

## PROSPECTING IN ALASKA.

ANY ONE having conceived the idea that the interior of Alaska contains gold or other metals to be picked up by the pocketful, may profitably read the following account of a prospecting trip to that region; then, if he has about \$1,000 to invest in an outfit and can find another fool to go with him, there is nothing to prevent him from trying it. Says the *Astoria Pioneer*:

Last Saturday evening the Pacific whaling steamer *Jeanie*, which arrived here from Alaska, brought two Alaska miners that had been picked up at the mouth of Copper river, near Prince William's sound. They were around the city Sunday afternoon, one of them being robed in fancy buckskin attire, trimmed in beads and fringe, such as is worn by the aborigines of Alaska. They have been in that wild and desolate country for some three years, prospecting for ores, and in all that time were back in civilization but once, about eighteen months ago. They exhibited some fine gold nuggets, some quartz they represented to contain 75 per cent. copper, and about a couple of ounces of gold dust that was exceedingly fine, and was equally as coarse as Judson powder. The names of the miners are J. G. Davies and John Maloney.

In 1885 Lieutenant Allen and a party explored the Copper river from its mouth to its extreme headwaters in search of a copper quartz ledge that had been discovered by a tribe of Indians, known as the Maniskies, but failed to locate the desired place. It is not on the Copper river, as it transpires, but lies between a point 250 miles southwest from a place commonly known as Forty-mile creek, situated at or near the mouth of Stewart river, a tributary to the Yukon, and the extreme headwaters of the Tananah river, also tributary to the Yukon, which finds its outlet in the latter river at Tuklukyet. Mr. Davies and his partner started from Juneau about six months ago with an assaying outfit and provisions that were valued at \$1,200, and endeavored to find their way to Forty-mile creek, where about 160 miners are located. The distance is about 850 miles, and before they reached their destination sixty-one days had passed away. The route selected was over the mountains from Juneau to Chilkat pass, and thence by a rowboat down lakes Linderman, Tohka and Marsh.

Just before reaching Lake Lebarge, and at a point about twenty-eight miles southeast of Lake Lebarge, in what is called Miles canyon, the boat upset, from the swiftness of the water, and the entire plant and provisions and men were thrown into the seething mass of water and floating ice, where gigantic walls stood up majestically on either side and uttered defiance to their chance for life. Chilled to the bone from the ex-

treme cold of the water, they battled in the tortuous current until the cargo had sunk from the boat and it had come to the surface, when fortune allowed them to grapple the boat. In this condition they drifted on down through the canyon for nearly half an hour, and then managed to reach shore almost helpless from their experience. Without food, dry clothing or a match to kindle a fire, all expectation of being rescued was abandoned, but to their great surprise and good fortune, other members of the party who were traveling to Forty-mile creek, via the mountain range, overheard their cries of misery and saved their lives. They reached Forty-mile creek in about fourteen days, and made their headquarters there for about two months.

Still determined to prospect for the famous quartz ledge that Lieutenant Allen had failed to find, and that two men who had left Forty-mile creek to prospect for two years ago, and never have been heard of since, they started with provisions on their backs, such as it was, and crossed the ice-covered Alaska mountains and struck the headwaters of the Tananah river. They were forty days making the trip of 250 miles, suffering untold agony from cold and hunger, having been seven days without food. Game was pretty plentiful, the only source for getting meat, but lost as they were, with death staring them in the face, they became so bewildered that ambition to hunt had departed from their thoughts. After wandering around for a day or so, they met an Indian, named Nicolai, a member of the Miniskie tribe, who furnished them with some fish and meat, and they recuperated sufficiently to resume their search for the famous ledge. They found it, and the ore exhibited to a *Pioneer* reporter was the outcome of their untiring efforts. Here they started, together with the Indian and his squaw, to Tokai river, toward the summit of the mountains, crossed the divide and struck the source of the Copper river, and continued down that stream for many days until Chittystone was reached. They then resumed a prospect for gold quartz with but little satisfaction. Taking the Copper river again, they traveled on down and over a portion of this river (which they termed "bad water," for reason of its swiftness and dangerous meanderings), where no white man has ever traversed, and landed at the mouth.

A great cause of rejoicing in Seattle and Tacoma, is the joint decision of the registrar and receiver of the land office in the former city to accept scrip filings on tide lands within city boundaries. The land sharks were thrown into consternation by this unexpected decision, and the result is that they will be compelled to fight from the outside instead of inside, as they had expected. No doubt they will make a hard fight through all the departments to the supreme court before giving up so rich a prize.