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ICE BREAKING UP ON THE YUKON IN THE SPRING.

HO, FOR THE KLONDIKE!

By HAMLIN GARLAND,

Author of "Main-Traveled Roads," "Prairie Folks," etc.

THE VARIOUS WAYS IN.—WHERE THE GOLD IS FOUND AND HOW IT IS GOT.—
WHAT NEW SETTLERS MAY HOPE FOR.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This article embodies the latest and most authentic general information regarding the Klondike region and the roads leading into it. Mr. Garland went directly to the Hon. Clifford Sifton, Canadian Minister of the Interior, through whose courtesy interviews were held with the specially detailed engineers just returned from surveying the various routes. These official surveyors went carefully over the whole subject with Mr. Garland, putting him in possession of just the facts which his purpose required. Much of the matter of the article is given, indeed, in their own words. It embodies also matter from valuable official reports, some of which are not yet published. We are not permitted to name all the men who thus served Mr. Garland, but among them were Mr. William Ogilvie and Mr. J. J. McArthur, civil engineers in the service of the Dominion Government; and Dr. George M. Dawson, head of the Dominion Geological Department. Through the kindness of Captain Deville, Dominion Surveyor General, we are enabled also to reproduce hitherto unpublished photographs of scenes along the several routes taken by the Dominion topographical surveyors, W. Ogilvie and Mr. Jennings.

THE word "Klondike" is now universally taken to mean the gold country of the whole mighty region of the British Northwest Territory which lies between the Continental Divide on the east and the Coast Range on the west. Broadly speaking, this region is 300 miles wide and 600 miles long. It reaches from Teslin Lake to Circle City, which lies within the Arctic Zone. The scale of measurements is enormous. The Yukon itself, in midsummer, is actually navigable for boats more than 2,300 miles. In general the region may be described as a wide, hilly valley, meshed with converging streams, deep sunk in the rocks.

It is a grim country, a country of extremes; it has a long and sunless winter, and a short, hot, moist summer. In winter the sun hardly makes itself felt, rising pale and white only for a few hours above the horizon. In summer it shines all day and part of the night. In July, when rain is not falling, the air is close and hot, the thermometer often registering 100 in the shade. Moss covers the high ground like a wet thick sponge throughout vast areas, and the soil is, in effect, perpetually frozen. There is little vegetable mold, and plant life is sparse. Steam arises under the hot sun from the cold, rain-



A VIEW FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP EAST OF DAWSON CITY, LOOKING NORTHWEST ACROSS YUKON VALLEY. PHOTOGRAPH BY W. OGILVIE.

soaked moss, and the nights are foggy and damp even in June and July. Gnats and mosquitoes move to and fro in dense clouds during midsummer, and add to the many discomforts and discouragements of the region. Life is a warfare. Fuel is scarce. There is little game, and not many fish. There never were many Indians in the district—the valley is too inhospitable for life of any kind to greatly abound. Agriculture is practically impossible. It is likely to freeze any night of the year. The climate, in short, is sub-arctic in character, and in and about Dawson City nearly all the features of the Arctic Zone are realized. The ice does not go out of the river, even at Dawson, till late in May or June, and the river closes early in September.

EDMONTON AND PEACE RIVER ROUTE.

Having decided that he wishes to take the risk involved in entering this grim country, the miner must decide on his route. The routes may be divided into two groups: the overland and the seaport. Of the overland, there are at present three: the Edmonton and Peace River

route, "the Old Telegraph Trail," and the Kamloops inland route. The Edmonton route begins at Edmonton, a small town at the end of a northern spur of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and proceeds by way of Little Slave Lake to Peace River, thence across the divide into the valley of the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek and Teslin Lake, which is the head waters of the Yukon. This route is a very long one, and little information is obtainable concerning it. It is undoubtedly practicable, and will be largely traveled by those not in breathless haste to get to Dawson City. It offers abundant fields for prospecting, and is a pleasant summer route. It will take about sixty days to go from Edmonton to Teslin Lake. The citizens of Edmonton are using all means to make this route easy and safe. It cannot be safely used before the middle of May. Pack horses are plentiful, and feed is good from May 15th to November.

THE OLD TELEGRAPH TRAIL.

The second overland route, the "old telegraph trail," begins at Ashcroft, a small village on the Canadian Pacific Rail-



VIEW ON ELDERADO CREEK, LOOKING SOUTH. PHOTOGRAPH BY W. OGILVIE.

