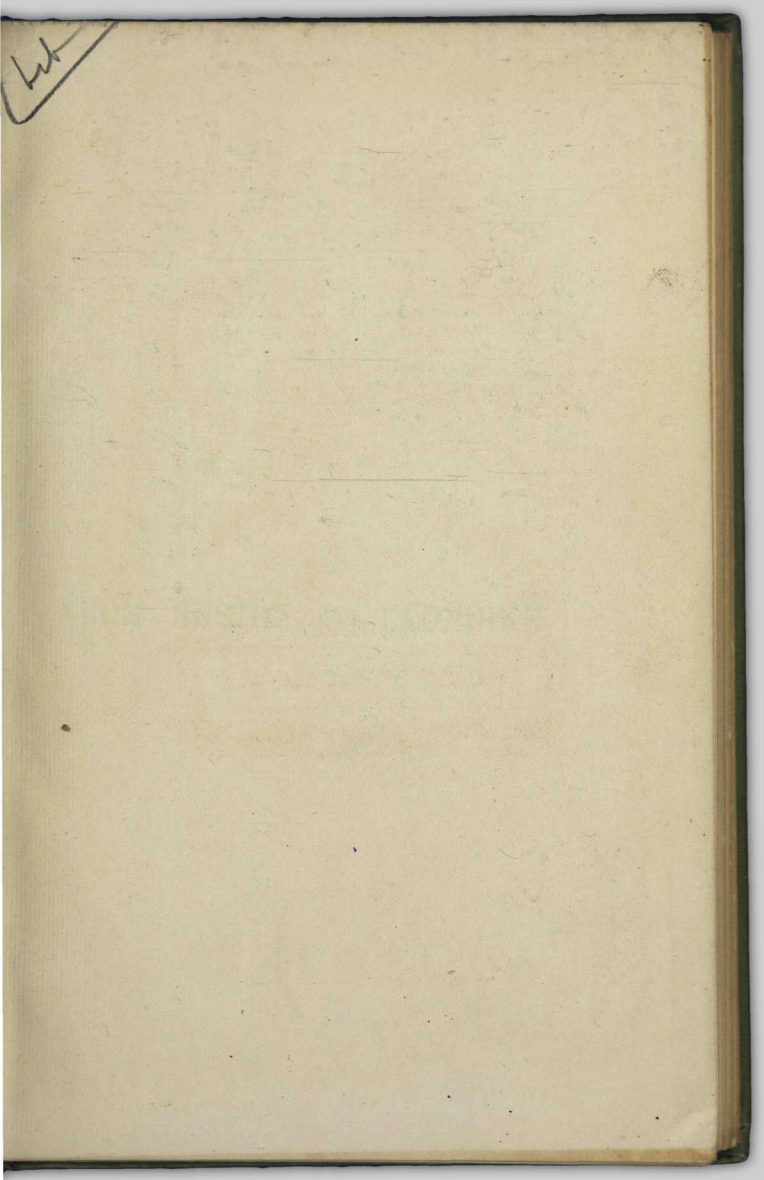

FROM EUSTON TO KLONDIKE

THE SUMMIT OF THE CHILCOOT PASS. [*See page* 85.

FROM EUSTON TO KLONDIKE

THE NARRATIVE OF
A JOURNEY THROUGH BRITISH COLUMBIA
AND THE NORTH-WEST TERRITORY
IN THE SUMMER OF 1898

BY

JULIUS M. PRICE, F.R.G.S.

SPECIAL ARTIST-CORRESPONDENT OF THE "ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS"

AUTHOR OF "FROM THE ARCTIC OCEAN TO THE YELLOW SEA"
"THE LAND OF GOLD," ETC.

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NOTE

I AM indebted to the proprietors of the *Illustrated London News* for their kind permission to reproduce in this work the sketches and drawings I made for them whilst on my journey, a great many of which have already appeared in that paper; and also for the use of the text accompanying them, which has formed in a measure the basis of my book.

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FROM EUSTON TO KLONDIKE

CHAPTER I.

LONDON TO ROSSLAND.

The Canadian Pacific Railway—Revelstoke—Steamboat journey on the Arrow Lakes from Arrowhead to Robson—Trail Creek—The Columbia and Western Railway to Rossland—An exciting experience.

"WELL, I don't envy you your journey," was the invariable remark when I mentioned to any one in London that I was about to start for Klondike. Nor was I altogether surprised, for I must confess that the mere name raised up in my mind visions of all the fearful hardships and dangers that are supposed to be inseparable from such a journey as I was about to undertake to those far-off Arctic solitudes, in whose gloomy fastnesses Nature has apparently made her storehouse of gold.

Once my journey decided upon, I settled to leave England early in the year, so as to leave myself ample time, whilst crossing Canada, to pay flying visits to the various new mining camps and mushroom towns of the West. Profiting by previous experience, I determined not to purchase an elaborate outfit in England, but confined myself to a few indispensable articles which cannot well be procured out of the Old Country. The bulk of my kit could be got in Vancouver.

I was to be accompanied by an old friend and cousin of mine, Lionel Harris, who was the representative of the *Financial News* of London.

From Liverpool to New York on the *Campania*, a few days' stay at the palatial Waldorf Astoria, then on to Canada by the Delaware and Hudson Railway, is as delightfully luxurious a trip as may well be imagined. Doubtless, to have crossed the Atlantic by an old cargo steamer would have been a fitter preparation for a rough journey to the far North-West; still, the good things of the world are not to be despised or avoided when they can be obtained, and we found ourselves in Montreal, none the worse or the less keen for our prospective

expedition from having taken the most comfortable means of getting there.

The journey across Canada by the Canadian Pacific Railway has been so often described as to be comparatively familiar to the English reader—to whom, thanks to rapid transit and cheap literature, the world is becoming every day more and more, as it were, an open book. A war of rates was being vigorously waged between the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway at the time of my trip, in consequence of the rush to the Pacific seaboard of prospectors and miners *en route* for the new Eldorado. So acute was the competition at the moment that through fares to Vancouver were reduced nearly one-half, and there was a probability of still further reductions. "It is an ill wind," etc., and certainly the poor passengers did not suffer by the dispute between the two companies on this occasion.

The courtesy of the officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway is proverbial, so I was scarcely surprised when Mr. McNicoll, the General Manager of the Passenger Department, informed me that he proposed personally to make me out a sketch-

plan of a route which would carry us over the principal points of interest on the line, enabling me to break my journey anywhere I chose, also to provide me with a permit which would enable us to ride on engines and freight trains; in fact, I was to have the run of the line in all directions, till the end of our journey. Thus provided, the journey could not fail to prove interesting.

The season was an exceptionally late one, and, although we were in the month of April, the ground was covered with snow, and lakes and rivers still held fast in the icy grip of the Canadian winter—in remarkable contrast to the genial spring-like weather experienced in New York a few days previously. No breath, however, of the icy-cold outer atmosphere reaches the interior of the luxuriously warmed drawing-room cars, where rugs and overcoats are positively superfluities. Oh, would that those responsible for the management of our home railways would take a leaf from the book of foreign railway travel, and look just a little more after the comfort of their passengers, so that in mid-winter one would not be frozen, and in the summer almost roasted! But it takes so

long to upset old-fashioned, conservative (or rather unprogressive) ideas, and, up to the present, our Canadian brothers and American cousins are miles ahead of us in the matter of comfort on the iron road.

Life on these long-distance trains resembles, in many respects, that on an ocean steamer, and, if one is fortunate in finding congenial travelling companions, the time passes very pleasantly. We were exceptionally lucky on this occasion. The Canadian Pacific Railway line passes through so few towns of any importance, and such sparsely populated districts in comparison to the United States route to the Pacific Coast, that the entire interest centres in the surrounding scenery, and certainly there is nothing in the world to rival that of the Rockies or the Selkirks. I of course availed myself of my permit to ride on the engine, and we had a novel and interesting experience through the most mountainous portion of the journey, so the time passed agreeably till the first stage of our tour was reached.

To reach the mining camps and towns of Trail Creek and the West Kootenay, one leaves the main

line of the Canadian Pacific Railway at Revelstoke, a little railway town picturesquely situated on the Columbia River, 2527 miles from Montreal. After five consecutive days and nights on the train, the temptation to break one's journey for a few hours was irresistible, and a day was spent very pleasantly rambling amongst quaint log-built cottages, which reminded one not a little of some far-away Swiss village. Revelstoke, though yet in its infancy, is growing very rapidly, and the past two years have seen the greater portion of its town lots treble themselves in value. At the present time building operations are in full swing, roads have been laid out, and where, until quite recently, was dense forest, promises shortly to become a busy and prosperous town. This sudden activity is due in a large measure to the decision of the Canadian Pacific Railway to make Revelstoke one of their big divisional points in the place of Donald, the present headquarters of the mountain division of the railway.

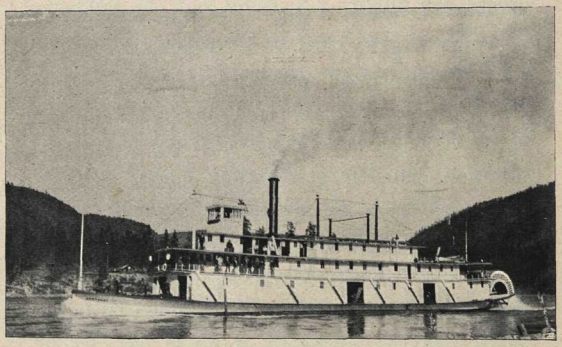
Doubtless, the transference of the big repair shops with their large staff of workmen will considerably help to put a new lease of life into the

place, for Revelstoke has hitherto not gone ahead very fast, notwithstanding the promise of its neighbouring mining camps at Big Bend and Lardeau, and its holding the key, as it were, to the trade with the Kootenay District.

We were timed to leave for Rossland at eight o'clock the following morning, but our start was delayed over two hours in consequence of a landslide some miles down the main line. These slides are of common occurrence during the early spring as the snow begins to melt, but beyond making the trains a few hours late (also a very common occurrence), they are seldom of dangerous magnitude. A few willing hands from the train, with shovels, soon shift the obstruction. The trip to Rossland, though only some 250 miles from this point, occupied practically a whole day, for on this particular occasion it took us sixteen hours to accomplish the journey.

A short branch line runs from Revelstoke to Arrowhead, where one embarks on a river steamer for Robson, the next point—a run of an hour and a half. Here the Columbia River widens into a series of broad expanses of water which are known

as the Arrow Lakes. The scenery is beautiful in the extreme, the precipitous mountains, dense pine forests, and, above all, the intense aspect of solitude, help to complete a scene which is thoroughly characteristic of the wilds of the North-West. A couple of roomy, stern-wheel



ONE OF THE ARROW LAKE STEAMERS.

steamers, belonging to the Canadian Pacific Railway, make daily journeys from Arrowhead to Robson, calling on the way at several small hamlets and stations, all of which bear the usual curious resemblance to Switzerland, and which helps so considerably to heighten the picturesqueness

of the country. The method of embarking or landing passengers is primitive. The steamer is run ashore, and a plank put out from the bows. Nothing could be quicker or more simple, as the water, quite close to the bank, is of great depth, and the shore falls away so abruptly as to form almost a natural quay. The feeding, as well as the sleeping, accommodation on these boats is excellent, and, given fine weather, the trip is a most enjoyable one.

Robson was reached late at night, two huge electric searchlights in our bows serving rather to accentuate the surrounding darkness than illumine it. Here the Canadian Pacific Railway system ends at present, the remaining portion of the journey to Rossland being accomplished in two sections, a broad and a narrow gauge of the Columbia and Western Railway. (At the time of writing I learn that this short line has been acquired by the Canadian Pacific Railway.) The broad gauge runs as far as Trail Creek, the smelting centre of the West Kootenay District, a little village that may one day become an important township, if its big smelter and surrounding mines

turn out as expected. Leaving Trail, the narrow-gauge line to Rossland mounts rapidly to an altitude of 1500 feet by a series of gradients, which must be seen to be believed. So steep are most of them that, when returning from Rossland, no steam is necessary at any part of the run—a distance of 15 miles. The line passes through some magnificent mountain scenery. It was originally constructed to carry ore from the Kootenay mines to the smelter, till, with the growth of Rossland, a passenger traffic sprang up. An opportunity then presenting itself to purchase, at a knock-out figure, the private cars of the late Brigham Young, of Mormon fame, which had been in use many years on his Utah Railway, the erstwhile steam tramway blossomed out into an extension of the Columbia and Western Railway, and is now paying handsomely. The permanent way, which is as roughly laid as possible, continually offers a variety of sensations more or less exciting, and numberless are the stories told of hairbreadth escapes of its one train.

We were already over three hours late on leaving Trail, so there was but little chance of

making up any lost time. Any hope we might have had of arriving at our destination even with no further delay was soon dispelled, for we had not proceeded many miles when there was a series of sharp bumps, and the train suddenly came to a standstill. There was a long period of suspense, during which we were all looking at each other, wondering what had happened, when the conductor passed through the carriage, remarking casually, as he did so, that a large mass of rock had fallen across the line ahead of us, and that we should be forced to remain where we were till it was removed. This looked cheerful for our chances of getting to our destination during the night. There was nothing, however, to be done but accept the situation philosophically as an incident of railway travelling in the far West. Our fellow-passengers apparently thought nothing of what was evidently an ordinary occurrence, and of one accord composed themselves to sleep away the time. On going out on the platform of the car, one could see nothing, so dark was the night, and there was no possibility of descending, for where the train had stopped was apparently a precipice on one

side and a high cliff on the other, and deep snow everywhere. The roaring sound of a torrent many hundred feet below, together with the short panting of the escaping steam from the engine, which echoed and re-echoed in the mountains, made up a weird impression not easily forgotten. I went back into the carriage, and, stretched on some rugs, soon fell into a deep sleep, from which I was suddenly awakened by a loud report. It was a charge of dynamite the conductor and engine-driver had exploded in the mass of rock barring our passage. The operation was successful, for, after a short delay, we began at last to proceed cautiously, for the line was evidently strewn with pieces of rock, and for a short distance the cars heaved and rolled to such an extent that we all looked at each other anxiously, almost expecting to find ourselves being precipitated down the ravine. It was the most unique fifteen-mile railway journey I ever made, and it was certainly with no feeling of regret that we at length saw the welcome lights of Rossland ahead of us.

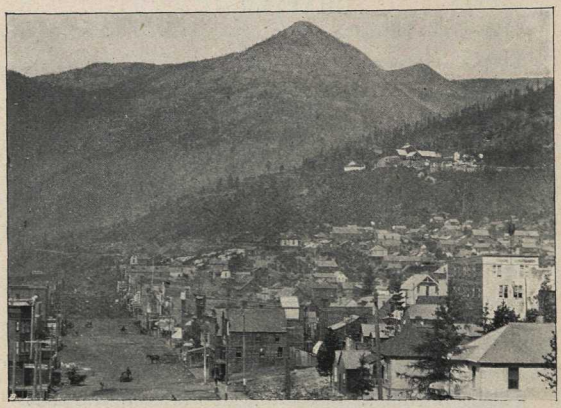
CHAPTER II.

ROSSLAND.

First impressions of the "Camp"—The local Fire Brigade—The "lions" of Rossland—Red Mountain Mines: the Le Roi, War Eagle, Centre Star, Columbia and Kootenay, Josie, and Nickel Plate—The British America Corporation—Governor Macintosh—A visit to the Centre Star Mine—The Rossland ore—Cost of working—An excursion to Sophie Mountain.

THOUGH barely three years old, there are probably few towns (even out in the far West, where the genus "mushroom-city" has its existence) that can show such marvellously rapid growth for so short a space of time as Rossland. It has been said that in laying out the plans for an American town-site, apparently the first things that are considered after clearing the ground, and even before starting building operations, are the electric lighting arrangements, tramway lines, and telephone wires. In this respect, perhaps, Rossland has not quite

followed the stereotyped example of its predecessors—possibly because it is in Canada, not the United States, and also that the town-site, when it was first located, became, unfortunately for it, the scene of a land boom which was not in any



ROSSLAND. LE ROI MINE ON HILL AT BACK.

way justified by surrounding conditions at the time. There must always exist a certain *raison d'être* for the coming into existence of one of these mushroom towns, and Rossland depends for hers on neighbouring mines, which, should they turn out

as is expected, will make her the principal centre of the Kootenay Gold Fields. Till, however, these mines are "proved," there is nothing but pure speculation to warrant a big rise in the value of town lots in a town which can scarcely be said to exist. It was such a premature land boom that this place passed through some three years ago, with the inevitable result; and it has taken the town over two years to recover from its evil effects.

Rossland is a good specimen of the mining camps of British Columbia, and though not yet quite so "rapid" as many a place its equal in size across the American side of the boundary, is a hustling little town, all things considered. Although it was three o'clock in the morning when we arrived, the whole place seemed to be as wide awake as though it had been six in the evening. Bars, saloons, and supper-rooms were still open, and apparently doing a flourishing trade, whilst along the principal streets every shop had its electric lights full on. It was a striking and unexpected transition from the tedious railway journey. We got comfortable rooms at the Allan

House Hotel, and were not unthankful to learn that even at that advanced hour of the night, we could, if we so desired it, partake of "lunch" before going to bed. (Oh, these delightful Americanisms!)

The Camp on a bright spring morning, with its background of snow-capped mountains towering above its picturesque streets, is certainly a very cheerful-looking place, and presents a certain busy and flourishing appearance that seems to augur well for the immediate future. I may here explain that the word "camp" out in these parts is an elastic term which may be used to convey several meanings; in fact, anything in the way of a mining settlement, from a single log-built "shack" to an old-established town of several thousand inhabitants.

As is the case in all these new towns, wood is exclusively employed for building purposes at Rossland. Considering the enormous risk of fire, one is somewhat surprised at this, in a country where stone is so easily obtainable. I may add here, incidentally, that the fire brigade in these parts is almost always composed of volunteers, and

in connection with this, it is of interest to mention that not a single house in any of the wooden towns I visited was insured, as no insurance company will take the risk. Large fire-proof cellars are excavated in several parts of the town, and at the slightest fear of a big conflagration valuables and papers are hurriedly stored in them.

As may be imagined, the actual attractions of so new a place as Rossland were soon exhausted. A stroll up the principal street, a visit to the inevitable club (without which institution no settlement of Englishmen is ever complete), and a cocktail at the principal saloon, finished all the actual town had to show. At night amusement was still more curtailed, as there was no theatre (there was one of a sort, but it was not open at the time of my visit), and social life resolved itself into card-playing at the club, or a chat at a friend's bungalow.

The real "lions" of Rossland are its big mines on the hill just outside the town. Several of them are already beyond the initial stage, and have settled down into steady dividend-paying concerns, into which the element of uncertainty that we

usually associate with a mining venture scarcely enters. The most successful of these mines are situated on what is known locally as the Red Mountain, and, judging from the developments up to the present time, this Red Mountain well deserves

THE LE ROI MINE.

an appellation which has a metallic ring about it, for it appears to be almost a mountain of mineral wealth—gold, silver, and copper, in combination with sulphides, etc., are there in such huge quantities that, in many instances, tunnelling or

shafting has to be made through what is practically solid metal. Amongst so many big undertakings it is somewhat invidious to choose, but up to the present the famous Le Roi Mine is admittedly the finest of its class in the country, and, judging alone from the enormous sums its fortunate shareholders have already received in dividends, this is probably the case. Up to the present date the Le Roi has paid $800,000 in dividends, of which $400,000 were paid in 1897.

The War Eagle, another famous mine adjoining the Le Roi, has paid over $187,000. And there are other mines on the same side of the mountain, amongst which are the Columbia and Kootenay, Centre Star, Josie, and Nickel Plate, that will, when more advanced, run the Le Roi output very closely, for their ore chutes are also immensely rich. Rossland is distinctly not a poor man's camp. Every inch, as it were, of shafting or tunnelling has to be accounted for by hard work and expense, which practically excludes the small purse. The actual prospector, therefore, can do but little more than prove his location to be a fair prospect, and, if he has no means, trust to his luck for some

capitalist to take it off his hands and make a mine out of it. It therefore nearly always happens that what are now rich properties were originally bought as prospects for a mere song, and gradually changed owners as development progressed, until they reached the rich American or English syndicate. This has been more especially noticeable in Rossland, where, owing in a great measure to the recent advent in the camp of the British America Corporation, with its huge capital and with Lord Dufferin at its head, a revival of energy all along the line is apparent. Claims that had been abandoned owing to lack of funds have been suddenly taken up again, prospecting in the neighbouring districts has been actively prosecuted, and everything points to an era of prosperity for the town, and this time on a solid basis.

To the Hon. C. H. Macintosh, Governor of the North-West Territories, who has recently joined the directorate, is undoubtedly also due a great measure of the popularity and success that have followed in the wake of the British America corporation. There is but little doubt that a

strong personality, or rather individuality, has an appreciable effect on all big undertakings, and Rossland, therefore, in the opinion of most people here, will be largely indebted to the popular governor for any measure of future prosperity.

I had looked forward to paying a visit to the Le Roi mine, but unfortunately an accident had just happened in one of the lower levels, several yards of shafting having collapsed, so no visitors were allowed. I therefore had to content myself with an inspection of one of the next best mines—the Centre Star—thanks to the courtesy of one of the principal owners, Mr. Oliver Durant, a charming gentleman, who showed us through the workings, and explained everything with all the delight of a father proud of his child's prowess. The mine is situate at the foot of the mountain a little lower down than the War Eagle and Le Roi, and tunnelling to the extent of several thousand feet has been done. Although not so interesting, from an outsider's point of view, as a mine where free gold is visible, this was a good object-lesson in the art of mining in the Kootenay, and gave one an idea of what has been done on the adjoining properties,

which are still more advanced. Imagine a tunnel cut through solid metal, and some conception may be formed of the work that has to be done and the obstacles overcome before these Kootenay mines can even be considered in their initial stage. In a narrative that is purely descriptive, statistics are superfluous, but at this point a few will be of interest for the purposes of comparison. As far as I could make out, the Rossland ore, which is what is known as a refractory ore, consists principally of sulphides of various metals; of these pyrrhotite, or magnetic iron pyrites, is by far the most abundant. The pyrrhotite contains gold and silver in varying quantities, gold ranging from traces up to several ounces to the ton, and the silver from traces to four or five ounces to the ton. Taking the gross value of the ore roughly at $25, from this must be deducted working expenses—viz. mining and putting on railway $5 per ton, freight and treatment at $7.50 per ton, leaving a net profit of $12.50 per ton, thus showing that fifty per cent. of the ore value is swallowed up in expenses. It will, therefore, be seen that no mine in the Kootenay can be worked with any measure of

financial success unless provided with the strongest sinews of war, in the shape of a large amount of ready capital, in which event it is a case of money making money.

Unless one was personally interested in mining there was but little to tempt one to pay more than a flying visit to Rossland, where almost the sole topic of conversation from morning till night is "ledges" or "ore shoots," and picturesque subjects for one's pen or pencil almost non-existent, as may be imagined. I was not sorry, therefore, when an opportunity offered for an excursion to a neighbouring camp in a district known as Sophie Mountain. Although only some ten miles distant, a range of snow-covered mountains, 6000 feet high, had to be crossed, so the trip promised to be an interesting and novel one.

An early start was made one fine morning. We were a party of four, mounted on the lively little horses known out here as "cayuses," and were soon galloping merrily along the muddy track leading from the town. Snow had disappeared from the valley, and all looked bright and spring-like, but as we ascended the scene gradually

changed, and we found ourselves returning to winter, till at last deep snow surrounded us on all sides. The trail, meanwhile, became so steep that the journey was becoming very interesting, not to say exciting—now along the very verge of a precipice on frozen snow, where the slightest mistake of our horses would mean catastrophe; then through dense pine forests looking black and sepulchral in contrast to the dead white of the snow, and with here and there the well-defined trail of a mountain lion or bear to arouse one's sporting instincts. At some places the narrow track became so steep that it was wonderful how our horses kept their foothold on the treacherous surface. It certainly was perilous work, and we all had narrow escapes from serious accident. The ascent to the summit seemed interminable, and the worst part had yet to come. The going up was bad, but the descent on the other side was ten times worse. To ride was impossible, so it meant leading the horses the whole way down, with the risk of them falling on one at any awkward place. Several times I missed the trail, and found myself floundering, up to my chin almost, in the soft snow,

TAKING STORES TO THE CAMP. A SKETCH ON THE ROAD TO SOPHIE MOUNTAIN.

fully expecting to find my horse plunging in on top of me, as I pulled myself out by means of the stirrup-leathers. To the snow succeeded a sticky semi-liquid mud, which was if anything more difficult to get through. If we had not been hampered with our horses, we should have had much less trouble. As it was, it certainly was an ill-timed expedition. We at length reached the camp, and without mishap, luckily.

Two log-built cottages constituted the camp, and in a very few minutes, considering our visit was quite unexpected, we were sitting down to a hot and well-cooked dinner served by a cook resplendent in a white apron and cap, and everything as clean as one could have found anywhere under similar conditions. Every mine in the country, it may be here mentioned, has its own "boarding-house," where the men take their meals at regular hours. The food is prepared by a cook and assistant, specially engaged for the work. A fixed charge of $1 per day is made all through British Columbia, and all miners and employees are bound by their agreement to take their meals here. In some cases, no doubt, where the mine is

situate near a town, the management make money by this arrangement, but where, as at Sophie Mountain, provisions have to be brought a considerable distance, a loss ensues. There is, however, one indisputable advantage for the men—they are certain of hot, clean, and well-cooked meals during the day, and under such conditions they must be in better health and more equal to their work than if they are "pigging it" by themselves, as is the case in most mining camps. At some of the mines they board as many as a hundred and fifty men, and there are several cooks and assistants. The salary of these cooks averages from $45 per month up, and for this they are expected to be adepts at pastry, cakes, etc., as well as ordinary cooking, for the miners get fastidious, and expect something tasty for their dollar.

We spent a portion of the afternoon visiting the Victory and Triumph and Velvet Mines, both of which, though at present little more than good prospects, are considered very promising, and may one day make a big place of the district. The Velvet was the most advanced,

and had her hoisting engine going merrily. The Victory-Triumph is at present merely a tunnel a few hundred feet deep into the side of the mountain some hundreds of feet above the Velvet.

The evening was delightfully warm, and in the valley there was not a trace of snow or mud, so we strolled about under the shadow of the big pines in the genial sunlight, till at last clouds of huge mosquitoes forced us to beat a retreat—a foretaste of summer in these regions with a vengeance. We had accepted the kindly offer of the manager of the Velvet to spend the night at his cottage. The accommodations were certainly rough, but, after the fatigues of the day, we were not difficult to satisfy, and could dispense with feather beds and such luxuries.

Rain fell heavily during the night, and we woke in the morning to learn that the track would be almost impassable. As we had made no arrangements for remaining away any length of time, there was nothing for it but to get back to Rossland as quickly as possible, so, with anything but cheerful anticipations, based upon our recollections

of the previous day, we decided to make a start immediately after breakfast. Rain in the valley meant, of course, heavy snow up on the mountains, and as we proceeded we found, agreeably to our surprise, that this had had the effect of somewhat improving the trail rather than otherwise. Riding our horses was, however, out of the question, so we decided to drive them in front of us, this being less risky than leading them. We thus proceeded cautiously, picking our way step by step, but not without some nasty falls at times. The view from the summit over ranges of snow-clad mountains was wonderfully beautiful, and almost compensated one for the fatigue of the climb. Curiously enough, no rain had fallen on the Rossland slope of the mountains, so we made rapid progress when once below the snow-line, till at last, mud-stained from head to foot, we galloped up the main street of the town, luckily none the worse for our extremely unpleasant twenty-four hours' experience.

A few days after this I received an invitation to join Governor Macintosh and a party of friends who were about to make a trip to some

places of interest in the neighbourhood. It promised to be a delightful excursion, so, having by this time finished my visit to Rossland, I gladly availed myself of so pleasant an excuse to get away.

CHAPTER III.

ROSSLAND TO SPOKANE.

Halcyon hot springs—The sanitarium—Local faith in the Halcyon waters—Pathetic incident—An impressive burial—The town of Nelson—Visit to the Hall Mines' smelter—Nelson to Spokane—A typical Western township.

OUR principal idea in leaving Rossland was that our excursion was to be entirely a pleasure one, and we certainly carried out the programme to the very letter, for from the moment of our departure we never had a dull moment, and were as jolly a party as could well have been imagined. It had been so arranged that, if time permitted, we should prolong the trip as far as Spokane, a smart little town in the United States, just over the border.

Halcyon Springs, a new sanitarium on the Arrow Lakes, was our first halting-place. A night had to be passed in one of the boats I have already

described, and very comfortable did we find the accommodation. At Halcyon are medicinal hot springs, which are said to possess wonderful properties for all diseases of the kidneys and bladder. A big and picturesque hotel, with baths and all the usual appliances of a hydropathic establishment, is being erected on the shore of the lake, and everything got ready for a large influx of visitors and patients.

We were the guests of the doctor in charge, and he used every endeavour to make our short visit an enjoyable one. The place, I may mention, is run by the inevitable syndicate, as every venture nowadays appears to be. There were already a few patients, although the place was still in a very unfinished condition, these hot springs being well known in British Columbia; in fact, for many years past, and long before the present owners had taken the place, pilgrimages were made from all parts to Halcyon. Up on the hillside, where the limpid water bubbles out of the rocks and forms a deep hot pool, are still to be seen two primitive log huts that constituted the hotel and bath-house of the sanitarium in days gone by.

Extraordinary faith is placed in this water, and in connection with this, a pathetic incident occurred during our visit. A sick man arrived by the morning boat. Although evidently very ill, he managed to walk unaided up to the doctor's consulting-room; he was in so weak a state that he could scarcely make himself understood. He explained that he was feeling rather "seedy," and had thought that a few days of the water treatment would put him all right. The doctor on examining him found, to his astonishment, that he was in the last stage of acute pneumonia, and might die at any moment. Within four hours the end came, without any one having been able even to ascertain what his name was or where he came from. He was buried the next evening at sunset, his grave being dug on the mountain side. I have seldom seen anything more impressive in its simplicity than this funeral. There was no clergyman, and as no one knew the burial service, the unknown man was lowered into his grave without a prayer or word of farewell. We all doffed our caps and stood in silent groups as the shovelfuls of earth fell with measured thuds

on the rough coffin, then slowly made our way down again—most of us doubtless the while pondering over the strange vagaries of fate.

