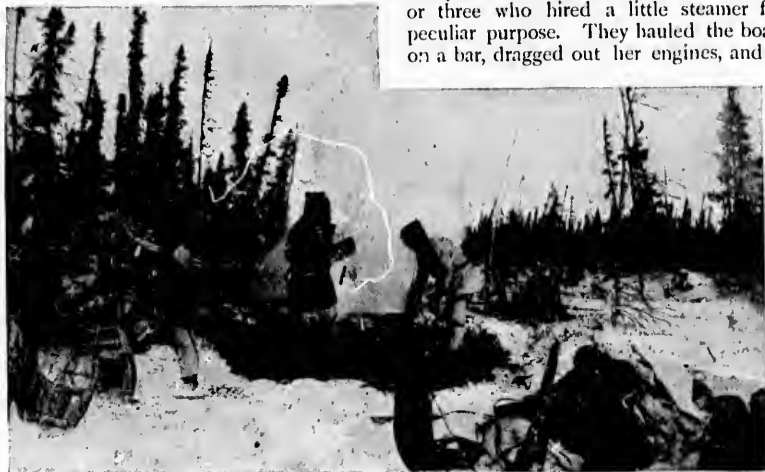


again she took on board men who had been waiting on the quay all night long lest the vessel should leave without them.

I asked Mr. De Windt what was the beginning of all this. "The region has been known to be auriferous for many years," he replied, "and a good few men have been at work there. The moment an exceptionally rich 'strike' was made a 'rush' followed. Men who had been working a 'grub-stake'

hired miners commanded £3 to £5 a day. How then can any city, within a thousand miles of such astounding wealth, hope to keep its firemen, its postmen, or other officials? Why, I know a stoker on a Yukon steamer who last year was only earning eight dollars a month and his board, but who went to the diggings and returned with a fortune of 170,000 dollars.

"So ingenious are the miners that they richly deserve their success. I heard of two or three who hired a little steamer for a peculiar purpose. They hauled the boat up on a bar, dragged out her engines, and then



From a]

LORD LONSDALE'S CAMP IN ALASKA.

[Photograph.

—one that barely paid—made a dash for their boats, throwing in their drunken companions as ballast, and then heading for the new creek. But the big boom commenced in September, 1896, when one George Cormack found gold in large quantities. Then came the inevitable rush. In the following spring, when water was available, gold was washed out in pounds' weight. Four pans went as high as 200 dollars. The washing-pan, by the way, about which one hears so much, is an ordinary sheet-iron thing for which one pays three dollars at Juneau. It is 18 in. in circumference and 4 in. or 5 in. deep. Some men made money at the rate of 17 dollars *per minute*; and fortunes of 100,000 dollars were made in less than two months, although the miners had only just commenced to work their claims.

"Last year," pursued the explorer, "I stayed with Mr. Ogilvie, the Dominion Surveyor. He assured me that he knew of 204 dollars' worth of gold being washed out of one pan; and he mentioned that

made them work a set of pumps which supplied the sluicing boxes. With this crude machinery the fellows each cleared 1,000 dollars a month."

"Now let us return to the journey up the Yukon," I suggested. "We had negotiated Lake Bennett."

"Very well. Leaving the Lakes on June 26th, we entered the Lewes River, and next day reached the Grand Cañon Rapid, which is nearly a mile long, and dashes through perpendicular walls of rock from 50ft. to 100ft. high. The fall is 100ft. wide, and so swift, that the stream is 4ft. higher in the centre than at the sides!

"Next we dashed down a perfect mill-race for six miles to the White Horse Rapids—a place so fatal as to have received the name of the 'Miner's Grave.' Not a day passed that we did not see a cairn, or a rude wooden cross, marking the last resting-place of some drowned pilgrim to the land of gold. At Fort Selkirk, the Lewes River down which we journeyed from the Lakes unites with the