Eldorado Creek is a branch of the Klondike. It flows through the ravine shown on the left in the picture. The ravine in the foreground is the bed of French Creek.

way, and follows the Fraser River over an excellent stage road constructed by the Canadian government to the little town of Quesnelle, 223 miles north. Good stopping-places abound along the road. Here the road ends, and the trail turns to the west, and passing over a nearly level country with good grass, reaches Fort Fraser on Fraser Lake, 125 miles from Quesnelle. Fort Fraser is a Hudson Bay post and trading-store, with two white men and several families of Indians, quite well civilized, settled near. A limited amount of supplies will be obtainable here. Up to this point the trail is quite level, and though there are hundreds of creeks, none are deep or hard to pass. The three rivers, the Blackwater, the Mud, and the Nechaco, can be forded except in high water, when rafts will have to be used and poled or paddled across. Neither of them is very wide. Many trails cross the route, and it will be necessary to have a native guide, unless some means should be taken to mark the main trail. "In this 125 miles there are over 300 good hay swamps and many Indian villages where feed for the horses can be found in abun-

dance. Indeed, the longest drive without good feed for the horses will not exceed fifteen miles."*

Beyond Fort Fraser the next supply point is Stuart, a Hudson Bay post, with three or four whites and eighty or one hundred Indians, who live in cabins and make their living by hunting, fishing, and trapping. From Fort Fraser to Hazelton is probably 325 miles. The trip from Quesnelle to Hazelton can be made by pack animals, and will require from sixteen to twenty days. Hazelton has a small population of prospectors who winter in the neighborhood. A Hudson Bay post, a few cabins, and a couple of stores are all that are to be found here, although about 15,000 Indians trade at this point. The goods are brought up by a Hudson Bay boat on the Skeena River during high water.

"From here it is about 200 miles to Telegraph Creek. The trail has been traveled for thirty-five years, and the

* From letters of the committee sent out to report to the Spokane "Spokesman" on the condition of the trail; and also from letters of A. L. Poudrier, Dominion Land Surveyor. The word "trail" means a narrow path, admitting only footmen or horses in single file.



WHITE PASS TRAIL: SHKAGWAY RIVER ABOVE PORCUPINE CREEK. PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. JENNINGS.

government has spent thousands of dollars to keep it in first-class condition. It will take from seven to ten days to travel this distance, as it is a little harder than before reaching Hazelton. There are two large stores at Telegraph Creek, and they do a great business." From Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake the trail will be the "Stikine route" now being opened by the Canadian government. It is estimated to be 150 miles long, and can be traversed in ten days or less. At Lake Teslin the trail ends and the water way begins.

The Ashcroft trail is alluring. The climate is genial and the land full of game. There are frequent stopping-places, and the Indians are friendly and helpful. The advantages of this route are offset, however, by obvious disadvantages. It is very long. According to the estimate of Senator Reid, it will take fifty days (forty days from Quesnelle), though by going in light it could be traversed in ten days less time, provided there were no delays for bridge building. It would be possible to go in light, sending the bulk of the outfit by way of Victoria to Telegraph Creek. Part of the outfit could be replenished at Hazelton. It would not be safe to leave Quesnelle till the grass came, say by the 10th of May. After that time the telegraph trail would be a com-

paratively cheap and pleasant route, with no duties and no toll to pay. It is reasonably safe to count on the early building of bridges and ferries.

In the matter of outfitting, it is probable that Kamloops, Ashcroft, and Quesnelle could furnish complete outfits for a limited number of pack trains, and being upon the Canadian Pacific road, supplies could be hurried forward by telegraph from Victoria, Vancouver, or Winnipeg. The only American outfitting point of any considerable size for this route is Spokane. To outfit in Spokane under present rules would make the outfit dutiable at the line. Ashcroft is a village; Kamloops is a town of nearly 2,000 inhabitants; Quesnelle has about 500 inhabitants. It would be possible also to outfit at Calgary or Winnipeg or even at St. Paul or Minneapolis, shipping the goods direct to Ashcroft, Edmonton, Hazelton, or Glenora, according to whichever route the prospector elected to take.

THE KAMLOOPS ROUTE.

Kamloops, the next town east of Ashcroft, is also advertising an overland route. As between Ashcroft and Kamloops, Ashcroft has the advantage of a good wagon road the entire distance to Quesnelle; but the people of Kamloops are actively en-



PACKING OVER THE SUMMIT OF THE WHITE PASS. PHOTOGRAPH BY W. OGILVIE.

gaged in opening a road which they claim runs through a better grass country. It passes up the North Thompson River, and crossing the divide, follows the Fraser River to Fort George, thence up the Nechaco, striking the Ashcroft trail at the headwaters of the Bulkley River. This road is not yet opened.

