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9195—Preparing to Climb "The Golden Stair" and Peterson's Trial, Chilkoot Pass, Alaska.

9195—Preparing to Climb "The Golden Stair" and Peterson's Trail, Chilkoot Pass

The difficulty of crossing lofty mountain ranges gives great importance to notches or passes in their tops through which travel and traffic may go with less effort than over their crests. The heavy snows may close the passes for several months each year. When railroads are built over mountain ranges they invariably cross by some pass and often avoid the last climb by tunneling. The Chilkoot Pass shown here is a splendid example.

The picture has an historical value also for it shows the rush to the Alaskan gold fields. During the years 1897 and 1898, 40,000 men entered the Klondike region. They went by various routes, but very many followed the old Indian trail over Chilkoot Pass which was open most of the year. Everything they wished to have had to be carried on the back or dragged on sleds and this added incredible hardship and danger to the trip. Here you see the goldseekers resting and preparing for the final climb. Each man guarded his possessions for they could not be replaced if lost.

The Chilkoot Pass is now almost abandoned, as steamers ply on the Yukon and a railroad runs into the interior through White Pass.

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