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469

MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

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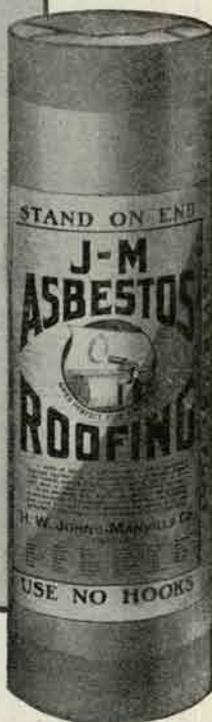
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No. 469. *J. J. J.*

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ALASKA: LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

BY JUDSON C. WELLIVER

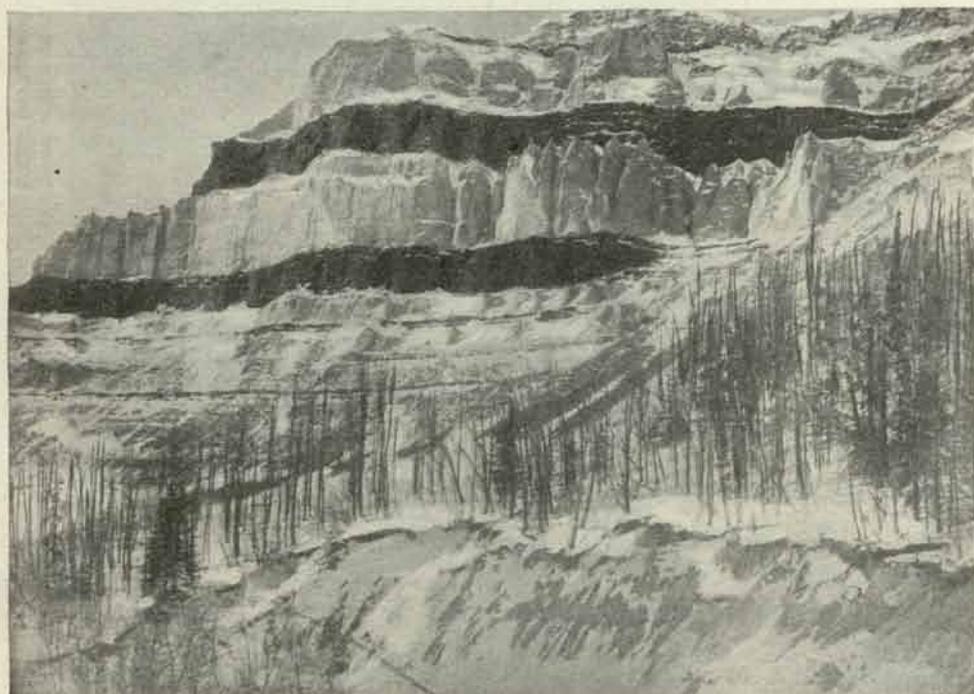


IN 1867 the United States paid Russia \$7,200,000 for Alaska, and almost everybody agreed that it was one of the worst real estate transactions ever consummated. We had been hopelessly defrauded.

Yet since that time \$525,000,000 worth of products have been taken out of Alaska,

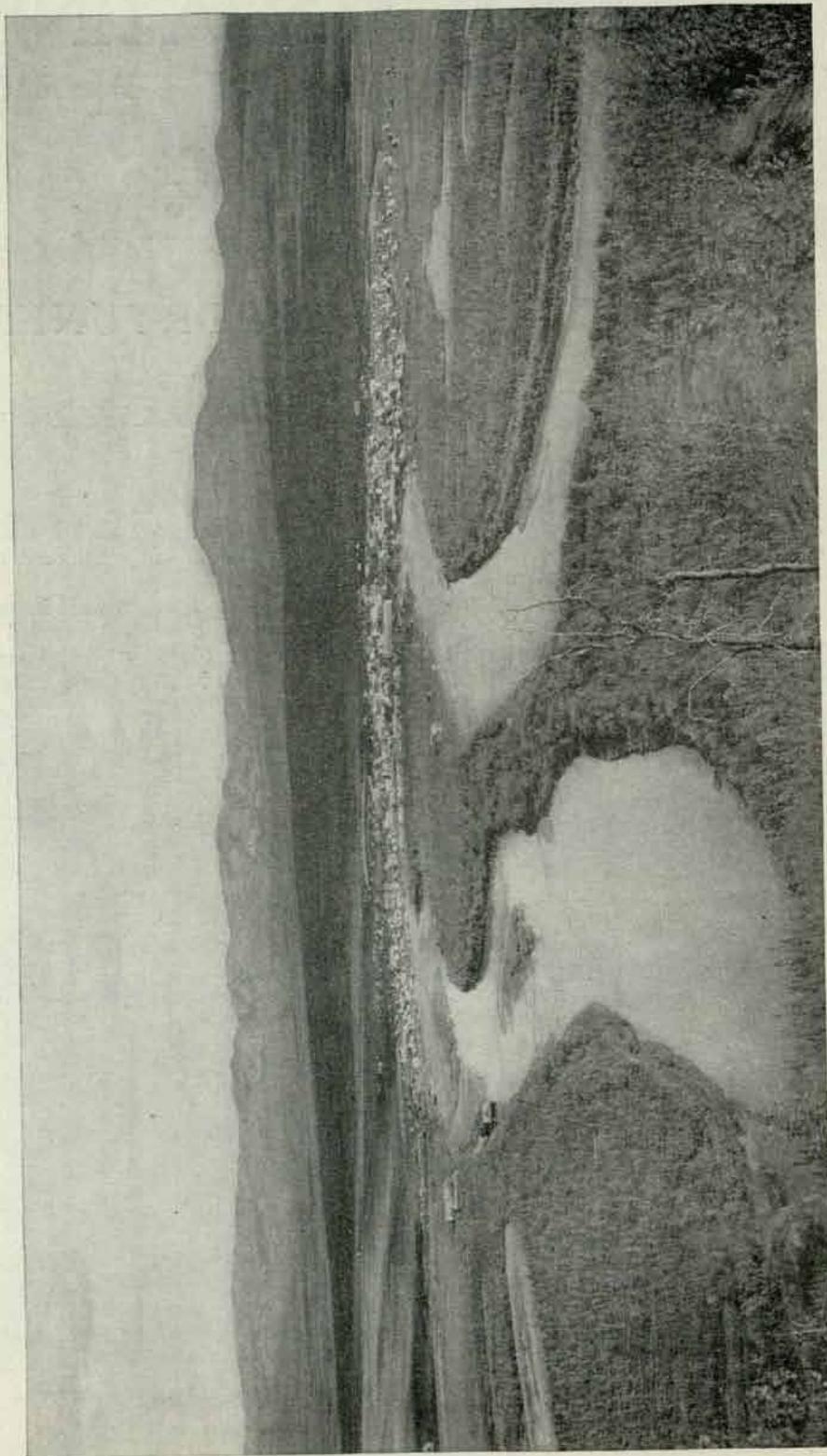
and just the other day the government decided to spend \$35,000,000 making the beginnings of a system of government railroads for Alaska.

You can't tell about these imperial speculations in real estate measured by continents or the big fractions of continents. Away back in 1803 when Jefferson

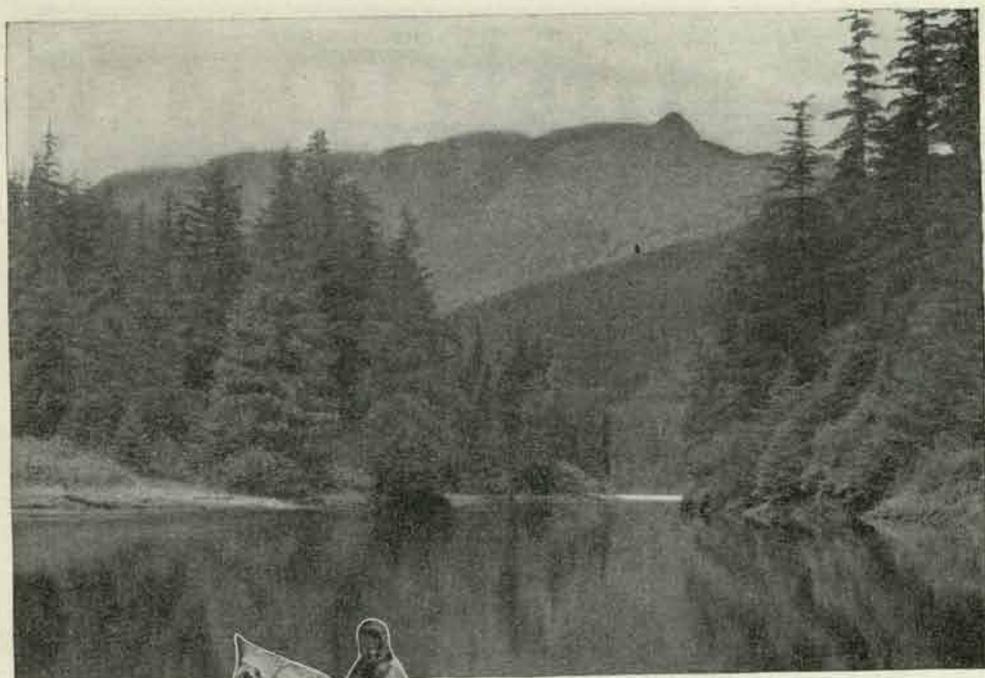


THE FAMOUS NENANA COAL-FIELD. THE BLACK RINGS AROUND THE MOUNTAIN ARE COAL VEINS, ONE 106 AND THE OTHER 85 FEET THICK

From a photograph by A. J. Johnson



IDITAROD, ON THE IDITAROD RIVER, AN INTERIOR TOWN WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE THE TERMINUS OF ONE OF THE LINES OF RAILROAD
THE GOVERNMENT IS TO BUILD



