



THE STIKINE RIVER: THE ROUTE TO KLONDYKE

BY CLIVE PHILLIPS-WOLLEY

[This article, the publication of which has been unavoidably postponed, was written early in the year 1895. It will be found of special interest at the present time. Not only does the writer foretell the great rush of gold-seekers which has since taken place, but he describes the new route to the Klondyke. The illustrations, which are from photographs taken by the author, give an idea of the desolate and wild scenery of the district.]

MEN do not expect to find a fairyland on any continent to-day, and least of all in our somewhat Scotch and practical Nor'-West. Even the South Sea Islands have a commercial interest as sugar producers, and send round a show of not too ingenuous maids and men; and though, when the grouse are drumming and the cedar swamps are heavy with the musk of the skunk cabbage, I sometimes fancy that I catch a glimpse of fairyland through the green lacework of hemlock and cedar on Vancouver Island, I know that I am wrong; the red gold is but the gold of the honeysuckle drooping over the deep blue of a forest tarn, and the tiny mailed knights are only bronze-bodied humming-birds darting or poisoning amongst the blossoms.

But if our fairyland has been explored and exploded, our Jötunheim, thank Heaven, remains. Here we call our Jötunheim Cassiar and Beyond, and it lies, as Jötunheim must lie, to the north of us, beyond seas of the North Pacific, as grey with mist, as vexed by storms, and as full of all vague and monstrous shapes as ever were the seas where the Vikings held sway.

Look at the two seas on the map and you will find them in about the same latitude (the North Sea, I mean, and the seas round Fort Wrangel), and though they lie a world apart, you will, if you look at them in Nature, find them not alone alike, inlet for fiord, and pine for pine, but alike in the dreams they suggest,