From Halcyon Springs we went by boat and train to Nelson, a picturesque little town on the Kootenay River, which has grown rapidly during the past year. A few hours were well spent visiting the big smelter of the Hall Mines. Having followed the operation of extracting the ore from the mine, it was here interesting to watch the various processes by which the gold and silver are separated from the baser metals with which they are so intimately associated in the Kootenay mines. Every car-load of ore tendered at the smelter is sampled and assayed before the Smelting Company purchase it. The sampling of several tons of ore is an art in itself, and an experienced staff of men is employed at all smelters for this sole purpose.

The ore, as it is delivered from the mine, is spread on an iron floor and thoroughly mixed, then it is piled in a circular heap and divided into four quarters; three of these are taken away and stored, the remainder is again thoroughly mixed

and quartered; three of these are removed, and the operation repeated several times, until the quarter becomes so small that it can be conveniently handled on a specially constructed table, where it is pounded and rubbed into a fine powder, which, in its turn, is also mixed and quartered till only a small amount remains, which is consequently an accurate sample of the entire car-load. This sample is divided into two portions, one of which is sealed up and handed to the owner, the other is passed through the assay test, and an approximate value of the ore per ton thus arrived at.

Sample car-loads of ore are frequently sent to the smelter from distant and undeveloped mines at considerable expense; and it is at times, I learnt, most amusing the exaggerated ideas the owners have of the value of their property. I was shown a heap of stuff that had been sent by an old prospector, who was convinced that he had at last struck his lucky star. For he was certain his precious car-load would run at least $1000 to the ton. When he was informed that the assay barely returned $8, his indignation knew no bounds, and, although he had been present at all the operations,

he went about telling every one that he had been swindled! Meanwhile the heap of ore lay waiting another assay.

It is a ten hours' railway journey from Nelson to Spokane, Washington, U.S.A., but this counts as only a short run in these parts, so, as one of our friends lived there and wished to show us the hospitality of his "home," we decided to make the trip there. We certainly were repaid for our decision, for not only was the journey a most interesting one, giving glimpses of river scenery along the mighty Columbia, which for grandeur I have never seen surpassed, but Spokane itself was well worth the visit. It is a typical American western town of some 40,000 inhabitants, with the tall buildings, cable cars, network of overhead wires, and, in fact, all that goes to make up that indefinable "something," which is so characteristic of the hurry and bustle and energy of the States. Apart from this business aspect, in the outskirts of the town, in sylvan surroundings that reminded one of the Old Country, are many evidences of wealth in the way of country houses of astonishing artistic beauty. All these

beautiful "homes" are the work of a local architect of great talent, and almost every conceivable form of architecture and style is represented, from the old English farmhouse, nestling in trees and surrounded by old-time flower gardens, to the modern French château with its terraced parterres. The effect, though obtained in almost all instances by means of wood, is most delightful and original. I was so charmed that I sought the architect with a view to his designing something of the sort for myself in England.

At Spokane are the famous falls of the Spokane River, a magnificent scene, though somewhat marred, for, with the usual American ingenuity, the grand torrent is utilized to supply motor power and electric light for the entire town. Spokane struck me as being a lively enough little place to live in. Like in all Western "camps," life seems to be passed either in business or gambling, and there is every opportunity for both, the latter more especially. Saloons, where faro, poker, klondike, or roulette can be played night or day without intermission, abound all over the place, and

there are stories of big fortunes having been lost in them (I never heard of anything fabulous being won). Apart, however, from these blots, there are several good hotels and restaurants, an excellent theatre (Melba was singing there at the time), smart newspapers, and delightful society. I spent a few days very pleasantly, and was not a little sorry when the time arrived to return to British Columbia and continue my journey towards the North.

CHAPTER IV.

SPOKANE TO VANCOUVER.

A landslide—Destruction of Northport—A curious incident on the line—Slocan city—Sport in the Slocan district—Silverton—Sandon—An interesting trip—Sandon to Vancouver.

OUR party broke up at Spokane, as most of us were going different ways. I had decided to continue my journey to Vancouver through the Slocan district, where were many places of interest well worth a visit, so I had to return to Nelson. My return journey was marked by a characteristic incident—a big landslide had occurred only a few hours previously, and completely blocked the line in a particularly dangerous part, along the top of a high embankment on the river side. Our train ran as close up to it as was deemed safe, the passengers alighted and climbed

over the fallen masses of rock and earth, the baggage was carried across, and we all whiled away the time as best we could whilst waiting for the relief train which would be sent to enable us to continue our journey. A big gang of men,

THE LANDSLIDE.

meanwhile, was vigorously attacking the slide, but it looked like a heavy task removing it.

The little frontier town of Northport had been totally destroyed by fire some three days previously, and when we passed through it the entire population was living in hastily improvised

shelters—a singularly curious scene. Although the ruins were still smouldering, lumber was being rapidly unloaded, and in several instances new houses and shops were already started—dogged energy, thoroughly characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon. Some little distance further, the train suddenly pulled up as we were running alongside a swift mountain stream. A group of men was waiting on the line, holding something, dripping wet and uncanny looking, on a sort of improvised stretcher made of branches. We learned that a man had been drowned here an hour previously, and his body had just been recovered. His mates wished to send it to the nearest town, so it was put in one of the baggage cars; the men climbed in with it, and off we started again.

From Nelson to the Slocan Lake is a branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The line again follows the banks of the seemingly ever-present Columbia River, and passed quite close to the famous Bonnington Falls and rapids, through magnificent scenery. These falls (or rather an infinitesimal drop from them) are being utilized by a company for the electric lighting of Rossland,

some fifteen miles distant, and a big power-house is being erected.

A curious incident occurred as we were going at a good rate, the track being level, with the forest on either side. Two horses had strayed on the line, and frightened at the unearthly shrieking of our engine's double whistle, galloped madly up the permanent way in front of us. Without slackening speed, and with our whistle blowing continuously, we continued on for several miles, the horses meanwhile going strong, and the engine-driver evidently expecting them to leave the track and get into the forest. This, however, they had not the instinct to do, and both were becoming visibly fatigued. The excitement on the train was great. Suddenly, as we were gradually coming up with them, down they both fell. They had fallen through a trestle bridge, and had become jammed right across the line. The train pulled up, and we all expected to find them seriously injured, if not killed; but, curiously enough, they were scarcely scratched, though, of course, absolutely helpless in their strange position. Luckily there were some men working close by, and there

was a supply of rope handy, so it was merely a question of how long it would take to get them extricated and hauled off the line. After some difficulty, this was accomplished, and we were once more able to proceed. We were only an hour late, but this did not deter the conductor of the train from trying his new Winchester rifle from the window of one of the cars, and stopping the engine while he ran back to have a shot at a fine eagle we had passed. (Time was made for slaves, not for trains on a branch line of the Canadian Pacific Railway!)

In spite of its portentous name, Slocan City is but an insignificant little town that has not, up to the present, fulfilled the promise of its birth. It is picturesquely situated at the head of the lake, and may yet turn out a place of some importance, if the mining claims in the immediate neighbourhood do any good.

Here may be said to commence the zone of galena, or silver-lead, which has made the fame of the Slocan district.

A roomy, stern-wheel steamer, belonging to the Canadian Pacific Railway, plies on the Slocan lake

and connects the Sandon and Nakusp lines with the Nelson and Slocan branch. It is a pleasant trip of about three hours. The water, which is intensely blue and of enormous depth, the high mountains rising precipitously on either side, give

SLOCAN CITY.

this comparatively small lake a more impressive aspect than the Arrow Lakes. The fishing here is, I learned, excellent, big trout being frequently caught. Every kind of suitable fly or artificial bait can be purchased in Slocan City. I was shown

a marvellously light and ingenious steel rod which almost tempted me to break my journey for a day. A lot of sport for a rifle or gun can be obtained round the lake, big game being reputed more plentiful here than in any other part of British Columbia. In fact, the grizzlies abound to such an extent, in the spring, that prospectors have actually been driven out of their camps at times by the brutes—one place in particular, called Wilson Creek, having a specially bad reputation for this.

I was told a curious story about a miner in one of the neighbouring mountains, where he and a mate were working a prospecting tunnel. He was returning to work one day, and had got some distance in the tunnel, when he heard footsteps close behind him. Thinking it was his friend, he paid no attention for the moment; when, receiving no reply to a question he put, he turned round and discovered to his horror that a huge bear was following him. To throw pick, shovel, and everything handy at the brute whilst yelling lustily was the impulse of the moment. At the unexpected reception the bear stood up, and in so doing struck its head sharply against the top of the tunnel, at

which, with a growl of rage and pain, it turned round and quickly disappeared.

We stopped over at a little place called Silverton, near which are some good silver-lead mines, having a wish to visit the famous "Galena Farm," a mine recently brought out in England with a huge capital, and in which I am somewhat unfortunately interested.

I thought I might as well, whilst so near, have a look at my property. I spent the night in a really comfortable hotel considering the size of the place, the evening being enlivened by a series of free fights amongst a crowd of miners in the bar, which considerably helped to pass away the time. We took the next day's boat for Roseberry, a town site at the end of the lake, where rail is taken for Sandon.

The town site, though located and cleared some little time back, has not been taken up as yet, and presented a dreary appearance—a "hotel," store, and one well-built dwelling-house constituted the entire town! It was a particularly interesting trip up to Sandon, although I was beginning to get pretty well satiated with scenery by this time.

The line has the steepest gradients I believe possible, five per cent. in many places, necessitating the placing of locomotives in the rear of the train.

Of the many places I visited in British Columbia,

THE MAIN STREET, SANDON, 1896.

Sandon was undoubtedly the most pleasing from an artistic point of view. In fact, I do not remember ever having seen a quainter place. It is built some 3000 feet up, in a narrow gulch not 300 yards in width, and is positively hemmed in by the sides of the high mountains, which have all

the appearance of overhanging it. Its one steep, narrow street reminds one so completely of Switzerland, that it is almost astonishing to find English names written over the shops. This

THE MAIN STREET, SANDON, 1898. PACK TRAIN ABOUT TO START FOR THE MINES.

wonderful little town dates back only three years. At the time of the boom in silver-lead, the extraordinary output of the Slocan mines attracted unusual attention, and Sandon was started and built up, in spite of almost insuperable

difficulties, in an incredibly short space of time. The fortunate locator of the enormously valuable town site, a Mr. J. M. Harris, who is also a big shareholder in the Reco Mine close by, told me he was laughed at when he asked a friend to give him half the recording fee, of a few dollars, for the location, and so share it with him. He therefore paid the whole amount himself. It is impossible to estimate at the present moment what this half share would have been worth. It goes without saying that the prosperity of a mining town depends entirely on the success of the mines on which it lives, so to speak. Such being the case, the future of Sandon appears assured. It is said that one can actually see from the town, and within a short distance, mines that have paid a bigger sum in dividends than all the gold and copper mines of British Columbia put together. This sounds a bold statement, but when one learns that over a million dollars was paid in 1897, it seems more credible.

Amongst the richest of these mines may be enumerated the Payne, Reco, Idaho, and Slocan Star, all of which are quite close to the town.

Snow was, however, still deep on the trails leading to them, so I was unable to pay any of them a visit, and my time was limited unfortunately; but results proved more than anything I could have been shown in the mines themselves. This is distinctly "a poor man's country" as compared to the Kootenay, most of the big Slocan mines having paid their way from the very first day they were opened up. In fact, it is said a child could dig the ore out in most places.

I was informed that the bill for blasting-powder in the district was curiously small in comparison to other parts of the country. In spite of the depreciation of silver, and the fact that the Government imposes a fairly heavy tax on both silver and lead here, exceedingly handsome profits are made out of the Sandon mines, and it is stated they could be worked to pay well even were silver to still further fall in value. As befits so rich a town, Sandon is well provided with hotels. At the one I put up at, the Goodenough, I had a room that, for comfort and furniture, quite equalled the one I occupied at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. It was incredible that barely three

years back this was all virgin forest. A good club-house provides social comforts, whilst a music-hall, run on the usual "mining-camp" line, helps to while away the evening, if the numerous gambling houses do not constitute sufficient

A PACK TRAIN GOING TO THE MINES, SANDON.

attraction. Taking it altogether, I regretted that time did not allow me to remain longer in this interesting place; but I had a big programme to get through, so had to hurry away.

From Sandon to Vancouver was, with the

exception of a short run over a line from Roseberry to Nakusp, on the Arrow Lake, familiar ground. It merely meant returning to Revelstoke, *viâ* Arrowhead, and thus completing the big circle of my tour round the Kootenay. From Revelstoke to Vancouver is a run of about sixteen hours over the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

CHAPTER V.

VANCOUVER TO SKAGUAY.

Preparations for my journey to the Klondike—My canoe—List of baggage and stores—The steamship *Tartar*—From Vancouver to Fort Wrangel—A stroll round the town—The Indian village—The "Opera House"—Wrangel to Skaguay—Utter lawlessness of the district—"Soapy Smith" and his gang—A tragic ending to a disgraceful state of affairs.

VANCOUVER being practically the starting-point for the Klondike, all my preparations for the arduous journey before us had to be made here. This of course necessitated a somewhat long stay, for information had to be obtained as to the best route for getting to Dawson City, transport, food and equipment, together with the host of minor details that are inseparable from an expedition into a comparatively unknown region. After due cogitation and discussions with men who knew the country, I decided to go by what is known as the

Dyea route, being not a little influenced in this decision by the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railway are running a service of two fine liners between Vancouver and Skaguay. The temptation to enjoy the comforts of civilization up to the very last moment was too great to be resisted. My projected route would therefore be as follows —Vancouver to Skaguay; thence to Dyea, a distance of some six miles by a small steamer I learned plied between the two places; from Dyea on foot through the mountains, and across the Chilcoot Pass to the head of Lake Linderman, a distance of 24 miles. From Linderman the 570 miles of waterway to Dawson City begins, a waterway which is beset with dangers and difficulties almost the whole way. This has to be accomplished by boat, and provisions and complete camp equipment have to be taken with one, as, of course, nothing whatever can be purchased *en route.* At Dawson, after visiting the mines, I proposed to catch, if possible, the first river-steamer to St. Michael's connecting with ocean liner for San Francisco.

The question of my boat for the long journey

from the Lakes to Dawson City was one that involved much deliberation. The usual method is to construct one at Lake Linderman—where lumber mills are now in operation and timber for the purpose of boat-building obtainable—but this place in unskilled hands necessitates much delay, so I eventually decided that as we were to travel "light," I would take a large canoe with me from Vancouver, and chance getting it safely to the lake. For the sum of $100 I purchased what is known as a "Strickland," a fairly big and roomy boat, that, I was assured, would carry easily four men and a ton of baggage. This struck me as a bold statement, since her dimensions were only 20 feet by 4 feet, and 2 feet deep; but it eventually turned out to be true, as will be shown later. Included in the price of the canoe were a pair of sculls, three paddles, two poles, a mast and lateen-sail with bamboo gaffs, brass adjustable rowlocks, and a quantity of rope, together with tow, resin, and odd pieces of thin board to make good any damages. When quite complete and in readiness to be shipped on the ocean steamer, *The News*—I had thus christened her—looked a very

serviceable craft indeed, and attracted no little attention and comment.

Now came the more serious question of baggage and provisions, for however much one may think out one's plans beforehand, it is naturally impossible when starting on a journey, through what is almost *terra incognita*, to be at all certain that they will work out as arranged. It was necessary to be prepared for any emergency that might arise. I therefore decided to enlist the advice and services of some "old-timer," who knew the country, and who would act as courier, guide, and general adviser, and was lucky in finding a gentleman who was desirous of returning to the Klondike, and would, in return for his transportation and a moderate sum in cash, act for us in the various capacities above enumerated. This arrangement turned out very well, and Boss proved himself very resourceful and willing during the journey.

My party now consisted of three, and provisions for at least two months had to be taken. As a matter of fact, a police edict had been issued, in which it was announced that no person would be

permitted to cross the boundary unless provided with at least two years' supplies, this extreme measure being taken in view of the distress caused in Dawson last winter in consequence of the large influx of people and the dearth of provisions. Thanks, however, to many letters of introduction with which I was provided, I anticipated no difficulty on this score, more especially as it would be known that mine was to be a flying trip only. A prolonged visit to the extensive stores of the Hudson Bay Company fixed us up with everything that I had been advised to take, and which, combined with our own personal baggage, was just about as much as the canoe would carry. The list may be of interest, so I give it (there was 1600 lbs. weight in all)—

150 lbs. flour.
30 ,, bacon.
30 ,, beans.
17 ,, ham.
20 ,, dried beef.
50 ,, dried fruits.
10 ,, rice.
20 ,, sugar.
10 ,, coffee.
10 ,, butter.
5 lbs. tea.
5 ,, salt.
3 ,, baking powder.
2 doz. small tins sardines.
2 ,, canned meat, pudding, etc.
4 jars jam.
2 doz. tins milk.
1 ,, soups (dried).
1 ,, maggis bouillon.

1 doz. bovril rations.
1 gallon keg Hudson Bay rum.
1 bottle old brandy.
10 × 12 light canvas tent.
Cooking utensils.
1 gross matches.
Tin dutch oven for baking bread.
1 gold pan.
1 shovel.
1 pick.
1 saw.
1 hammer.
1 axe.
Nails.
Canvas bath, bucket, and basin.
Burroughs and Wellcome Medicine Case, containing various drugs in tabloid form.
2 Wolseley valises with cork mattresses and camel-hair sleeping-bags.
Mosquito curtains and head dresses—"Hills" mosquito lotion.
Waterproof ground sheet.
2 suits of clothes with Norfolk jackets—one rough tweed, the other Gabardine.
3 Jaeger flannel shirts apiece.
Jaeger flannel underclothing.
Gauntlet mosquito gloves.
1 pair brown field boots each.
1 „ rubber wading boots.
1 „ ordinary rough shooting.
2 pocket filters.
1 12-bore gun and cartridges.
A Kodak camera.
A fishing-rod with tackle, comprising flies, spoon-bait, landing-net, etc.
Plenty of spare pipes, and 5 lbs. tobacco in tins.

Whilst, besides all these articles, the many small items, without which no Englishman considers it possible to travel (however short a distance), helped to make up what I ventured to consider a very complete outfit; and it was satisfactory to find, on the completion of the journey, that we had not brought any too much, whilst where we had a surplus, as was the case with flour, beans, dried

fruit, etc., we disposed of them easily at very handsome profit. It will be noted that our principal item of food was the national dish of the country, the homely bacon and beans. I was fortunate in getting all my preparations completed in time to catch the *Tartar*, as the attractions of Vancouver had soon been exhausted, and I was anxious to push on with my journey.

At the last moment I was recipient of the two following invitations, which eventually proved of great value. One was from the Chilcoot Aerial Tramway Company, who courteously offered me the free use of their line for the transportation of my canoe and baggage from Dyea to Lake Linderman, with a prior right of way to enable me to get through ahead of anything that might be waiting at their depôt; the other was from the management of a line of steamers which were being constructed on Lake Bennett, and were intended to ply between that point and Dawson City. It was not certain at the time, so the management explained to me, whether the steamers would be ready on my arrival at Lake Bennett. If any one of them was, I was offered transportation for my party and

baggage the entire length of their route. As may be imagined, both of these invitations were invaluable, as will be seen later. Owing to the steamboat line not being in readiness, I was only able to avail myself of the "Tramway" pass. These two invitations were, however, sufficient to prove to me the amount of energy and capital which is being expended in order to make the route I had decided to go by the most popular one.

The distance from Vancouver to Skaguay is 906 miles, the time occupied on the trip being usually a little over four days, which includes a stay of a few hours at Victoria. For small steamers, the route taken is most delightful, passing through narrow fjords and close to numberless islands, the water the whole way being so sheltered as to be always as calm as a mill-pond. Our vessel, being of high tonnage, was forced to take the open sea route a great part of the way. Luckily, there was a dead calm, and the time passed very pleasantly. We were a very small but select crowd, and all bound for the capital of the new Eldorado.

The steamship *Tartar*, which, together with her sister ship the *Athenian*, has been purchased by

the Canadian Pacific Railway from the Union Line, is the once famous mail-boat on the Cape Line. It seems a strange irony of fate that this fine liner, which has carried so many South African millionaires and passed through so many vicissi-

THE SCHOONER "HERA."

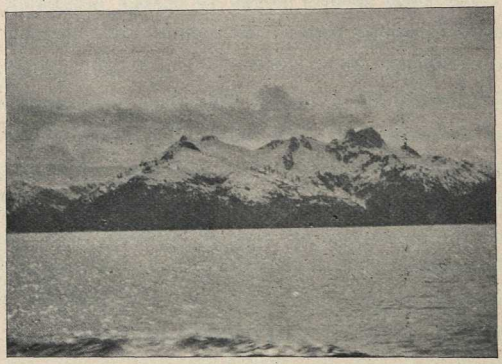
tudes, should end thus on this dreary Arctic coast route, and we were all agreed that she is far too good for the work. However, the accommodation was all that could be desired, so it was hardly fair to find fault. The voyage was uneventful, except that we passed a schooner becalmed and short of

provisions, and which turned out to be the *Hera*, over two months overdue at Seattle and long given up as lost. We gave them some beef, etc., and left them still whistling for the breeze that would not come to waft them home.

The coast scenery began to change noticeably after passing Vancouver Island, and differed considerably from what we had got almost accustomed to in British Columbia. Low ranges of snow-capped rocky mountains rising almost precipitously from the shore gave that indefinable impression of sadness which I have noticed as one of the prevailing features of far-away northern latitudes. The sea, too, appeared to suddenly abound in strange creatures. It was as though we had passed some unmarked zone and entered the region of whales, sun-fish, bottle-nose sharks, and what not.

We stopped for a few hours the third day out at Fort Wrangel, a little American town close to the mouth of the Sitkine river, and which has grown during the past few months from an insignificant Indian fishing village into what may turn out to be a place of some considerable importance, should

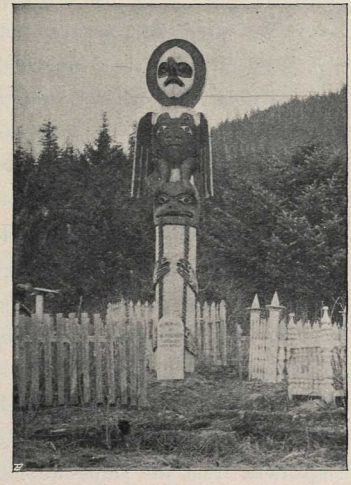
the Sitkine river route to the Klondike turn out as is claimed for it. After what appeared to be much unnecessary delay, during which all light for sketching or photography had gone, we were permitted by the customs officers to land and



COAST SCENE NEAR WRANGEL.

have a look round. The visit was an interesting one, for Wrangel is the quaintest place imaginable. Although the hastily built wooden booths and shops run up by speculative Yankee traders give the place to a great extent the appearance of a fair, there were still many parts where the

Indian village appeared in its primitive condition and where the houses, built on piles, extend over the muddy flat a great distance, with numerous rough canoes drawn up on the beach around.



TOTEM POLE, INDIAN GRAVE-YARD, WRANGEL.

A curious feature of the place is the "Totem" poles which abound in the native quarter. These "poles" are enormous trunks of trees carved with the most fantastic designs—human heads, goblins,

birds, animals, etc.—and showing a sentiment of proportion and a sort of weird talent that is thoroughly in keeping with this strange place. Many Indians sat at the doors of their houses smoking stolidly, and eying us with absolute indifference as we wandered round and did the sights. One wonders what they must think of their solitude so rudely disturbed by this sudden inrush of "pale faces," which, as it were, threatens their very existence in these parts.

Wrangel, of course, presents all the usual features of a new American town, utter lawlessness being its principal characteristic. Shooting was of frequent occurrence and passed unchecked, and, judging from the ill-favoured looking ruffians one saw hanging about the numerous gambling saloons, it was easy to imagine what would happen if one fell into their hands. On remarking this to one of our companions from the ship—we had gone in a big party—he informed us that Wrangel was "not in it" with Skaguay, which had the unenviable reputation of containing the biggest crowd of "toughs" on American soil.

Still, Wrangel was not without its amusing side,

as we found out when we visited its "Opera House"—a canvas-covered frame-shanty in a back block, and where a sort of music-hall entertainment was in progress. The place was constructed with "boxes" on the upper floor, where between the turns, the fair (or otherwise) "artistes" congregated. Our appearance created no little commotion amongst them, for it was evidently regarded as an influx of business, and we were immediately escorted to the "best box" by quite a bevy of songstresses and dancers of various ages, though mostly on the shady side of thirty. The ladies at these shows get a percentage on all drinks sold through their endeavours, so it may be imagined we were not suffering from thirst whilst in the establishment. The appearance of the auditorium certainly did not recall memories of anything one had seen anywhere before. It was evidently not a "big night," for the audience was not a full one, and several gentlemen in the stalls were lying fast asleep full length on the floor, whilst others in the boxes sat in their shirt-sleeves and with their legs dangling over the edge, and otherwise enjoying themselves in their own

individual way, regardless of what is prudishly called propriety in England. There was no attempt at scenery, and the performances were particularly feeble, so we soon tired of it, in spite of the blandishments of the fair houris surrounding us, and made our way back to the *Tartar*, which was due to sail in the early hours of the morning.

Skaguay was reached some four and twenty hours later. The harbour is quite enclosed between high hills, and can scarcely be seen from the outside. The town itself is built on a good flat site some short distance back, and is connected with the landing-stage by several very long wooden piers. It presented a very picturesque and animated appearance the morning of our arrival, as several steamers were unloading and many people were about. Work on the wharves and piers was evidently being diligently prosecuted, and everything being put in readiness for the railway which is shortly to be started. The town itself is a typical specimen of what the American can do in record time. In fact, it is difficult to realize that it is barely four months old. The streets are well graded, sidewalks laid, and it has

the telephone and electric lighting. It has every indication of becoming an important business centre in the near future.

I was told a story in connection with the town site which is interesting, if only as serving to prove the lawlessness of these far-away corners

SKAGUAY.

of the great United States and the apparent apathy in Washington of the officials connected with their administration. It appears the present town site was staked and located by one William Moore some ten years ago. All the necessary steps were taken to ensure his rightful tenure; surveys were made, the improvements, and, in fact, all

done that the law demands, as is proved by the fact that documents to this effect exist in triplicate and are registered at Sitka and Washington. In spite of all these precautions, no sooner did the town site of Skaguay show signs of becoming really a town of some importance than a band of land pirates arrived, headed by a noted scoundrel named Soapy Smith, and actually seized the entire property of Mr. Moore, together with all buildings, etc. These thieves then actually started a town council, of which they constituted themselves members, laid out the town, sold lots, and dealt with the ground as though it was really theirs. It seems well nigh incredible that such a state of affairs could be possible under United States Government, but so it is. Moore has, of course, placed the matter in the hands of competent lawyers, and all the documents were, together with counsels' opinion, shown to me. Up to the present, however, nothing has resulted, and, with the roguery and corruption in the place, it seems doubtful how soon it will be settled, or what the result will be in either case. It goes without saying that the property, which comprises 160

acres, is at the present of great and growing value. Moore himself estimates it at $500,000.

This is but one instance of the lawlessness prevailing in Skaguay, where, up to the present, no attempt at enforcing law or order has been made. Strangers are frequently held up in broad daylight and openly robbed, and a foul murder of a woman had taken place the night before our arrival, and the murderer, who was known, was walking about the place unmolested. Half the Americans we spoke with made no secret of their regret that the town was not under the English flag, because then they would be sure their property would be protected from the ruffians hanging round the neighbourhood.

Since writing the above, I learn from a San Francisco paper that vigorous measures have been taken to end this disgraceful state of affairs. The gang of ruffians, which had been practically holding Skaguay under a sort of reign of terror, has been effectually broken up, and the leader, Soapy Smith, has paid with his life for his many crimes. The killing of this arch-desperado occurred at an indignation meeting held by the

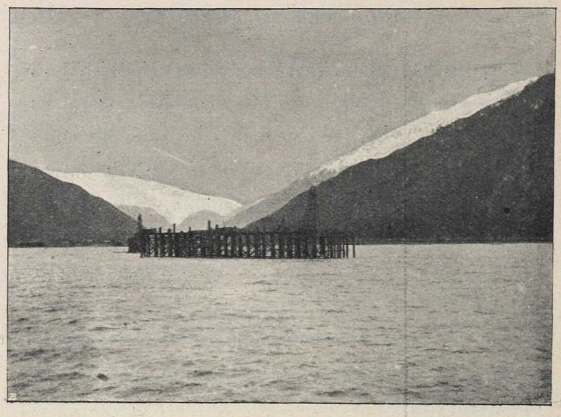
law-abiding portion to discuss the latest act of lawlessness of the band—a returned Klondiker having been "held up" and robbed of some $4000. Soapy Smith, on hearing of this meeting, became mad with rage, and rushed down to the wharf, where it was being held, positively armed to the teeth, thinking to overawe the crowd as usual. But he was out of his reckoning at last. He was met by an old enemy of his, one Frank Reid. Some free shooting immediately ensued, during which both men were hit. Smith was killed instantly, while Reid lingered in the hospital for about two weeks, when he died. Immediately after the affray there was a "round up" in the middle of the main street. A vigilance committee was formed to enforce law and order; then the entire town was surrounded by determined citizens armed with rifles, and a regular "man hunt" was started to capture every one of the Soapy Smith gang, alive or dead. This was successfully accomplished, and in a short time not one of the blackguards was at large in the place.

