

es than if it

Yukon River, which is de- and Mr. Ivan a third more "her of Waters been explored the first signs brought to s on the bars veyed by similar talinquas, and er mines were le, and Birch n 1883, how- ounted to only extant a pho- runners of the ile Creek was from it in 1893 ring streams. the pioneer of led and became of the region.

CREEK.

California miner the little trading ch strikes had the river. He excess, and hear- neighbors' part ,000 in coarse gan to work up eam which the as offering no ward declared, that it was *chee* ver that may ten days from above Dawson. Bonanza Creek c on August 12. d it is said that locality by his the Klondike—rd *Thron-dick*, s primitive, he me distance to two other men, in this fashion, and returning to report which left t. This was in y a year before

the world heard of the discovery and had the proof brought to it on the *Excelsior* and *Portland*, although William Ogilvie, government surveyor, had made reports to Canada, and rumors were broadcast. The *Excelsior* brought down from St. Michael \$500,000 worth of gold, most of it from Forty Mile Creek. A little later the *Portland* sailed into Seattle with \$700,000 of Klondike gold and six of the lucky pioneers on board. Seattle was stirred to its very depths. Five thousand people crowded around the dock, and as the gold came down the gang-plank packed in "blankets, tin cans, canvas sacks, even in the legs of old trousers," the onlookers went wild with enthusiastic excitement. An eye-witness reported that one weather-beaten old fellow was so overcome by this ovation and by the actuality of his good fortune which it impressed upon him that he proceeded to shower among the crowd a handful of nuggets worth some \$300.

The news ran along the western coast like wild-fire. The north pole changed its location to the spot where the one hundred and forty-first meridian crosses the arctic circle for all adventurous spirits—a golden pole toward which every compass pointed. From that day to this the excitement has been increasing, despite the

swarm of daunting and contradictory reports which have been floated to meet the public demand for news. Since this time the gold that has reached the United States from the Yukon foots up about \$6,000,000. The gold brought out of the Yukon before the arrival of the *Excelsior* was not considerable, authority giving the output of the Yukon basin for the ten years preceding the Klondike discovery at about \$3,000,000, while within two months after the discovery \$5,000,000 were taken out. It must be said, though, that this "two months" is hardly a fair statement. True, it was washed out in that time, but the result also represented much time and labor during the previous eight or ten months in accumulating part of the sands sluiced in that two months. It is interesting to know that it took the first eight months of mining in California to get out that amount, under infinitely more favorable climatic conditions.



THE GRACEFUL CHILKAT DUGOUT IN TAIYA BAY.

#### THE GREAT GOLD BELT.

The highest authority on Alaska, Dr. W. H. Dall, of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, a geologist of note, says: "The gold-bearing belt of Northwestern America contains all the gold-fields extending into British Columbia and what is known as the Northwestern Territory of Alaska. The Yukon really runs along in that belt for five or six hundred miles. The



LOOKING UP THE TLEHINI VALLEY.

Photo by J. F. Pratt.

bed of the main river is in the valley. The yellow metal is not found in paying quantities in the main river, but in the small streams which cut through the mountains on either side. Mud and mineral matter are carried into the main river, while the gold is left on the rough bottom of these side streams. In most cases the gold lies at the bottom of thick gravel deposits. The gold is covered with frozen gravel in the winter. During the summer, until the snow is all melted, the surface is covered with muddy torrents. When the summer is over and the springs begin to freeze the streams dry up. At the approach of winter, in order to get at the gold the miners find it necessary to dig into the gravel formation." This is definite and authentic testimony, but the Klondike miners have given me this more intimate explanation of how the gold placers are found and worked.

#### LOCATION OF THE PRECIOUS METAL.

Their experience has taught them this simple rule of nature, that the disintegrations of gold-bearing quartz veins are washed down the steeper declivities, and where the streams assume a more horizontal current form a bed of the small particles of stone and mud and gold (flour, sand, and nuggets). The constant action of the water moves the lighter of these substances first, with the heavier—the gold—always tending, on account of its weight, to settle deeper and deeper. With this con-