A MOUNTAIN SCENE
NEAR SITKA. INDIAN
WOMEN FISHING FOR
SALMON IN ONE OF
THE LAKES TUCKED
AWAY IN VOLCANIC
POCKETS, FROM
WHICH THE OUT-
FLOWS GO TUMBLING
INTO CHASMS HUN-
DREDS OF DIZZY
FEET BELOW

From a copyrighted photograph by Merrill

was buying Louisiana, and the safe, sober, conservative judgment of the country wanted to impeach him for the wicked recklessness of it—for did he not pay the scandalous figure of \$15,000,000 to Napoleon for that worthless wilderness?—it was widely agreed that if we ever got out of the transaction with a whole skin, it would be because there was a mountain of salt on the upper waters of the Missouri, that might some day be worth the money! Aside from that, we were getting nothing but trouble and wild Indians for our investment!

We smile at this estimate of the Mississippi-Missouri Mesopotamian valley from which the magnificent agricultural interior of the nation has been carved. But why smile?

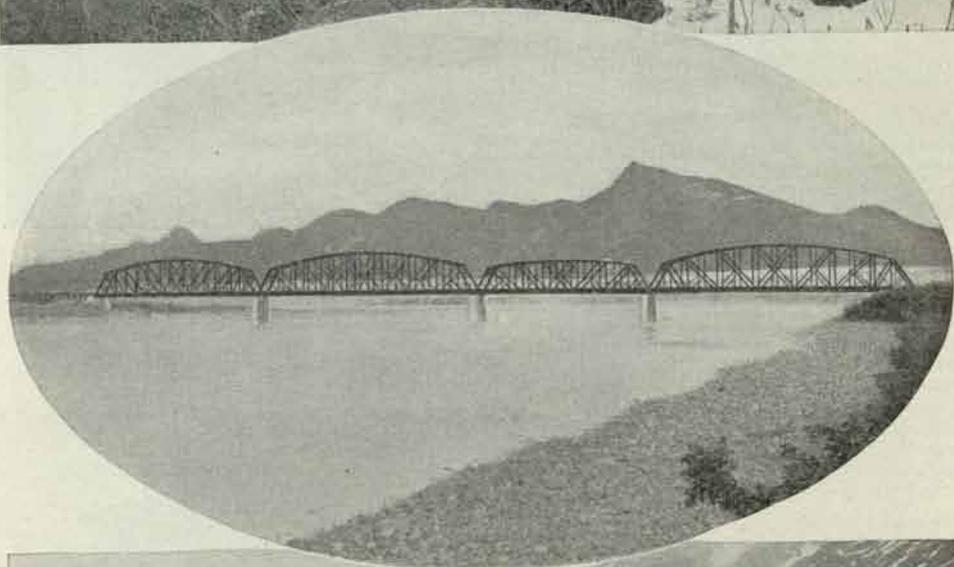
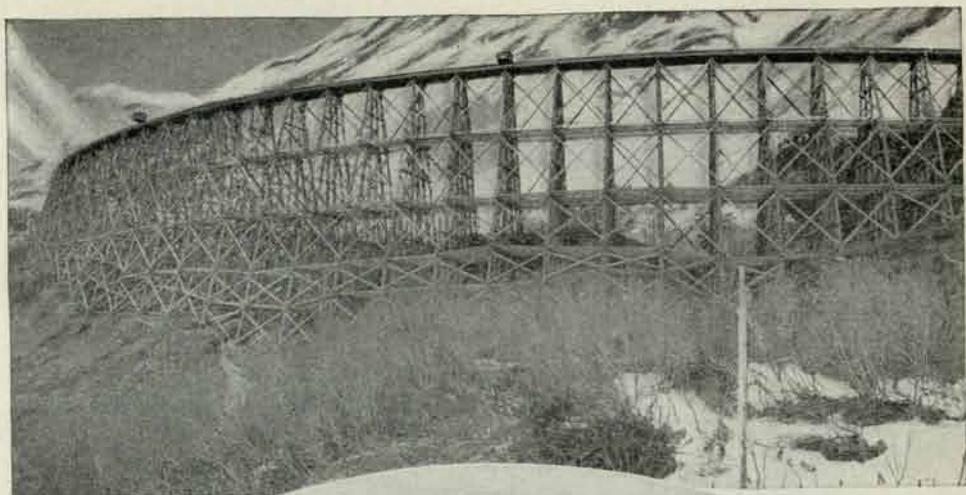
Half a century later the Oregon ques-

tion was urgent: the question of whether we could get, or wanted, the great Northwest. Senator Dickerson of New Jersey solemnly pronounced judgment that:

Oregon can never be one of the United States. If we extend our laws to it we must consider it as a colony. . . . The Union is already too extensive and we must make two or three new States from the Territories already formed.

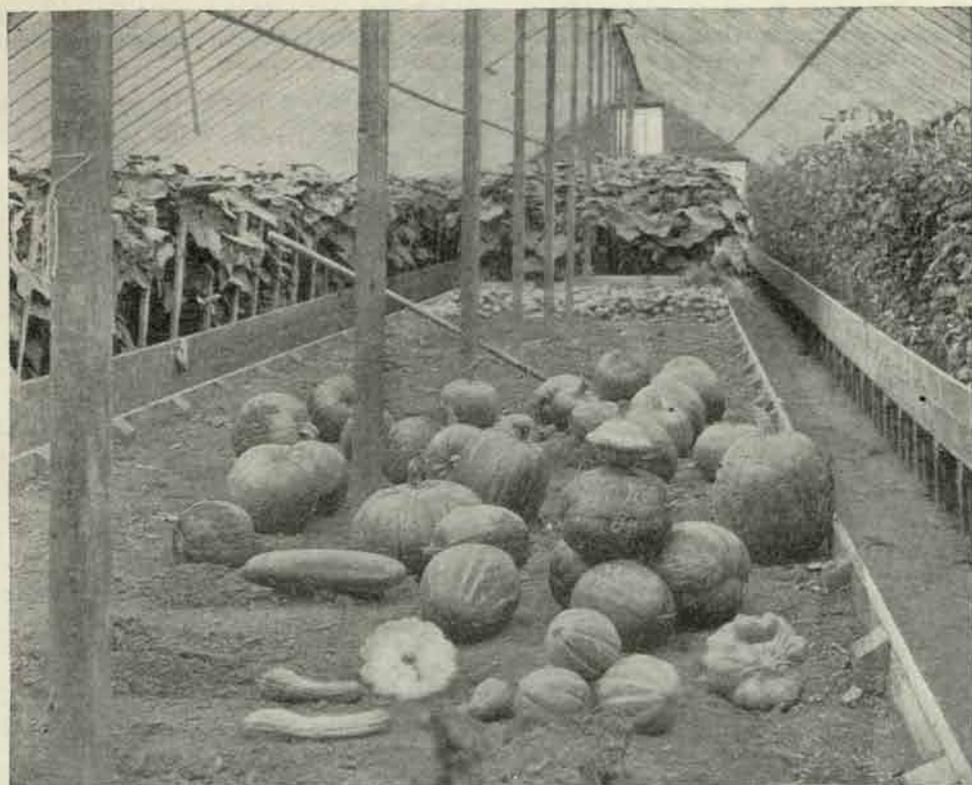
It would seem that that ought to have settled the question. But to the great Daniel Webster, also speaking in the Senate, was reserved the distinction of a more telling presentation, thus:

What do we want with the vast, worthless area, this region of savages and whirlwinds of dust, of cactus and prairie dogs? To what use



THE TOP PICTURE SHOWS A TRESTLE CURVING ON THE ALASKA NORTHERN RAILWAY; THE MIDDLE ONE THE BRIDGE NEAR CORDOVA SITUATED BETWEEN TWO GREAT GLACIERS; AND THE LOWER ONE A BIT OF SCENERY ALONG THE COPPER RIVER

From photographs by E. A. Hegg



STARTING EARLY VEGETABLES IN A HOTOUSE AT FAIRBANKS. THE PUMPKIN, SQUASH, ETC., IN THE PICTURE ARE NOT OF HOTOUSE GROWTH BUT ARE FROM A GARDEN NEAR BY

From a photograph by F. H. Nowell



NATIVE WEAVERS AT WORK ON THEIR WONDERFUL BASKETS WHICH ARE PERFECTLY WATER-TIGHT

From a copyrighted photograph by Case & Drater

could we ever hope to put these great deserts, or these endless mountain ranges, impenetrable, and covered to their base with eternal snow? What can we ever hope to do with the western coast, of 3,000 miles, rock-bound, cheerless, and uninviting, and not a harbor on it? Mr. Presi-

dent, I will never vote one cent from the public treasury to place the Pacific coast one inch nearer to Boston than it now is.