Many curious and almost incredible facts have since transpired as to the methods of Smith and

his gang. It appears that his favourite scheme was to put up bogus business premises in different parts of the town. The usual signs and insignia of trade gave to these places an air of respectability and genuineness which was calculated to completely deceive the new-comer. Some of these buildings would be called "Information Bureaux," others "Pack-train Offices," "Cut-rate Ticket Offices for Dawson," and so forth. Whatever they were, it goes without saying that the advantages offered were greater than at the actual business houses of the town. On the arrival of a steamer, Smith would detail certain of his gang to be on the wharf to pick out likely "pigeons" amongst the new arrivals. In fact, so cleverly planned was this conspiracy of thieves, that often there would be one or two members of the gang on board who had made the trip to Victoria and back with the sole object of making acquaintances amongst the unsuspecting passengers. (Such an incident actually happened on the *Tartar*.) Once on shore, the victim would, of course, be easily induced by his newly found friends to give the preference to one of the so-called bureaux, if he

had freight to pack or required information as to route, etc. Once in the office and surrounded by the gang, Soapy Smith, who was from all accounts as smooth-tongued and plausible a villain as possible, would conduct negotiations. Then when all was arranged, a small deposit would be asked for—as a sign of good faith, "just to prove that the business would not be given elsewhere." As the unsuspecting victim took out his pocket-book or purse, one of the gang would snatch it from him. Immediately one of the bystanders would pretend to get very indignant, and swear he would not stand by and see a man robbed. A scuffle would ensue, in the course of which the unfortunate victim would be "accidentally" knocked down, and perhaps severely injured, and by the time he had recovered himself, the man who had robbed him of course had got away. This sort of thing took place time after time in broad daylight, and as the entire town, as I have described, was practically in the possession of this gang, no redress whatever was possible, the United States Government not having deemed it necessary to take steps to represent law and

order in the place. At last, however, flesh and blood would stand it no longer, and the citizens have accomplished what their Government should have done for them. From the latest information it appears that the town was under military rule, a detachment of United States troops under Captain Yeatman having tardily, though opportunely, arrived on the scene. Skaguay, which is practically the gate to the Klondike, may therefore now have a chance of becoming a prosperous and peaceful town.



DYEA.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM SKAGUAY TO THE SUMMIT OF THE CHILCOOT PASS.

Skaguay to Dyea—Dyea to Cañyon City—The Trail—Our travelling companions—Cañyon City—Sheep Camp—The Chilcoot Pass Aërial Tramway—The ascent of the Chilcoot Pass—Impressions of the scenery—The summit—The North-West Mounted Police camp.

WE only remained long enough to get our baggage through the customs, then took the ferry boat for Dyea, six miles distant, a pleasant little run

through lake-like scenery into a completely land-locked bay on which stands the town. The water is so shallow that carts come some distance into the water, and back right up against the boat that lands passengers from the ferry. Dyea consists of one long, dusty, straggling street of wooden and canvas shanties, and is nearly two miles in length. It can boast of a fairly good hotel for a place of its description; in fact, it is reputed the best north of Victoria. We were not long afterwards in realizing that this was no fictitious reputation, and often had occasion to wish for even its meagre comforts. There was some unexpected delay in getting our things over from Skaguay, so I decided, rather than waste time in this uninteresting place, to go on ahead with Harris, and leave Boss behind to follow up with the canoe and baggage. The Chilcoot Aërial Tramway, though not starting until Cañyon City, some seven miles further on, practically commences at Dyea, as the company takes over goods here and includes in their charges portage by waggon the intervening distance. I therefore felt we were running no undue risk in leaving our equipment

to follow. Quite an organized line of waggonettes and other vehicles run from Dyea to the foot of the mountains at Cañyon City, thus saving what would have proved a very tedious and irksome walk, as we soon discovered. For the sum of one dollar we got seats in quite a smart trap, with good cushions and springs, and an awning to protect one from the almost tropical sun.

We started at 9 a.m., our two game horses dashing through the long street of the town in blissful ignorance of the tough journey in store for them. We had two fellow-passengers, a middle-aged man and a Jewish youth of about eighteen. Both, as it turned out, were characters in their way. Travelling makes strange bed-fellows, and probably nowhere more so than here. Mr. Hart, the older of the two, was an undertaker by profession, about to start a branch establishment at Dawson City; and the youth was making his way to the same place, with three big piles of American newspapers of more or less recent date, which, he informed us, he hoped to sell by degrees on the way, and so pay his expenses "and perhaps a bit besides." This sounded a big proposition till we

learned that he charged fifty cents a copy! Fancy paying two shillings for an out-of-date newspaper! Yet they were greedily snapped up by different inn-keepers as we went along. We eventually lost sight of the youngster as he plodded after us, later on in the mountains, but, to our no little astonishment, he turned up smiling one morning, a month after, in Dawson! We eventually ran across him again working his passage home to America on board the steamer, having sold all his papers, paid his way, and with $250 in his pocket, as he proudly told me! That boy ought to get on in the world.

But to return to our journey. The road, after leaving Dyea, passed through a broad, smiling valley, that looked very beautiful in the glory of its spring verdure in the bright morning sunlight. By degrees, however, we realized that the idiosyncrasies of the "road" would debar us in a measure from enjoying the scenery as we should have wished to, for in a short while we were travelling over a rocky track that could not, by the wildest stretch of the imagination, be denominated a "road." Our light vehicle, which was quite

unfitted for such work (it came direct from the streets of Victoria, I learned), rocked and heaved about from boulder to boulder, till one expected at any moment something or all would give way, we the while clinging as though for dear life to the

ON THE ROAD TO CAÑYON CITY.

backs of the seats, and bracing ourselves with our knees so as not to be thrown out. Nor was this the worst, for we shortly reached a wide shallow stream, which we afterwards had to continually ford and re-ford, the water in many places rising as high as the floor of the carriage, and rushing

past at such a speed as to threaten to overturn us as we rose and fell over the rocky bottom. It would have been fairly amusing had it not been for the idea of getting the contents of one's sketching-bag and kodak ruined. These seven miles certainly appeared the longest drive I ever made, and it was with no slight feelings of relief that I learned we had at length reached our destination, though I saw no signs of a city anywhere.

Cañyon City is the high-sounding appellation of a small collection of rough wooden shanties and tents. The indiscriminate use of the word "city" out in the far West is very misleading till one gets used to it. Then one never expects to find much more than a primitive village, and is seldom disappointed. We drove up to "Cañyon City" Hotel, a hut somewhat larger than the others, where we proposed to "lunch" before continuing our journey on foot towards the pass. It may be imagined our repast was not an extravagant one, though the price charged for the unappetizing food put before us would have paid for a nice little *déjeuner* at many a London restaurant. This, however, it may be mentioned in parenthesis, was but the beginning

of a rising scale of exorbitant charges that culminated with great *éclat* on the Klondike. We had found our undertaker fellow-traveller quite a genial fellow, and an old inhabitant of the district to boot, so as he was going our way and was agreeable to moderate his "old-timer" pace to our "tenderfoot" gait, we arranged to proceed together. To this happy arrangement was doubtless due the excellent distance we covered that afternoon and evening.

Our next halting-place was Sheep Camp, another little mountain camp-station. It was a pretty stiff up and down climb, with much mud in places, but we did it in good time. The Aërial Tramway ran alongside the trail most of the way, so we had an opportunity of admiring its wonderfully ingenious workmanship, whilst not a little regretting that human freight could not be taken by it. An aërial tramway is a steel moving cable, hung on trestles: on this cable run at intervals "buckets," slung by means of grooved wheels; these buckets carry the freight. By this means a portage is established that is not in any way affected by the conditions of the ground it

traverses, its sole inconvenience being that the line of buckets has occasionally a knack of sticking in awkward places, often high up in mid-air when crossing ravines or valleys, and thus causing long delays. It will, therefore, be understood how it is passengers cannot be taken by this method. By a curious coincidence we reached Sheep Camp just as our canoe, slung between two buckets, passed majestically through. As ill luck would have it, the kodak was not handy, as it would have made a most novel snapshot.

Leaving Sheep Camp, the trail led along a mountain-valley full of huge rocks, over which one had to climb and scramble as best one could. It was like the seashore, though fortunately not slippery. We were nearing the dreaded Chilcoot Pass, and snow now began to show around us as we slowly ascended. Almost imperceptibly we entered the realms of winter, and very soon had lost all trace of vegetation. Snow-clad mountains towered around, their precipitous sides crowned by enormous glaciers that appeared to threaten destruction at any moment, whilst looming ahead, and looking almost perpendicular as one saw it

foreshortened by its acute perspective, was the dreaded summit of which so much has been written and said during the past year. At the foot of the steep ascent a huge snow-slide almost blocked the way, the narrow trail being actually cut through it. This was the scene of the awful disaster in the early spring of this year when so many pilgrims to the new Eldorado were suddenly overwhelmed, and perished under its icy pall. The scene and its association was undoubtedly a weirdly impressive one, and kept one awestruck for some minutes. Here in those times, when everything had to be packed over the summit by Indians at so much per lb., was a huge weighing-machine, which gave the place the name of "the Scales," an appellation that has stuck to it since, though the actual scales have since disappeared.

From the Scales to the summit of the pass is not a great distance, probably not more than a thousand yards, but, owing to its terrific angle, is about as fatiguing a climb as could well be imagined. Without exaggeration I should say the angle must be about 45°. A thin rope-line has been fixed to posts the greater part of the way to

enable the carriers to pull themselves up the series of steep steps in the deep snow that have been formed by the thousands of persons who have passed this way during the last twelve months. I personally was very glad to make use of this

LOOKING UP THE CHILCOOT PASS. SHOWING AËRIAL TRAMLINE ON TOP.

welcome, though icy-cold, safeguard, for I am subject to vertigo, and a false step or sudden look down the abyss behind me might have resulted in serious mishap. By dint of stolid plodding, with an occasional pause to take breath, we reached the

summit in about half an hour from leaving the Scales, and were glad to avail ourselves of some rocks on comparatively level ground to have a rest and look round.

The view was simply magnificent, and I have rarely seen anything to equal, and certainly never anything to surpass it. Where the sun had just set the sky was a blazing glory of red, which gradually merged into tender opalescent tints till on the opposite horizon it finally merged into the most delicate grey-blue, against which the distant snow-clad peaks stood out in faint relief. At our feet, spread like some vast panorama against a background of mountain peaks, and stretching far away till lost in the gathering twilight of the valley, lay the Chilcoot Pass, looking strangely quiet and deserted, save for an occasional speck here and there that betokened some other pilgrims slowly making their way towards the summit and his possibly golden goal. How small and insignificant as seen at this height and in comparison to these glorious mountains, like one's poor little human ambitions as compared with the infinity of time!

This deserted aspect of the pass was the more remarkable, for only a few short weeks previously, from all accounts, it had been as animated a scene as possible, no less than 22,000 people having gone across the summit during the winter in a continuous stream, the whole valley being crowded with tents and rough shelters. This mountain solitude must have then presented the appearance of some vast winter fair, with stoves, saloons, and, in fact, everything to tempt the new arrivals to part with their ready money. The American "shellman," the prototype of our English thimble-rigger and three-card sharpers, were here (and, in fact, all along the American side of the trail) in their hundreds, and many a foolish youth found himself completely fleeced of his little all, and forced to turn back before he had actually started, as it were. It is with no little feeling of legitimate pride that one learns that once across the summit, which marks the frontier line between Alaska and the British North-West Territories, not any of these rascals dared show their tricks, except at a risk they did not as a rule care to run, for such curs have no backbone,

and they knew they were on British territory, and that even the meanest of their victims was under the protection of the handful of North-West Mounted Police encamped just beyond the line. The ragged old Union Jack, waving above the half-dozen wretched tents in this far-away British outpost, was doubtless a glad sight to both English and American alike, for it betokened law and order and bad business for all who might attempt to defy it.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUMMIT OF THE CHILCOOT PASS TO LINDERMAN.

Inspector Belcher of the North-West Mounted Police—An amusing incident—Lakes Crater, Long, and Deep—"Happy Camp"—An awkward adventure on Deep Lake—A sledge ride—The Alaska sledge-dog—From Deep Lake to Linderman.

WE were undoubtedly very fortunate in getting such delightful weather at the summit, for it is more usual, I believe, to get dense mists, which completely block out the magnificent view. I had a letter of introduction to Inspector Belcher, the officer in command of the police detachment here, so we stopped at his quarters for a few minutes' rest and a chat. Every one passing this way from the American side has to stop here while his baggage is examined, the North-West Mounted Police acting as the Dominion Customs officials

at this point. All duties charged are paid to them, a very big sum having been thus collected during the rush. It may be mentioned that the North-West Mounted Police collect the customs at all the principal points along the line. We found Inspector Belcher "at home," if a rough canvas shanty can be so called, and he expressed himself delighted to see us, accentuating his cordial reception by producing almost immediately a big jar of Canadian whisky, and making us help ourselves liberally to keep out the cold. What a delightfully constituted temperament to be able to retain such good humour (I was almost saying "spirits") when forced to live in such an awful spot as this bleak summit of a mountain pass in far-away Alaska! I envied him when I remembered how little it takes to make most of us grumble when in the midst of comfort and plenty. I had decided to push on without delay, and, if we could manage it, reach Lake Linderman before morning. The bracing air of the mountains acted like a strong tonic, and one felt curiously less fatigued than one would have done after

such an arduous walk in a different climate. So, after a short rest, we bade good-bye to our genial host, and started off, feeling much refreshed, and at a good swinging pace, downhill towards the lake.

CHILCOOT PASS, SEEN FROM CRATER LAKE.

The snow and ice on the other side of the summit proved but a foretaste of what we had in store for us for the next six miles. It was as though one had been suddenly transported to the heart of Siberia in the middle of winter. At the

foot of the declivity we were descending lay a large lake, still held hard and fast in the icy grasp of the Arctic winter, whilst near and far as eye could reach its snowy pall stretched unbroken till lost in shadowy distance. Close by a man was vainly struggling with a sled heavily packed with goods. On the steep hillside the sled kept overturning time after time in the deep snow as he attempted to guide it down the course. Taking compassion on his helplessness, we helped him adjust it several times, when suddenly it started off unexpectedly as I was holding on behind, and down the hill we both went at a breakneck pace, the man vainly trying to act as a brake in front, whilst I was dragged along on my stomach, endeavouring the while to check the speed with the toes of my boots. The finale may be imagined. At the foot of the hill the sled completely overturned, the man and I being thrown by the impetus into a drift of snow, where we both laughed heartily at this unexpected bit of tobogganing. Harris and Hart meanwhile had been coming along more soberly, and soon rejoined me.

The track lay across the lake, or rather along the middle of it, and was well defined on the thick ice by the footsteps of the many men and animals that had traversed it. Whilst crossing we passed some men packing goods on sledges with sails fixed to them, presenting a curious effect in the distance of boats sailing across. There was a stiffish breeze blowing, so they were getting along pretty well, though constantly delayed by their sleds overturning, as they had no outriggers to them. We had now three lakes, named Crater, Long, and Deep, to cross, six long miles on the ice all the way. It was well on into the early hours of the morning and freezing hard, with a biting cold wind that seemed to get through into one's very marrow, for we were absolutely unprepared for this sudden transition from genial spring temperature to arctic cold, and had not even gloves or overcoats with us. There was nothing for it but to walk as fast as possible to keep ourselves from freezing entirely, when we fortunately met some people who gave us the joyful intelligence that we were close to a "restaurant." Oh, the

visions the mere word raised! So we hurried on faster than ever, and soon were rewarded by the sight of a dim light ahead on the far bank of the lake. We naturally hesitated a few minutes before leaving the beaten track to cross unknown ice, but the temptation of something hot and cheering proved irresistible, so through the deep snow we plunged. The place appeared much further than it really was, for in the distance and the darkness it gave the impression somehow of a big, well-built place. Imagine our disappointment to find only a tent lighted dimly by a candle. Inside was a long sort of counter spread with iron cups and plates, and behind it a man was standing over a wretched little stove making coffee. The aspect was wretched in the extreme, the thin tent merely serving to keep out the wind, not the cold. We were, however, glad to get even a cup of so-called coffee, for it was at any rate hot, and to a certain extent comforting. This and a slice or two of coarse bread and butter, and a plate of tinned beef, made up a supper that was perhaps more filling than satisfying, but as even this was more

than we had expected to find on the way, we could not grumble.

I had a talk with the man meanwhile, and learned the place was called "Happy Camp;" that he had his wife and youngest children with him in an adjoining tent. They had come into the country during the winter, and, provided he could make enough money on the way, his idea was to get up to Dawson. But, unfortunately, there was not much to be made where he then was. It cost too much to get his supplies, wood alone being five cents a pound! One wondered at the strange fascination of gold that it could reconcile a man, and, for the matter of that, his wife also, to come and eke out a miserable existence in such an awful place as this, on the mere chance of perhaps some day satisfying their avaricious desires, and also so far make them forget their natural instincts as to bring children with them to share their awful hardships. Our meal was not dear considering all things, and can have left him but little profit after paying expenses.

We hurried on as soon as possible, Hart leading

the way, and taking what he evidently thought a short cut across the ice to the track. Unfortunately, however, Harris, who was following him, did not trouble to follow exactly in his footsteps, with the result that we suddenly heard a loud exclamation, and he disappeared up to his waist through a rotten piece of ice. Fortunately he managed to scramble out with nothing worse than getting his legs wet, the thickness of the ice preventing him from going deeper into the water. There was nothing for it but to grin and bear it as a bit of ill luck incidental to such a journey.

Both Crater and Long Lakes were still frozen hard, and showed no signs of breaking-up, but Deep Lake had already begun to crack some days before, I had been informed. We reached the foot of it as day was dawning, to find that matters were somewhat worse than we had feared, for all along the shore the ice had opened out and large pools of water were forming. The track still, however, was used, for we could see sledges crossing on the centre of the lake. Neither Harris nor I had any desire to get unnecessarily wet, and so we told

Hart; but he was for pushing on as quickly as possible, so argued that if sledges could get across we could, and at any rate he intended to try, as it was only 3½ miles to Linderman, and he was ready for bed. We followed him to the edge of the water to see how he would get across to the dry ice, and intending to follow if he did not get very wet. The water was only on the surface and he managed to get through a short distance without much difficulty; then seeing a tree-trunk lying on the surface near him, he made for that as a next move as the water was getting deeper. Just as he reached it and was in the act of stepping on to it, the ice under him gave way, and he went into the water backwards, getting completely drenched. It was luckily not more than three feet deep, so he got out easily and on to the trunk; then without hesitation, and evidently regardless of what might happen next, he plunged and squelched through the rotten ice till he reached the track and scrambled on to it. Standing there dripping wet in the freezing air of the early dawn, with no means whatever of drying his soaked clothes,

he looked a pitiable object, and we both felt heartily sorry for him. He called out to us to follow him, that it was "nothing;" but we did not feel like taking a cold bath just then, and told him so, whereupon he said that he intended hurrying across as quickly as possible so as not to catch cold standing about, and laughingly adding he would meet us at Linderman, he strode quickly off.

We looked at each other wondering what was the best thing to do. The situation was an unpleasant one. We had been walking with scarcely any rest since two o'clock the previous day, twelve good hours, and here we were stranded at daybreak at a place where all was snow and ice, and not a sign of any other trail to our destination but the one across the lake, and not a soul in sight to direct us. Harris, whose teeth were chattering with the cold, his legs not being dry yet, was all this while muttering something about it "not being good enough," and naming the fabulous sums he would have given to be back in his luxurious chambers in Down Street, Piccadilly, when suddenly Providence came to our rescue in the shape

of two men with dog-sledges. They were "freighters," and immediately an idea occurred to me, and, going up to the leader, I asked him if he would put us both across the lake on the sledges for a consideration. After looking at the ice for a few minutes, he replied that if it could be done he would. Both he and his mate went forward and cautiously probed the rotten ice and water, then fetching axes from the sledges, they went and cut down some small trees near, and made a sort of impromptu corduroy road across the wet part, whilst avoiding as much as possible the deeper water. Then one sledge went across first to test the work, the dogs going very gingerly indeed, and taking ridiculously careful steps. They knew what they were about evidently, and what it meant to have a heavy sledge sink whilst they were harnessed to it. However, it got across safely, so the man told us to sit on the next one and he would take us across the lake for a dollar, and over we went without further incident. It was certainly very cold sitting in the cramped position necessary for keeping one's balance on a

dog-sledge, but it gave us a few minutes' welcome rest.

The dogs were of all sorts and conditions, from the Indian dog of the country to the ordinary mongrel retriever, most of them in splendid condition, and with shoulders wonderfully developed from constant pulling. Poor brutes! they got little but kicks and blows in return for their hard work, for, as a rule, their owners treat them with ferocious cruelty when they fancy they are lagging. Yet in spite of all they are gentle and affectionate brutes, except amongst themselves, for when not working they seem to live for fighting. It was no great distance across the lake, and we soon reached the opposite bank. The ice had not broken here, so we got ashore without further mishap, and hurried along the trail again, hoping to make our destination in a very short time, as we both felt an unconquerable feeling of fatigue coming over us, and which was difficult to shake off, a sort of impulse to lie down and sleep anywhere. But there was nothing for it but to plod steadily on.

The track, after leaving the lake, appeared to

our tired feet to become worse and worse, at one time deep snow, then rock after rock, over which we had to clamber, Harris meanwhile becoming more and more unconsciously humorous with fatigue, if such a condition is physically possible, and was evidently mad with himself for being here at all. At length this muttering to himself resulted in his offering as high as £50 if he were only in bed in the "hotel" at Linderman. Poor chap, his hopes were destined to be rudely shattered when we eventually reached the so-called "hotel;" but of this anon.

Why the last two miles of a journey to a place one does not know always appear the longest is inexplicable. In our case they apparently trebled themselves, and, although we were lucky in meeting two genial fellows who were going our way, the distance from Deep Lake to Linderman seemed to us considerably undermeasured. At last, on reaching the top of a long hill, there lay stretched at our feet, though some distance below, a large placid sheet of water, looking like a huge piece of rose-coloured silk spread between the mountains. At the point nearest

us on a promontory of flat shore was a huge conglomeration of white tents, looking like a flock of seagulls on a distant beach. This was Linderman.

LINDERMAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

LINDERMAN AND BENNETT.

The "hotel" at Linderman—First experience of a bunk-house—Boat-building—A wonderful scene—The *coup d'œil* Linderman—From Linderman to Bennett—Bennett—Shooting the rapids—Arrival of our baggage—Our Jap cook—Packing the canoe—The start for Dawson.

DOTTED in and about the tents and along the shore were numerous strange-looking yellow objects. As we got nearer these took definite shapes, and I saw they were boats in various stages of construction. It certainly was a curious and withal weird sight, this sleeping city of tents, for at least 10,000 people must have been encamped there. Many hopes lay dormant in that confused mass of white canvas. How many were to be realized?

A somewhat steep climb downhill brought us into the town itself. All was deserted. It was

half-past three in the morning, and at that early hour few sensible people are about even at Linderman. Without delay we set about looking for the "Hotel Linderman" to which our friends of the road had directed us. After a little trouble we found it, a fairly large log cabin, but in vain we knocked and hammered at the door; there was no response. They must have heard us, for we made enough noise to wake up the whole place. Then we tried another place opposite, a sort of big tent structure with a high-sounding name written over the door. Again without success. We looked at each other wondering what to do. This was something we had certainly not bargained for. Just then a man came along, and, on my explaining our predicament, he volunteered to take us somewhere where we could get beds, and led us round to the back entrance of another canvas house called the "Dawson Hotel," and, knocking at the door, it was soon opened by a sleepy-looking, half-awakened individual, who said he had luckily just room for us. So in we went, delighted to be so near really going to bed at last; but our joy was soon over when we saw the interior.

It was a very large place, and down the centre and reaching up to the slant of the roof was a big structure with four double sections of four tiers of bunks, these bunks being formed by canvas stretched from side to side. Along one side was

INTERIOR OF THE LINDERMAN BUNK-HOUSE, AND ONE OF THE LADY LODGERS.

another half section, making in all forty-eight sleeping-places, all of which were occupied except the two we had just secured. In one corner of this bunk-room was the kitchen, or rather a place where cooking went on, and alongside it three or

four iron basins on a narrow shelf represented the toilet accommodation. Beyond the kitchen was the dining-room, with a sort of high counter like one sees in the cheapest workmen's eating-houses in England. Over the filthy floor round the bunks were scattered boots in all stages of wear, whilst on the woodwork hung dirty garments that would have in most cases reflected discredit on an average coal-heaver in London. I did not dare to catch Harris's eye for a moment, for I knew what he would say; but I will confess that in all my varied experiences of roughing it all over the world, I never struck anything so utterly repellent as this Linderman bunk-house. I learned afterwards it was perhaps a shade better than the average of these places, and which are the sole hotels of the country at present.

It was no time for making compliments, so there was nothing for it but to turn in, as the proprietor was evidently anxious to get back to his bed, and was waiting for his money for the night's accommodation. So we paid him the fifty cents each he asked, and in return got two doubtful-looking blankets apiece. To climb up and throw

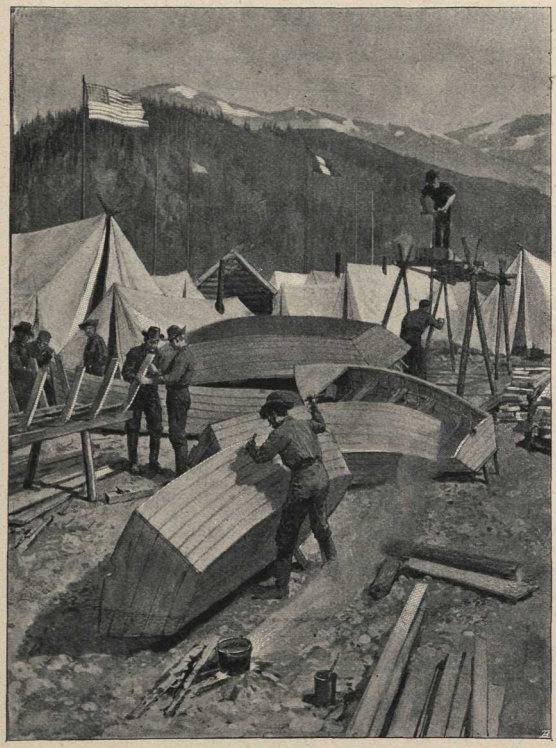
ourselves into our bunks without troubling even to undress was the work of a few seconds, so tired were we, and almost instantly we were in the land of sleep.

The sun was high up when we woke, so we had the place nearly to ourselves, most of the lodgers being away at their various vocations. We had a sort of a "lick and a promise" wash, for the towels were on a par with the rest of the establishment, and it was impossible to get others even by paying for them. The proprietor, in fact, seemed annoyed and surprised at my suggesting they were not quite so clean as they ought to be, mentioning somewhat testily that I was the first of his lodgers to complain, and adding, as though to convince me of the injustice of my demand, that over thirty people had already used them.

After a rough breakfast, we strolled round the town. I certainly was prepared for a busy scene, but certainly nothing to equal what was before me. It almost baffles description. All along the shore and to some distance up the side hills, boat-building was being carried on with quite feverish activity, and the sound of a steam saw-mill, whip-

saws, and hammering and planing, resounded on all sides. Boats there were in all imaginable shapes and sizes, from big unwieldy barges to tiny craft that reminded one of the paper boat dear to childhood. It was, indeed, a wonderful sight. Many of the boats were being constructed with great skill, and were evidently the production of practical boat-builders, whilst others were little better than flat open boxes fitted with thwarts and thole-pins. There was a remarkable resemblance between the boats, as though they were mostly built on one stock pattern. Curiously enough, not a single one had a rudder, nor do I remember seeing one anywhere on the journey.

The lumber for all this building was brought from the neighbouring hills, and could be purchased all ready cut in planks, if the men could afford it and did not feel equal to cutting up the trunks themselves with whip-saws. There were also professional boat-builders who would build one a boat outright. In fact, they had several ready for sale at fairly reasonable prices considering, and even these were considerably reduced in consequence of competition. I saw well-



BOAT-BUILDING, LINDERMAN.

built boats capable of holding three or four men, and two tons of provisions, etc., for $75. They could not have cost much less to build. Apart from these home-made craft, there were Peterborough and Strickland canoes, steel boats built in sections, collapsible boats, punts, and, in fact, almost anything fit for the long river journey, on sale all along the principal thoroughfare. The animation of the scene can be more easily imagined than described.

The crowds of people were as remarkable as their surroundings. All the nations of the world seemed represented, and it was quite a Babel of tongues to be heard. The costumes were most picturesque and of the most varied colours and descriptions. Many women were to be seen elbowing their way through the throng of swarthy-bearded men, several of these ladies even in this rough camp making some instinctive attempt at coquettish display, although the coarse, uncouth costume necessary for the rough trip did not as a rule lend itself to graceful styles. I saw one very pretty girl with a straw hat and veil, yellow oil-skin coat cut to fit her figure, blue overall short

skirt and high-top boots, and brown kid gloves, who looked as though dressed for some scene from an opera comique. These splashes of colour helped considerably to give animation to the curious *coup d'œil*, which was still further heightened by the numerous pack trains of horses, mules, and donkeys constantly passing through.

Our baggage got delayed at the summit in consequence of some slight breakdown on the aërial tram-line, so I decided to wait its arrival here before proceeding further. There were several nice fellows in the place whom we had met before, and in their genial society we managed not a little to forget the discomfort of our lodgings and the coarseness of the food. In this far-away and wild region, it was impossible to judge of men by their outward garb, for the rough clothing and the unshaven beard not unseldom hid the university graduate or old-country gentleman, and in their pleasant company many an hour that would otherwise have but tediously passed, slipped away unnoticed midst intelligent mirth and witty repartee.

After a couple of days' delay, Boss turned up

with the welcome intelligence that the canoe and the baggage were well on the way to Linderman, so, as their arrival was only the question of a few hours, I thought we might as well run over to Lake Bennett and have a look round there, and get some information as to the state of river, etc., for our actual start was to be made from Bennett.

A small iron steamer had just started running from Linderman, and for the moderate sum of $1 each landed us at the foot of the lake, whence a walk of half a mile over the narrow tongue of land dividing the two lakes brought us to the town of Bennett. It was my first trip on the lake, and I was surprised to see the whole way that on both shores were numerous camps where boat-building was being energetically prosecuted. Bennett, if anything, presented a still busier appearance than Linderman. It was a far larger place, and showing indications of a possible permanency in the shape of several large log-built cabins. The Skaguay trail *viâ* the White Pass ends here, so this is a sort of junction where the two incoming crowds meet. The place presented almost identical features, both being tent towns with boat-building everywhere,

the animation being increased by the presence of many big waggons splendidly horsed, which were constantly passing heavily laden with goods newly arrived on the trail. On the shore of the lake several large and powerful stern-wheel passenger

BENNETT.

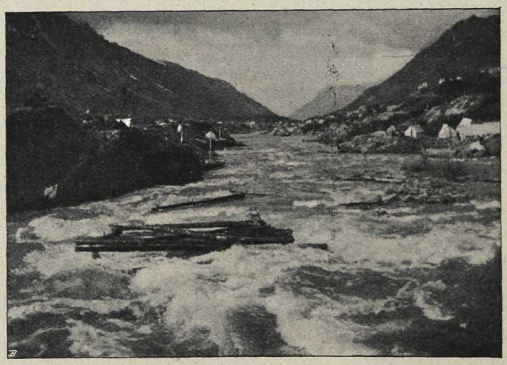
steamers were being rapidly put together, the different parts having been sent up in sections. Many steam saw-mills were hard at work. The beach was packed several deep with boats heavily laden and ready to start, their sails already spread.

