

which its discovery must be credited to the Russians, it does not appear possible to accept Murray's statements, in spite of the fact that he was on the ground, and could not have had the remotest reason for exaggerating the claims of his trade rivals. Dall, Petroff, Baker, and Whympier, all of whom went carefully into this question, and had at their command the original narratives of Russian explorers, agree that the Russians did not in any event ascend the river above the mouth of the Tanana. Ivan Petroff, in his "Report on the Population, Industries and Resources of Alaska," says that Glazunof explored the Yukon (then called the Kvikhpak) as far as Nulato, in 1836. Marcus Baker, in his *Geographic Dictionary of Alaska*, gives 1837-38 as the date of this first exploration, and says that in the latter year Malakof built a blockhouse at Nulato. Elsewhere the date of this establishment is given as 1839. It was burned by the natives, and rebuilt in 1841. Nulato is about four hundred miles above the mouth of the river. In June, 1843, Zagoskin, of the Russian Navy, explored the river for some distance above Nulato, in fact, as far as the mouth of the Nowikakat. Here the hostile attitude of the natives compelled him to turn back. He afterward published a voluminous journal of his travels in the valleys of the Yukon and Kuskovim. The Nowikakat seems to have been the extreme point reached by the Russians at the time of Murray's journey. Some time after the building of Fort Yukon, Russian traders ascended the river to Nuklukayet on the west bank, a few miles below the mouth of the Tanana. Dall ("Alaska and its resources," 276-7) is of the opinion that this did not take place until about 1860; but A. H. Brooks, of the United States Geological Survey, thinks it probable that the date was about 1850. In any event, it was after, not before, Murray's visit, and the point then reached was still a long way below Fort Yukon. In a letter dated October 24, 1908, to the Geographer of the Department of the Interior, Mr. Brooks says: "The reason why the Russian traders never ascended the river above Nuklukayet is obvious—their clumsy boats would be unmanagable in the swift water which prevails through much of the Rampart region above. The same point seems to have been reached by the Hudson Bay traders, who descended the river from Fort Yukon for the purpose of barter with the natives. [This was, of course, after 1837.] If any confirma-