Daniel's views might be set down as merely representative of the attitude of a



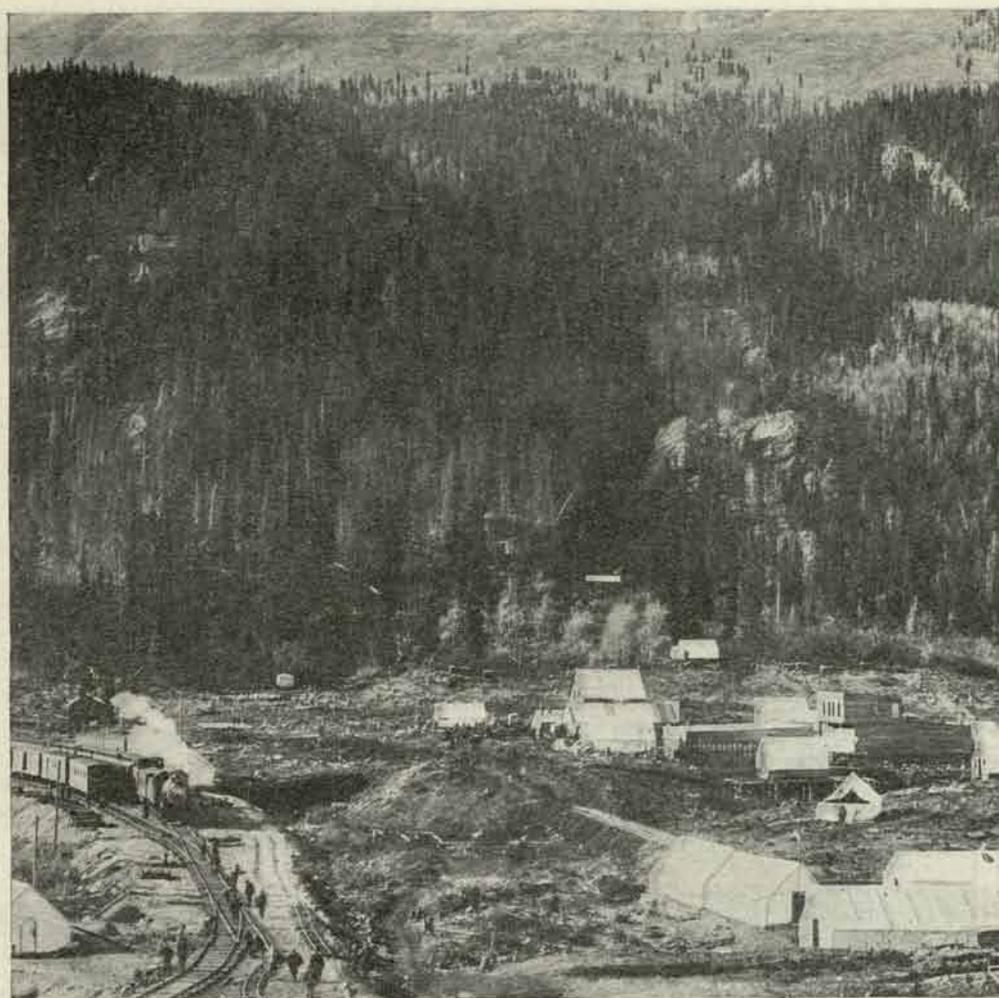
THE ESKIMO BEAUTY
OF THE TERRITORY

*From a copyrighted photograph
by B. B. Dobbs*



ALLEN AND DARLING'S RACING
DOG-TEAM WHICH WON A TEN-THOUSAND-
DOLLAR ALL-ALASKA SWEEPSTAKES FOR DOG-TEAMS
AT NOME IN 1910

From a photograph by B. B. Dobbs



THE TOWN OF CHITINA, 132 MILES INLAND. WAGON ROADS TO THE INTERIOR CONNECT WITH THE RAILWAY HERE

From a photograph by E. A. Hegg

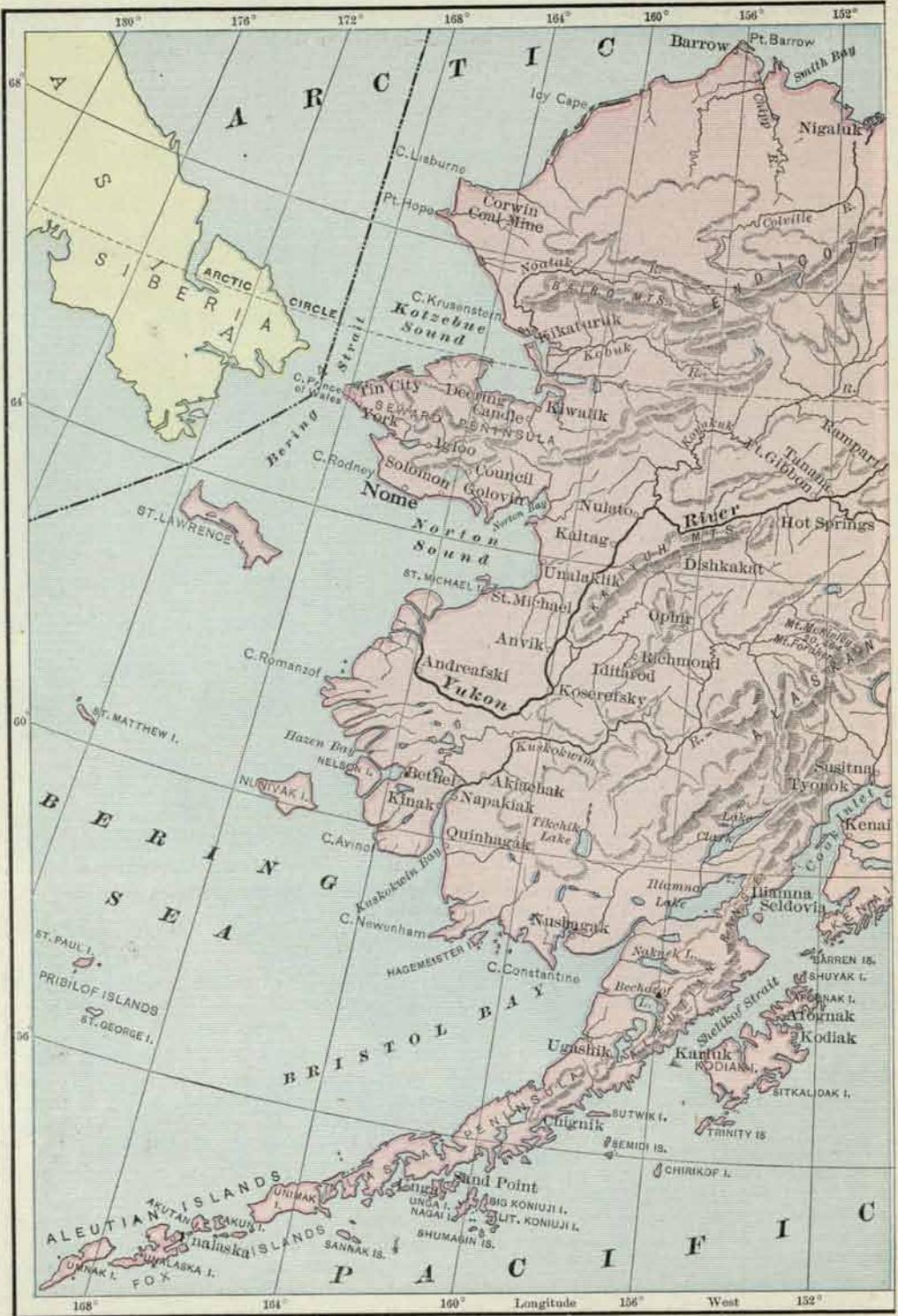
section; but in fact they reflected very well what in that time was also the Far West. For Thomas H. Benton, Senator from Missouri, at a time when that State was the farthest west in the whole Union, made this contribution from the Senate floor:

The ridge of the Rocky Mountains may be named as the convenient, natural, and everlasting boundary. Along this ridge the western limits of the Republic should be drawn and the statue of the fabled god Terminus should be erected on its highest peaks, never to be thrown down.