Flags were gaily flying from hundreds of mast-heads, and in the bright sunlight the scene thus presented was one never to be forgotten. Certainly the world will never see its like again. In the town of tents itself, one could find almost everything —hot baths, barbers' shops, restaurants, drinking saloons; whilst in the main thoroughfares, mining-agents, land-agents, solicitors, doctors, dentists, company promoters, rubbed elbows with unkempt and dirty Indian packers, brawny, bearded miners, and eager, newly-arrived fortune-seekers, all on their way to their golden shrine in far-off Klondike.

I had a letter of introduction to the representative of one of the Lake Bennett steamboat companies, and this gentleman courteously permitted us to camp in his store tent, so we made up a sort of cosy corner in it with mattresses belonging to the steamer being built, and felt we were in clover after our experiences in the Linderman bunk-house. There was little to do in Bennett once one had exhausted the novelty of watching the boat-building, the campers, and the varied life of the tent town. I was anxiously looking for the

arrival of our canoe and baggage in order to get away as quickly as possible. Any unforeseen delay on such a journey as this renders it doubly trying.

The principal source of amusement for those who happened to have any time on their hands



THE RAPIDS BETWEEN LINDERMAN AND BENNETT.

was to watch boats shooting the rapids that connect Lake Linderman with Lake Bennett. The current is a very swift one, and there are several awkward rocks about midway, so it requires a certain amount of nerve and skilled

handling to take a boat through safely. The water is not deep enough to endanger life, but in case of an accident the boat stands every chance of being smashed up, as several wrecks along the shore below the rapids testify. There is a good portage between the lakes, so it struck me as foolhardy any one thus running the unnecessary risk of losing all his belongings and his boat besides at the very outset of the journey. Still, there were many who daily did so, much to the edification of the onlookers and the many amateur photographers of the camp. On the high ground near by is a simple grave surrounded by a wooden fence. It is the last resting-place of a man who may be said to have been followed by persistent ill luck. Starting from Seattle eighteen months ago on his way to Dawson, he happened to be on an ill-fated steamer that got wrecked on its way up. He got ashore safely, but lost all his belongings. He returned to Seattle, got a fresh outfit, and managed to get as far as Linderman. There he built a boat, but was foolish enough to risk running the rapids. His boat was wrecked, and he again found himself minus everything. To most men

these two reverses would have proved fatal; not so with him. Though much depressed, he managed to get funds together, and, returning to the coast, came back shortly with yet another equipment, bought a boat this time, was either foolhardy or obstinate enough to again attempt these same rapids, and by an extraordinary fatality again was totally wrecked. The following day he was found to have committed suicide on the bank close by.

Departures became more and more frequent as time wore on. One day alone nearly eight hundred boats started, presenting a remarkable appearance as of a big fleet sailing away across the lake. We became more impatient at our enforced delay. All comes to him who waits, and at last, to our relief, Boss turned up, and with him on a waggon the canoe and all the baggage, the canoe looking not a bit the worse for her long land journey, and scarcely showing a scratch. I decided to start the following morning. We had a pleasant farewell evening with several good fellows who were starting a few days later, and when we eventually returned to our store-tent, the sun was already above the horizon.

It took some little time to arrange and pack the canoe; 1600 lbs. is a fair load for a small boat at any time. Still, we found that when all was in and we three also, she had fully ten inches of free board. Going into the town for the last time to make some trifling purchases, I heard of a little Jap from one of the restaurants, who would come to Dawson with me and do our cooking on the way in return for his passage and food. Knowing how little space we could dispose of, I would not give a reply till I had seen him, but when I saw a little chap about four feet six inches high and not weighing more than seven stone, I decided at once to give him a passage on his own terms, on the sole condition that his baggage was in proportion to his dimensions. With Boss our guide, and Frank our Japanese cook, we were indeed travelling *en princes*, if such a condition is possible in a canoe.

At last we got away, curiously enough just at the moment that one of the big passenger steamers was launched. Into the water it glided majestically and without attracting more attention than our own departure, and that was not much.

People in Bennett were far too occupied with their own affairs to look at such trifles. The weather was lovely, the sun blazing in a cloudless sky, and not a breath of air stirring. The placid, unruffled surface of the lake reflected the snow-capped mountains as in a mirror. We were a bit cramped and hampered with the baggage at first, but soon settled down and made ourselves comfortable. I took the sculls and started rowing, and was delighted to find how easily and lightly the canoe went.

CHAPTER IX.

LAKE BENNETT TO LAKE MARSH.

An exciting race—The *J. B. Goddard*—Lake Tagish Police Camp—Captain Strickland—A gang of murderers—Miners' licences—Afternoon scene on Lake Marsh—First experience of the Alaska mosquitoes—A dismal camping-ground.

MANY boats surrounded us as we quickly proceeded and caught up with them one by one, the lumbering, awkwardly built craft having no chance against our well-constructed canoe, with Boss deftly steering with a paddle. In the far distance, some miles ahead, we could distinctly hear the measured thump of the pistons of a small stern-wheel steamer towing two big barges. I rowed steadily on for some time, till suddenly Harris remarked that he thought we were gradually catching her up. This put an idea into my head, a sort of recollection of the Thames.

The heat was intense, and to exert one's self in the middle of the day struck me as being idiotic and unnecessary. Why not catch up the steamer and ask her to give us a tow? I said nothing, but put all my strength into my rowing, and for the next hour worked like a nigger. Now I was undoubtedly slowly but surely gaining on my goal. But it was terribly slow work, and the shortest rest made one lose a lot of ground. In vain did the others endeavour to persuade me give in. I knew what it meant if we could catch her. For three solid hours I rowed with all my strength, gaining perhaps at the rate of one foot in six, till at last we got within three hundred yards. Then Frank begged to be allowed to take the sculls. I was nearly done after so prolonged a spurt, as may be imagined, so, as there was no difficulty in our changing seats, I consented, and he started off like a little Samson, and very soon we were abreast of the steamer.

After some little difficulty, as she had two large lighters full of sheep on either side of her, and there was a strong undercurrent running round them, we managed to hook on, half a dozen men

on board looking on stolidly, but offering no assistance. I jumped aboard and made my way to the captain, who was steering, and asked him if we might hang on for a little while. He demurred at first, saying he was already late, but eventually consented. So we made fast, and had lunch, which we enjoyed immensely, since we were losing no time. Afterwards Harris and I, armed with a flask of whisky and some big cigars, went up and had a long chat with the captain, which ended in our becoming so friendly that he gave us permission to remain in tow as far as he was going, which turned out to be Lake Tagish, some fifty odd miles on. This was a splendid lift, and I felt well rewarded for my obstinacy in catching him up.

Although not making an excessive speed, as may be imagined, the *J. B. Goddard* kept pounding along at a good steady pace, which was safer for our heavily laden canoe than if she had been a fast boat. The sheep she was carrying—for apart from the lighters her hold was also full—were destined for Dawson. They had been brought in over the Skaguay trail, and were to remain at Tagish for

a few days, to give them a chance of recovering from the effects of their long journey before proceeding any further. Their owner, who was on board, hoped to make a big profit on them, but the risk was very great necessarily.

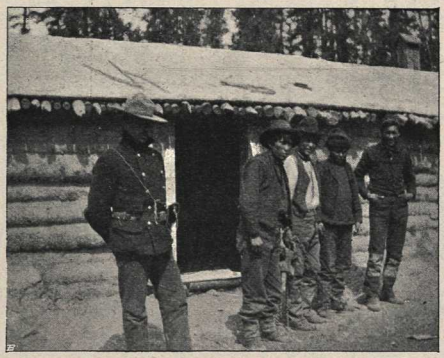
We did not reach Tagish till past midnight, and at this time we were beginning to get very cold and cramped after sitting so long in the canoe. A strong wind had sprung up, and the spray from the wheel was thoroughly wetting everything. We had had no opportunity of getting anything solid to eat since lunch, as we did not want to cast loose in order to go ashore and cook. The "lift" we were getting was far too precious and well worth any attendant discomfort, so by the time we reached the steamer's destination we were simply starved with hunger and cold. We had come exactly 56 miles, not so bad for the first day. Tagish is a station of the North-West Mounted Police on the river of that name, which extends from Tagish to Marsh Lake. I had a letter to the officer in charge, Captain Strickland, so had decided to stop over and present it. Moreover, it was here we were to get our miners' licences.

The daylight, as we were gradually getting further north, had continued increasing, and there was now but a little twilight, but no night. It was broad daylight when we landed at about 1 a.m., and set the boy to work to light a fire and get us some hot coffee while we put up the tent. It was not an ideal camping-ground, but we were too sleepy to waste time choosing another, and, after a hasty supper, turned in without delay. Next morning we went up to the police camp to see Captain Strickland.

The station consisted of half a dozen log-built cabins, and was also the office of the district gold commissioner and customs officer, Captain Strickland representing all these vocations. We spent the whole morning on the place, which was crowded with people waiting to get licences, and were shown four Indian prisoners who were in custody on a charge of murdering a prospector some months ago. It appeared that the murdered man and a friend were proceeding leisurely down the river in their boat when they were suddenly fired upon from the bank by the prisoners. One of the men fell overboard riddled with bullets, but

his friend, though severely wounded, escaped as though by a miracle, and managed to reach a neighbouring camp and give the news. Immediately a party of six miners set out on the tracks of the Indians, and followed them for nearly six hundred miles, when at last they came up with them as they rejoined their tribe. These brave men then actually held up the entire tribe for several days, whilst they sent one of their number to the nearest police camp to get assistance to arrest the murderers. This was eventually done, and the four wretches brought back here to be tried. They then confessed to their crime, saying they did it to get the food in the boat. That they will be hanged is only a matter of time. They were brought out of their cell for us to take a photograph of them—four ordinary looking natives chained together hand and foot to a very heavy iron anvil, which, whenever they moved, had to be carried between them, a very necessary precaution considering their prison was only a log cabin. They appeared quite unconcerned at their position, and apparently treated the affair with the utmost indifference.

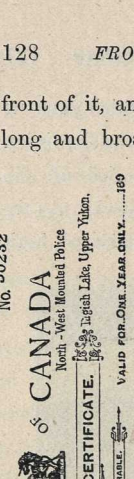
We got our miners' licences here, which gave us the right to seek for gold anywhere in the Dominion and North-West Territories for a period of one year from date for the sum of $10 each. As we should soon be in the gold-bearing district, we both



GROUP OF MURDERERS, POLICE CAMP, TAGISH.

felt we might have a chance of staking out a couple of claims. We also had to get our boat registered here, the number we got being something in the third thousand. We got away after dinner and just as a good favourable breeze sprang up, so we hoisted our sail and bowled along merrily in

front of it, and soon reached Marsh Lake, a very long and broad expanse of water surrounded by



DATE OF ISSUE *June 7th 1898* No. 50232

DOMINION CANADA

North-West Mounted Police

FREE MINER'S CERTIFICATE. Dawson Lake, Upper Yukon.

NON-TRANSFERABLE. VALID FOR ONE YEAR ONLY.....189

PLACE OF ISSUE *Dawson Lake*

This is to Certify that *Jackson Fr Bee* of *London, England* has paid one dollar being the sum of *Ten dollars* and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a Free Miner, under any Mining Regulations of the Government of Canada for one year from the *Seventh* day of *June* 189*8*

This Certificate shall not be proof to the holder thereof the privilege of Staking and Holding subject to the provisions of any Act which has been passed, or which may hereafter be passed for the protection of persons and property, and the privilege of Staking Bands for actual necessities for dwelling houses, barns, wood yards, grazing, shingles, and timber, however, is to be the exclusive use of the owner himself but such permission shall not extend to timber which may have been destroyed or which may hereafter be granted to other persons or corporations

Countersigned,

R. R. Sharpe

R. L. Cunningham

Acting Warden or an Officer or Agent of the Department of Interior

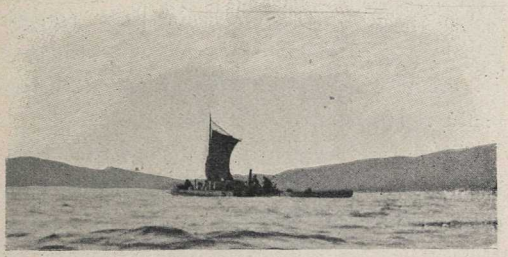
CUSTOMS CANADA JUN 7 1898

R. R. Sharpe

Agent of the Minister of the Interior

beautiful hills that reminded one of Scotland. The breeze gradually increased to a strong wind, before which we must have been running at a rate

of at least ten knots, the canoe behaving beautifully, and we were passing every boat. There must have been many hundreds, and all had their sails up; and in the genial warmth of the afternoon sun, with the rippling blue water around, the effect was that of a big regatta, more especially as all the occupants of the boats appeared as gay and light-



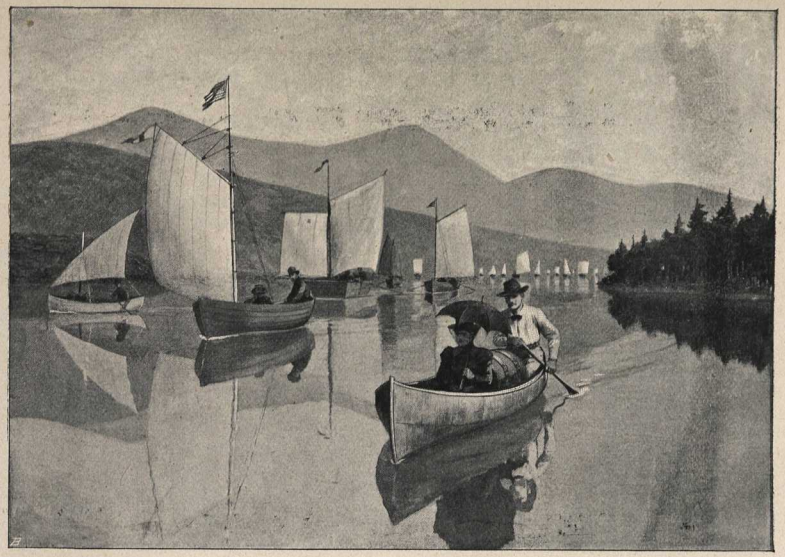
ON LAKE MARSH.

hearted as though bent on a pleasure cruise. Evening was on us by the time we had got across the lake, and the wind dropped as we entered the Lewis River.

Mosquitoes, from which pests we had hitherto been remarkably free, now put in an appearance, and caused us considerable annoyance. Mosquito-

net head-dresses came into general requisition on all sides, the effect produced in many instances being most curious and not a little weird, especially when black gauze was used. We had some of "Hill's" mosquito lotion, with which we spread our faces and necks and hands. It is an unpleasant oily mixture, which is, however, only efficacious against a few mosquitoes, but is without effect against the myriads in these regions. Standing or sitting in the smoke of a "smudge," *i.e.* fire made of green leaves, is the only real remedy.

Camps were being pitched all along the river banks, and I noticed so many men fishing that I got out my rod and line and tried my luck for a couple of hours, but without success. We took supper on the boat as we drifted along, and when towards midnight we decided to halt for the night, the cold air had fortunately driven all the mosquitoes away for the moment. Our camping-ground was as dismal a spot as could well be imagined, being at the corner of a burnt-out forest. All was dead and black. Gaunt and twisted charcoal skeletons of fine trees swayed and creaked drearily in the



ON LAKE MARSH.

night breeze; even the very grass and moss had been destroyed by the ruthless element, and there was no sign of life anywhere. We should have moved further on, but it was so late, and this was at any rate dry, so we decided to make the best of it.

CHAPTER X.

FROM LAKE MARSH TO DAWSON CITY.

The Cañon and White Horse Tramway—Miles Cañon Rapids—The White Horse Rapids—Lake Lebarge—A bath under difficulties—Curious fishing experience—Weather-bound—Forty Mile River—The commencement of the Yukon—Forest fires—Animal and bird life on the Yukon—The Five Finger Rapids—The Rink Rapids—Our daily life on the Yukon—A curious incident—Nearing our goal—Dawson at last.

THE river from this point became gradually very swift. We were approaching the Miles Cañon and White Horse Rapids, places marked as "very dangerous" in the maps. As we neared them we saw many boats moored along the banks, their occupants preferring to walk on ahead and have a good look before "taking any chances," as the saying is in these parts. A couple of miles before the actual rapids begin there is a portage some 5⅛ miles in length, over which boats and baggage

can be transported. A pole tramway with horse traction has recently been laid along it by the Cañon and White Horse Rapids Tramway Company; and for a comparatively small amount considering, all risk can thus be avoided. Many,

LOADING THE CANOE ON THE TRAMWAY.

however, whether through love of excitement, or more probably to save money, prefer to run the rapids, with the inevitable result that thirteen lives have been lost here this year alone. How many in previous years will never be known. That both these places are extremely dangerous

and not worth the risk of losing one's outfit, and perhaps one's life also, is indisputable. There were many pilots about who, for the sum of $10, would undertake to run one's boat through, but as they would not guarantee to do so and not ship any water, I decided to avail myself of a courteous invitation given to me by the representative of the tramway company, to permit them to transport my canoe and baggage. This meant of course unloading everything, but there were lots of willing hands to assist; and in a few minutes the canoe and all our belongings were safely packed on one of the trolleys and started off, whilst we walked round by the riverside to have a look at the rapids.

Miles Cañon, as the first of them is called, is a deep, narrow gorge, about 600 yards in length, through which the river rushes at a terrific pace, a mass of foaming, swirling water, and with an awe-inspiring, roaring sound which is heard a long way off. There were quite a number of people waiting to see boats come along, so we sat down and watched for a few moments. We saw several good-size ones go through, and although they certainly

did so without accident, I felt I should not have cared to do it in our canoe. Several empty boats passed, and they appeared to run less risk of being smashed against the sides of the cañon than when

THE MILES CAÑON RAPIDS.

there were occupants in them to steer their course. They were picked up lower down after passing the other rapids. There is a swift but comparatively quiet stretch of river between this

and the White Horse Rapids, though about midway, and right on the centre of the stream, there is a treacherous sort of gravel bar round which the current rushes madly. As we passed, a large raft with six men and two horses on board ran aground here, and got stuck hard and fast. How, if ever, they got off, I don't know, as there was no means of reaching them from the shore, and those coming down in boats could not possibly stop except at great risk. Let's hope they got off safely.

As we gradually left the roar of the cañon behind us, we equally gradually heard ahead another, even greater, sound of rushing waters. This was the dreaded White Horse Rapids, of which one had heard and read so much. At first sight it does not impress so much as the cañon, as the river here runs through rocky banks, which though steep, are not formidable. The actual rapids are nearly a mile in length, in one part the river plunging through a narrow passage of rocks, over which there is a very steep fall of several feet. This is the most dangerous part, and at the point, on our arrival, was gathered

SHOOTING THE WHITE HORSE RAPIDS.

quite an audience to watch the boats come down, waiting possibly for something to happen, though had an accident occurred, not a soul could have done anything but look on, as no help was possible. All the principal points of vantage were crowded, and I saw many women; the ubiquitous photographer by the dozen of course,—for where is he not in these last days of the nineteenth century? Oh, Kodak, Kodak, what have we done that even in these far-away Northern solitudes one cannot escape thy demon eye! Nothing in the nature of an accident occurred whilst we were looking on, although there were one or two narrow shaves. I learned, though, that an amateur photographer, a few days before, had been lucky enough (*sic*) to get a snapshot of a boat that had overturned and two men who were drowning! I know the gentleman's name, but will not mention it, trusting that if he ever reads these lines he will send me a copy of the photograph in question, as I am a great admirer of presence of mind.

The canoe had been waiting for us some time when we reached the tramway, and we found all in readiness to load again. I had an interesting

chat with Mr. Norman Macauley, the manager of the tramway. He told me that the line had only taken 18 men 21 days to lay; that they had 23 horses in work constantly, and that the charge for portage was 3 cents per lb.; men's wages were $8 per day of 10 hours, with overtime paid extra at same rate. "People were beginning to realize," he said, "that the cost of portage was cheaper than the risk of losing their boats."

The river below the rapids is quite respectable again, and is almost a quiet stream, though for some little distance bars appear now and then, and one has to be careful how one steers. At last, however, it settles down into a good steady stream, and we have nothing further to trouble us for many miles ahead. The scenery now became very grand, the banks in many places being of great height, and often consisted of a sort of loose gravel, which kept continually falling into the river with a movement like quicksand. Where these cliffs were formed of harder substance, maybe sandstone, thousands of martins had built their nests in the very face of the rock, and formed a very pretty sight as they kept flying

in and out of them. So, gently paddling down the stream, and taking it very leisurely and enjoying it immensely, we at length reached Lake Lebarge, the largest and last of the lakes we had to cross. Seen from the river it appeared like a sea, for one was looking down its entire length of thirty-two miles, so the opposite shores were of course not visible. Evening was on us and it was a dead calm, so we decided to row a short distance out and camp on the shore at some convenient spot.

We had two sets of visitors that night, one being almost as troublesome as the other, Indians from a neighbouring village and mosquitoes, though fortunately there were not so many of the former as the latter, or we should have had to shift our quarters at once. Barring these slight annoyances, our camping-ground was a pleasant one, on a level stretch of grass quite close to the lake. After supper I got out my canvas bath and had a good hot tub, though the pleasure of it was somewhat marred by having to take it in the smoke of the fire that Frank kept going all the time with green twigs within a foot or so of me, to keep off

the myriads of winged pests that hovered around outside the fumes, possibly on the chance of getting a good supper off me. It was a curious fact that these Arctic mosquitoes never seemed to rest, unless it came on cold suddenly or a strong wind blew. Day and night they were ever on the alert, and although Harris and I covered our hands and faces with oil lotion till we both looked as if we had been varnished, the beasts would still buzz around trying to find an unprotected place, and, failing that, would actually bite through our thick clothes. Our gauze head-dresses and gauntlet gloves were only useful when we were not working.

It was a lovely morning when we started next day to cross the lake, though a light breeze soon sprung up against us. I got out my fishing-tackle, and soon had a big spoon-bait spinning merrily in our wake. The lake being reputed full of trout, no rod was necessary, only a good strong line fastened somewhere to the boat and a landing-net handy. There is no "playing" these uneducated fish; only brute strength is required to pull them in; it is a case of which is the stronger, the fish or

the line. The breeze meanwhile was steadily increasing in force, a bad sign so early in the morning, as a big sea would soon spring up if it lasted long. I took the sculls and paddled along quietly for some miles, Harris meanwhile reading to us Nansen's "Farthest North" to while away the time, and with the fishing-line twisted round his ankle to feel if any fish took a fancy to my bait. At last we reached a big island some distance out, and here struck the wind with a vengeance. There was no use attempting to go any further till it abated, for we should have been swamped, so we decided to lay up in a little sheltered bay close by. Just as we were turning towards it, Harris called out to me to stop rowing, as our fishing-line had got caught in a snag or something and was cutting his foot, and then he started pulling it in, when, to his and our astonishment, he found he had caught a nice 7-lb. trout. The landing-net was handy, and we quickly had our captive aboard, and were naturally delighted with so palatable an addition to our dinner *menu*. The wind blew quite a gale all that afternoon, so there was no chance of getting away. These

sudden wind-storms are of frequent occurrence on Lake Lebarge, and boats are sometimes hung up for days at a time.

We slept all the afternoon so as to be ready for a move as soon as the wind dropped. This happened about ten o'clock that night, when it dropped almost as quickly as it had sprung up. So off we started, and rowed all night without a stop. It grew very cold towards morning, though not a breath of air was stirring, and the surface of the vast lake looked like glass. We gave up all conversation after the first two hours—we were all too occupied with our work. Harris was sculling, Frank and I at the paddles, and Boss steering. We only had one idea—to get across before any more wind should spring up. It seemed as though the lake would never end, for although we only had about twenty-five miles to go, the water was without a bit of current and absolutely dead. At length, towards three o'clock, we reached the end, and all felt so cold and numbed that it was decided to pull up to the shore, and make some hot coffee and have a sleep for a couple of hours. The sun was, of course, well up by now, so our

friends the mosquitoes were waiting to receive us as usual.

From Lake Lebarge our route was down a dangerous river known as the Forty Mile, where the current is very swift, and many partly submerged rocks bar the passage. Numerous wrecks along the bank testify to the treacherous nature of the waterway. Many fatal accidents will occur at this river, as it is not even marked as "dangerous" on any maps I have seen. The rocks crop up so unexpectedly that a boat is almost on them before the steersman can steer clear. We passed several parties of men busily engaged spreading out their baggage and provisions on the bank in the sun to dry, thus proving the narrow escapes they had had. We fortunately got along without accident, Boss steering very cautiously. The current was tremendous, and we raced along at a rate of at least eight miles an hour, catching up boat after boat. It was curious how, after the usual greetings had been exchanged, always the first question asked was, "What is the latest news? How are they getting on in Cuba?" or, "Is it true that England has declared war with France?" Unfortunately

we knew about as much as they did of the doings of the outside world. In this wilderness, news, weeks old, is greedily swallowed, and I have seen $2 given for an old newspaper that had been knocking around for a month. One is indeed out of the world up here.

The Thirty Mile River may be said to be the beginning of the mighty Yukon, for, although it is given several different names in parts, it is virtually but one and the same river that issues from Lake Lebarge and empties itself into the Behring Sea 2549 miles away. Fed at intervals in the course of its long route by several almost equally grand rivers—amongst others the Hootlinqua, Pelly, Stewart, Indian, and Tanana—this immense waterway may be said to constitute the main artery of the entire breadth of the British North-West Territories and Alaska, and to drain this vast stretch of continent from the Taku Mountains to its north-eastern seaboard.

It was just about here that a column of smoke beyond the hills ahead of us attracted my attention. It arose from a forest on fire, and was the outpost, as it were, of the many that were

following it, for for days after this scarcely an hour passed without one of these conflagrations being visible. In fact, on one occasion we appeared to be passing through a positive zone of fire, and for two whole days smoke obscured the sky to such an extent as to give the impression of a dense fog, through which the sun, completely denuded of its rays, shone a deep dull red. All this immense and irretrievable amount of destruction of fine timber is, without any doubt whatever, caused by the thousands of prospectors and others who have passed this way since the beginning of summer. They stop to camp or cook a meal, light a fire, and, when they have done, off they go, leaving the glowing embers on the ground, where the slightest breeze blows them amongst the dry moss; and in an incredibly short time a big blaze ensues, which spreads from tree to tree with a rapidity that must be seen to be believed, and which never stops until it has completely burnt itself out. All this wilful destruction might have been avoided had these vandals had the consideration to throw a bucket of water over their fire when leaving. It is no exaggeration to state that when we passed through

in June the whole country was ablaze from the banks of the river to the very summits of the highest hills where was timber to burn, and I feel much inclined to add that in my opinion, if there is no heavy rain to check these fires, there will be scarcely a particle of timber left growing in the country in a year's time.

The landscape where the devouring element has not yet reached looks so peaceful and beautiful in its spring mantle of delicate green and brilliant flowers, that it makes one positively feel sad to realize the rough awakening that so surely awaits it after its long winter sleep. That anything can be done to put a stop to the culpable negligence that causes all this destruction is extremely doubtful with the small force of police in the district. There is, I believe, a law in Canada making it a penal offence, punishable by fifteen years' imprisonment, for any one convicted of setting fire to a forest; but how is a conviction to be obtained?

We had a bit of excitement one evening as we were crossing the river at a particularly wild part, and where the current was very swift. Boss

suddenly called out to me to get my gun; there was a moose swimming across the stream. But my gun was in the bottom of the canoe securely packed away in its case, and, as it turned out, luckily so, for, in spite of both he and Harris begging me to hurry up, something in the look of the so-called moose made me a bit doubtful. As we got nearer my doubts were fully justified, for the swimming animal turned out to be only a big snag, which somehow, even when quite close, took the exact form of a moose, even to the horns, the water pouring past giving it every appearance of moving.

Mentioning this incident reminds me how little animal life there is in these vast solitudes. At Bennett one day there was great excitement, some one having caught sight of a bear on the side of the mountain near the town. Some men started off after it with rifles, but of course did not see it again. I saw some squirrels, and also once a beaver swimming in the river, these being the only four-footed wild creatures I can remember seeing. Among the feathered tribes, curiously enough, there were a great many sea-

gulls about, looking very much out of place indeed, so far from their native element. There appeared to be plenty of small birds; in fact, the forest often sounded quite like an aviary when we were encamped. Linnets, chaffinches, yellow-hammers, robins, and jackdaws hopping from bough to bough and chirruping or singing merrily, helped to send one's thoughts back to far-away England, and made one frequently feel very home-sick, and wishing that this was some quiet back-water on the dear old Thames. A gun out here, when on a flying trip, is an absolute useless superfluity, and one never has any use for it.

At length we reached the Five Finger Rapids, the last but one of the places marked as "dangerous" on our maps. Boss assured us that from what he had heard he could take us through easily; but, following the example of others who reached the place at the same time as we did, I considered it advisable to have a look around beforehand.

The Five Finger Rapids are caused by three huge masses, or rather bluffs, of rock standing

out right in the middle of the stream, which is extremely wide just here. The swift current, thus suddenly divided, rushes through the narrow passages with terrific force, and presenting a wild scene that is in my mind, if anything, more impressive than either Miles Cañon or White Horse. Only one of these passages, that on the right bank going down, is practicable; the other two, though being much wider, are full of submerged rocks, which make their navigation extremely dangerous. Many seagulls were flying round the rocks, and added considerably to the general effect.

Without a moment's hesitation I came to the conclusion that I would prefer not to entrust the steering of the canoe to an inexperienced man like Boss, and, as there were several pilots about, arranged with one of them to take her through for the sum of $5. He would, however, have only one person besides himself in the boat to manage the sculls. So as Boss was anxious to go, and neither Harris nor I were anxious for a wetting, I let him do so. We went up on to the nearest bluff overhanging the rapids to see the canoe go by.