Cattle have been used for packing in this country to very good advantage. They are slower than horses, but carry about the same amount, and, if carefully used, will fatten on the road and sell readily to the butchers at the end of the journey. Horses could be sold at Glenora, probably, though this is a risk.

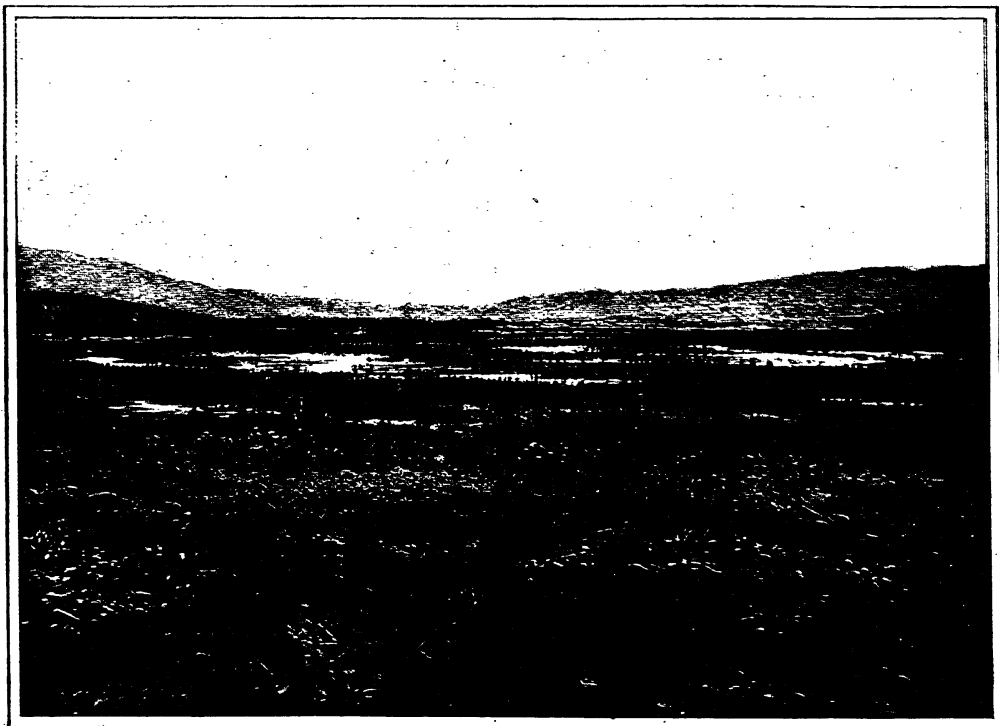
It is estimated that horses will cost about thirty dollars at Ashcroft; and each man will require one saddle horse and two pack horses. He is then his own master, and expenses thereafter will be light. It is estimated that \$200 would enable a man to go through from Ashcroft to Teslin Lake, but no one should undertake the journey with less than \$500 in hand.

THE ST. MICHAELS ROUTE.

Of seaport routes there are six: one by way of St. Michaels, three by way of Lynn Canal, one by way of the Stikine River, and one by way of Taku Inlet. Of

these, the longest, safest, and most leisurely is that by way of St. Michaels. It carries the miner by steamer from San Francisco, Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, or Victoria to the mouth of the Yukon, and by river steambot direct to Dawson City and other gold fields. The fare by this route ranges from \$150 to \$300, and includes meals and berths, and the free transportation of 150 pounds of baggage. The excess baggage charge on a miner's outfit is about ten cents per pound. There are no hardships connected with this method of reaching Dawson City; but it is slow. It is more than 4,000 miles to Dawson from Seattle, and as the ice does not go out of the middle river until June, the miner will not be able to reach his mine before winter begins to return.

Lynn Canal is a long narrow arm of the sea which runs deep into the high mountains of the Alaskan coast, not far from the town of Juneau. It is, in fact, a deep, narrow chasm or cañon between the mountains, into which the Chilkat and the Chilkoot rivers empty. At this point the tide waters and the head waters of the Yukon are but twenty-five or thirty miles apart, and because of that fact three trails already lead across the divide. Lynn Canal will undoubtedly be the best known entry point on the Alaskan coast. Here



VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM THE DALTON TRAIL, BETWEEN DALTON'S POST AND HOOTCHI LAKE. PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. JENNINGS.

is situated the town of Shkagway, which already contains 2,000 inhabitants and will be a city by the first of April. From here the Chilkoot Pass, White Pass, and Dalton trails severally make their start.