To the delver into ancient legislative records, indeed, it is marvelous that the nation ever saved anything from the public domain that was laid at its door. Sena-

tor McDuffie of South Carolina declared his firm opinion that "if there ever was a country upon the face of the earth in which I should consider it a great misfortune for the poorest man to settle — any country blasted by God, which is utterly destitute of all conceivable attraction, scarcely capable of sustaining the life of humans, it is this very Territory of Oregon."

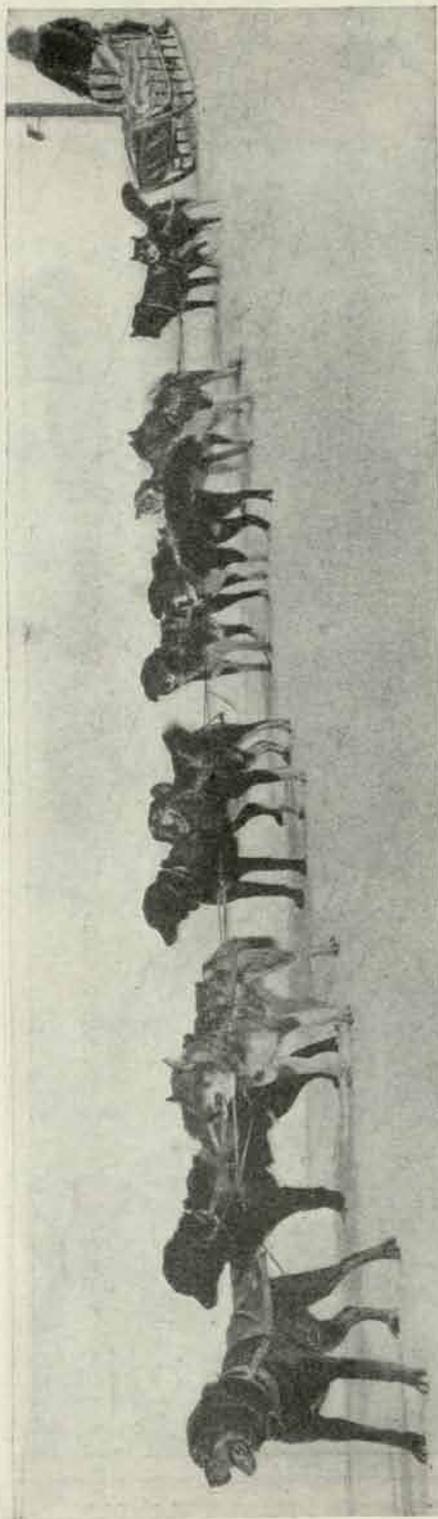
Senator Dayton of New Jersey knew all about the great Northwest, too: it was "as irreclaimable and barren a waste as the desert of Sahara; the climate so unfriendly to human life that the native population is dwindling away under the ravages of malaria."



GENERAL MAP OF ALASKA, SHOWING ITS RELATION TO SIBERIA AND ALSO TO THE DOMINION OF—
30,000 MILES OF COAST LINE, OR MORE THAN—



—CANADA. THE TERRITORY INCLUDES FULLY ONE THOUSAND ISLANDS AND HAS FROM 26,000 TO
 —ALL THE REST OF CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES



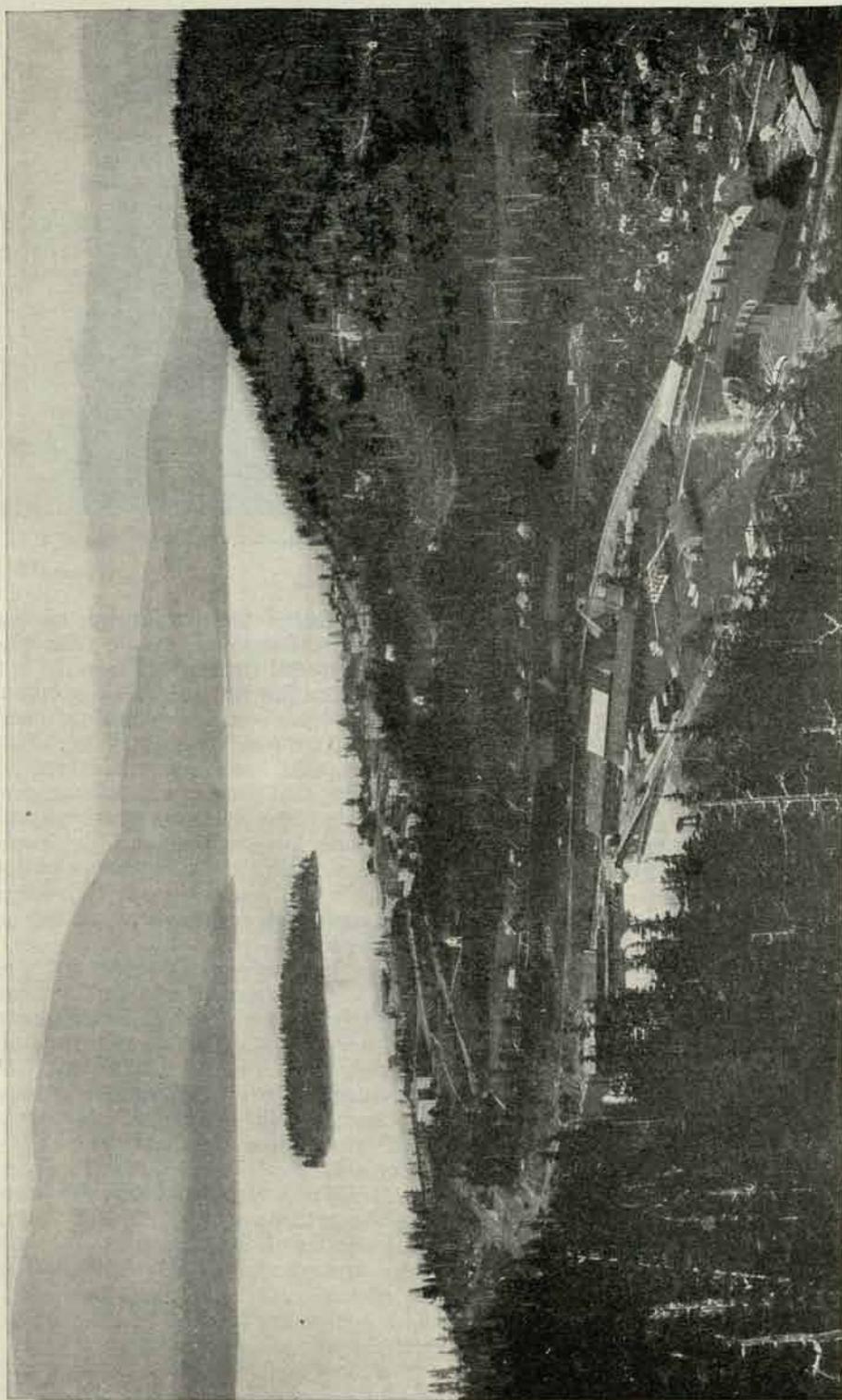
ALTHOUGH OTHER STYLES OF TRANSPORTATION ARE BEING INTRODUCED, THE WONDERFUL DOG-TEAMS OF "HUSKIES" AND RUSSIAN HOUNDS ARE USED ALL OVER THE TERRITORY

From a photograph by Dobbs



A RURAL MAIL ROUTE EQUIPMENT OFF FOR THE NORTH ON A ROUTE WHICH COVERS ABOUT 700 MILES, FROM NOME TO VALDEZ

From a photograph by Dobbs



CORDOVA, THE TIDEWATER TERMINUS OF THE COPPER RIVER AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY, GATEWAY TO THE COPPER AND COAL FIELDS
From a photograph by E. A. Hogg