After a little delay caused by our pilot re-arranging the packing of the baggage and covering it up, they came along at a tremendous rate, swinging round almost in the swirling water as they entered the narrow channel. About halfway through a wave hit the nose of the canoe, and completely drenched Boss, besides shipping a quantity of water. We hurried along, and about a half mile down found them safely landed, though Boss was very wet and, as ill luck would have it, my baggage was soaked through. We elected to camp on the spot, and lighted a big fire to dry my things. Everything in the bags had got completely saturated, and it took hours to get them right. Fortunately my blankets had escaped.

We made an early start the following morning, and just as we were setting off were surprised to see a large boat with several men in it come through on the far side of the rapids. A few minutes later a smaller boat floated down, also on the same side of the river, bottom upwards. Some men passing close to us at that moment told us that the larger boat, though it had got through

safely, was half full of water, and had only escaped being smashed up by a miracle almost. The smaller boat, in which had been one man of the same party, had been overturned, and its occupant drowned without any one being able to do anything to save him; in fact, he had not been seen since. This naturally cast somewhat of a gloom over us all. We did not delay, however. There were still the Rink Rapids to pass, and then all our troubles would be over. Five miles' rowing brought us within hearing of the roaring of the water over the rocks.

We pulled up under the bank a little distance below, and, getting out, walked up to see what we had to do. The rapids consisted of a sort of wide tumbling bay, formed by a ledge of rocks extending almost across the entire width of the river. On the right hand is a quiet bit of very swift current, which, with ordinary care, can be navigated without any special risk by cool-headed men. I thought it best not to have all of us in the boat, so asked Harris to walk on with Frank whilst Boss and I took the boat through, he steering, I rowing. This we did with the utmost ease and

without a moment's anxiety, and rejoined the others a little distance further on.

Our course to Dawson was now all clear sailing. We had passed all troublesome places, and there was nothing before us but steady quiet sculling to land us in due time at the golden city. Although we had been making very good time considering the many inevitable delays, I began to find the journey growing just a little bit monotonous. Scenery palls on one after a time, more especially when it is always the same day after day, mile after mile; and there certainly is not much variety on the mighty Yukon, where nothing is ever seen to break the eternal monotony of the solemn pines or the silent grandeur of the mountains; for even the occasional encampments of prospectors bear the strongest family resemblance to one another, and could not be said to improve the landscape from an artistic point of view. The grand solitudes of distant lands, where the sun rises and sets with deadly monotony on a never-varying scene, are to my mind far less impressive than the beauty of some homely moorland in close touch with civilization, where Nature's mood is less

stern and repellent. Maybe the rough life and coarse fare of the pioneer deter one from looking on such scenes from the standpoint of an artist. The days passed in a sort of unvarying routine. We generally broke up camp at eight o'clock in

MY CANOE AND PARTY ON THE YUKON.

the morning, and then we would take it in turns to scull, sticking at it generally for at least three hours, the others reading, smoking, sleeping, or fishing to while away the time. At midday we would stop for dinner, landing at some convenient spot, Frank lighting a small fire, and preparing coffee

or soup. Then another long spell till close on midnight, as we generally had something ready in the canoe for supper, so as not to lose time; then fixing up camp again, and bed—a healthy enough existence, no doubt, but certainly not wildly exciting, as may be imagined.

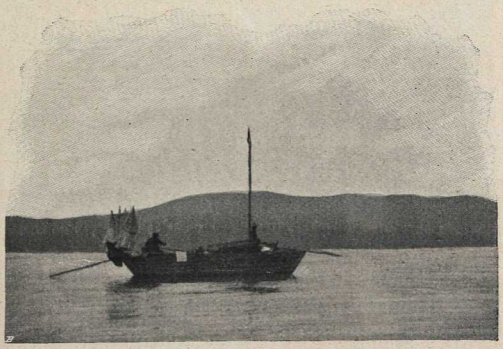
A curious incident occurred one day as we were passing through a very wide part of the river, where numerous islands cut up the broad stream to such an extent that the actual banks were scarcely visible. It was midday, and the sun blazing with tropical intensity out of a cloudless sky, when suddenly we heard the voice of a man hailing us from the bank of an island ahead. Our surprise may be imagined, for there was no boat near him, and we could not imagine how he had managed to get where he was. Still, he was evidently calling for help, so we made for the spot, when, to our still further astonishment, we saw he had his kit-bag with him. Before we could get close up, in accents of urgent entreaty he called out to ask us to take him over to the opposite shore, or anywhere away from this island, as he was being eaten alive by the mosquitoes.

By this time we had got near enough to distinguish his face, which was a sight to be remembered, for it was puffed and swelled by the voracious attacks of the insects to such an extent that his features were scarcely discernible. He must have been suffering acute agony. Of course we proposed taking him off, but, unfortunately for him, the Fates were against it. The river was extremely rapid at this point—in fact, so much so, that we had the greatest difficulty in getting the canoe anywhere near where the unfortunate man was standing, whilst, to add to his ill luck, just below us was a seething mass of water, indicating partly submerged rocks. It was an extremely dangerous place to endeavour to land, and, after several futile attempts, we found ourselves being carried away from the island by the force of the current, and with no chance of ascending the turbulent stream again. So we had reluctantly to abandon the fellow to his chance of getting off on one of the many boats following us. Although we often talked this incident over, we could never decide who or what this man was to get abandoned thus in this terrible position. I was inclined to think

he had made himself objectionable to his boat-mates, and, in order to get rid of him, they had "marooned" him here—a terrible revenge as it turned out.

We were all anxiously counting the hours it would now take us to reach our journey's end, for signs were everywhere apparent that we had reached the famous gold-bearing belt of country—Fort Selkirk, at the mouth of the Pelly River, where there has recently been a rush; Stewart River, which is spoken of as immensely rich; Indian River; gradually the prospector's tent became more and more frequently visible and often in large camps. On one occasion we saw two men busily engaged "washing" on the shore, so we landed, and they showed us quite a respectable sample of the precious metal they had just obtained. We were now approaching well-known creeks and islands—Monte Cristo, Baker Creek, and others too numerous to mention, where active work had scarcely yet been commenced, but where good prospects had been located; everything indicated that our long and arduous boat journey was nearly finished. At last, on turning

a high bluff that had hidden from our view a big bend in the river, Boss exclaimed quietly, "There is Dawson City;" and we saw it spread out before us, not more than a few hundred yards distant, a huge town of white tents and log cabins, whilst in front of it, and all along the river bank for some distance, hundreds of boats were moored three and four deep. The goal for which we had travelled 9000 miles was reached at last.



A TYPICAL YUKON BOAT.

CHAPTER XI.

DAWSON CITY.

First impressions—Inspector and Mrs. Constantine—The main street—Dawson City—Famine prices—*Menu* of a little dinner—The Bank of British North America—The prospects of the Klondike district—Market value of gold—The royalty question—Interview with Major Walsh.

TRY and picture to yourself a wide flat stretch of marshy ground, with a background of high hills, on the shore of a mighty river rushing swiftly by; and cover this shore with as many tents of all shapes and sizes as your imagination can picture. In the water and along the beach facing these tents place hundreds of the roughest of wooden boats and of all imaginable builds, some afloat, others drawn up on the shingle. Then draw further on your imagination, and see a big and motley crowd of men and women and children, in all sorts and conditions of garb, round and about the tents,

boats, and everywhere; and above all a blazing sun, and plenty of dust blown about by a persistent wind,—and you have Dawson, the golden city, as it appeared to me as I landed on the 14th of June, 1898.

THE RIVER FRONT, DAWSON CITY.

It is said that first impressions are the truest and the most lasting. In this instance, however, I feel that such was not the case, for the real impression of Dawson was only gained after a prolonged visit and a close inspection of the place. At the time of my arrival the town was in such a growing,

or rather embryo stage, that there were no hotels or inns worthy of the name, so I decided to live in the tent for the few days we should remain before leaving for the mines. Our first care, therefore, was to find a suitable camping-ground. This was no easy matter, the whole place being simply packed with tents and log huts as far as the eye could reach, and we had to remember that we only had ourselves to transport the baggage and provisions, so the nearer the canoe the better. At this juncture I suddenly bethought me of a letter of introduction I had to Inspector Constantine of the North-West Mounted Police. We had fortunately managed to push our way through the pack of boats, and moored the canoe directly in front of the Government enclosure, from which the Union Jack waved gaily, and by a still further bit of luck, I found on inquiry of the policeman on duty at the gate that the inspector was in. I therefore sent in my card with the letter of introduction, and was immediately received by a middle-aged gentleman of military appearance, who courteously informed me that he would be delighted to do anything that lay in his power to

render our stay in Dawson agreeable; and suiting his action to the words, he put on his hat, and took me round to a secluded spot behind the barrack square, where he said we could camp. This was delightful, and put us out of our difficulty at once.

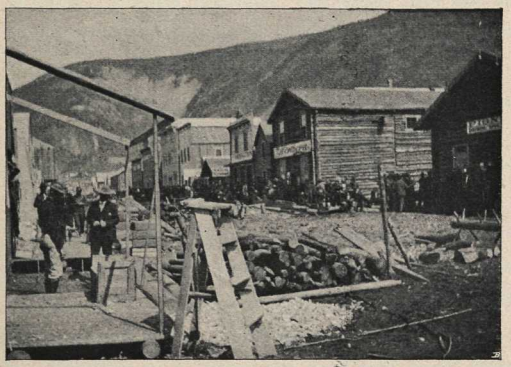
Then, as if to add to our good fortune, several policemen off duty volunteered to help carry our things up from the canoe, no light task had we been forced to do it ourselves. A very short time, therefore, after we arrived, saw us installed in our camp, and with all our belongings around us. Almost before we were unpacked, up came the genial inspector to insist, he said, on behalf of Mrs. Constantine, on Harris and me dining with them that evening. We would perhaps have preferred "pigging it" in the tent as usual, as we were not prepared for paying visits after our ten days on the trail, but his invitation was so cordial that I felt constrained to accept it. We had a delightful evening, Mrs. Constantine—who, by the way, enjoys the enviable reputation of being the most popular woman in Dawson—telling us a heap of interesting incidents of her life on the gold-fields. The dinner did not detain us late, and we got away a little

after ten, and got everything comfortable in camp before turning in.

We had a stroll down towards the town early in the morning, for the police barracks are situated a little away from the centre. The road along the water front was crowded with people strolling about looking at the new arrivals in the boats, and presented a curiously holiday-like appearance, very unlike Bennett and Linderman, where every one seemed to have no time for anything but his preparations for the journey before him. Here, the long river journey was an accomplished fact, and the old miner and the newest of new-comers rubbed shoulders in the big and ever-increasing throng of eager gold hunters. On the main street, which is a continuation of the river front, the scene was even more animated, and almost baffles description. On all sides big buildings were being erected with feverish rapidity; the sound of hammering and sawing was to be heard everywhere, and the roadway was encumbered with rough timber, planks, ladders, and all the paraphernalia of the carpenter and builder. Harris and I stood and looked on in amazement. We

RIVER FRONT, DAWSON.

had both expected a great deal from all we had heard and read, but the extraordinary scene of bustle and activity certainly outdid all that one could have even looked for. Here was a big city growing before our very eyes. It recalled one of



STREET SCENE, DAWSON CITY.

those street scenes that have become so popular at recent exhibitions, only this was before the opening ceremony, and they were hurrying up so as to get finished in time!

The footway was blocked to such an extent with men walking, or standing about, or sitting on the

piles of timber, that it was with difficulty we could get along. Many very smartly-dressed women were to be seen, looking indeed strangely out of keeping in such surroundings, for the men were absolutely the roughest, raggedest, and most unkempt lot I have seen anywhere before, or am likely ever to see again. There was a certain picturesqueness about their dirt though, as there is, for instance, in the squalor of the Italian beggar, and with their long boots, faded yellow flannel coats, and slouch hats, they added considerably to the stage-like effect of the whole scene. As one gradually worked one's way through this big crowd and caught scraps here and there of the conversation, one realized that all these rough, dirty-looking fellows were not what they outwardly appeared, and that this was not entirely a gathering of roughs or "hobos," but a cosmopolitan assemblage, and was of all nations of the earth, attracted hither by the mighty ring of the Klondike gold; and whilst I was in Dawson I had ample opportunities for verifying this impression.

As we strolled along, wonderstruck at all we saw, Harris suggested our getting a long-needed

shave. There were plenty of barbers' shops, so we walked into one that looked a little less rough than the others; even at that it would have disgraced the meanest street in the East End of London, and the occupants of the half-dozen chairs looked like dock labourers. I was surprised to notice, whilst waiting my turn, that when a man went to pay the proprietor for what he had had, he produced a little bag of gold-dust, and the requisite quantity was weighed out in payment, scales being kept for the purpose; no actual money changed hands. Having had my *modest* shave, I asked what there was to pay, and was told $1. Harris had been shaved and had his hair brushed up also, so his lot came to $1.50. Fancy paying six shillings for a shave and brush up, and a dirty one at that! There was a notice up to the effect that hot baths were obtainable here, so I asked casually what they charged, and was informed their charges were $2.50 for a bath, $1.50 for hair-cutting, $1.50 for a shampoo, and $1 for a shave. I at once realized that unless I struck a gold-mine without delay, my modest purse would not suffice to

keep me long in the most ordinary necessaries of life. Yet all these apparently poverty-stricken men paid these exorbitant charges without a murmur. Of course this strikes a new-comer more forcibly than it does an old-timer, for everything is on the same exorbitant basis—food, wages, house rent, etc. A few examples will be of interest.

When we were in Dawson (June, 1898) a square meal, consisting of bacon and beans, or sometimes fresh moose-steaks, tea and bread and butter, cost $2.50, and all drinks or cigars in the different saloons 50 cents each. One wondered how the ordinary individual, not a gold-mine owner, could pay such prices, till we learned that carpenters got paid as much as $25 and $30 per day, cooks $15, and ordinary workmen $10. The dollar was practically the lowest negotiable sum, and very little could be bought even for that, for everything had to be packed into the country, and over the trail, and down the river, or on the ice, so one cannot be surprised at the prices asked for the most ordinary things. House rent (if the most ramshackle canvas structures can be so denominated)

was astoundingly high considering how young the place was. Small shanties on the main street fetched $200 per month; a "Restaurant" (*i.e.* canvas 40 × 25) $35 per day; provisions were, of course, in proportion, though prices have gone

STREET SCENE, DAWSON CITY.

down considerably since the arrival of many boats with supplies. Some phenomenal prices were still given for luxuries "not easily obtainable." Amongst others, eggs fetched $3 a dozen; lemons $6 and bananas $12 a dozen; ten head of oxen fetched $7500, and retailed $2 per lb. Of course

there was an immense amount of money or gold-dust in the town, otherwise these prices could never be kept up, for they appeared quite out of proportion in most cases, as, for instance, why should lemons have cost 50 cents apiece, whilst bananas were $1? Nothing seemed in ratio. What, however, did such trifles matter to a man who was taking thousands of dollars' worth of gold a day out of his claim? Many such men would come into the town from the creeks after an absence of perhaps some weeks, bringing with them a bag of "dust" to spend. When it was all gone, back they would go. Meanwhile no extravagance was too great for them as long as the "dust" lasted. To the "checharka" (*i.e.* newcomer) it was little less than appalling to watch these men spend their gold, either in gambling or in drinking in the saloons. When paying for drinks, they would fling their bags on the counter, and let the man who was serving them weigh out what was owing, never even troubling to look how much he took, this probably being considered "bad form." As the scales were perhaps at the other end of the room, one can imagine the opportunities

thus afforded for petty pilfering. A few grains from every bag would not be noticed, and would soon amount to a respectable sum.

There are two or three music-halls in Dawson, with some pretty artistes engaged especially and brought from Seattle, and on the evening of the opening of the first of these halls, there was a big crowd of the richest claim holders. From all accounts, it was a great night, and champagne (Mumm's extra dry) was flowing all the time at $40 per pint bottle! All the lady artistes at these mining-camp "opera houses" receive a big commission on drinks sold through their introduction. One can, therefore, guess what a nice sum the prettiest and most popular girl must have made on the champagne she sold on this occasion.

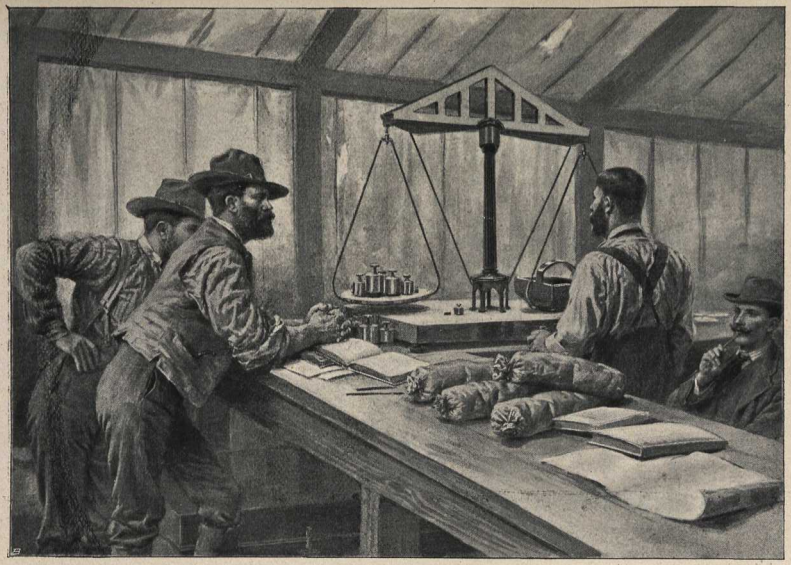
The *menu* of a little dinner given whilst I was in Dawson by one of the gold kings may be of interest.

Two portions of fricassée of canned chicken.
Two moose-steaks.
One rum omelette (made with crystallized eggs).
One pint bottle of champagne.

The bill came to $30—roughly, £6.

But to sum it up, this total disregard of money is soon comprehensible. These men, most of them, came to the country without a cent; the money they squander represents but so much "dust;" they fill their bags with it, have what they consider a good time, and, when it is all gone, return to their claim for more, if they have it. When the currency of the country become notes or gold coinage, it will be very different, for then they will be able to note, if they care to, what they spend. At present the Dawson trader makes his fortune out of the "old-timer," not the newcomer, who, as a rule, counts every dollar he spends, while comparing in his mind Dawson prices with those of the place he hails from.

I had an interesting hour at the Bank of British North America one morning watching several men selling the result of their season's wash-up; the bank, by the way, only consisted of a canvas tent structure. The gold was brought in in large leather bags, each one weighing about as much as a man could carry. Each of these was emptied into a big copper scoop, and put on a large pair of scales, and weighed carefully to a grain. A



SKETCH IN THE BANK.

stranger to the country, walking in suddenly, would have never believed that these big heaps of metal were each thousands of dollars' worth of gold, or that the owners of all these sacks of wealth were the rough, dirty-looking men lolling over the counter. The various claims were busy finishing their work for the season, and the banks had their hands full. The manager told us that he had taken over $250,000 worth of gold that day alone. When the various banks close for the day, the gold is sent to the barracks, and is kept under an armed guard all night—a necessary precaution since there were scarcely any iron safes yet in Dawson, and all the houses built either of wood or canvas.

All the gold brought in from the creeks is not, however, sold to the banks; the two large stores of the North American Transportation and Trading Company, known locally as the N.A.T. and T. Co., and the Alaska Commercial Company, known as the A.C. Co., take charge of a considerable amount for their customers. At one of these stores I was shown safes, huge boxes, and other receptacles packed with the familiar leather gold-

bags, each bag bearing the owner's name, the weight of contents, and date of delivery, many of these bags being of enormous weight.

Whether or not the Yukon district ever fulfils the prognostications of marvellous wealth as prophesied by Mr. Ogilvie and others, it is not my province to discuss in a narrative that is purely descriptive. This much, however, I feel bound to say—that before I came to the country I was told by people who had been there that I would see gold brought down from the creeks in amounts that would make me open my eyes, and I smiled. Well, I did see this in Dawson, and even more than I ever could have imagined possible. The old saying that one swallow does not make a summer of course holds good up here also, so it would be absurd to assume that the entire region is a mass of gold-bearing gravel because some parts have proved marvellously rich. That there is an immense amount of gold in the Klondike district is indisputable, but whether it will be found pretty generally distributed or only in patches, and therefore fall to the luck of only a favoured few, time alone will prove. It would be both

unfair to the country and misleading to the public to attempt to give any decided opinion either way at present, for the whole district is only just now being prospected. Rich finds are continually occurring, in what were hitherto considered impossible places, and by the time this goes to press many places up to the present unheard of will have suddenly come to the front.

It may be of interest to mention whilst on the subject the method for disposing of gold-dust and nuggets. The banks and stores buy it of the miners at a fixed rate—$14 per ounce. Out of this they deduct four per cent., to cover exchange, assay charges, freight, and insurance, and they give drafts for the balance on any place the men wish. Should the gold assay more than $14, the difference is paid without further deduction to the miner. These charges strike one as reasonable and fair enough as against what the men were forced to pay last year before the banks came here, and the two stores had it all their own way. I have heard of eighteen per cent. being charged for a bill of exchange. These, however, are not the only charges levelled on the fortunate

prospector, for there is a royalty of ten per cent. charged by the Government on the gross returns of every claim. This is no doubt a very big and irksome tax on a new country, and is causing an enormous amount of bad feeling, and, to a very great extent, justly so.

I went very carefully into the *pros* and *cons* of this question, which appears sufficiently serious to retard the progress of these new fields unless it is speedily and judiciously revised. The men contend that such a tax will practically mean closing down many mines next year, the possible profit being too doubtful to balance the certain risk. On the other hand, the Government says, "We have gone to the great expense of bringing police into the country, establishing stations, and generally affording you complete protection for your life and property. We have thus induced banks to establish branches in the country. We have introduced a mail service, and are about to spend money on trails to the various creeks, etc. All this must be paid for, and, if so, by who else but those who are taking wealth from the country?"

This struck me as all very well, but still the fact remains that a ten per cent. royalty on gross returns was excessive. The increase of revenue to the Budget of the Dominion Government this year will be enormous from the usual resources alone. When it is remembered how many thousands of people have come into the country, the number of miners' licences issued at $10 each, and the claims that will be recorded at the fee of $15, the sum derived from these sources of increased income alone should be sufficient to defray any extra expenses that may be incurred through sending police from what is practically one part of the dominion to another, and the cost of laying out new trails (which had not yet even been started). There can be no doubt, in my mind, that thus unwisely hampering a young country can but have two effects—firstly, that of seriously retarding its progress; and secondly, of inciting people to use their utmost ingenuity to evade what they rightly or wrongly consider an unjust impost. It is estimated that the revenue of England is the loser by millions every year through people making false income returns.

What, therefore, will it be in this far-away region where the law is only represented by a handful of police and the American boundary line but a few miles distant down the river? The reply is obvious.

Mentioning the police, reminds me of an interesting chat I had with Major Walsh, the governor of the Yukon district. The major is undoubtedly the right man in the right place up here. The renown of his deeds of daring in the days of Indian fighting on the frontier, his well-earned reputation for marvellous nerve and pluck, going a long way towards making him popular in this wild mining camp. The next best thing to being loved, perhaps, is to be feared, and in the case of Major Walsh it is an admixture of both. In either case, it is pretty well known by now that he is a man to stand no nonsense. His camp on the hillside above the town is a specimen of cleanliness and order, and a great contrast to the filthy and slovenly conglomeration of shanties below. In fact, it represented the man himself, for the major generally managed to look smarter and cleaner than any other man in Dawson City. Although

always *in mufti,* he wore the indelible stamp and bearing of an English officer and gentleman.

He received me with a cordiality that put me at once at my ease, and submitted to my cross-examination, whilst I made a sketch of him

meanwhile, with an affability and frankness of manner that much impressed me.

"Do you think that the output of gold this year from the Yukon will be disappointing?" was my first question. "Well, I will tell you," he replied, "that exaggerated reports have undoubtedly been sent out, and outsiders who have been guided by these reports may feel some disappointment, but those inside will not only not be disappointed, but rather the reverse. There has been some little surprise that Lower Bonanza has not yet fulfilled expectations, but Eldorado will quite come up to all hopes." In reply to my question as to whether the authorities anticipated much smuggling of gold across the boundary in consequence of the ten per cent. royalty, the major smiled in a "knowing" way, but declined to discuss this subject. "And how about law and order in the district?" "We have here in Dawson as tough a crowd as in any mining camp anywhere. Yet, although we have only sixty police, the place is as quiet and well-behaved as many a city away East. I don't thank people for being orderly; it is simply the flag they are

under that covers them, and the knowledge of what they may expect if they don't behave themselves. You will be doubtless surprised to learn," he added, "that at the present moment we know there is quite a gang of American card-sharpers and 'shell-game' men in Dawson. They know we are watching them, so dare not try any of their tricks." "If they did?" "Well, we shall make an example of the first one we catch," replied the major, grimly.

"And with reference to the labour question. Is the market becoming overstocked, in your opinion?" "It would hardly appear so, judging from the price paid to-day for labour, which still remains $1 per hour of a working day of ten hours." "But this enormous influx of people, in view of the fact that everything is located for miles around, what will they do? Have the authorities considered that side of the question, the great question that so exercises the minds of our officials at home—the question of the unemployed?" "They will have either to hunt up a new territory or leave the country. They won't be able to remain here. The great majority of

new-comers forget, in their eagerness to get here, that this is a comparatively old camp, and has been staked out long ago. They might as well go to New York and expect to be able to stake out a lot on Broadway," replied the major, with unexpected humour, as he rose to greet a visitor.

"Just one question in conclusion, Major Walsh," I said, buttonholing him. "Do you consider the Yukon a good field for the capitalist?" "If wise selection is made of the properties, I think that with cheap food and cheap labour we have the richest camp in the world. What we want though is railway, telegraph, and good steamboat communication. We cannot afford to pay $15 a day for mining labour; that is absolutely impossible. As far as the capitalist is concerned, I would not advise one dollar being put into any property without the closest investigation."

CHAPTER XII.

DAWSON CITY (*continued*)—A VISIT TO BONANZA AND ELDORADO.

The Klondike River—Lousetown—The trail to the creeks—The halfway house—Harris has an unpleasant accident—A good Samaritan—A "wash-up" in Bonanza—The *modus operandi*—"Discovery" and other claims—"Siwash" George—The Forks—Eldorado—Gold stealing—Chat with Justice McGuire—Sunday in Dawson—Return to the creeks—Staking a claim—The N.A.T. and T. Co.

HEARING and seeing so much of gold, I was, of course, most anxious to go out to these wonderful creeks, and see for myself how all this wealth was obtained, so as soon as possible took advantage of an opportunity to go out with Palmer of the *New York Press*, who had already been up the trail. The distance from Dawson to the nearest mines on Bonanza Creek is about nine miles, but the really famous working does not commence until some six miles further on, where Eldorado

Creek joins the Bonanza. The only way to get out to the mines is on foot. The trip can be made on horseback at an exorbitant charge, but it is a very tedious and unpleasant way of travelling, as the trail does not allow of any but a walking pace the whole way. We decided to follow the example of the "old-timers," and do the walk at night, it being far too hot to travel when the sun is up at this time of the year. It will, of course, be remembered that there is no real night in these latitudes in June, the sun not setting till eleven o'clock, and, after a couple of hours of twilight, rising again about two. Men who do the trip constantly, reckon to get out to Eldorado in four hours, but when the trail is in bad condition a little longer.

Before starting we were told we should find it pretty bad; and pretty bad it was—in fact, I don't think I ever did a more fatiguing walk in my life. The first part was not very rough, and lured us in the belief that we were merely out for a pleasant stroll through shady woods and by the side of a rippling stream, but we were soon undeceived!

The Klondike River, that made the fame, as it

were, of the whole of the Yukon district, divides the camp of Dawson into two unequal sections, the larger one being Dawson City. These sections are connected by a frail suspension bridge, for the privilege of crossing which a nominal charge of 50 cents per head is made. The smaller portion is known by the unpoetic cognomen of Lousetown, and is a dirty little place, half mining camp and half Indian village, either half dirtier than the whole, if that is possible. The Klondike River is here a wide brawling stream of fine clear water, rushing down in a five-mile current to empty itself into the muddy Yukon. Its name is said to be derived from an old Indian word "Troan-duik," signifying "plenty fish," this being a favourite fishing ground of the natives, salmon and grayling abounding at certain seasons. Though giving its name to the whole country, curiously enough there are no mines at all, so far, along its banks, though it is all staked out for miles—no gold having yet been found in paying quantities, in spite of "colour" being discovered everywhere.

The wealth of the Klondike apparently lies in its network of tributary creeks, such as Bonanza,

Hunker, and again their tributaries, and exhausts itself before reaching the main stream. The stories told of the manner in which the discovery of this fabulously rich region was first made, are now so varied that it is almost impossible to get at the exact facts, more especially as the actual locator of the first claim was an old Yukon prospector, by name George McCormack, whose stories of vast hidden wealth had always been more or less dubiously received by his brother miners. I will not, therefore, narrate any of the time-worn anecdotes which somehow seem to attach themselves almost naturally to all fresh discoveries of gold anywhere, but will continue the narrative of my trip to the creeks.

Leaving Lousetown, the trail skirts the Bonanza Creek, which joins the Klondike close by its mouth. The walking here was easy enough, and would not have been unpleasant but for the mosquitoes, that simply swarmed in the long rank grass and vegetation along the banks. It is a curious and remarkable circumstance that whilst the country round Dawson and all the way along the rivers and creeks are infested with these pests, not a single

one is to be found in the town itself. This is hard to explain, and I could find no one who could give any reasonable solution of so extraordinary a fact. It is, however, one of the few things that help to make life there bearable, for once outside the radius of the tents life becomes a burden and misery.

But to return to the trail. In a short time it began to get rocky, then muddy, then both, till at last it could scarcely, even by a stretch of the imagination, be considered even that, for after this point words fail to convey any idea of what that walk to the creeks meant. In many parts of the route it was positively a case of floundering through black squelching mud for miles, till one wondered whether one would get through and save one's boots. To the mud would probably succeed a long tract of deep wet moss, into which one sank till the water reached knee high; or perhaps there would be a slight variety, and there would be huge rocks to clamber over, till one's ankles ached with the continual wrenching they got.