THE DALTON TRAIL.

The Dalton pack trail starts from the Chilkat arm of Lynn Canal, and strikes directly towards the Lewis River. My information regarding this trail is derived mainly from an interview held expressly for *McCLURE'S MAGAZINE* with Mr. J. J. McArthur, Dominion Land Surveyor. In reply to my question, "How could I go on over that trail from Seattle, Vancouver, or Victoria?" Mr. McArthur said: "You should take ship for Lynn Canal and land at Haines Mission, which is on the Chilkoot arm of Lynn Canal a little below Shkagway.*

"The trail, after leaving the mission, leads up the Chilkat River to the point where the Tlehini River comes in, then follows the Tlehini. The road is flat and

gravelly to this point. The trail now begins to climb. It is an old Indian trail, but has been improved by Dalton. After reaching the upland, the trail enters upon a high and open country through which a wagon road is possible with very slight improvement, such as clearing out timber and grading some of the side hills. The trail at present climbs over the hills, to avoid the wet and soggy places.

"The highest point is 3,100 feet above the sea, and is covered with heather and bunch grass. By the middle of May feed is good. The trail crosses the Tlehini near its source, at a point called Rainy Hollow, where is considerable timber. This point is about fifty miles from tide water. You will still be on the seaward slope, but pretty close to the divide. There are several local divides to cross before you reach the inner watershed, but they are not difficult to cross. You will hardly realize that you are crossing from one to the other. You will next come to Dalton's Post, which consists of a large trading store with an Indian village near by. After leaving Dalton's, the country will continue to be open and easy of travel. You will ascend for a short dis-

* As far as possible, the spelling of proper names adopted by the American Geographical Society is followed in this article.



VIEW ON THE DALTON TRAIL, SOUTHWEST OF DALTON'S POST. PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. JENNINGS.

tance until you pass the head waters of the Alsek and reach the watershed of the Yukon and Hootchi Lake.

"It is impracticable to reach Fort Selkirk direct from this point. High, mossy, and rocky hills lie between. The ridges are covered with moss like a huge sponge right up to the summit, and underneath is broken rock, making it a very difficult country to traverse. The trail which you will follow is the old Indian trail; it bears to the northeast towards the Lewis River, which it attains at the mouth of the Nordenskiold, and keeping down Lewis River ends just below Rink Rapids. This half of the trail runs through wide, flat, grassy valleys, and the entire distance from Haines Mission is not more than 245 miles. Dalton has shortened it somewhat and improved it in places, but does not charge toll. The trail is open to any one. At Rink Rapids there is very considerable timber, some of it eighteen inches in diameter, so that lumber for boats will be plenty. It is probable that a town will spring up at the end of the Dalton trail, for it is sure to be a much traveled route.

"You cannot start on this trail before the 15th of May, but you should be on

the spot a little earlier and have your horses and their packs at the head of tide water, which would save forty miles. The goods can go up by boat to the Tlehini. If you go in light, take a saddle horse and a couple of pack horses for each man. You can reach Rink Rapids in ten or twelve days, traveling about twenty miles a day. In summer you may make possibly twenty-five miles per day. If feeding-stations were established, one could go through at any time. There are fine hay lands all along this route, and there is no difficulty in the matter of feed after May 15th."

The intent of the Dalton trail, as well as of the Chilkoot and White Pass trails, is to land the miner in some one of the head waters of the Yukon, in order that he may float down the current at his will. In each case there is a strip of American soil to cross and a high bleak mountain pass to climb. What is gained by easy grade is lost in distance.

CHILKOOT PASS AND WHITE PASS ROUTES.

Beside Chilkat Inlet, and on the east of it, at the head of Lynn Canal, is Chilkoot Inlet, into which flows Dyea Inlet; and into Dyea Inlet flow the Shkagway and Dyea



THE YUKON AT THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN ALASKA AND BRITISH COLUMBIA. THE WHITE LINE AT THE RIGHT IN THE PICTURE SHOWS WHERE THE BOUNDARY RUNS. PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. JENNINGS.