THE OLDEST SETTLEMENT IN ALASKA, UNALASKA, ON THE ISLAND OF THE—

From a photo—



CHIEF KAT-A-SHAN'S
TOTEM POLE,
FORT WRANGLE

From a copyrighted photograph by Winter & Pond

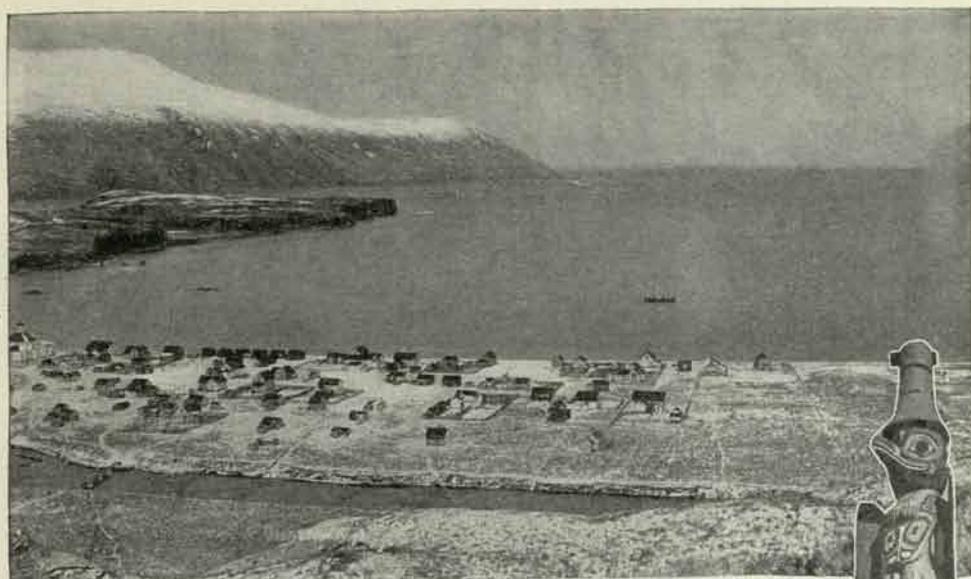
In the light of these demonstrations of legislative intelligence on the subject of our mid-west and far northwest, it will have to be conceded that, after all, Alaska is getting far more discriminating treatment than those sections got. In order that Alaska may be saved to the service of the whole nation, and not exploited by any limited group or interest, it has been recognized that there must be public transportation; transportation organized for the single purpose of serving the whole community, and not with the end of promoting any monopoly. It has been realized that, in the peculiar conditions under which Alaska must be developed, the control of trans-

portation means the domination of the Territory. Alaskan experience with privately controlled transportation in the last twenty years has pointed this conclusion.

It must have been an emphatic demonstration of the possibilities and the future of Alaska, that could induce Congress to reverse the traditional policy of the government and plunge into national railroad construction for the benefit of the Territory. What was there to say on behalf of Alaska, to win Congressional and Presidential approval for so revolutionary a program?

James Wickersham, the able and eloquent delegate from Alaska in Congress, said it in tabloid form when, in the course of a speech favoring the government railroad bill, he presented a balance sheet of the account between Alaska and the nation, from the time when Seward bought the Territory down to the close of 1913. There is little need to add to the figures that Mr. Wickersham presented. He found that the nation's account against Alaska was made up of these items: Purchase price, \$7,200,000; general appropriations for Alaska since, \$27,795,525.92; post-office expenses for Alaska, \$6,564,642; total, \$41,560,167.92.

That was what the national government had invested in Alaska. Now look at Mr. Wickersham's itemization of what the



—SAME NAME IN THE ALEUTIANS. HERE THE RUSSIANS FIRST SETTLED IN 1765

—graph by Dobbs

country has taken out of Alaska in that same period. It was made up from the best records, and is generally conceded to be very conservative: Gold, \$228,512,471; silver, \$2,037,280; copper, \$16,074,625; gypsum, \$647,345; marble, \$555,443; tin, \$88,062; coal, \$340,189. Fur and fur products: Fur—seal skins, \$52,042,528; other aquatic furs, \$12,616,937; furs of land animals, \$9,537,081; walrus products, \$368,053; whalebone, \$1,707,410; fishery products, \$182,569,625; total cash receipts, \$15,588,278.72. Total, \$522,685,327.72.

More than half a billion of wealth had come out of this "Arctic waste" in a generation of our national ownership! Moreover, during most of that generation the nation was utterly without conception of the possibilities of the Territory. Its population has been and is ridiculously small considering the range and extent of opportunities it presents. Even now, despite that we have been learning in recent years something about what Alaska is and what it means to us as a nation, it has only about 65,000 people (census of 1910) and in the decade from 1900 to 1910 gained only 764. Almost half the population is composed of Indians.

Early suggestions of public construction of railroads were greeted with widespread protest. It was a policy that had never been favored by this country. Private en-

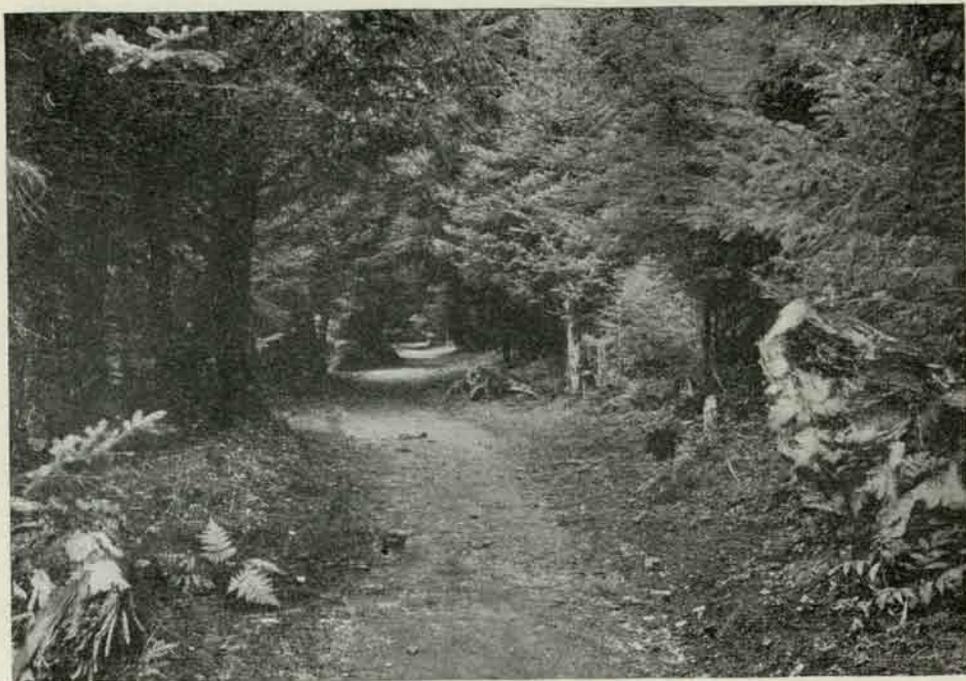
terprise had given this nation its great transportation system, embracing nearly half of all the railroads ever built in the world. The proposal to adopt so radically different a policy was viewed with alarm. Moreover, while students of Alaska's peculiar and unique situation were beginning to understand why that situation demanded a new kind of treatment, the number of these understanding ones was small. It was necessary that an adequate conception of the conditions should sink into the mind of the people and their official representatives.

Thus the Alaska situation reached an impasse; a deadlock. Development substantially ceased. It



