

been cut, for a distance of two miles to the north shore of Lake Atlin. To cross the lake the prospector is obliged at present to construct some sort of a boat or raft; but, no doubt, by next year someone will be found enterprising enough to establish a steam ferry system to carry passengers and their outfits across the seven miles of water from one shore of the lake to the other, whence a trail leads to Camp Discovery on Pine Creek.

The Atlin placer diggings were discovered by a man named Miller, who is said to have first obtained his information about the existence of gold in the creeks some three years ago from a Juneau Indian, who at the same time showed him a number of nuggets. Miller at once proceeded to the spot; but, so far as can be learned, without staking out any ground. He must, however have satisfied himself of the truth of the Indian's story, for he returned to Pine Creek in February of this year, accompanied by eight or ten



others, and together these men staked thirty 250-foot claims on Pine Creek, which were recorded by the officer commanding the detachment of the North-West Mounted Police at Tagish, under the impression that the district was in the North-West Territory. When the "rush" to the new diggings began in August, Mr. Norman Rant (to whom we are indebted for the photographs accompanying this article), the son of Capt. Rant, the Gold Commissioner at Bennett, was temporarily appointed Mining Recorder for the district, and ordered to proceed at once to Camp Discovery, where he arrived on August 5th. Shortly after his arrival all the claims held by Miller and his partners were "jumped" and staked out afresh, in accordance with the regulations of the British Columbia Placer Act, as 100-foot claims. This action on the part of the newcomers created a great deal of ill-feeling, and, perhaps, only the presence of the men of the Mounted Police, the tact of Capt. Rant, and the wholesome respect of the American miners for British-Canadian law, prevented bloodshed. The case will be tried in the spring, and it is quite safe to express the opinion that the prior rights of Miller and his partners will be in every way

recognized, for even now there seems to be some doubt as to which side of the boundary separating British Columbia and the North-West Territory the Atlin Lake mining district is situated.

The Discovery claim on Pine Creek has, according to Mr. Rant's statement, been worked by a cut to its full length of 250 feet, 6 feet deep and 10 feet wide, and since May of this year the four partners have taken out approximately \$8,000 in dust and nuggets. The average value of the gold, which is of a beautiful light yellow colour, is rather higher than that found in the vicinity of Dawson, being placed at \$16.75 per ounce. The diggings on Pine, and, indeed, on all the creeks so far located upon in the district, are very easily worked, the water being never much more than from three to four feet deep in the streams. The method chiefly employed for the recovery of the gold is by ground sluicing, but rockers are occasionally used in cases where the bed-rock is shallow and men are anxious to secure quick returns. Since August some twenty claims have been worked on Pine Creek, each, without exception, paying from \$25 to \$30 per day to the man; and from what is at present known, the striking uniformity of the values for the entire lengths of the creeks where staked is a remarkable and certainly a most pleasing characteristic of the Atlin district, which differs in this particular from the Klondike region, the paystreak in the creeks there, notably in the

case of Bonanza, being extremely variable and uncertain. Nuggets weighing from one to four ounces are commonly found on Pine Creek; but the biggest find yet reported is the discovery of a nugget valued at \$275, which was washed out of a claim near Discovery.

Since August, 1,500 claims in the district, were recorded with Mr. Rant but altogether 3,000 applications for leases were made to him officially. A large proportion, of course, of these leases

were granted for creek claims on Pine, Birch, four miles west of Camp Discovery, Musket, near Birch, emptying into Surprise Lake, Spruce and Wright Creeks, but a large number of bench claims have been staked, and some of these appear to afford even better results than the creek locations, Mr. Rant telling a story of a man who carried the dirt down from this bench claim to wash it in the creek, and making from three to five ounces a day in pay. Wright Creek, however, which parallels Pine, is said to be the most promising in the district, the water being very shallow and the gold in the gravel being quite generally coarse; and another stream recently discovered, and known as Goose Creek, thirty-two miles north-east of Pine Creek, also promises well. Very little prospecting for quartz has yet been attempted, but some finds of free-milling quartz, showing visible gold and also of galena ore, are reported, and some thirty or forty



1. Capt. Rant, Gold Commissioner, and Capt. Belcher, N.W.M.P.
2. Crossing Lake Atlin on a raft.