rivers. Up the Shkagway River runs the White Pass, or Shkagway, route; and up the Dyea River runs the Chilkoot Pass, or Dyea, route. The distance to Lake Lindeman is twenty-six miles by the Chilkoot Pass route, which starts at the town of Dyea, at the head of Dyea Inlet; and forty-six miles by the White Pass route, which starts at the town of Shkagway, a little lower down on Dyea Inlet. The two passes are not very widely different from each other in character, being "simply narrow, tortuous, ever-ascending gorges in the mountain-chain." They are shorter than any of the other passes. The routes to which they give name, though rugged, steep, and exposed to violent storms, are likely to be the most traveled and the most over-worked of all the routes to the Yukon. Everything that business enterprise can do to facilitate transportation is being done. At Shkagway they are building two large piers, in order that steamers may lie alongside even at low tide and discharge freight. A tramway and also a wagon road are building from the wharf at Shkagway to the summit of the White Pass, which is several hundred feet lower than the Chilkoot Pass. Bridges are being built and the trail improved. These improvements will be charged for, however. Toll will be collected for use of the bridges, and during the rush freights will be high.

Dyea is also making a smart bid for traffic. A tramway is being built to the mouth of the cañon, and from there it is proposed to carry freight to the summit of Chilkoot Pass by means of an aerial cableway. This cable road is expected to transport 120 tons of freight daily.

By either of these two ways the traveler is landed at Lake Bennett by his packers and freighters, and thence he is supposed to be able to make his way down the Lewis River without further expense. If he takes one route, he will wish he had taken the other, no doubt. The cost of getting an outfit from say Seattle or Victoria will be about ten dollars per ton. The cost of getting it over the passes will range all the way from thirty to fifty cents per pound. "If you go in before the middle of April and are strong and active, you may be able to take your outfit in on a sled. The trail is better when packed deep with snow than when bare and boggy. A party could 'double teams' in hauling hand-sleds, and in this way avoid a large part of the expense. But by neither of these ways is the journey as simple as it may seem. You take ship, for example, at Seattle, Tacoma, or Portland, for Shkagway. You pay, first of all, fare for yourself, freight charges for your supplies, horses, implements, whatever you have with you. Three or four

days' sail takes you to the head of Dyea Inlet; but does not, by any means, land you at the trail. You are at Shkagway or Dyea, but without means of transportation unless you have brought horses with you. If you hire your goods transported, you are at the mercy of such freighters as have this matter in hand. If there is a great rush, which is likely, there may be very great delay in getting your goods carried even to the end of the wagon road. From the end of the wagon road your goods must be packed by sled, if there is snow; or upon the backs of men or horses, if the snow has melted; and the cost will be very great. If the trail should be crowded, as is likely to be the case, very great delay may be experienced in getting to the summit. Last autumn the trails were one long line of struggling men and horses, and the price of packing reached fifty-three cents per pound.

"Having reached Lake Lindeman at considerable cost and after much longer delay than you had anticipated, you will find yourself again helpless on the shore of the lake. A ferry charge will be met, and having reached the end of the lake and having crossed the portage to Lake Bennett, while you are done with packers, your troubles are not over. By the 1st of April there will be very little timber remaining out of which to construct rafts. If there are boats for freighting purposes, their owners will be masters of the situation, and there will be very considerable charges for transportation down the river. Unless you go in able to carry your own outfit with a 'knock-down' boat capable of floating supplies on both lake and river, you will be at the mercy of the transportation companies on either side of the summit."

Undoubtedly, with plenty of money it will be possible to go from Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, or Victoria to the head waters of the Yukon in shorter time by either Chilkoot Pass or White Pass than by any other route; but it must be understood that it is not, and will not be, the poor man's route during the rush of March and April, and it will be attended by many hardships and killing hard work.

THE ALL-CANADIAN ROUTE.*

Very naturally the Canadian people desire to have it known that there is to be

* The information here given regarding this route is derived from the advance sheets of a special report to the Dominion Government. For the privilege of using this report, I am indebted to the courtesy of the Hon. Clifford Sifton, Canadian Minister of the Interior.

an all-Canadian route via the Stikine River. If you desire to go in by this way you will proceed to Victoria, Portland, Seattle, or Tacoma by any convenient line of railway, and there take steamer to Wrangell, about three days' sail up the coast. From Wrangell you will be transported by river boats up the Stikine River to Glenora, a distance of 150 miles, which will take several days longer. From Glenora, or from Telegraph Creek, which is a few miles beyond Glenora, you will be obliged to cross by pack to the head waters of Teslin Lake, which is connected by Teslin River with Lewis River, and so with the Yukon. This trail is about 175 miles long,* but it is comparatively easy, and will be shortened considerably as soon as spring opens. The journey across country by trail can be made as comfortably as any travel of the kind. There are no dangerous features. The ground, both in the open and timbered district, is covered, to a depth of about two feet, with moss; but during the open season, between May and the middle of October, sufficient grass for 200 or 300 animals can be obtained all along the route. It would not be practicable to travel over this trail before the 1st of May, as snow is likely to be on the ground in many places and the grass is not far enough advanced to meet the requirements of pack animals. There are no settlements on the route.