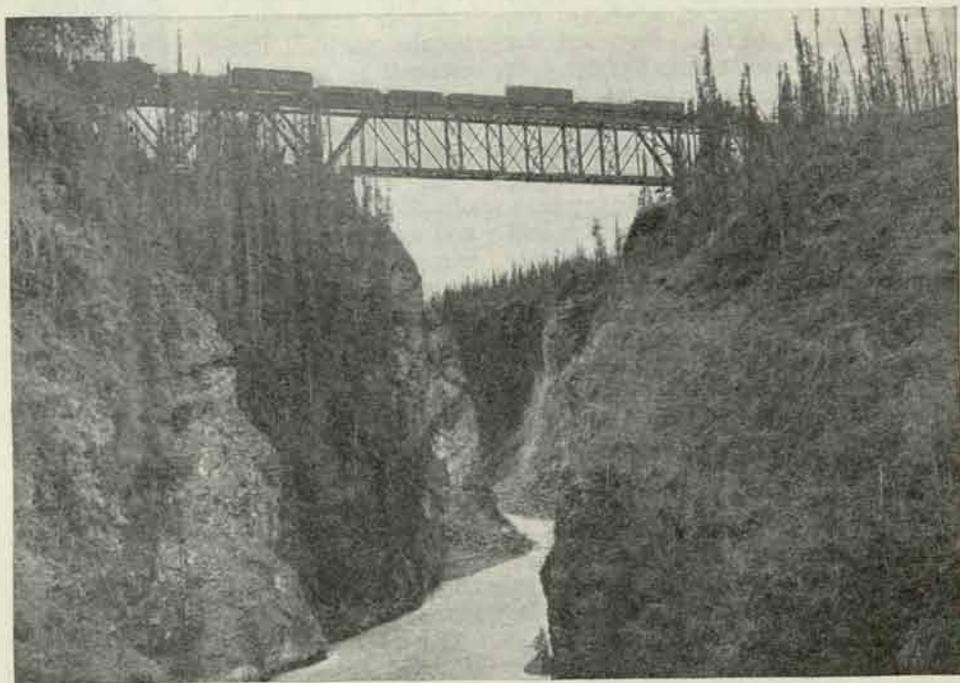
CHIEF SHAKES TOTEM
POLE,
FORT WRANGLE

From a copyrighted photograph by Winter & Pond



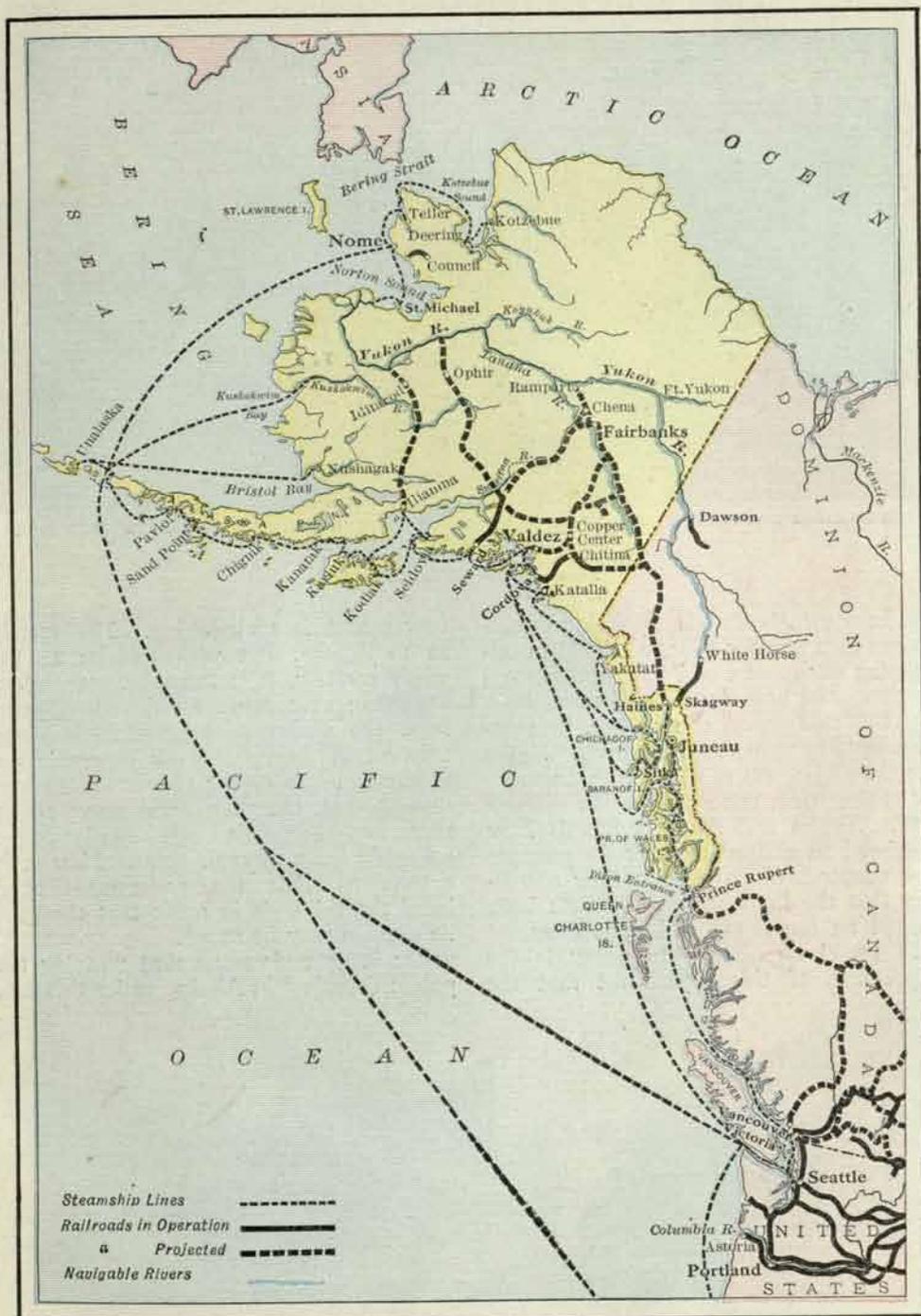
A BIT OF ALASKAN WOODLAND, WITH A VIEW OF LOVERS' LANE, ON THE OLD RUSSIAN ROAD NEAR SITKA

From a photograph by Merrill



KUSKULANA BRIDGE ON THE COPPER RIVER AND NORTHWESTERN RAILWAY. A FEW MILES AWAY IS THE BONANZA COPPER MINE

From a photograph by E. A. Hegg



THIS MAP SHOWS THE VARIOUS RAILROAD ROUTES SUGGESTED BY THE ALASKA RAILWAY COMMISSION TO OPEN THE COUNTRY AND COORDINATE THE WATER AND RAIL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS



CELEBRATING THE FOURTH OF JULY IN THE FAR NORTH. THE MEN'S TWO HUNDRED YARD DASH ON MCKINLEY AVENUE, VALDEZ

From a photograph by P. S. Hunt

was hard for Alaska; disappointing to ambitious men anxious to take a hand in up-building our newest and last northwestern empire. But now that an early end is assured to this period of suspense, it is beginning to be suspected that neither Alaska nor the nation will in the end be the worse for taking time enough to think matters over. Alaska and Alaska's friends have displayed an enthusiasm over the program now adopted, which testifies their conviction that the business has at length been started on the sound and right basis.

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of this experiment that the

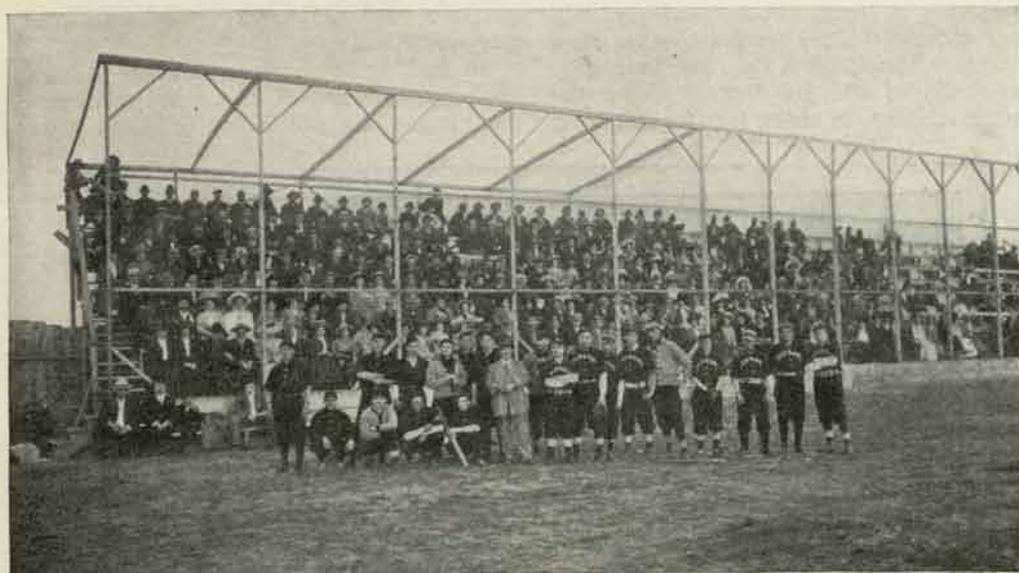
government is undertaking. Not merely as to Alaska, but with relation to the whole country, it is the most tremendous departure ever made by the government from the conservative lines traditionally adhered to throughout our economic development. In earlier phases of Western development, the government was wont to give away the public lands in order to get railroads built through them. Now it is determined that the government shall build the railroads in order that the public domain may be saved.

Let it be understood that "saving the public domain" in Alaska, under this new



SOCIETY FUNCTIONS IN ALASKA. THE TEAM HAS BEEN—

From a photo—



THE MIDNIGHT SUN BASEBALL GAME AT FAIRBANKS. IT OPENS AT MIDNIGHT, JUNE 21, EVERY YEAR, AND IS FINISHED BEFORE SUNDOWN!

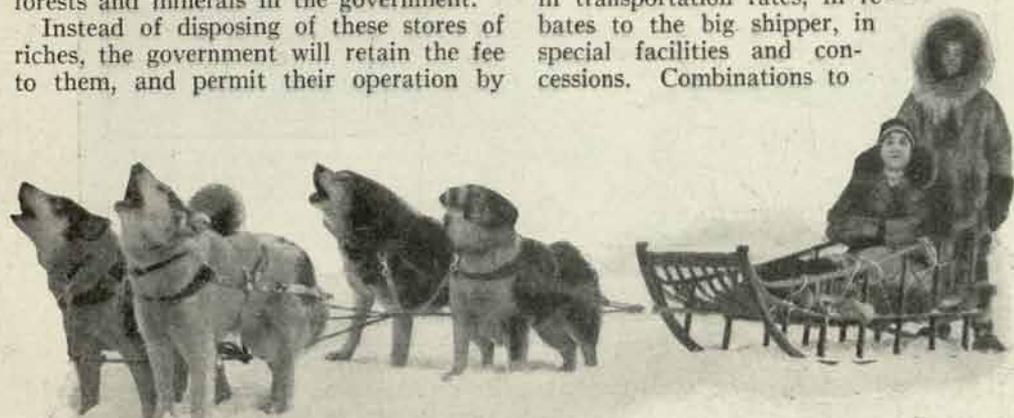
From a photograph by Huey & Hyland

policy, does not mean that it is to be locked up and guarded against growth, enterprise, improvement. It means merely that the great natural resources of the Territory, in forests, gold, copper, coal, tin, marble, fisheries, agriculture and what not, are to be held for the use of the people, in the interest of the people. Inevitably and inseparably connected with the policy of government railroads, will go the other policy of keeping title to the mines and forests and minerals in the government.

