

## DOUGLAS ISLAND, ALASKA.

AS long as gold remains the basis of money systems the interest of nations will center around regions where the "royal metal" is obtained. Alaska's mineral wealth was first to be recognized, and no doubt this will continue to be her most important resource. Douglas City, on the island whence she derives her name, is the center of the mining industry for Southeastern Alaska.

Douglas island is about twenty miles in length by eight at the point of its greatest dimensions. It extends from northwest to southeast, and is sheltered on its southwest coast by Admiralty island, one of the largest of the Alexandrian group. Gastineau channel, a deep, narrow strait, varying in width from one to three miles, separates it from the mainland and furnishes good roadway and harbor for the regular line of steamers plying between Port Townsend and Sitka.



AN ALASKA MARKET—SALMON BERRIES FOR SALE.

Alaska is the land of "topsy turvey," and Douglas island is a typical piece of Alaska. From the shore the land rises constantly until it reaches the high backbone, a ridge running through its center, at an altitude of two thousand five hundred feet. Extending about half way up this slope are dense forests of spruce and hemlock, interspersed with small, treeless spots covered with the annual accumulations of moss, holding water like a sponge. About the forest line dense thickets of alder and "devil's club" reach their arms downward to repel the mountain climber, and furnish a refuge for the hard-pressed bear and deer. A coarse species of grass covers the top of the ridge wherever the snow is melted away, and furnishes pasturage for numbers of mountain sheep. Salmon berries, huckle berries, cranberries and wild currants form an underbrush to the forest, and provide the natives with a succession of fruit as the season advances up the mountain. Squirrels, ground-hogs and porcupines abound,

while the "ill omened" raven, the shrill spoken king's fisher, the lazy sea gull, and, in their season, great numbers of geese and ducks, comprise the feathered inhabitants.

Mountain streams, fed by melting snows, swell to considerable creeks as they dash down the steep declivity into the sea, and have furrowed great gullies and yawning chasms. During the summer season great numbers of hump-back and dog-mouth salmon ascend the mouths of these creeks to spawn. At times the water from bank to bank is one mass of writhing, struggling fish, leaping falls, shooting rapids, hurrying up stream and returning to the salt water with the falling of the tide. It is in these shallow waters that the Indian, armed with a long pole on the end of which is a sharpened hook, secures his winter supply, which he smokes over a hemlock fire until dry.

Considering the high latitude Douglas island has a very mild climate. The greatest extremes of winter

and summer are zero and seventy above. This temperature of course grows rapidly colder at greater altitude than at the sea level. Glaciers exist both above and below the island, on the mainland, and it is no uncommon sight during the summer season for the incoming tide to bring in large masses of ice broken from them. Douglas City does not receive as much rainfall as Sitka. Situated on the eastern side of snow-capped mountains, she is not so accessible to the moist ocean currents.

The gold-bearing quartz lies along the eastern side of the island at from one thousand to fifteen hundred feet from the beach, outcropping about four hundred feet above sea level. All the probable mineral ledge has been taken in claims six hundred by fifteen hundred feet, the size prescribed by the United States mineral laws, and such mines as Bear's Nest, Ready Bullion and Mexican literally cover the map of locations. The ore, however, is of very low grade, assaying from