Teslin Lake opens about the middle of May, and closes about the 26th of October. Last year it was open till the middle of October, and there was no indication of its closing immediately. The slopes and benches along Teslin Lake are fairly timbered with a growth of spruce and black pine, the average size of this timber being about ten inches, and sufficient for scantling, flooring, and sheeting for house purposes and for boat-building. The machinery for a saw-mill is now being transported across the portage from Telegraph Creek to Teslin Lake; the same company intend to place a steamboat on Teslin Lake and river on the opening of navigation, and skiffs, scow boats, etc., suitable for navigating the Yukon waters are to be kept for sale.

With proper roads or railway facilities from the Stikine to Teslin Lake, no better route could be found for getting into the Yukon country from the Pacific seaboard. The region about Teslin Lake, including

* There are various estimates of the length of this trail; the one given above is official. The trail is to be much shortened.

the rivers flowing into it from the east, is considered very good prospecting country, and it is likely that the coming season will find a large number of miners engaged in that vicinity. Rich strikes have been reported from there quite recently; and Teslin Lake is likely to have "the call" next season. The Canadian Pacific Railway officials announce that the journey from Victoria to Telegraph Creek can be made comfortably in six days, and that several large new steamers have been put into service from Victoria. This route has two marked advantages: First, if the miner should outfit in Winnipeg, Victoria, or any other Canadian town, he will be able to go into the gold region without paying duty, a saving of from fifteen to thirty-five per cent.; and, second, as soon as he passes Telegraph Creek, he will be in the heart of a gold country, and can at once begin to prospect.

It is probable that stopping-places will be established along the route, so that a man can go in light at a considerable saving of time. This route and the Dalton trail will undoubtedly be the ones advocated by the Canadian Interior Department, and steps will be taken before the 1st of March to furnish means of transportation. It would be possible for the miner to send his outfit through to Glenora in bond without the payment of duties. Whether the difference in price between American towns and Canadian towns will offset any of these duties or not can only be determined by the purchaser on the ground.

There is also a trail up the Taku River from Juneau, and overland to Teslin Lake, but this is not as yet thoroughly surveyed, and the bay at the mouth of Taku River at certain times is very dangerous by reason of fierce winds, lack of good anchorage, and floating ice from the enormous glacier which discharges into it. Another pass is just reported from Chilkoot Inlet; but every overland route from the sea to the Yukon must climb the steep, cold, and slippery heights of the Coast Range. They are all alike in general features. They are all difficult.

FINDING "PAY DIRT."

To find "pay dirt" has never been easy, and it will not be easy in the Yukon. Dr. Dawson, the head of the Canadian Geological Survey, has this to say on this point: "Rumors of big strikes will be thick, and are likely to be false. Even

when the report is true, the tenderfoot, being without means of transportation and knowing nothing of the country, will reach the point of discovery only after every rod of pay dirt is staked, and he will find it extremely difficult even to buy an interest in a claim, and will be forced to set forth on his journeys again to some other regions of discovery. My advice is: Scatter out; go into the creeks of the upper branches of the Yukon. It is of no value to go to the Klondike, to Indian River, or any of the creeks where discoveries were made last year. They have all been staked beyond pay dirt, both up and down from the point of discovery. Keep higher up, and prospect the small streams. This is my advice to the tenderfoot, which I do not expect any one to follow."*

