

hung in bags on pegs behind the door, tied up in the arm of a worn-out shirt, or perhaps filled in the foot of a rubber boot.

Few books reach these camps, and fewer newspapers, as neither government carries anything but "first-class mail matter." But I noticed on the passes last summer that nearly every man had a

Bible with him, and I saw a number of copies of Shakespeare. And to the man of thoughtful mind I should think that a few good books, hard to exhaust, would be a food needed as much as bacon and beans. Nansen while on the *Fram* got better work from his men because he gave them the diversion of books and music.

Some of these miners build their cabins with a "lean-to" which covers the shaft and protects the partner at the windlass as he draws up the buckets of frozen dirt. The plan of working these placers is for two men to work together, one down in the drift, who, by keeping a fire going while he sleeps, thaws enough ground to pick it out and load it in the bucket when awake, while his partner draws the bucket up the shaft with a windlass, made like the old-fashioned well. This dirt he piles outside, and there it stays until spring, except for an occasional "panning" to see how rich the dirt is running.

When the springs thaw and begin to trickle down the mountain the miner builds his sluice-box, and turning the water into its head, incunes it for just the necessary current, and then feeds the box at its upper end with this dump pile. The water continues what nature began, and the gold in the sand sinks against cleats on the bottom, while the dirt passes away. The "rocker" is also used, and every miner has his little preferences as to details



THE INDIAN PACKER AND HIS PONY.



DIVERSION OF CAMP LIFE.

of method, but as yet on the Yukon they are primitive indeed.

In the towns, particularly at Dawson, Dyea, and Skaguay, everything is "wide open"—drinking, gambling, and the mad dance of the miners and their women are almost a "continuous performance" through the winter. Of course the crowd of miners change, but the women don't. The men come into town from the mines at intervals for a diversion from their monotonous life. This monotony is liable to make the settlements of the Yukon the most wicked in the history of camp towns, for human nature will "even up" things.

It was never my belief that there would be a serious famine at Dawson or on the Klondike this winter. Food might go to very high prices and men might have to economize in its use, but with the personal knowledge I had that three-



THE ARGONAUT'S CAMP ON CHILKOOT TRAIL.

fourths of those who got through the passes last year went with a year's supply, made me feel sure that this, with the tonnage that got up the Yukon, made a gross supply which would keep the wolf away from the "shack" if men remained together. A miner in that country will charge you the highest market prices for food if you have the money to pay or the strength to work, but be you penniless and with no work to do, it is his spirit to divide his last crust with you, and with good grace.

The very best advice that can be given on "outfitting" for a year or two in that land of the long nights, without particularizing, is to take only what is absolutely needed, and be sure that it is of the very highest quality. A good sleeping-bag is worth a dozen a little cheaper; one well-made coat is worth many inferior ones; and so on through the list of clothing, tools, and food. If you do decide to cut on quantity, let it be on the clothes.

II.—HOW TO GET TO DAWSON CITY.

The most vital question that these gold-seekers are asking is, What is the best route? Having kept in close touch with the man who is going to the Yukon, I have concluded that he will have