About half way was a sort of wayside inn, a big log cabin called the Bonanza Hotel, where hot

supper could be obtained. We, of course, stopped here to refresh the inner man and have a rest, for the walk had already fatigued us, and we had a good bit yet to do. The remaining half of the journey was even worse than the first, for, in addition to the mud and the rocks and other impedimenta, we had to cross Bonanza Creek several times, and by bridges more often than not consisting only of single trees laid from bank to bank—easy enough for an old hand or a tight-rope walker, but a feat not in my line. I managed somehow to negotiate most of them in a more or less graceful manner. Harris, however, was not so fortunate, although he was far less awkward than I. He was the last to cross a single pole at a comparatively narrow part, when suddenly we heard a splash, and, looking round, saw that he had somehow managed to slip off, and was floundering up to his waist in the icy-cold waters. He was, of course, soon out, but wet through to the skin. Here was a pretty predicament. It was nearly one o'clock in the morning and beginning to freeze hard, as it always does out here during the small hours, not a house near, and seven miles at least to

do yet. We decided to push on as fast as we could, so as to prevent Harris from taking cold, if possible. So off we started at a racing pace.

The next bridge proved too much for my nerves, more especially after the accident I had just witnessed. I tried hard to walk it, but had to give in, and sit down and slide across somehow—not a dignified performance, I must confess; still, I got over safely, though much to the astonishment and amusement of an old miner who chanced to come along just as I was in the middle. Our companion having suddenly remembered that he knew some one on a neighbouring claim, we made straight for it in the hopes of finding him at his cabin—sure that if he were he would let Harris warm himself by his fire, and lend him something to put on whilst his own things were drying. We were not far off, fortunately, and by the greatest good luck found him in, though in bed. On learning what had happened, he was up in an instant, lighting a fire and preparing coffee, and, before we had time to turn around almost, Harris was out of his soaking clothes and rubbing himself down with a good rough towel—not a moment too soon either,

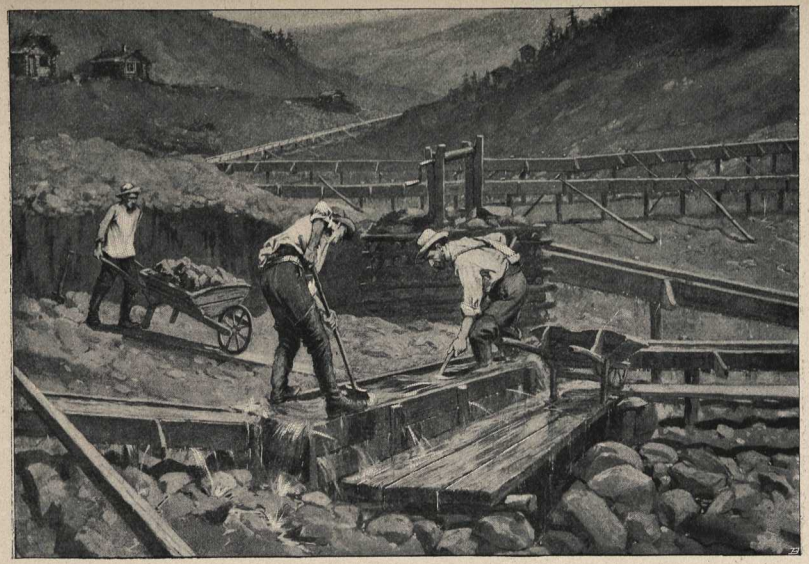
for his breeches and boots were coated with ice, and beginning to freeze hard. All this had been done so quickly that our companions had scarcely had time to introduce us to the good-hearted fellow we had thus rudely disturbed, and who was taking all this trouble for us. We learned he was an American named Voss, that he was the owner of the claim we were on, and was one of the successful men of the creek. Here was another instance of the rough exterior of the miner disguising the born gentleman. Had we been in an English country house instead of the uncouth log cabin, we could not have received a more genial welcome. After a good hot cup of coffee, we insisted on our host returning to his bed, for it was scarcely three o'clock, and making ourselves as comfortable as we could on rugs in different parts of the cabin, we slept soundly till close on eight o'clock. When we woke, it was a lovely morning, the sun shining brilliantly, and making the poor cabin look quite cheerful and homely. A good breakfast was awaiting us. The appetizing smell of coffee and the bacon cooking on the stove outside was almost worth the tough walk to enjoy.

We had, I am sure, but one thought in our minds as we sat down to the excellent meal, and that was that Voss was a jolly good fellow, and it is a pity there are not many more like him.

We spent the whole day on the claim. The wash-up was in progress, and as the method is the same on all claims on the creeks, it could be observed equally well here as elsewhere. The result might, perhaps, not be so phenomenal as some, for the claim is not considered one of the richest, but it would doubtless show what a good average was. It is not, I believe, generally known that these placer claims of the Klondike region can only be worked in the winter months—that is to say, what is known as the "pay-gravel" is excavated when the ground is frozen; then a hole is sunk till this gravel is reached, usually some ten to fifteen feet, sometimes less. This is accomplished by thawing the ground by means of fire, digging out as much as has been thawed, and repeating this process again and again every day all through the winter. Of course there are exceptions to this, some ground not being frozen at all, but this is rare. When the sun returns, and the creek is

released from its icy mantle, then the washing of the big heap of gold-bearing gravel commences, and usually lasts till the end of July. This is called the wash-up, and an experienced miner can tell beforehand almost to $1000 what the result will be. A fortune may be the reward, or a blank comparatively, for though there is gold everywhere, all claims are not Bonanzas.

The washing, or rather sluicing, process is accomplished by conveying water from the creek at a higher level than the claim, by means of what is known as a "flume," a sort of small wooden aqueduct that runs into a large wooden trough called the sluice-box. By grading this "flume," a certain velocity of water is obtained, so that it passes through the sluice-box with sufficient force to thoroughly wash and disintegrate the gravel as it is thrown in, as shown in my sketch. The gold, by reason of its specific gravity, sinks to the bottom, and the refuse is carried away by the stream. There are usually three of these sluice-boxes or troughs of different sizes, with movable battens at the bottom, which help to catch the gold. On very rich claims the troughs are cleaned



A WASH-UP ON BONANZA.

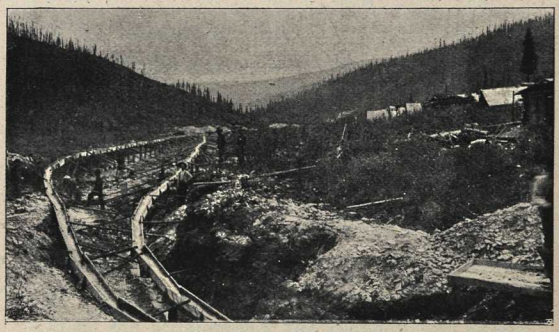
out every two hours, but on this claim only once in ten hours, at the end of the day-shift.

It was a most interesting moment when, towards six in the afternoon, the clean-up for the day commenced. As the accumulated small sand and gravel at the bottom of the troughs was gradually cleaned away, gold could be seen freely, mostly fine and flaky, but with small nuggets here and there, till at last there was quite a respectable heap in the iron pan in which it was collected. About 200 ounces for ten hours' washing was the result, not phenomenal perhaps, but a good representative average probably.

One of the principal difficulties the claims have to contend against up here is the water question. It stands to reason that in the summer small creeks like Bonanza and Eldorado do not contain an unlimited supply of water. Every one at wash-up time naturally wants all he can get, so the entire creek is taken up by flumes, the newcomer but standing little chance of getting in except by an arrangement with old claim-holders. Of course a lot of water is lost thus, as the flumes have been placed anyhow, till the whole bed of

the stream is a complete network of them. In the spring, when the snow melts on the hills and the creeks become roaring torrents, there is of course always the risk of all these frail aqueducts being washed away.

We had a stroll up to Eldorado in the evening,



ELDORADO CREEK, LOOKING TOWARDS FRENCH GULCH.

the valley presenting a still busier scene as the older claims were approached. It may be mentioned that claims are not named here as in other countries, but numbered—No. 1 being the one on which the gold on that particular creek was first found; the numbers then run "above" and

"below" "discovery," as it is called. "Discovery claims" are not allowed on any but gulch claims; not on the tributary streams of the parent discovery creek. On these the numbers start from the mouth of the stream. There are four classes of claims—gulch, bench, hill, and quartz. Gulch claims are of 250 feet run and from rim to rim, *i.e.* bank to bank. "Discovery" claims are double this. Bench claims are those on the bank above the creek, *i.e.* from the rim, and are considerably larger, being 250 feet long and 1000 feet deep, provided the hill does not extend more than 1000 feet back, in which case hill claims would be staked, these being 250 feet square. Quartz claims are 1500 by 600 feet, that is, 1500 along the lode.

Gulch claims have prior water rights on their own claims, but before fixing the flumes this question is generally settled by the inspector acting for the Gold Commissioner. It is usual to work claims from the lower stake and up stream. This is to prevent "tailings" from becoming cumbersome. Bench or hill claims will have to use pumps to get their water. The ground is leased by the Government to the miners for one

year certain, subject to all charges by it. As the mining regulations have been frequently changed during the past year, I commend this fact to those intending to prospect in this locality. It may also be added that all disputes are settled by the Gold Commissioner.*

The discovery on Bonanza Creek, as already stated, was made in July, 1896, by George McCormack, an Irishman, who is known locally as "Siwash George," in consequence of his having married an Indian squaw. He displays a good deal of energy and method in the working of his double claim (which, by the way, is reputed to be very rich), and has a steam pump to carry water to his sluice-boxes. Above Discovery are the richest claims on Bonanza, so far, whilst all on Eldorado up to 36 appear to be, up to the present, the richest discovered in the country. It is, however invidious to make any distinction, for many outlying places are gradually being proved, as, for instance, Hunker, Sulphur, Dominion, and French Gulch, which may turn out in their turn of immense wealth.

* See Appendix.

The great obstacle to developing at any excessive distance from Dawson, which is practically the base of supplies, is the difficulty and expense of getting provisions out. On French Gulch, for example, they were paying as high as 50 cents per pound to get food packed out to the claims. It wants a very long purse to contend against such charges when a claim is only in the prospective stage, and over and above this the miners have to be paid $1.50 per hour.

At the junction of Bonanza and Eldorado is a village called Forks, which can boast of the most expensive hotel I have ever put up in. It is in reality but a bunk-house, somewhat similar to the one I described at Linderman, except that it is log-built, and has an upper story. For the use of a bunk and two blankets for the night they charged $2, and all meals $3.50—and badly cooked and filthily served even at that. In other words, it cost, roughly, £3 per day to stop here, and this without counting drinks, which cost $1 each. I fancy that even in the historic days of Kimberley these prices could not be equalled.

We were unfortunate in our visit to Eldorado,

for most of the rich claims had just finished their wash-up, and the others were stopped through lack of water. We saw, however, enough to prove to us that the place is teeming (if one can use the word) with gold—for those lucky enough to find it.

It may appear incredible, but I was shown bags of gold which were used as pillows in their owner's cabins. The individual of envious turn of mind would indeed have a bad time up here. And what about thieving, will doubtless be asked? In this mining-camp, as in others in different parts of the world, considering how easy it would be to break the Eighth Commandment, there are very few instances of it. There may be occasionally some petty pilfering, but even that is rare. The risk is too great, for in a mining-camp the gold-thief would be treated as summarily as the horse-stealer on the prairies. Here there is also the police to count with. There was one case whilst I was in Dawson. A man had made off with two big bags of dust. He was followed, and soon caught, after a desperate resistance. At his trial, thinking he would get off more easily, he pleaded guilty, and gave information as to where he had

concealed one of the bags. The judge, however, decided to make an example of him, more especially as he had seriously injured one of his captors, so he was sentenced to five years' hard labour. Even after his sentence he evidently still thought to get off a bit, so he then gave information as to the whereabouts of the other bag, which was also recovered, but his sentence was unchanged. He would serve his time at the penal station of Fort Cudahy on the Yukon River.

Mentioning this incident reminds me of an extremely interesting conversation I had one day with the Hon. Mr. Justice McGuire, one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the North-West Territories, who was sent out in the spring of last year to organize the judicial district of the Yukon. "The Canadian Government," he told me, "has been particularly anxious to provide for the maintenance of peace and order in their gold-fields of the Yukon. Life and property must be made safe. When the news first arrived of the discovery of gold in the tributaries of the Yukon, it was not anticipated there would be such a tremendous rush from all parts of the world. It did not,

therefore, seem then necessary to establish regular courts, but they provided several justices of the peace. A small force of the North-West Mounted Police, twenty men, was sent in 1895, in charge of Captain Constantine, an experienced, efficient, and popular officer, who was in addition given the powers of two justices of the peace. Captain Constantine first established a police post at Forty Mile, which was then the centre of mining activity. Subsequently, on the discovery of the wonderful gold-fields of Bonanza and Eldorado, he moved to Dawson, the new town which sprang into existence in 1897. The majority of the first miners were American citizens drawn chiefly from the adjacent diggings in Alaska. These were none too well disposed towards the Union Jack or Canadian officials, but they soon learned that they had to deal with a determined and courageous officer in command of men able and willing to enforce the law. It was not long, therefore, before the miners learned, or were taught, to respect the Canadian rule, and to obey the law as administered by the police and the magistrates. The self-elected 'courts' which the American miners had

brought in with them were ignored by the police. For a time these 'courts' tried to decide civil and other disputes, and the titles to mines, but Captain Constantine preferred that these matters should be dealt with by him, and soon the miners' courts ceased to exist.

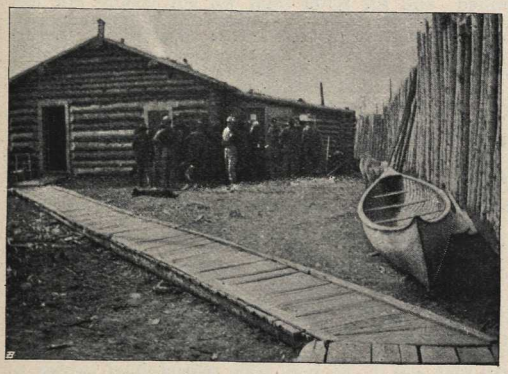
"In 1897, when thousands began pouring into Dawson, the Government recognized that the time had arrived for the presence of a Court of General, Civil, and Criminal Jurisdiction, and there is now a regularly organized Court at Dawson, fully equipped, and having all the powers of the High Court of Justice in England. Several prisoners were there in custody awaiting trial, one for stealing about $20,000 in gold dust, another for stealing a quantity of food from the cabin of some miners, their winter supply. Here were two typical crimes. Gold dust must frequently be left exposed to being stolen, and, like stealing horses in Montana, required that the punishment should be exemplary. Food was also a thing that was necessarily exposed to theft, and there being then a threatened famine, the crime of taking it, and leaving its owner to the risk of starvation, was

obviously a very serious matter. Both these cases were visited with the heaviest sentences the law permitted, namely, five years' hard labour.

"Crimes of violence are all but unknown in Dawson and its vicinity, where no one carries a knife or pistol except for strictly legitimate purposes. The most serious offences against the person with which the Court has had to deal have been common assaults where no weapon has been used. New-comers, who have been accustomed to mining-camps in other countries, are surprised at the quiet and order which prevails. In my opinion," added the judge in conclusion, "by day or night one can walk the streets of Dawson with greater safety than one could the Thames embankment."

On our way back to Dawson, we passed a train of pack-horses and men escorted by two policemen on foot. As the animals did not appear to be loaded, I inquired what it meant, and learned that it was gold from a wash-up. Each horse carried about two hundredweight in leather bags, which looked quite insignificant of course in size in proportion to their weight.

We had decided to leave the golden city for St. Michaels at the mouth of the river by the first steamer going down. It was pretty generally known that it would be a real "treasure ship," as a large amount of gold was to be sent out by her,



OUTSIDE THE POST-OFFICE, POLICE CAMP, DAWSON CITY. MY CANOE IN FOREGROUND.

and many successful miners were also going by her. It had immediately occurred to me on learning this that the journey under such conditions could not fail to be an interesting one, so we went to book our passages. To our no little astonishment, we found the clerk not inclined to take our

money. He was not sure whether there would be room, and asking if we were miners, and a lot of other, what appeared to us, irrelevant questions. Fortunately, a friend well-known in the town introduced us formally, and then the difficulty ended; and for $300 each we got tickets for the river-steamer, and then on to Seattle by ocean-liner connecting at St. Michaels. We afterwards learned the reason of this mystery. In consequence of the enormous quantity of gold being taken by the boats, it had been determined only to sell tickets to persons known to the officials, as rumours had been floating about that a well-organized attempt was to be made to get hold of the precious cargo. As it was, we were told that no move would be made from St. Michaels till the war news had been ascertained, so as to run no risk of falling into the hands of a Spanish privateer. The boat we were to go down the river in had not yet arrived from her winter quarters, so we had several days to spare yet, and we made full use of them to thoroughly inspect Dawson.

It was Sunday when we got back from the creeks, and I was immensely impressed by the

manner this day was observed in this rough camp. From midnight on Saturday till midnight Sunday not a stroke of work is allowed, not a saloon is permitted to open, and no drink whatever may be sold. The result is that this is a day of rest in every sense of the word, and after the hustle and bustle of the week, the calm that reigns over the vast camp is very soothing and refreshing. I could not help contrasting in my mind this state of affairs with what holds in Western Australia, where work in the mines and everywhere goes on without interruption day and night from week end to week end, and thus gives a man no chance whatever of a day to himself.

One of the two churches in Dawson had been burnt down just before my arrival, but the Church of England had a building which, I believe, was usually well attended. I was much disgusted and surprised to learn what a shamefully mean salary the minister receives. In a place like Dawson, where even the humblest workman can earn $1 per hour, and where even the barest necessities of life are at starvation prices, as must be known by now in England, it will hardly be believed

that this gentleman is the recipient of the munificent sum of $700 per annum! It would be interesting to know on what basis this stipend was fixed. Charity, that cardinal virtue, is brought to a high pitch here—far more so indeed than in

ARRIVAL OF WAR NEWS, DAWSON CITY.

many a place I could mention inside the borders of civilization. Perhaps it is the rough life of these Arctic solitudes that helps to soften men's hearts; but whatever the cause, the fact remains that up in these gold-fields more is done genuinely and spontaneously, and without hankering after

réclame, to help those in trouble. If a man gets frost-bitten and disabled, a fund is started to help get him home with some dollars in his pocket; or perhaps money is required by the hospital,—then, maybe, a newspaper reading of some event of interest is given, with substantial financial results as a certainty. Apart from these and many similar proofs of genuine sympathy with the distressed, most of the rich miners give $50 per annum towards supporting the hospital. It will be seen, therefore, that given good local government, Dawson has in it the right sort of "grit" to work on, which is no unimportant detail.

One morning, whilst strolling around, we met an acquaintance, who startled us by asking if we had staked out a claim yet. We were taken aback for the moment, as we had never given the subject a thought. However, once started the idea took root, more especially as the *Hamilton* had not yet arrived. But where could we find a suitable location, since from all accounts everything worth the name was staked out for miles around. Our luck was in the ascendant though, for, discussing the subject with a friend, an old-timer who knew

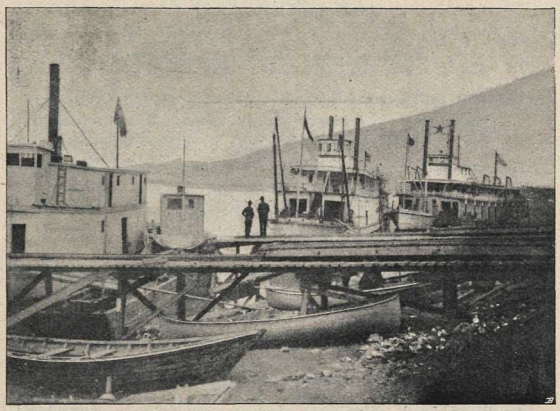
the country by heart, he at once said that he thought he could help us if we cared to undertake another trip to Bonanza. This was not particularly tempting, another wearisome walk of 32 miles; still we had nothing to do, so we decided to go. So he gave us a letter to a friend, telling him that if certain claims, staked last year, but not recorded, were still without an owner, to put us on to them. By still further good luck, we managed to get the loan of two riding-horses, so made a comparatively easy trip, though it was somewhat fatiguing going at a walking-pace the whole way, and having to be continually looking after our steeds. One had to be continually on one's guard against their slipping or stumbling on the treacherous trail. We spent the night at the hotel at the Forks, and started out early to inspect the ground, which was in a splendid position on the "bench" close to the creek. It seemed extraordinary such a site could have been overlooked, but probably, since all this ground has the reputation of being long since located, no prospector looks here. Having obtained full particulars as to the ground and what to do, our task seemed perfectly easy;

but we were a bit too sanguine, for, after working hard for several hours, taking difficult measurements and cutting stakes, we discovered that we had located somebody else's ground. A few further instructions, however, put us on the right track, and, aided by our morning's experience, we complied with the requirements of the law, and in thoroughly workman-like style. Cutting and placing the required stakes, *i.e.* posts about four feet high with two facets cut on the upper part; then with a long tape-measure, kindly lent us by the friend we had our introduction to, we measured out two claims of 250 by 1000 feet each, placing three posts to mark their front line. On these posts we wrote the necessary inscription, viz. on the facet looking up stream, "I claim 250 feet up stream for mining purposes,—Julius M. Price, No. 50,232, June 21, 1898;" and on the facet looking up hill, "I claim 1000 feet up hill for mining purposes," etc. No stakes are necessary to mark the 1000-feet line, and as the two claims adjoined, three stakes were of course sufficient to mark the front line, the centre one doing duty for two. Although no prospecting had been done on

this ground, the adjoining properties had been proved and said to be very rich, whilst the ground all round contained the finest claims on the creeks; in fact, we were in the very thick of it, so felt we had reason to be satisfied with our morning's work, in spite of our having badly blistered our hands with the axe (as might have been expected). All that remained was to pay our $15 apiece and get the claim duly recorded, and we were the lessees for one year.

On our return to Dawson we found the *Hamilton* had arrived, and was announced to sail on a certain day, and we were simple enough to believe it; but we did not know then the methods on which the two principal companies of Dawson owning the steamboats did their business. It mattered not to them a straw the convenience of their passengers, so long as it suited their own purpose, to start a week even after the advertised time; there was nothing to say and no possibility of redress. The *Hamilton* is owned by the North American Trading and Transportation Company, and is represented in Dawson by a managing-director, one Healy. This gentleman certainly did not go out

of his way to make himself either obliging or agreeable to his passengers, as we soon found. Meanwhile we were kicking our heels waiting for something really definite to be announced as to our departure, realizing the while the old saying



THE WHARF, DAWSON CITY, WITH STEAMERS "C. H. HAMILTON" AND "PORTEUS B. WEARE."

about certain places in Africa, that the difficulty is not so much getting to them as getting out of them. At last—and all comes to him who waits—we got notice to get our baggage on board. The *Hamilton* was really about to start.

CHAPTER XIII.

DAWSON CITY TO ST. MICHAELS.

Farewell to Dawson City—The *Charles H. Hamilton*—Our passengers—Our freight—Native pilots—The *Porteus B. Weare*—Fort Cudahy—Wooding-up—The Yukon Flats—Circle City—Stranded—Rampart City—Fort Weare—An awkward accident—The *Bella*—Captain Hanson—A Masonic funeral—A native canoe—Holy Cross Mission—Russian Mission—Arrival at St. Michaels.

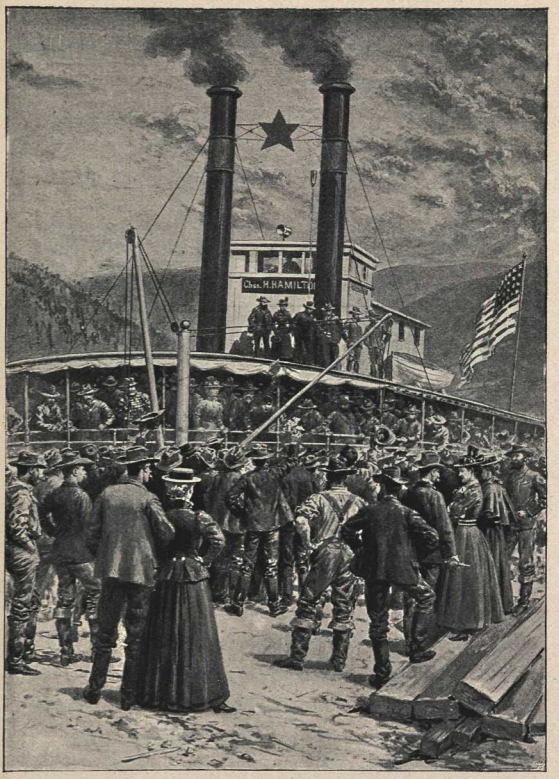
It may be imagined that it was with a feeling of relief that we got the intimation that the *Hamilton* was ready to start on her down river journey, for the many postponements of her departure had kept us in a continual state of uncertainty of one's movements, and effectually prevented our going far from the landing-stage, in case she should suddenly get under way. Even when we had got our baggage safely on board, and she was apparently announced to definitely start at five o'clock on the same afternoon, for some reason

or other (or probably no other reason than vacillation of purpose) the actual start was not made till more than twenty-four hours had still further been wasted. It certainly required a vast amount of patience to put up with these annoyances. Fortunately for those who will be coming out next year, the British America Corporation will be here by then; and with their big capital, backed up by sound business enterprise, will take the wind out of the sails of the two effete companies that up till now have apparently controlled the destinies of Dawson and on lower Yukon River.

The *Charles H. Hamilton* is the largest steamer that at present plies on the river. Although some 300 feet in length, she only draws 32 inches of water. She is the usual stern-wheel build, and has staterooms to accommodate sixty-six passengers. These rooms open on to a long dining-hall occupying the entire centre of the vessel. A sort of verandah running outside this forms a long narrow promenade round the vessel. When not overcrowded and no untoward incidents occur, a trip down the river on the *Hamilton* should be rather a pleasant excursion. On the occasion I am, however, about

to describe, it was exactly the reverse. The greed of the company owning her had caused them to crowd a hundred more passengers on board than she was constructed to carry, with the result they had to sleep where best they could, on the floor of the cabin or deck, in the hold, anywhere. Considering the fare had been doubled since last year, and $300 had been charged for all tickets, this overcrowding was little short of disgraceful. This was but one of the many discomforts of what turned out a very tedious and prolonged journey.

It had been arranged that the *Porteus B. Weare,* another steamer belonging to the same company as the *Hamilton,* should follow us down the river at a short interval, so that, should either of us unfortunately get aground, one could help the other. The amount of gold the *Hamilton* was rumoured to be taking down varied from 4 to 4½ tons, representing an approximate value of $1,200,000, this being the largest amount any insurance company would take risk on for one vessel, so I was informed. The remainder of the output for the year, which was said to be about 13 tons, would be sent on other ships as opportunity would offer. The amount of the



DEPARTURE OF THE "HAMILTON."

precious metal being sent on the *Weare* did not transpire. There was an immense crowd assembled, both on the steamer itself, the landing-stage, and the banks, to see us start, the *Hamilton* being the first steamer out this year doubtless helping to

THE CROWD TO SEE US OFF. DAWSON CITY.

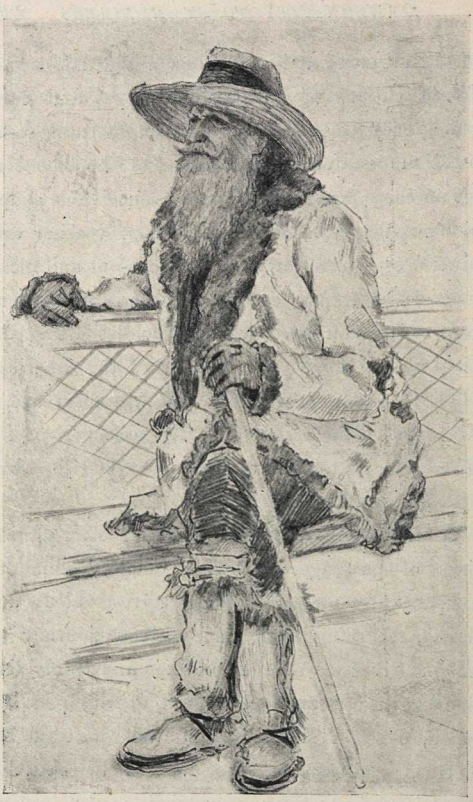
make the event a sort of half-holiday. At last the final handshakes were given, the gangway drawn in, and cables shipped, and, amidst the screaming of steam whistles and the loud cheering of the crowd, the *Hamilton's* huge paddles began to slowly revolve, and we were under way.

Looking on that big crowd as the shore gradually receded, I found myself thinking of many a similar scene I had witnessed in other parts of the world. A farewell is always impressive, but in this instance it struck me as being more particularly so—for, how many of these rough men speeding us on our journey but would have willingly changed places with us? Aye, and possibly have given up their doubtful chances of fortune in this dreary land to have been leaving it as we were. A hard and comfortless life was in store for most of them, and they had probably already begun to realize it—too late, however.

A stroll round our crowded deck revealed as heterogeneous a lot of passengers as could well be imagined. Taking them in at a glance, the casual observer would have unhesitatingly put them all down as absolutely poverty-stricken. The rough garb of the prospector is neither elegant nor well-fitting when new; after months of hard wear in all weathers, it is usually in such a condition that the meanest of rag-pickers would reject it with scorn. Picture to yourself, then, a hundred unshaven, unkempt men attired not only thus, but

also in all sorts and conditions of the oldest and dirtiest clothes of all possible shapes and cuts, from greasy frock-coats and tweed morning-coats to the mud-stained fustian jacket of the labourer; put on these men boots of every conceivable shape and mis-shape, from old Indian moccasins and miners' top-boots down to the worn-out and filthy boot of the tramp; cover their heads with every form of hat you have ever seen, whilst letting the usual greasy slouch felt sombrero of the American "hobo" predominate,—and you will form but a faint idea of the majority of the passengers of the *Hamilton,* all of whom had paid $300 for their passage to Seattle.

There were a score or so of a better-dressed class of passengers—a few doctors, solicitors, company promoters, newspaper correspondents and artists, returning from their arduous journey by ice or river to the Klondike, and prominent amongst these unflagging sons of the pen and pencil, Joaquin Miller, the famous "poet of the Sierras," representing the *New York Journal,* in attire of startling eccentricity; also several ladies and one Russian priest; but all these



JOAQUIN MILLER, THE "POET OF THE SIERRAS." A SKETCH ON BOARD THE "HAMILTON."

only served to accentuate the apparent squalor of the rest. Of course, it must not be concluded from this that the better-dressed were necessarily the lucky ones going out with their "pile," or *vice versâ*. As a matter of fact, as I soon learned, it was impossible to gauge from their appearance what these men really were, rich or poor, though one was not long in realizing that our enormously valuable consignment of gold-dust was not owned by many of those on board, and that really but few of these rough-looking men were better than ordinary labourers. They had evidently managed out of the $15 a day wages to save a few hundred dollars, sufficient to pay their passage and get them back to their homes, not much the richer for their terribly hard experiences, and in many cases thoroughly broken up in health besides.