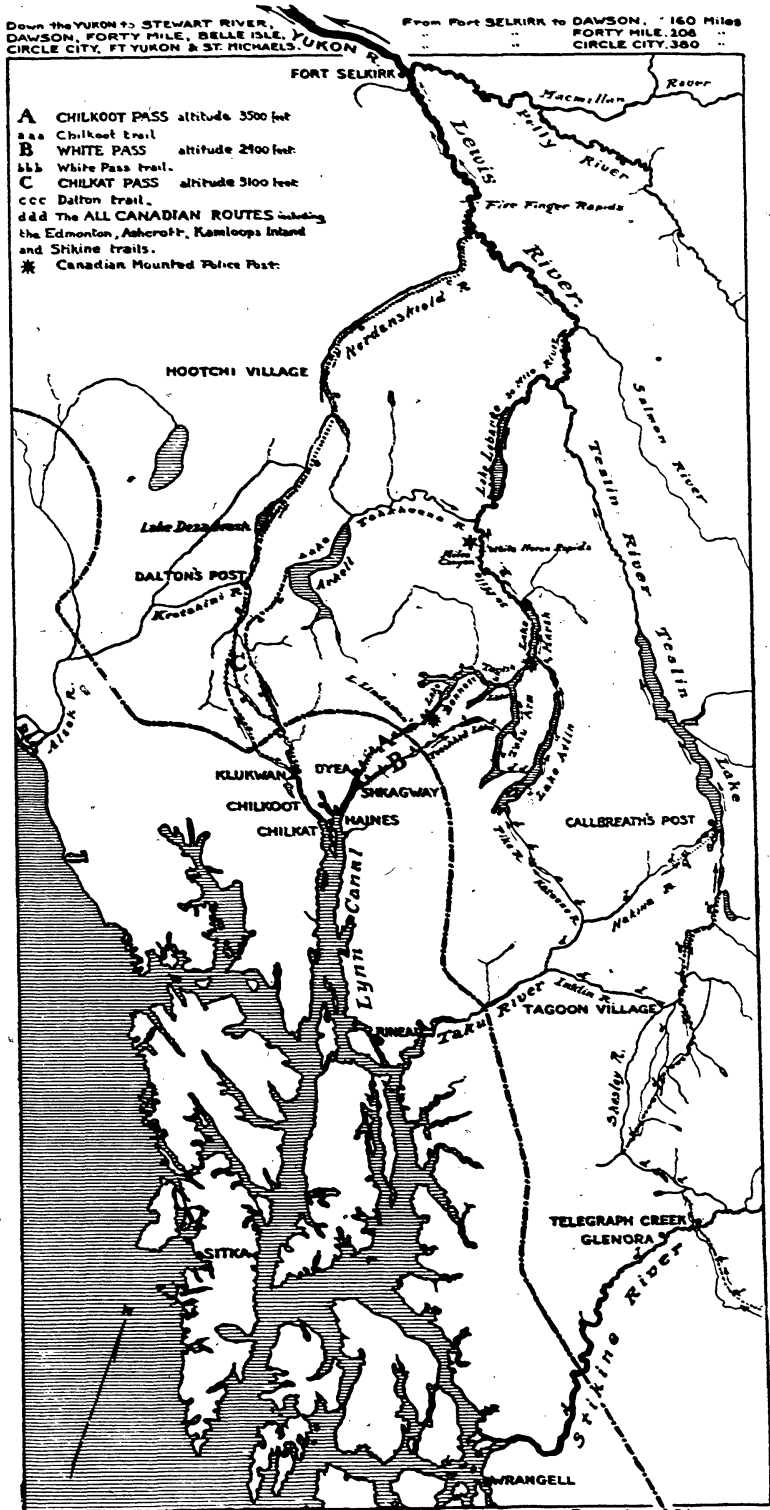
THE WORK OF MINING.

Having been lucky enough to find color in the gravel or sand, you will be required to stake out your claim at once, so that there can be no mistake with regard to boundaries. You may take a strip not more than 100 feet in width along the stream, but your claim may extend back to the hills which bound in the valley. If you are fortunate enough to make the first discovery, you will be allowed to stake a second claim of 100 feet. You are then allowed sixty days in which to visit the nearest land office and make your entry. The cost of making this entry is fifteen dollars. Thereafter, if you leave your claim for seventy-two hours without permission of the Gold Commissioner, or without putting a man on it, you forfeit your right to work the claim. When you clean up, you will be required to pay a royalty upon all the gold you take out—ten per cent. of all returns up to \$500 per week, and twenty per cent. on all returns over \$500 per week. However, this will not trouble you until you have opened up your pay streak. These are the regulations at present. They are subject to change by the Dominion Interior Department.

Having made your claim, you can now begin the work of constructing your shelter, and here you should take time to build yourself a comfortable shanty. If you are fortunate enough to get located near timber, you will be able to construct very readily a log cabin, which when banked with snow in the winter will be warm.

* From an interview for McClure's Magazine.