Instead of disposing of these stores of riches, the government will retain the fee to them, and permit their operation by

lessees, under royalties. Thus the government will get its modest tribute. But vastly more important, it will reserve to itself the privilege of fixing terms on which development may be conducted. It will permit no monopoly, no unreasonable exactions, no extortions. It will insist on equal terms and a square deal to all comers.

The small operator with modest capital will be assured the same chance as the great corporation. There will be no favors in transportation rates, in rebates to the big shipper, in special facilities and concessions. Combinations to



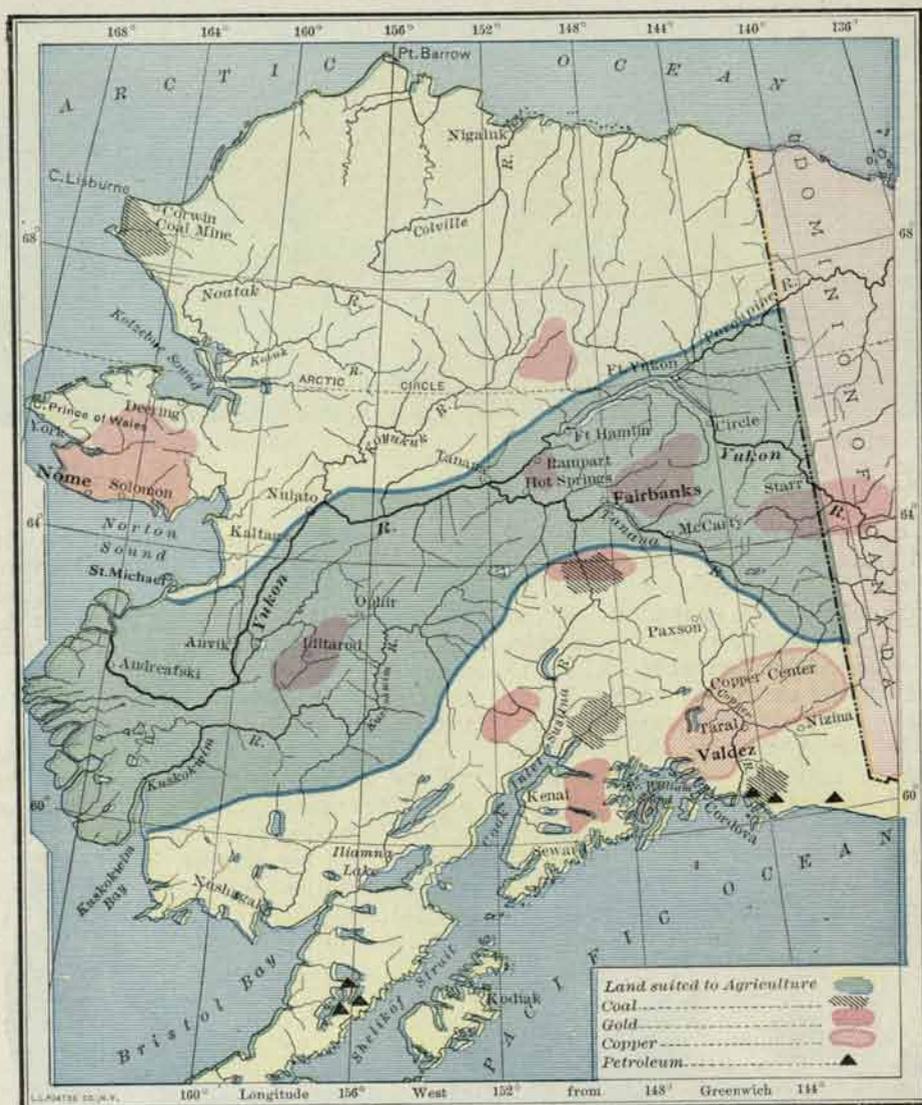
—HARNESSED READY FOR A TRIP TO A NEIGHBOR'S CAMP

—graph by Dobbs

overpower or freeze out the small man will not be permitted; attempts of that kind will mean forfeiture of the right to operate the lands of the government under the leases. Alaska, in short, is to be subjected

300,000 square miles and 8,000,000 people.

In making this comparison, the Alaska Railway commission has been conservative; it has cast aside about 300,000 square

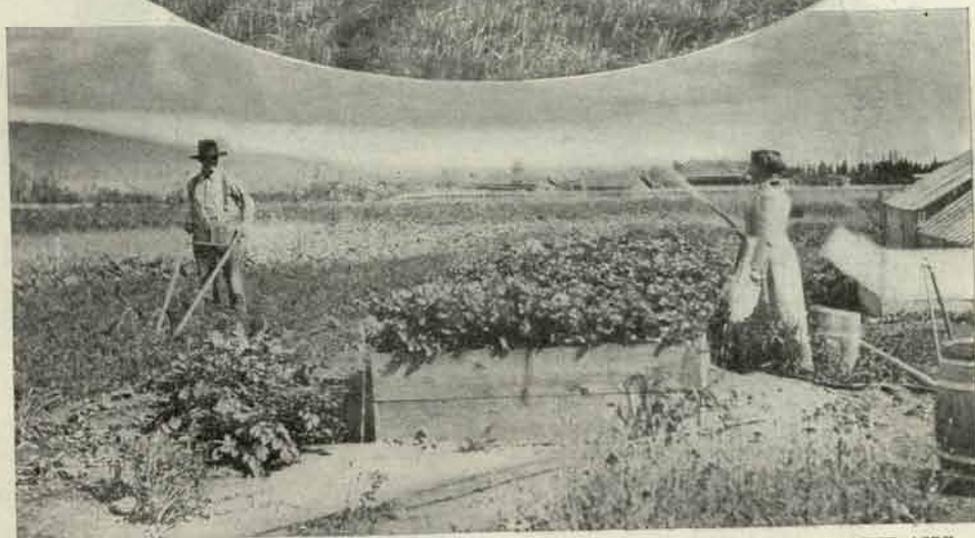


MAP SHOWING THE GENERAL LOCATION OF THE VARIOUS GREAT MINERAL AND METAL AREAS OF ALASKA, AND THE VAST EXTENT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND THAT WILL ONE DAY BE THE REAL SUSTENANCE OF THE TERRITORY

to the experiment of free opportunity under equal conditions.

Let us see what Alaska is to-day. The Alaska Railway commission describes it as a country "comparable in size, resources and climate to Norway and Sweden." Norway and Sweden have just about

miles of Alaska as barren, worthless, and too cold; yet it is still able to retain 300,000 miles, and finds it comparable to Norway and Sweden! That is almost a third the area of the United States east of the Mississippi; almost five times New England; and it is held capable of sus-



THE TOP PICTURE SHOWS A POTATO PATCH WHICH YIELDED ABOUT THREE TONS TO THE ACRE, THE CENTER PICTURE A SELF-BINDER IN OATS, AND THE LOWER ONE A TRUCK GARDEN, ALL IN FAIRBANKS

