

Yukon River is shown in the next photo, which was taken near Forty Mile City. Mr. De Windt tells a tragic story in this connection. The sledge-dogs are not controlled by reins; and so intense is the cold in winter that when travellers are gliding across the frozen rivers the sledge has to be stopped at intervals, or the wind created would freeze the passengers to death. "A tenderfoot was one night travelling in a sledge with an Indian, when he (the tenderfoot) dropped his pipe. The sledge was stopped as soon as possible, and the Indian sent back about a hundred yards to recover the lost 'comfort.' While he was gone, the dogs started off on their own account. Mile after mile they sped on, and when at length they pulled up outside Joe Leduc's house, at Dawson, their solitary passenger was stiff and stark, his sightless eyes gazing straight ahead."

In addition to all the terrible hardships and dangers encountered on the journey, it seems that there is one other overwhelming curse at the Klondike and other Yukon mines. I allude to the mosquitoes, which swarm in summer.

"Life is made unbearable," said Mr. De Windt. "For the first few days on the Yukon, conversation, sleep, and even eating are almost out of the question. I have camped out after a hard day's work, famished with hunger, and yet unable to raise a mouthful to my lips, owing to the persistent onslaughts of those awful mosquitoes. Dogs are tortured to death by them; deer and bear are driven into the rivers. The incessant irritation caused by the bites brings on positive illness. I shall never forget seeing ungloved and veiless 'tenderfeet,' whose faces and hands were mere masses of bleeding flesh."

We here reproduce a photograph of the Klondike cabin of Mr. Joe Leduc, one of the most persistent and successful of all the Yukon miners. As long ago as 1883, when Lieut. Schwatka, of the United States Army, was conducting his military reconnaissance from the Chicout Inlet to Fort Selkirk, he made the acquaintance of Joe Leduc, who was then "digging holes perseveringly and finding precious little in them." Mr. Leduc,

however, was the virtual creator of Dawson City, on the Klondike River, and is now a multi-millionaire. He will doubtless soon exchange his rough wooden cabin for a palace on Fifth Avenue.

When you reach the gold-fields, you seek out Inspector Constantine, the Government official in charge, and apply for a claim, before even commencing to prospect. "You get what is called a 'free miner's certificate.' It's called that because it isn't free; you pay five dollars a year for it, and there are several other charges. If you commence without this paper you are fined twenty-five dollars and all costs. The next step is the locating and recording of the claim you would like to work. The entry fee is twenty-five dollars for the first year, with an annual fee of 100 dollars. Dry diggings are, as nearly as possible, rectangular (100ft. square) and marked by four legal posts at the corners. Red tape is even here, you see. It is written:

'Posts must be at least .7in. square'—as if that mattered. On one post must be written all sorts of particulars—names, dates, and the like. Creek and river claims are 500ft. long, by the way. If you leave your claim for more than seventy-two hours on end, anyone

may come in and take possession of it. There are quite a number of other regulations about tunnels, drains, water rights, and so forth." The miners have no great love for the Government officials, whom they do their best to baffle. The diggers are also very reticent about their earnings.

Thus there is the appalling journey, the awful cold of winter, the terrible mosquitoes in summer, and a scarcity of decent food at all times. Transportation companies are being formed, however, and doubtless things will be different next spring, when, among other things, the British Yukon Co. will place twenty stern-wheel steamers on the great river, and probably construct a narrow-gauge railway over the White Pass. But that there will be much suffering among the gold-seekers, no one doubts. When you hear of thousands of inexperienced persons, who wouldn't know iron pyrites from gold quartz,



From a MR. JOE LEDUC'S CABIN AT DAWSON CITY. [Photograph.]