You are now ready to begin the work of mining. Except in a few instances, the gold will be upon the creek flats. The pay streak is seldom more than three feet in depth, and it lies under a layer of moss, ice, frozen muck, and gravel ranging from three to thirty feet in depth. If you start in summer to dig a hole to bed rock, the probabilities are that it will fill with water. But as soon as the ground is frozen sufficiently to enable you to prosecute your work without interference from the water, you sink a hole to the bed rock by means of a pick. If it is frozen too hard to dig, you build a fire on the gravel and heat the ground until it can be picked and shoveled, and after the layer of softened ground is taken out, you rebuild the fire. This requires a great deal of wood and is slow work. In this way the pay dirt may be taken from underneath the surface in the winter. In May the sun comes rushing up from the south with astonishing heat. It softens the dump of pay dirt, and as soon as this can be shoveled into the sluice-boxes, you begin washing.



THE ROUTES TO THE KLONDYKE. Boundary Line between ALASKA and CANADA which follows the summit of the High Coast Range.

OUTFITS.

The miner entering the remorseless country should go prepared for an encampment of six months or a year, and should consider that he is going into a daily war with hunger and cold, and that he is to be isolated, in all likelihood, from stores and goods of almost every sort, and especially from all delicacies and medical supplies. Every man going to the Klondike should be sober, strong, and healthy; he should be sound of lung and free from rheumatism and all tendency to liver or heart diseases. He should be practical, able to adapt himself quickly to his surroundings.

The climatic extremes make it necessary to prepare for very cold and also for very warm and wet weather. The outfit of clothing should consist of comfortable woolen underwear and of very warm outer garments, which can be laid aside at will. Above all, it will be necessary to take rainproof coats, tents, and waterproof boots. The miner works a large part of his time in snow or water. Bedding should be plentiful, and the sleeping-bag, such as is sold on the coast, will insure warmth at night.

If the prospector should decide to go in light, depending upon the trading points along the river for his supplies of flour, bacon, and sugar, he should carry in dried fruits and vegetables and other foods likely to prove preventative of scurvy, biliousness, and other diseases which arise from a monotonous diet. It is probable that bacon, flour, and other common necessities will be in full supply by the 1st of July, though at a high price.

Any man who takes due thought concerning the dangers of the Yukon is exceedingly loath to advise another concerning the route by which to enter. It has been my aim here to present all the routes without bias. Each is advocated strenuously by the business men who will profit by the travel over it, and the statements of these must be taken with a due allowance. The Ashcroft "telegraph trail" seems to be the most feasible overland route. The Edmonton way is longer, runs through a colder country, and is less likely to be traveled. The Dalton trail has many advantages, provided one has means sufficient to purchase pack horses and cares to wait until the grass is grown sufficiently to feed his horses en route. The Chilkoot Pass and White Pass routes have been much written about, but the miner may

safely depend upon finding them much more difficult than any published report describes them to be.

I will close with a word of general warning, first from Mr. William Ogilvie, who says: "Now, lest you get excited and drop everything and fly there, let me tell you emphatically, yes, emphatically, that all the Klondike region I speak of is located, is taken up, and if you now have money enough to purchase an interest in any of the one hundred claims mentioned on the Bonanza and the forty odd on the Eldorado, you have money enough to stay at home; and, in all human probability, would add more to it, and enjoy it much more, and benefit by it much more, socially, physically, and morally, than by bringing it into the Yukon. My experience is, and I have had considerable, that the man who stays at home and plods on the farm or in the shop or office, in the vast majority of cases, is better off, healthier physically and morally, and has answered the end of nature or God vastly more completely, than the man who devotes his life to the calling of the everyday placer gold miner. Somebody must do it; but I assure you, if you are viciously inclined, there is no calling in which you can waste your life so completely and fully in every sense of the word."

To this may be added the reports of men who have wintered and summered in this cruel and relentless land. For nine months in the year it is necessary to melt ice in order to get water to drink or to cook with. It is exceedingly difficult to obtain dry wood with which to build a fire. It is exceedingly laborious work to get together the logs to build a cabin, and in some locations it is absolutely impossible. When the snows begin to melt in the spring, water is everywhere. All work is suspended in many mines, while summer rushes over the land. There is scarcely any spring. The discomforts of the dark and sunless winter give place only to the almost intolerable discomforts of the summer. In short, the Yukon country is a grim and terrible country, and the man who goes there to spend a year is likely to earn with the ache of his bones and the blood of his heart every dollar he finds in gold. He should go like a man enlisting for a war. He should be able to pass the examination which is required of a soldier in the German army, or of an officer in the mounted police of the Canadian government. It is no place for weak men, lazy men, or cowards.