

the nearest point for departure to the gold fields as soon as spring should open. The stories of the Chilkat and Chilkoot Passes have been told and retold, with many illustrations, in the last twelve months. The bowlder-strewn cleft of the Chilkoot, rising twenty-five hundred feet in two miles, a terrible pathway over which unloaded animals can be driven only with the greatest difficulty and men must bear all burdens upon their shoulders, is, as a choice of evils, the preferred route of the emigrants. Some typical scenes—the steep, narrow defile filled with toiling men, and slipping, frightened horses urged on toward the summit; the abandoned outfits and the men and animals fallen out by the way—are familiar to all readers of the current illustrated periodicals. Of the disappointments, homesickness, despair, the weariness and smarting under unfamiliar toils, that the walls of this mountain pass have seen, but little has been told to compare with the reality. With the worst difficulties encountered at the very outset of the journey, and the promise of five hundred miles of wilderness to be traveled beyond, it is little wonder that many of the gold-seekers quit at this point, and that the traders of

Dyea and Skaguay should be besought by hosts of discouraged prospectors to buy their outfits at half the cost to provide the means of return.

The written history of this pass, so recently exploited to the world, opens with a tragedy. It was here, in 1887, that the miner Williams, who had traveled six hundred miles, from Forty Mile Creek on the Yukon, bearing letters and a bag of gold specimens, perished of hunger and exposure. His guide, a young Indian, succeeded in getting to a trading station, bringing the letters and gold with his story of disaster. In the last year the route through Chilkoot to the Klondike has been marked by similar happenings, some of which have been tragedies on a far greater scale. Of these may be mentioned particularly the disaster that occurred last spring near Crater Lake. Twenty-two men, hauling sleds in single file over the frozen surface of a stream, were engulfed by the breaking of the ice and sunk from sight before the eyes of their comrades, who were powerless to save them. A recent tragedy was that of June last, when sixteen men and women bound for the Klondike were drowned in Lake Lindemann. They had constructed



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