

On the Way to Klondike

we returned and pitched our tent for the night alongside of our belongings. We had had some supper at one of the saloons 'up town,' but we unpacked our little stove and collected some firewood in readiness to prepare breakfast in the morning.

Our first night under canvas passed very quietly. We both slept soundly, and thoroughly enjoyed our tin cups of coffee at seven o'clock.

We talked matters over after breakfast, and decided to accompany the contractor, who was about to start with his first load to the foot of the Pass. Arrived there, we would each shoulder a fifty or sixty pound package, and march with it up the canyon to the first halting-place. We should then be better able to judge as to the alleged difficulties of transport and the charges for haulage.

We carried out our programme, and when we got back we were sufficiently convinced of the strict moderation of the contractor's demand, and hastened to close with the offer. That first short stage would have been no mere pleasure trip with nothing heavier than a walking-stick to carry, but with half a hundredweight strapped on to one's back it was simply killing. The snow was half melted, and I perspired so much that I believe I lost