Naturally there were a few really successful and wealthy men amongst us; but they were generally "old-timers" with big interests in the country, who were in many cases taking a holiday, whilst a partner remained behind to look after the claim; and many of these men who were the poorest-looking on board were said to have big

quantities of gold about them. All had fearful tales of suffering during the Arctic winter to narrate, whilst the hacking cough, haggard look, and scurvied limbs helped more to corroborate this than any doctor's report could have done; in fact, as I soon found out, we had so many invalids on board that the *Hamilton* reminded me of a ship conveying the wounded away after some big engagement, whilst the gold in her hold represented the honours of war won by the lucky few.

The *Hamilton* was on her maiden trip almost, this being the first time she had got as far as Dawson. Launched at St. Michaels last year, it had been intended to bring her up the river for the winter, but owing to the usual procrastination, she could not be got higher than a little creek a few hundred miles from the sea, and had to winter there, and for nine months had remained icebound. As compared with the rough accommodation of Dawson, she appeared almost palatial in her appointments at first. This impression, however, quickly wore off. Our first meal on board struck us all as not being quite up to the mark considering what we had paid for our

passage. The second was worse, and after that no mere description can convey any idea of the horrible-looking stuff placed before us at "meal" times. Tinned food, of course, we expected, since no fresh meat was procurable at Dawson in sufficient quantities to provision so large a vessel as the *Hamilton*, but there is tinned food and tinned food. Whilst to make matters even worse, the purser announced that he feared our provisions, bad as they were, would not be sufficient to go round freely till we reached Circle City or Fort Yukon some distance ahead, and took on fresh supplies, as the company had shipped one hundred more passengers than they had provided him with food for. The indignation of all the men knew no bounds, and had the managing-director of the N.A.T. and T. Co. been on board, I fear he would have spent the worst moment of his life. This was indeed a pleasant commencement to the voyage!

The distance from Dawson to the mouth of the river is 1815 miles, and to St. Michaels Island on the coast 80 miles further. The journey is usually accomplished in six days, but there are so many dangerous sandbars that it is almost impossible to

reckon on any definite time within a day or two. In a river so peculiarly unsuited for navigation as the Yukon, one had to consider it a lucky thing getting through at all, apart from any loss of time. For many years past the Hudson Bay Company and the Alaska Commercial Company have been running small stern-wheel steamers between Fort Yukon and the sea, and seldom has a season passed without accident. The only pilots are natives, as the river has been but roughly surveyed, and all these men have their particular sections of river. The great obstacle to navigation of the Yukon is the fact that the different sandbanks, bars, etc, are continually shifting, being no two years in the same position. This extremely serious drawback can only be overcome by using vessels of the lightest possible draught.

We proceeded down stream at a good speed, and reached our first point of call, Fort Cudahy, forty miles below Dawson, in about three hours. Only a short stop was made here, just long enough to land two policemen with a prisoner in irons for the penitentiary, this station being the convict settlement for the Yukon district.

ON BOARD THE "HAMILTON." SOME OF OUR PASSENGERS.

The mosquitoes here were terrible, so we were not sorry to get away. In midstream these pests did not bother us, the cool wind and the movement of the vessel keeping them away; but at many of the places the boat called at it was almost impossible to land; so ferocious and determined were their attacks that even one's veil and gloves appeared to have little or no effect.

We had not proceeded far after leaving Fort Cudahy when we realized what is the principal cause of all the wearisome delays on this river—stopping for wood. No matter how well the engines were doing or if wood had only been taken on an hour before, if we happened to reach a place where there were a few piles of it for sale cheap, in we would go, and several more hours would be wasted. Doubtless a lot of fuel is required, but, at the rate we took it on, the furnaces must have simply devoured it. All along the banks at intervals were to be seen big piles of wood, ready cut in the requisite lengths for sale, at so much per "cord," *i.e.* a stack measuring 4 by 4 by 8 feet, the prices varying according to the timber around. All these wood stations were simply hot-beds of

mosquitoes, which immediately took possession of the entire ship, and held it whilst we were alongside the bank.

Towards evening, the second day out, we reached a part of the river much dreaded by pilots, called the Yukon Flats. Here the river widens into an immense expanse of water fully thirty miles from shore to shore, and is full of islands and shoals to such an extent that it must be a matter of great difficulty distinguishing the main stream from the numberless backwaters.

Our next stopping-point was Circle City, and we were getting on well in spite of having to go dead slow and sound almost every foot we advanced. Right ahead of us we could plainly see the town. We should reach it in about ten minutes, when suddenly the engines were rapidly reversed, and the ship was turned and began to slowly stem the stream again. The main channel was blocked by quite a new sandbar, we learned, and our pilot would have to look for another passage by which to get through. It seemed a pity having to waste so much time going back again when we could have easily found a channel that would have taken

us past Circle City; but it appeared that this is a boundary station of the United States Customs, so it is absolutely imperative on all vessels going down stream to call here and show their papers. It took two solid hours getting through, and it was quite late by the time we got moored.

Circle City is on the boundary line between the British North-West Territories and Alaska, and is so named from its position just on the edge of the Arctic Circle. It is a large straggling log-built village, very Russian in appearance. Before the rush to the Klondike it was quite a large settlement, but it was now almost deserted, and most of the cabins empty. There are gold-mines in the interior some fifty miles distant, which have been worked for many years past, but with no very startling results.

I learned that the difficulties and hardships that have to be gone through to reach these workings almost surpass belief. The region to be traversed is but one vast swamp on which mosquitoes breed in myriads; in fact, so terrible are the sufferings these awful insects inflict on the prospector that stories are told of big stout-hearted men rolling in

the wet mud in their agony to escape from their tormentors. Along the river bank in front of the town were smoky fires—"smudges," as they are called out here—over which men with thick veils over their heads were standing right in the smoke, to get away from the mosquitoes. A large supply of tinned food was taken on board here from a store belonging to the steamboat company, and, what with one thing and another, there was a delay of more than two hours. We had ample time to see what there was to see of the town, but, apart from the two principal stores, a couple of dilapidated saloons, and a disused "opera house," there was nothing to keep one from remaining on board. It was close on midnight when we got under way again. The sun was still above the horizon, there was just a slight breeze blowing, and it was so delightfully warm that it almost seemed a pity to go to bed at all.

We were now all congratulating ourselves that we had passed the worst of the flats, and should reach Fort Yukon the following day, and then it would be all clear sailing, as the river is deep all the way down after this. At four o'clock in the

morning a dull, grating, ominous sound woke me up with a start. It did not take long to realize what had happened. We had got aground. I hastily put on my overcoat and ran on deck. Many of the passengers were already there, giving vent to their annoyance at what might prove a very serious delay. On all sides we heard expressions of disgust at the bad way the boat had been handled, for she had not run on a sandbar, but absolutely ashore on an island standing well out in the main channel. There was apparently no excuse for such bungling. No time was lost in rigging up a contrivance for pushing the boat off the gravel bed in which she lay, but with no success. She could not be got to budge an inch, although there were ten feet of water within a few yards of us. The whole day passed in futile endeavours to extricate ourselves from the predicament we were in. During the evening the men managed to get a heavy line firmly fixed to an island close by, and by means of the steam capstan tried to haul our stern round, but still with no success. Most of us went to bed that night with gloomy misgivings. Visions of wintering on the

Yukon rose in my mind, and I lay tossing from side to side for a long while before I at last fell asleep.

I woke up the next morning to find the *Hamilton* still aground, although the men had been hard at work all night trying to move her. The whole morning was again spent in trying various devices to shift us. After dinner a new arrangement was fixed up, and then the men were given a couple of hours of well-earned rest, so as to be fresh for a combined effort of all forces towards evening. Every one was on deck to watch the result when the work was resumed, and there was much suppressed excitement. The ropes creaked and strained and looked like breaking; then, as the engine started, suddenly there was a shout, "She's moving!" from those who were taking sights along the banks, from the deck; then another long pause as the steam capstan puffed and spluttered as the cable slipped from it; then another big shout of joy as we all heard the dull sound of a heavy body dragging over gravel, and knew for certain that we were free this time. Then slowly and majestically the *Hamilton* swung

round on the current, her bows gradually sliding off the bank, and leaving a mighty trail of yellow mud on the surface of the water. We were afloat once more after thirty-six hours of delay and mishap that might easily have proved very serious indeed. We anchored in midstream whilst the men hauled in the line, and everything was being made snug again. Then we proceeded again; this time very cautiously, as the river was full of banks and bars. I learned afterwards that the accident had been caused simply by the hesitation of the pilot as to which of two channels to take; whilst he hesitated the swift current decided, and landed the *Hamilton* on the tail of an island he was trying to steer clear of.

The *Porteus B. Weare* caught us up as we were getting under way, so we proceeded in company—a good plan for both of us as it turned out. We had several narrow escapes of grounding again, churning up the mud in most exciting fashion on one or two occasions, but fortunately got through without further incident, and reached Fort Yukon that evening. It came on to rain heavily, and that and the mosquitoes prevented any prolonged

excursion on shore. The place appeared the usual sort of uninteresting native encampment, so there was nothing much to attract one from the shelter of the ship.

We stopped later at night for wood, and had an excellent opportunity for observing the midnight sun, as we were now well inside the Arctic Circle. Most of the passengers remained on deck to watch the unusual scene. Something happened to the *Weare's* boilers, so there was another tedious delay next day whilst the engineer patched them up. At last we got under way again, and continued so for some hours without a stop. The scenery on either bank was very beautiful just here, and looked still more so in the calm evening air—flat, undulating plains covered with low bushes interspersed with small spruce, the whole backed up by distant mountain ranges, and over all the indescribable aspect of absolute solitude. We had several good musicians aboard, and after supper a little group of us would often get together in some quiet corner of the deck, and accompanied by mandolin and guitar, would while away the evening hours, singing old songs and

choruses we all knew well, but which lost nothing by being repeated softly over and over again in the quiet reaches of that mighty river as the banks passed quickly by like some huge panorama.

Five days out from Dawson we reached Rampart City, a rising mining-camp at the mouth of the Minouk River, where some rich finds of gold have recently been made. It was only 3.30 a.m. when we arrived, a little too early to commence sight-seeing Moreover, the entire place could be seen from our deck, so after a last glimpse of what looked like the usual style of rough mining-camp of the Yukon, we got back to bed again for a few hours more sleep. When we awoke at about 6.30 we found the steamer still at anchor, but about to start, and learned that it had been decided to give our consort, the *Porteus B. Weare*, three hours' start, as she could not otherwise keep up with us. Just before we left a poor fellow was carried on board. Both his feet had been frostbitten during the winter, and he had quite lost the use of them. He was going out of the country to get them operated on, though from all accounts it appeared there was no chance of saving them

from amputation, as necrosis of the bone had set in.

Our next stop was at a place called Fort Weare, some hours further on. This is another of the old Hudson Bay stations and a large native encampment. Here we found the *John J. Healy*, another

FORT WEARE.

of the N.A.T. and T. Co. steamers, just arrived from St. Michaels. The *Weare* was also here, so there was quite a brave show of steamers. Naturally there was a long delay, which gave us ample time to roughly inspect the station. For an Indian encampment it was very picturesque, and well

repaid a visit. Bark canoes appeared to be the principal industry of the place, of beautiful proportions and the frailest construction. One could buy a brand-new one for $10. The banks were covered with them, and, had it not been for the difficulty of getting it to England, I should have felt tempted to buy one to use on the Thames.

We got away at about two o'clock this time, followed by the *Weare,* most fortunately as it turned out. We proceeded down stream at a capital pace without a hitch until nearly six o'clock, when suddenly we were startled by a loud report and a shock that nearly threw us all off our feet. Almost instantly the engines stopped dead. Every one looked round, scared for a moment; then there was an excited rush to ascertain what had happened, as the whole stern of the vessel had suddenly dropped several feet, and it looked as if we were sinking. The cause of the alarming noise was soon ascertained. One of the main supports, known as the "hog chains," of the upper structure of the *Hamilton* had snapped in two places, throwing the machinery out of line, and rendering it useless, and at the same time

breaking down the entire afterpart of the ship in consequence of the sudden strain put on it; whilst to add to the gravity of the situation, at any moment the other chain might also give way under its double tension, in which case nothing could save the hull from breaking in two. Here was a pretty predicament, 750 miles from our destination, and the *Hamilton* an absolute wreck; for we at once realized that even if she could be held together, she was now little better than a big raft, as her engines could not be used again. The *Weare*, meanwhile, in answer to our signals of urgent distress, only hauled up alongside the bank a couple of miles back. Again and again was the whistle sounded, while the firemen below were rapidly putting out the fires of the boilers and blowing off steam. It was certainly exciting. The river here was at least a mile wide, yet the *Weare* made no sign of coming to our assistance. What could it mean? "They must surely know something serious had happened to us or we should not be signalling so persistently," we were all exclaiming. At last a small boat was seen approaching from her. Then it dawned on us that

the captain, a person named Weare, who also represented the company, might perhaps be frightened to bring his ship too close, in case it might be that the *Hamilton* had been seized by an organized band of thieves, and that our signals were simply a ruse to get the *Weare* alongside. And so it proved, for the mate who was in charge of the small boat, and who would not come on board, said his orders were to return and report what had happened. We therefore had to wait whilst they pulled up stream and actually got quite up to their ship before they came to our assistance, although at any moment the *Hamilton* might have broken up completely. With provoking slowness the *Weare* gradually got alongside, and made fast. Then a sort of temporary support was rigged up with heavy steel cables, though the whole of the superstructure had given way so much that this did little more than slightly take off the strain from the other parts. Then a consultation took place between those in command of the two ships as to the best thing to be done.

Mr. Weare, representing the company, and as such having naturally no thought but for his own skin,

was for towing us ashore, and leaving us to fix up the *Hamilton* as best we could. To this brutal and heartless course our captain, a fine fellow, who knew what leaving us behind meant, would not agree for a moment, insisting on our sticking to the *Weare* and she sticking to us as previously arranged. Mr. Weare, fortunately probably for him, gave in when he saw that he could not evade what was only too clearly his duty, and consented to take the *Hamilton* in tow. There is no doubt about it that had he attempted to get his vessel clear of ours, there would have happened something he would never have forgotten, for there were many determined men on the *Hamilton*, and their blood was fairly up at his unmanly behaviour since our misfortune. The two vessels were then securely lashed together, and we proceeded again, very slowly, of course, in comparison to our recent speed; but still it was moving forward towards our destination, and that was something to be thankful for.

The next morning, as we were "wooding up," *The Bella*—a boat belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, also bound for St. Michaels—

caught us up, and stopped to take on wood alongside. She was pushing a huge lighter full of passengers. It was fitted up with a sort of big marquee, in which we learnt was sleeping and cabin accommodation for nearly two hundred people. Captain Hanson, who was in command, undertook

A WOOD STATION ON THE YUKON.

to send a tug from St. Michaels to meet us before we reached the mouth of the river, so as to help us through our troubles. Moreover, he was reported to have behaved in a very manly way on hearing what a plight the *Hamilton* was in. Calling his passengers together, he informed them of what

had happened, and then said, "Boys, I know you are all overcrowded as it is, but a bad accident has occurred on the *Hamilton*, and her people are in danger of being left behind. It is my duty to help them by taking them all on board the *Bella*, even if it means only standing-room for the rest of the journey. If I feel I ought to do this, shall I be following out your wishes?" With one accord all the passengers endorsed this generous speech with a hearty "Aye, aye." As it turned out, fortunately there was no necessity to take advantage of these kindly feelings towards us.

As there was a swift current for some distance, we now made good progress considering, and no incident occurred to mar our progress for the next twenty-four hours. Then one of the passengers on board the *Weare* died of typhoid pneumonia. He had been ailing for some time past, and was an invalid when brought on board, but he was expected to pull through. It was decided to bury him the following day. There being no clergyman on board, a notice was stuck up on the two ships that evening to the effect that "The Freemasons on board the *Weare* and *Hamilton*

will bury Brother Hertz at Nulato on July 1st with Masonic Honours." The funeral took place the following day close to an Indian encampment, and was of a most impressive character, as may be imagined, and the more especially coming as it did on the top, as it were, of our recent misfortune.

On our arrival at the little station of Anvik, we were met by quite a small fleet of native canoes, their occupants having a quantity of fish for sale. This turned out to be what is known as "dog" salmon, and our purser purchased a number of them for the use of the ship; but they proved poor eating, and scarcely better than the canned food. There was a very pretty little village here, in the midst of which was a picturesque wooden church and vicarage standing by on a well-kept green lawn. This is one of the stations of the London Missionary Society, I believe. The curio fever broke out amongst many of us here, and anything at all uncommon or artistic was speedily bought up. In fact, there was quite a keen competition for boat paddles and the like.

I had my first and only experience on one of the

native canoes here, and never remember getting into a more cranky craft. It was like being in a boat made of brown paper; I was afraid I should put my boot through it. It looked so simple an operation to just step in and sit down on the matting at the bottom, back to back with the man who did the paddling, that I thought nothing of it till we were well started and a mosquito settled on my ear. I was just putting my hand up to annihilate it, when the Indian gave an exclamation of terror, for this movement of mine had put the boat out of equilibrium, and the water instantly rushed over the side, and I found I was sitting in several inches of water. The Indian grumbled something that I took to mean that I had better not move in that reckless manner again, but I wanted no telling. The mosquitoes took all they wanted for the remainder of that trip. I scarcely dared to move my eyelids.

That afternoon we touched at a place called Holy Cross Mission. It appeared to be the prettiest of any of the numerous stations we had yet seen; but we only stopped long enough to drop a passenger, and then hurried on. The place is

a Catholic mission station, and is in charge of a group of "sisters." There is a convent school here, and the school-girls came down to see us arrive. Very neat and clean they looked in a sort of uniform costume, though perhaps not quite so picturesque as the dirty Indian attire. There appeared to be laid-out gardens and quite well-built cottages. Altogether the little place had a very flourishing appearance, and we were all sorry at being unable to visit it.

The next morning I woke up to find we were stopping at a little village called Russian Mission. Here we were to leave our Russian priest. It was a very cold morning, and not later than three o'clock, but the place looked so quaint from the window of my cabin that I got into my clothes, and went ashore with my sketch-book. I was amply repaid for so doing, as the place was wonderfully quaint, and a typical Russian village, reminding me not a little of some village on the Yenesei. This was the first place we had touched at that retained any of its old Russian characteristics. The wooden church, with its green cupolas, standing in the midst of the old-fashioned wooden hovels, might

have been a bit of Siberia, so typically like was it. It was a very chilly morning, and as I made a sketch I could not help wishing that the resemblance had been carried a little further, and that there were a post-station or inn where some comforting vodka or hot Borstch soup could have been obtained. Unfortunately, Alaska is not the land of such luxuries! Once past Russian Mission we could begin to consider ourselves as getting well within touch of the delta of the mighty river.

Another of our invalid passengers died that day, a German lady from Dawson, who had been suffering from a complication of diseases, any one of which would have sufficed to kill her soon. She had been very ill all the time on board, her case being rendered still more painful by the fact that she was going down alone with her young baby, which, by the way, was the first white baby born on the Yukon, her husband remaining in Dawson. She was buried the next morning at a place called Andreafski. It struck one as particularly pathetic, these people dying and being buried so far away from home and friends, alone, as it were, in this dismal land. We were fortunate in having

two doctors on board the boats, so everything was done to alleviate their sufferings, though on such a journey as this the hardships must have been fearfully trying, and hardly calculated to help them towards recovery. We still had two more very sick people with us, but it was hoped they would hold out till we reached St. Michaels, where better nursing could be obtained.

As we gradually neared the sea—and on all sides were evidences of the approaching completion of our eventful voyage—the spirits of all on board rose in proportion, for there was not a soul amongst us who was not heartily sick of these interminable river-banks; and when at last the trees disappeared, to be succeeded by the low tundra of the delta, delight was on all faces. At a place called Kutlip, some nine miles from the actual sea, and which consisted of a single house on the bare plain, occupied by a Russian trader, we met a small steamer, the *John C. Barr*, that had been sent across by Captain Hanson of *The Bella* to meet us, so we were well in the straight for home now.

It is not considered advisable to make the eighty-

mile run up the coast in these flat-bottomed boats except if the sea be perfectly calm and there is no sign of wind. We were, however, very fortunate for once, and it was a dead calm. The disabled *Hamilton*, moored securely between the *Weare* and the *Barr*, therefore ran no risk, though we had to stop a few hours, a few miles up the coast, whilst a slight breeze blew itself out, the time meanwhile being pleasantly passed visiting a little fishing-village close by. We saw here for the first time the canoes called kyaks, which are made of walrus hide, and are almost familiar to one from Dr. Nansen's famous book. From here was only a run of a few miles to St. Michaels, but we were not to accomplish this without one final incident to complete this uncanny journey—another passenger died just as we came in sight of our destination. The *Hamilton* was exactly six days overdue.

CHAPTER XIV.

ST. MICHAELS.

Arrival of the *Hamilton*—The wharf—The hotel—A good Samaritan—Fort St. Michaels—Relics of the past—Boat-building—The United States officials at St. Michaels—Revenue cruiser *Bear*—The native settlement T'satsúmi—A visit to the Unaleet tribe—Delay in getting away from St. Michaels—The s.s. *Roanoke*—Advice to intending emigrants—St. Michaels to the Aleutian Islands, Dutch Harbour, Unalashka, and Seattle.

THE arrival of the disabled *Hamilton* caused quite a stir in the roadstead, and the air resounded with the screeching of sirens of big steamers and the shrill whistling of smaller craft, this being the true Yankee form of marine welcome. The effect produced, though weird, was cheerful and gladdening in the extreme, for it betokened one's return to civilization after the long and tedious journey just accomplished. One must have gone through

perils and hardships to thoroughly appreciate the delightful sensation of such a moment.

The quay towards which we were slowly making our way appeared to be crowded with people, a somewhat surprising circumstance to me, since I knew that St. Michaels is not a large place, and ours was the first steamer out from Dawson. On getting closer, however, one soon realized that it was the ingoing "rush" to the Klondike we were meeting—people who were on their way to Dawson by the route we had come out. The curiosity they displayed to see us and learn our news was only equalled by our own, for we were returning, as it were, to the world, and all that had been happening during the past three months was as a sealed book to us. Long before the ships were moored to the wharf a busy fire of cross questions was taking place—as to how the Klondike was turning out, the result of the war between America and Spain, how much gold we had on board, and so forth. Although we were still some ten days' journey from actual civilization in the shape of telegraphic communication, it may be imagined how eagerly news, even of such comparatively recent date,

was swallowed up. At last we got on shore, and with difficulty made our way slowly through as motley a crowd as I have ever seen. Had it not been for the rough background one might have thought one's self on some landing-stage in the old country. The majority of the bystanders had not yet got into what may be termed the "roughing-it" stage, when collars and other such impedimenta of a luxurious age are discarded, so they presented a marked contrast to the dirty and unkempt passengers of the *Hamilton*.

Close by the wharf was a large wooden building, in appearance a cut between a quarantine station and a store. This was the hotel of the North American Transportation and Trading Company, recently erected to accommodate those who could afford the luxury whilst waiting for the river-steamers which were to take them to Dawson City. It was as mongrel an affair as the throng on the landing-stage. In the entrance-hall well-dressed men and women rubbed shoulders with some of the roughest-looking beings imaginable, and were lounging in wicker chairs, or standing about in groups laughing and chatting gaily, whilst

from an open window came the sound of a piano and a woman's voice singing a well-known air. The inner hall, or lobby, which, as in all American hotels, was the office and waiting-room combined, was so crowded that we could only with great difficulty elbow our way through to the dining-room and "restaurant," to which we almost naturally turned our steps, the prospect of a good meal proving irresistible.

To our no little disappointment we learned that the kitchen was "eaten out," several ships having just arrived, and in consequence there had been a big rush for the supper which had just finished. It was past ten o'clock, and we were nearly famished. We looked at each other in dismay, for the prospect of going to bed hungry was not inviting. We were a party of six, nearly all newspaper correspondents, so it meant a big meal we were looking for. Our good luck was in the ascendant though, for the hotel clerk, a real good Samaritan, came to our assistance, and sent us to a friend, an official living close by, who had charge of the boarding-house of the employees of the company. Needless to add that he turned out to be

one of those good-hearted fellows one meets so often when out in the wilds, and he not only saved us all from imminent starvation, but actually refused to accept any payment for his trouble. What a delicious supper that was, or rather how delicious it appeared at the time after the awful food on the *Hamilton!* To mark our sense of gratitude, before leaving we each presented our host with a little Klondike nugget as a souvenir of the occasion.

We learned the next morning that the ocean steamer, on which we were to continue our journey to Seattle, had only just arrived, and as she had a very heavy cargo to discharge, there would be a delay in her sailing. We therefore had to remain in our quarters on the *Hamilton* for a few days. This was provoking, though I personally was not sorry of a chance to visit the island.

St. Michaels—or, as it was formerly called, Fort St. Michael or Michaelovski Redoubt—is now nothing more than a trading-station, a base of supplies, as it were, of the two principal companies that up to the present control the

trade of the Yukon region, namely, the Alaska Commercial Company and the North American Transportation and Trading Company. It was established as a Russian trading-post and fort in 1833 by one Michael Tebenkoff, an officer of the Russian-American Company. It is interesting to note that all the servants of this defunct company were Siberian convicts, and had the place continued in the hands of the Russians, it would doubtless have developed into a penal station. Remains of an old wooden palisade are still to be seen, though only a few rusty and antiquated cannon are left to recall the Muscovite occupation before the place passed into the hands of Uncle Sam. Apart from these warlike relics, there is still the picturesque little Greek church, with its inevitable green cupola, and also a row of old log-built cottages of unmistakable Russian appearance, now occupied by the Alaska Commercial Company, which are in striking contrast to the painfully new stores and other buildings put up recently to meet the exigencies of the rush to the Klondike. A few Russian merchants still live in the settlement, though their numbers are yearly

decreasing. They naturally cannot compete with Yankee bustle and enterprise. A camp, formed by new arrivals by the steamers, has gradually grown up around the old fort, but, owing to stringent police regulations, is restricted to a certain area, beyond which no tents are allowed. Boat-building is being somewhat actively carried on, and at the time of my visit there were several large stern-wheel river-boats on the stocks, and within measurable distance of being completed in time for this season's work. The timber and machinery for these craft is brought out direct from America, and merely put together here. Of course the principal drawback to St. Michaels ever becoming a harbour of any importance, should the Klondike become a permanent gold-field, lies in the fact that it is practically only open to trade during the four months when the Behring Sea is free from ice. Under such conditions its growth cannot possibly be extensive. The government of the United States is here represented by a small detachment of infantry, whose duties also comprise police and custom-house work. During the summer months a three-masted Dundee whaler,

resuscitated under the high-sounding name of United States Revenue Cruiser *Bear*, looks after the maritime interests of Uncle Sam in these far-away waters.

There is a large native village named T'satsúmi near the settlement, which amply repays a visit, and a few hours may be easily spent wandering round its quaint though dirty precincts. At certain times of the year the place is crowded, the natives doing a good trade with the skippers of the many ships that make St. Michaels a port of call on their way North. These aborigines are of a tribe named "Unaleet," which is one of the great family of Eskimos, to whom they naturally bear a great resemblance, though somewhat bigger in stature. Of equally filthy habits and of exceptional repulsiveness of feature, it is at first puzzling to distinguish between the sexes, for both dress in the same loose-fitting, reindeer-skin garments; and as the men, like all their race, are smooth-faced, there is scarcely anything in their outward appearance to help distinguish the gentleman from the lady, except perhaps that the latter usually does the greater part of the work. The village, with

its huts built of the whitened and water-worn logs brought down to the sea by the mighty Yukon, is very picturesque. "Caches," *i.e.* small storehouses built high up from the ground on long wooden legs, to keep provisions, etc., from the attentions of the

A "CACHE."

dogs, are to be seen everywhere, and of the most grotesque shapes. The beach was covered with boats, from the large walrus-skin "bidarra," which will carry easily forty people, to the diminutive sealskin-covered "kyak," which conjured up

reminiscences in one's mind of Nansen's famous journey. In and about these craft were "curios" that would have gladdened the heart of a collector, though the natives are not at all eager to dispose of them to strangers—spears, harpoons, bows and arrows, etc. Primitive as these weapons may appear, in the hands of a skilful and intrepid man they are from all accounts very deadly; and the Unaleet in his frail boat does not hesitate to attack even so formidable a quarry as the beluga, or white whale.

A couple of days sufficed to see all there was to see at St. Michaels, and we were soon beginning to grumble at the delay in "getting on." The cargo of the *Roanoke* seemed interminable, more especially since the arrangements for unloading or loading were of the most primitive character, and the ship was lying fully a mile from the wharf owing to the shallowness of the bay.

We could, however, console ourselves with the thought that we were no worse off than others in this "land of delay," where time, except to those eager to move on, appears to be of no special

importance; for there were several hundred people waiting to start on the up-river journey, and who had been kept fooling around for weeks, and this in spite of the assurances made to them before leaving that the river-steamers would be in readiness on their arrival at St. Michaels.

After all I have seen on my journey to and from the Klondike, I am forced to the conclusion, and give it as my deliberate opinion, that it would be well for all who intend making this inevitably comfortless journey not to pay the slightest heed to the alluring promises held out in pamphlets and prospectuses issued by transportation companies, for if any reliance is placed in such promises the disillusion is certain to be all the more acute. It is one thing making arrangements in some big office in, say, Seattle or San Francisco, for one's passage, etc., to the gold-fields, it is quite another matter when one finds one's self stranded out in the wilds miles from anywhere, without any possibility of redress, and quite at the mercy of some unprincipled agent of the company one bought one's ticket from. I was present at St. Michaels on one occasion when some miners, who had actually

paid for "first-class" passage from Dawson City to Seattle, were given "steerage" on board the ocean steamer, as the ship was full. Tickets had knowingly been sold for more passengers than could possibly be accommodated. Naturally the men were loud in their protests at not getting what they had paid for, their spokesman in particular waxing very wroth, whereat the agent of the company, a big, bullying sort of fellow, came from an inner office and in most insolent tones told the men that if they did not like it they could do the other thing, or words to that effect, adding that if they chose to go to law about it when they got to Seattle, it was a matter of complete indifference to him—the company had lots of similar lawsuits in view, and one more or less would make no difference. What could the men do? It goes without saying that once back safely in the States, most of them would be far too pleased to find themselves home again without bothering about lawsuits, whilst the others were probably not in a position to afford such a luxury as law.

However, to resume my narrative, at last, and to our no little relief, we found ourselves on board

the *Roanoke*, and, although this only meant a change of quarters, it looked like moving on nearer our destination. Two more days' delay, and at last we were really off, and it was probably with no feeling of regret that any of us looked back at the inhospitable coast of Alaska, as it rapidly vanished in the mist astern.

It is usually a ten days' run from St. Michaels to Seattle-Tacomo, but, owing to the many uncertainties, in the shape of fog and drift-ice, in the Behring Sea, no definite time can be relied upon. A very big *détour* northward has to be made on leaving the roadstead of St. Michaels, in consequence of the shallowness of the water round the delta of the Yukon, and several hundred miles have to be circumnavigated before the ship can be headed straight for her destination. We were all so delighted to find ourselves fairly under way that this trifling detail did not affect us much. The steamship *Roanoke* is one of a fleet of smart vessels that ply between New York and Norfolk Island, and in her day, when ten and twelve knots an hour was considered big speed, was doubtless a greyhound of her class; now, however, she is very

antiquated and slow, and, in spite of a brave show of white paint, is quite out of date. She may, I suppose, be considered good enough for the St. Michaels' trade. We were of course crowded together like herrings in a barrel, as may be imagined, yet, although there was a good deal of grumbling and jealousy at first—for every one of course expected to have the best cabin to himself—after a few hours out the men settled down quietly, and apparently forgot their grievances against the company. A somewhat welcome stop for a couple of days to coal at Dutch Harbour, a trading-station in the Aleutian Islands, helped considerably to break the monotony of the ten days' tedious journey. We naturally availed ourselves of the opportunity to explore the islands, the scenery of which reminded one much of Scotland. I learned that there is excellent fishing to be got on the inland lakes and streams, and also some good wild-fowl shooting. There are two trading-stations in the islands belonging to the Alaska Commercial Company, and the North American Commercial Company. One of these stations is at Dutch Harbour, where there is a fine

landlocked bay and excellent anchorage, and the other on an adjoining island called Unalashka. At the latter place is a picturesque little town of unmistakable Russian origin. All the vessels of the American whaling and sealing fleet make Dutch Harbour their head-quarters.

The voyage from the Aleutian Islands was uneventful—an alternation of fog and sunshine, which is so characteristic of these regions in summer time—then a delightful run up Puget Sound to the picturesquely situated city of Seattle, where a vast concourse of people, attracted by the news of our arrival, crowded every available coign of vantage on the quays and landing-stage to welcome us back, and to gaze with reverence, not unmixed probably with envy, on our ragged and travel-stained passengers as they came across the gangway, shouldering their kit-bags, which, rumour had stated, were full of nuggets from far-away Klondike.

As we sat that evening in a luxurious restaurant over our coffee and cigars, after the excellent dinner we had been so long looking forward to, I turned to Harris and asked him if he

would care to go through all our recent discomforts again. "Not much!" was his laconic reply, and I felt that these words echoed my own sentiments.

SEATTLE.

APPENDIX A

REGULATIONS GOVERNING PLACER MINING IN THE PROVISIONAL DISTRICT OF YUKON, NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

(*Approved by Order in Council of* 18*th January*, 1898.)

INTERPRETATION.

"FREE miner" shall mean a male or female over the age of eighteen, but not under that age, or joint stock company, named in, and lawfully possessed of, a valid existing free miner's certificate, and no other.

"Legal post" shall mean a stake standing not less than four feet above the ground and flatted on two sides for at least one foot from the top. Both sides so flatted shall measure at least four inches across the face. It shall also mean any stump or tree cut off and flatted or faced to the above height and size.

"Close season" shall mean the period of the year during which placer mining is generally suspended. The period to be fixed by the Mining Recorder in whose district the claim is situated.

"Mineral" shall include all minerals whatsoever other than coal.

"Joint stock company" shall mean any company incorporated for mining purposes under a Canadian charter or licensed by the Government of Canada.

"Mining Recorder" shall mean the official appointed by the Gold Commissioner to record applications and grant entries for claims in the Mining Divisions into which the Commissioner may divide the Yukon District.

FREE MINERS AND THEIR PRIVILEGES.

1. Every person over, but not under eighteen years of age, and every joint stock company, shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges of a free miner, under these regulations and under the regulations governing quartz mining, and shall be considered a free miner upon taking out a free miner's certificate. A free miner's certificate issued to a joint stock company shall be issued in its corporate name. A free miner's certificate shall not be transferable.

2. A free miner's certificate may be granted for one year to run from the date thereof or from the expiration of the applicant's then existing certificate, upon the payment thereof of the sum of $10.00, unless the certificate is to be issued in favour of a joint stock company, in which case the fee shall be $50.00 for a company having a nominal capital of $100,000 or less, and for a company having a nominal capita

exceeding $100,000, the fee shall be $100.00. Only one person or joint stock company shall be named in the certificate.

3. A free miner's certificate shall be on the following form :—

DOMINION OF CANADA.

FREE MINER'S CERTIFICATE.

(Non-transferable.)

Date..... No.....

Valid for one year only.

This is to certify that.....of..... has paid me this day the sum of.....and is entitled to all the rights and privileges of a free miner, under any mining regulations of the Government of Canada, for one year from the.....day of..... 18.....

This certificate shall also grant to the holder thereof the privilege of fishing and shooting, subject to the provisions of any Act which has been passed, or which may hereafter be passed for the protection of game and fish; also the privilege of cutting timber for actual necessities, for building houses, boats, and for general mining operations; such timber, however, to be for the exclusive use of the miner himself, but such permission shall not extend to timber which may have been heretofore or which may hereafter be granted to other persons or corporations.

4. Free miner's certificates may be obtained by applicants in person at the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, or from the agents of Dominion Lands at Winnipeg, Manitoba; Calgary, Edmonton, Prince Albert, in the North-West Territories; Kamloops and New Westminster, in the Province of British Columbia; at Dawson City in the Yukon District; also from agents of the Government at Vancouver and Victoria, B.C., and at other places which may from time to time be named by the Minister of the Interior.

5. If any person or joint stock company shall apply for a free miner's certificate at the agent's office during his absence, and shall leave the fee required by these regulations with the officer or other person in charge of said office, he or it shall be entitled to have such certificate from the date of such application; and any free miner shall at any time be entitled to obtain a free miner's certificate, commencing to run from the expiration of his then existing free miner's certificate, provided that when he applies for such certificate he shall produce to the agent, or in case of his absence shall leave with the officer or other person in charge of the agent's office, such existing certificate.

6. If any free miner's certificate be accidentally destroyed or lost, the owner thereof may, on payment of a fee of two dollars, have a true copy of it, signed by the agent, or other person by whom or out of whose office the original was issued. Every such copy shall be marked "Substituted Certificate;" and unless some

material irregularity be shown in respect thereof, every original or substituted free miner's certificate shall be evidence of all matters therein contained.

7. No person or joint stock company will be recognized as having any right or interest in or to any placer claim, quartz claim, mining lease, bed-rock flume grant, or any minerals in any ground comprised therein, or in or to any water right, mining ditch, drain, tunnel, or flume, unless he or it and every person in his or its employment shall have a free miner's certificate unexpired. And on the expiration of a free miner's certificate the owner thereof shall absolutely forfeit all his rights and interest in or to any placer claim, mining lease, bed-rock flume grant, and any minerals in any ground comprised therein, and in or to any and every water right, mining ditch, drain, tunnel, or flume, which may be held or claimed by such owner of such expired free miner's certificate, unless such owner shall, on or before the day following the expiration of such certificate, obtain a new free miner's certificate. Provided, nevertheless, that should any co-owner fail to keep up his free miner's certificate, such failure shall not cause a forfeiture or act as an abandonment of the claim, but the interest of the co-owner who shall fail to keep up his free miner's certificate shall, *ipso facto*, be and become vested in his co-owners, *pro rata*, according to their former interests; provided, nevertheless, that a shareholder in a joint stock company need not be a free miner, and, though not a free miner, shall be

entitled to buy, sell, hold, or dispose of any shares therein.

8. Every free miner shall, during the continuance of his certificate, but not longer, have the right to enter, locate, prospect, and mine for gold and other minerals upon any lands in the Yukon District, whether vested in the Crown or otherwise, except upon Government reservations for town sites, land which is occupied by any building, and any land falling within the curtilage of any dwelling house, and any land lawfully occupied for placer mining purposes, and also Indian reservations.

9. Previous to any entry being made upon lands lawfully occupied, such free miner shall give adequate security, to the satisfaction of the Mining Recorder, for any loss or damage which may be caused by such entry; and after such entry he shall make full compensation to the occupant or owner of such lands for any loss or damage which may be caused by reason of such entry; such compensation, in case of dispute, to be determined by a court having jurisdiction in mining disputes, with or without a jury.

NATURE AND SIZE OF CLAIMS.

10. A creek or gulch claim shall be 250 feet long, measured in the general direction of the creek or gulch. The boundaries of the claim which run in the general direction of the creek or gulch shall be lines along bed or rim rock three feet higher than the rim or edge of

the creek, or the lowest general level of the gulch within the claim, so drawn or marked as to be at every point three feet above the rim or edge of the creek or the lowest general level of the gulch, opposite to it at right angles to the general direction of the claim for its length, but such boundaries shall not in any case exceed 1000 feet on each side of the centre of the stream or gulch.

11. If the boundaries be less than 100 feet apart horizontally, they shall be lines traced along bed or rim rock 100 feet apart horizontally, following as nearly as practicable the direction of the valley for the length of the claim.

12. A river claim shall be situated only on one side of the river, and shall not exceed 250 feet in length, measured in the general direction of the river. The other boundary of the claim which runs in the general direction of the river shall be lines along bed or rim rock three feet higher than the rim or edge of the river within the claim so drawn or marked as to be at every point three feet above the rim or edge of the river opposite to it at right angles to the general direction of the claim for its length, but such boundaries shall not in any case be less than 250 feet, or exceed a distance of 1000 feet from low water mark of the river.

13. A "hill claim" shall not exceed 250 feet in length, drawn parallel to the main direction of the stream or ravine on which it fronts. Parallel lines drawn from each end of the base line at right angles

thereto, and running to the summit of the hill (provided the distance does not exceed 1000 feet), shall constitute the end boundaries of the claim.

14. All other placer claims shall be 250 feet square.

15. Every placer claim shall be as nearly as possible rectangular in form, and marked by two legal posts firmly fixed in the ground. The line between the two posts shall be well cut out so that one post may, if the nature of the surface will permit, be seen from the other. The flatted side of each post shall face the claim, and on each post shall be written on the side facing the claim, a legible notice stating the name or number of the claim, or both if possible, its length in feet, the date when staked, and the full Christian and surname of the locator.

16. Every alternate ten claims shall be reserved for the Government of Canada. That is to say, when a claim is located, the discoverer's claim and nine additional claims adjoining each other, and numbered consecutively, will be open for registration. Then the next ten claims of 250 feet each will be reserved for the Government, and so on. The alternate group of claims reserved for the Crown shall be disposed of in such manner as may be decided by the Minister of the Interior.

17. The penalty for trespassing upon a claim reserved for the Crown shall be immediate cancellation by the Mining Recorder of any entry or entries which the person trespassing may have obtained, whether by

original entry or purchase, for a mining claim, and the refusal by the Mining Recorder of the acceptance of any application which the person trespassing may at any time make for a claim. In addition to such penalty, the Mounted Police, upon a requisition from the Mining Recorder to that effect, shall take the necessary steps to eject the trespasser.

18. In defining the size of claims, they shall be measured horizontally, irrespective of inequalities on the surface of the ground.

19. If any free miner or party of free miners discover a new mine, and such discovery shall be established to the satisfaction of the Mining Recorder, creek, river, or hill, claims of the following size shall be allowed, namely—

To one discoverer, one claim, 500 feet in length.

To a party of two discoverers, two claims, amounting together to 1000 feet in length.

To each member of a party beyond two in number, a claim of the ordinary size only.

20. A new stratum of auriferous earth or gravel situated in a locality where the claims have been abandoned shall for this purpose be deemed a new mine, although the same locality shall have been previously worked at a different level.

21. The forms of application for a grant for placer mining, and the grant of the same, shall be those contained in Forms "H" and "I" of the schedule.

22. A claim shall be recorded with the Mining

Recorder in whose district it is situated, within ten days after the location thereof, if it is located within ten miles of the Mining Recorder's office. One extra day shall be allowed for every additional ten miles or fraction thereof.

23. In the event of the claim being more than one hundred miles from a Recorder's office, and situated where other claims are being located, the free miners, not less than five in number, are authorized to meet and appoint one of their number a "Free Miners' Recorder," who shall act in that capacity until a Mining Recorder is appointed by the Gold Commissioner.

24. The "Free Miners' Recorder" shall, at the earliest possible date after his appointment, notify the nearest Government Mining Recorder thereof, and upon the arrival of the Government Mining Recorder, he shall deliver to him his records and the fees received for recording the claims. The Government Mining Recorder shall then grant to each free miner whose name appears in the records, an entry for his claim on Form "I" of the regulations, provided an application has been made by him in accordance with Form "H" thereof. The entry to date from the time the "Free Miners' Recorder" recorded the application.

25. If the "Free Miners' Recorder" fails within three months to notify the nearest Government Mining Recorder of his appointment, the claims which he may have recorded will be cancelled.

26. During the absence of the Mining Recorder from

his office, the entry for a claim may be granted by any person whom he may appoint to perform his duties in his absence.

27. Entry shall not be granted for a claim which has not been staked by the applicant in person in the manner specified in these regulations. An affidavit that the claim was staked out by the applicant shall be embodied in Form "H" of the schedule.

28. An entry fee of $15.00 shall be charged the first year, and an annual fee of $15.00 for each of the following years. This provision shall apply to claims for which entries have already been granted.

29. A statement of the entries granted and fees collected shall be rendered by the Mining Recorder to the Gold Commissioner at least every three months, which shall be accompanied by the amount collected.

30. A royalty of ten per cent. on the gold mined shall be levied and collected on the gross output of each claim. The royalty may be paid at banking offices to be established under the auspices of the Government of Canada, or to the Gold Commissioner, or to any Mining Recorder authorized by him. The sum of $2500.00 shall be deducted from the gross annual output of a claim when estimating the amount upon which royalty is to be calculated, but this exemption shall not be allowed unless the royalty is paid at a banking office or to the Gold Commissioner or Mining Recorder. When the royalty is paid monthly or at longer periods, the deduction shall be made

ratable on the basis of $2500.00 per annum for the claim. If not paid to the bank, Gold Commissioner, or Mining Recorder, it shall be collected by the customs officials or police officers when the miner passes the posts established at the boundary of a district. Such royalty to form part of the consolidated revenue, and to be accounted for by the officers who collect the same in due course. The time and manner in which such royalty shall be collected shall be provided for by regulations to be made by the Gold Commissioner.

31. Default in payment of such royalty, if continued for ten days after notice has been posted on the claim in respect of which it is demanded, or in the vicinity of such claim, by the Gold Commissioner or his agent, shall be followed by cancellation of the claim. Any attempt to defraud the Crown by withholding any part of the revenue thus provided for, by making false statements of the amount taken out, shall be punished by cancellation of the claim in respect of which fraud or false statements have been committed or made. In respect to the facts as to such fraud or false statements or non-payment of royalty, the decision of the Gold Commissioner shall be final.

32. After the recording of a claim the removal of any post by the holder thereof, or by any person acting in his behalf for the purpose of changing the boundaries of his claim, shall act as a forfeiture of the claim.

33. The entry of every holder of a grant for placer mining must be renewed and his receipt relinquished

and replaced every year, the entry fee being paid each time.

34. The holder of a creek, gulch, or river claim may, within sixty days after staking out the claim, obtain an entry for a hill claim adjoining it, by paying to the Mining Recorder the sum of $100.00. This permission shall also be given to the holder of a creek, gulch, or river claim obtained under former regulations, provided that the hill claim is available at the time an application is made therefor.

35. No miner shall receive a grant of more than one mining claim in a mining district, the boundaries of which shall be defined by the Mining Recorder, but the same miner may also hold a hill claim, acquired by him under these regulations in connection with a creek, gulch, or river claim, and any number of claims by purchase; and any number of miners may unite to work their claims in common, upon such terms as they may arrange, provided such agreement is registered with the Mining Recorder and a fee of $5.00 paid for each registration.

36. Any free miner or miners may sell, mortgage, or dispose of his or their claims, provided such disposal be registered with, and a fee of $2.00 paid to the Mining Recorder, who shall thereupon give the assignee a certificate in the Form "J" in the schedule.

37. Every free miner shall, during the continuance of his grant, have the exclusive right of entry upon his own claim for the miner-like working thereof, and the

construction of a residence thereon, and shall be entitled exclusively to all the proceeds realized therefrom, upon which, however, the royalty prescribed by these regulations shall be payable; provided that the Mining Recorder may grant to the holders of other claims such right of entry thereon as may be absolutely necessary for the working of their claims, upon such terms as may to him seem reasonable. He may also grant permits to miners to cut timber thereon for their own use.

38. Every free miner shall be entitled to the use of so much of the water naturally flowing through or past his claim, and not already lawfully appropriated, as shall, in the opinion of the Mining Recorder, be necessary for the due working thereof, and shall be entitled to drain his own claim free of charge.

39. A claim shall be deemed to be abandoned and open to occupation and entry by any person when the same shall have remained unworked on working days, excepting during the close season, by the grantee thereof or by some person or persons on his behalf for the space of seventy-two hours,* unless sickness or other reasonable cause be shown to the satisfaction of the Mining Recorder, or unless the grantee is absent on leave given by the Mining Recorder, and the Mining Recorder, upon obtaining evidence satisfactory to himself, that this provision is not

* "Seventy-two hours" mean three consecutive days of twenty-four hours each.

being complied with, may cancel the entry given for a claim.

40. If any cases arise for which no provision is made in these regulations, the provisions of the regulations governing the disposal of mineral lands other than coal lands, approved by His Excellency the Governor in Council on the 9th of November, 1889, or such other regulations as may be substituted therefor, shall apply.

APPENDIX B

REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE ISSUE OF LEASES TO DREDGE FOR MINERALS IN THE BEDS OF RIVERS IN THE PROVISIONAL DISTRICT OF YUKON, NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

(*Approved of by Order in Council No.* 125, *of the* 18*th January*, 1898.)

THE following regulations are adopted for the issue of leases to persons or companies who have obtained a free miner's certificate in accordance with the provisions of the regulations governing placer mining in the Provisional District of Yukon, to dredge for minerals other than coal in the submerged beds or bars of rivers in the Provisional District of Yukon, in the North-west Territories :—

1. The lessee shall be given the exclusive right to subaqueous mining and dredging for all minerals with the exception of coal in and along an unbroken extent of five miles of a river following its sinuosities, to be

measured down the middle thereof, and to be described by the lessee in such manner as to be easily traced on the ground; and although the lessee may also obtain as many as five other leases, each for an unbroken extent of five miles of a river, so measured and described, no more than six such leases will be issued in favour of an individual or company, so that the maximum extent of river in and along which any individual or company shall be given the exclusive right above mentioned, shall under no circumstances exceed thirty miles. The lease shall provide for the survey of the leasehold under instructions from the Surveyor General, and for the filing of the returns of survey in the Department of the Interior within one year from the date of the lease.

2. The lease shall be for a term of twenty years, at the end of which time all rights vested in or which may be claimed by the lessee under his lease, are to cease and determine. The lease may be renewable, however, from time to time thereafter in the discretion of the Minister of the Interior.

3. The lessee's right of mining and dredging shall be confined to the submerged beds or bars in the river below water mark, that boundary to be fixed by its position on the first day of August in the year of the date of the lease.

4. The lease shall be subject to the rights of all persons who have received or who may receive entries for claims under the Placer Mining Regulations.

5. The lessee shall have at least one dredge in operation upon the five miles of river leased to him, within two seasons from the date of his lease, and if, during one season when operations can be carried on, he fails to efficiently work the same to the satisfaction of the Minister of the Interior, the lease shall become null and void unless the Minister of the Interior shall otherwise decide. Provided that when any company or individual has obtained more than one lease, one dredge for each fifteen miles or portion thereof shall be held to be compliance with this regulation.

6. The lessee shall pay a rental of $100.00 per annum for each mile of river so leased to him. The lessee shall also pay to the Crown a royalty of ten per centum on the output in excess of $15,000.00, as shown by sworn returns to be furnished monthly by the lessee to the Gold Commissioner during the period that dredging operations are being carried on; such royalty, if any, to be paid with each return.

7. The lessee who is the holder of more than one lease shall be entitled to the exemption as to royalty provided for by the next preceding regulation to the extent of $15,000.00 for each five miles of river for which he is the holder of a lease; but the lessee under one lease shall not be entitled to the exemption as to royalty provided by the next two preceding regulations, where the dredge or dredges used by him have been used in dredging by another lessee, or in any case in respect of more than thirty miles.

8. The lessee shall be permitted to cut free of all dues, on any land belonging to the Crown, such timber as may be necessary for the purposes of his lease, but such permission shall not extend to timber which may have been heretofore or may hereafter be granted to other persons or corporations.

9. The lessee shall not interfere in any way with the general right of the public to use the river in which he may be permitted to dredge, for navigation or other purposes; the free navigation of the river shall not be impeded by the deposit of tailings in such manner as to form bars or banks in the channel thereof, and the current or stream shall not be obstructed in any material degree by the accumulation of such deposits.

10. The lease shall provide that any person who has received or may receive entry under the Placer Mining Regulations shall be entitled to run tailings into the river at any point thereon, and to construct all works which may be necessary for properly operating and working his claim. Provided that it shall not be lawful for such person to construct a wing-dam within one thousand feet from the place where any dredge is being operated, nor to obstruct or interfere in any way with the operation of any dredge.

11. The lease shall reserve all roads, ways, bridges, drains and other public works, and all improvements now existing, or which may hereafter be made, in, upon or under any part of the river, and the power to

enter and construct the same, and shall provide that the lessee shall not damage or obstruct any public ways, drains, bridges, works and improvements now or hereafter to be made upon, in, over, through or under the river; and that he will substantially bridge or cover and protect all the cuts, flumes, ditches and sluices, and all pits and dangerous places at all points where they may be crossed by a public highway or frequented path or trail, to the satisfaction of the Minister of the Interior.

12. That the lessee, his executors, administrators or assigns shall not nor will assign, transfer or sublet the demised premises, or any part thereof, without the consent in writing of the Minister first had and obtained.

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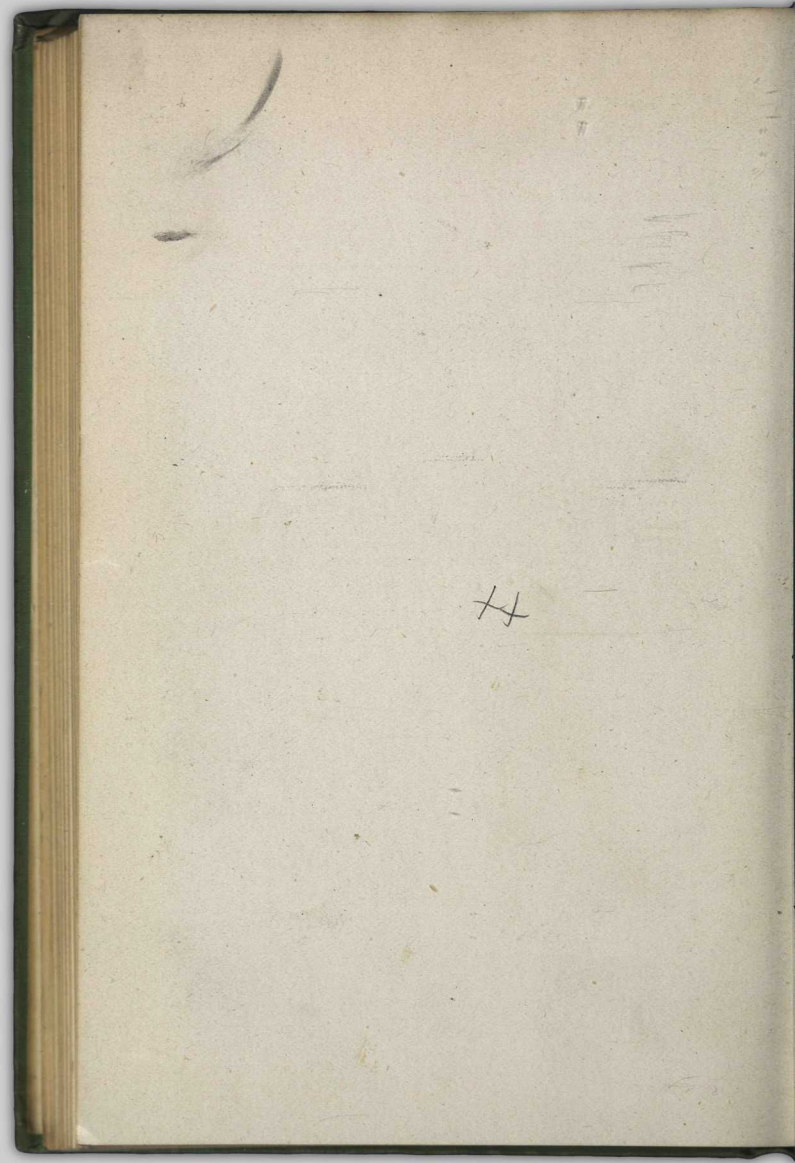

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MAP OF THE KLONDIKE GOLDFIELDS, TO ACCOMPANY "FROM EUSTON TO KLONDIKE," BY JULIUS M. PRICE, F.R.G.S.

WORLD
on Mercator's Projection
Showing Route to Klondike.
Scale of English Miles
Author's Route
KLONDIKE
GOLD FIELDS
DAWSON CITY
Fort Yukon
Circle City
Charley Village
Belle Isle
Johns Village
Ft Cudahy
Ft Reliance
Ft Selkirk
Pelly Banks
Yukon or Pelly R.
Upper Ramparts
Seminow Hills
Eagles Nest
Lake Le Barge
White Horse Rapids
Tahkeena R.
Dyea
SKAGUAY
Chilkoot Pass
White Pass
Lake Atlin
Atlin L.
Tagish L.
Bennett L.
Lake Athin
Indian Vill.
Occidental Trading Post
Chesmainn L.
Centreville
Sheep Mt
Laketon
Dease Lake
Glenora
Telegraph Creek
Tahltan Vill.
Wrangel
Port Wrangel
Sitka
Juneau
Lions Head 5800
Mt Fairweather 15,500
Mt Whiffle
Mt Drum 13,500
Mt Sanford
Mt Tillman 12,500
Mt Wrangel 17,500
Mt Blackburn 12,500
Mt Logan 19,500
Mt St Elias 18,000
Mt Vancouver
Mt Augusta
Mt Hendrickson
Mt Logan 8000
Campbell Mt 7000
Simpson Mt 6500
Cassiar 6500
Totsho Mts 1860
Sooloi Pass
Glacier
Kayak I.
C. Suckling
Yakutat
Yakutat B.
Malaspina Glacier
Icy Cape
Tanner Rapids
C. Fairweather
Icy C.
C. Spencer
C. Cross
C. Edward
Kruzof I.
C. Edgecombe
Chichagof Island
Admiralty Island
Baranof Island
Kuprianof I.
Mitkof I.
Summer Str.
Frederick Sound
Stikine R.
Dease R.
Liard R.
Pelly Mts
Mc Millan Mts
Mc Millan R.
Mc Pherson's Lakes
Trustles Lakes
Pelly Lakes
Quiet Lake
Teslin Lake
Gauches Lakes
Reid Lakes
Wellesley L.
Mansfield
Tanana R.
Porcupine R.
Yukon R.
Big Black R.
Preacher C.
Crooked C.
North Fork
Klondike R.
Takhandi R.
Tesnadu R.
Stewart R.
Pelly R.
Upper Pelly R.
Ross R.
Frances R.
Campbell Cr.
Hootch-i
Dalton's Ho.
Indian Ho.
Old Reid Ho.
Harbor's Stores
Five Finger Rapids
Rink Rapids
Lake Arkell
Lake Marsh
Lake Tagish
Lake Athin
Watson Valley
Mendenhall R.
Alsek R.
L. Dasar Dee-ash
L. Klushu
L. Arkell
L. Marsh
L. Tagish
L. Maud
Chilkat Pass
Chilkoot Pass (Taiya Pass)
White Pass
Slocan L.
Chilkat R.
Klukwan Vill.
Pyramid H.
Sullivan I.
Seward City
Muir Glacier
Berner's Bay
Great Britain
Taku Inlet
Douglas
Treadwell
Wright Glacier
Taku R.
Tahltan R.
Stikine R.
Dease R.
Liard R.
Nahlin R.
Tanzilla R.
Tahltan Vill.
Tahltan Vill.
Nook R.
Scud R.
Iskoot R.
Overpull R.
Mouse R.
Cassiar Mts
Sylvester's Landing
Gatewood
Dease Lake
Tahltan R.
Tahltan Vill.
Telegraph Creek
Glenora
Mt Whiffle
Port Wrangel
Sitka
Kuprianof
Frederick Sound
Prince of Wales I.
Kruzof I.
C. Edgecombe
C. Cross
C. Edward
C. Spencer
C. Fairweather
Icy C.
Lituya B.
Yakutat
Yakutat B.
C. Phipps
Malaspina Glacier
Tanner Rapids
Kayak I.
C. Suckling
Glacier
Mt Logan 19,500
Mt St Elias 18,000
Mt Vancouver
Mt Augusta
Mt Hendrickson
Mt Fairweather 15,500
Mt Drum 13,500
Mt Sanford
Mt Tillman 12,500
Mt Wrangel 17,500
Mt Blackburn 12,500
Mt Logan 8000
Campbell Mt 7000
Simpson Mt 6500
Cassiar 6500
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Sooloi Pass
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