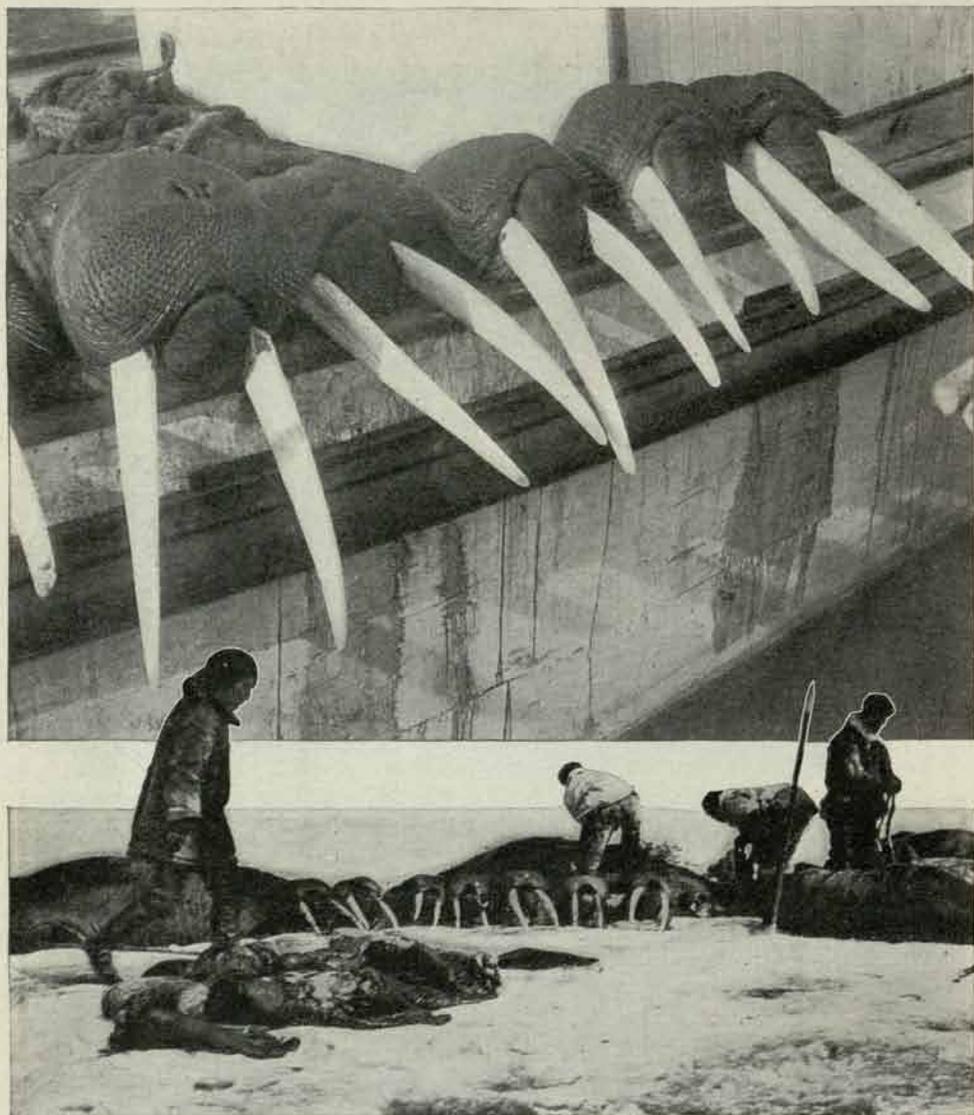
The middle picture from a photograph by Robertson

taining a population—for Norway and Sweden do—three times that of the colonies when they attained independence!

But the railway commission has been

climate as Alaska. But after that, everything is in favor of Alaska.

The Scandinavian peninsula has no gold; Alaska has given the world \$228,000,000



WALRUS HEADS AND TUSKS. UNLESS THE WALRUS IS PROTECTED BY INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, THE PERSISTENT HUNTERS OF THE SEA, SEEKING THE IVORY, WILL SOON EXTERMINATE IT

From a photograph by Dobbs

extremely conservative in its estimate of the possibilities, the natural wealth, of Alaska. The comparison with Norway and Sweden is suggested merely by the fact that the Scandinavian peninsula is in the same latitude and has about the same

of it and not scratched the surface of its possibilities.

There is no copper in Scandinavia. Alaska has produced over \$16,000,000 of merchantable copper, in the earliest infancy of development, and all the world



INDIAN VILLAGE OF HOONAH, ALASKA, SHOWING THE ARTISANSHIP OF THE NATIVES AND SUGGESTING THE CIVILIZATION THEY ARE DEVELOPING

From a photograph by Case & Draser

now knows that its deposits of this metal are among the richest, not unlikely the very richest, in the world.

Scandinavia has no tin. Alaska doesn't know how much of this rare and very valuable metal it has, but does know that it has already produced some and has assurance of great development in this direction.

Oil has been found in many places in Alaska, and all the geological indications point to the probability of very valuable developments. But for the present most of the lands on which oil is likely to be found are in the public domain and withdrawn from the privilege of entry and development, in line with the general policy of protecting the country from being monopolized.

Imagination runs riot with the figures on Alaska's coal supplies. Alfred H. Brooks, of the United States Geological Survey, for many years in charge of investigations of the geology and mineral resources of Alaska, reaches the conclu-

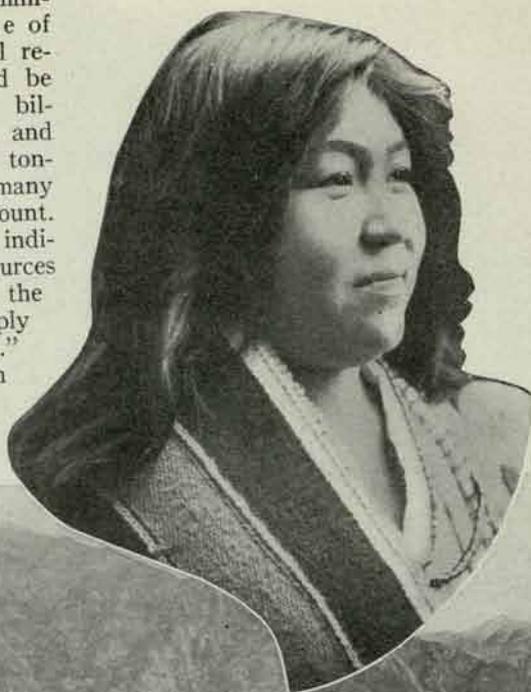


AN ESKIMO CHILD AT NOME, WHITHER THE ESKIMOS COME TO TRADE

From a photograph by Dobbs

sion that "the minimum estimate of Alaska's coal resources should be placed at 150 billions of tons, and that the actual tonnage may be many times that amount. These figures indicate coal resources far in excess of the original coal supply of Pennsylvania."

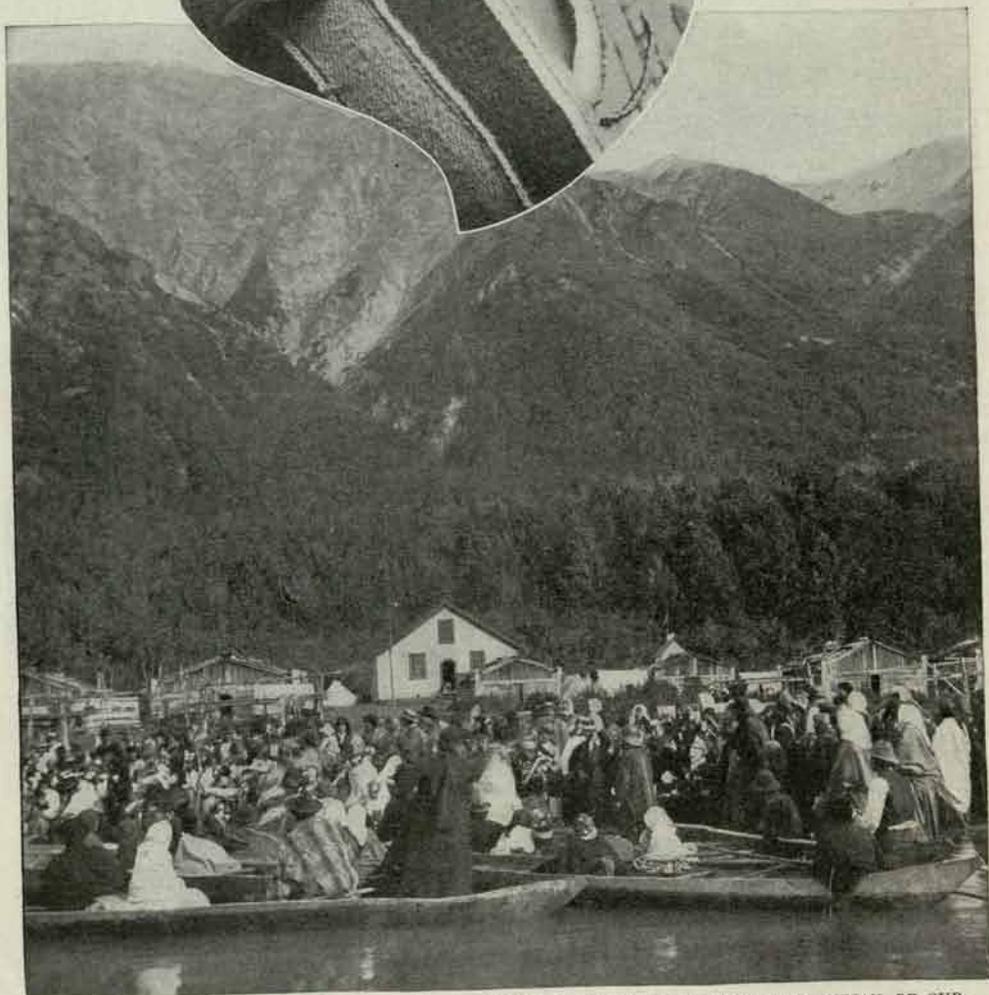
An illustration of what this prodigality of



coal resources means in the development of Alaska is afforded by a little incident that took place a few days after the passage of the railway construction bill in Congress. Delegate Wickersham called on Secretary of the In-

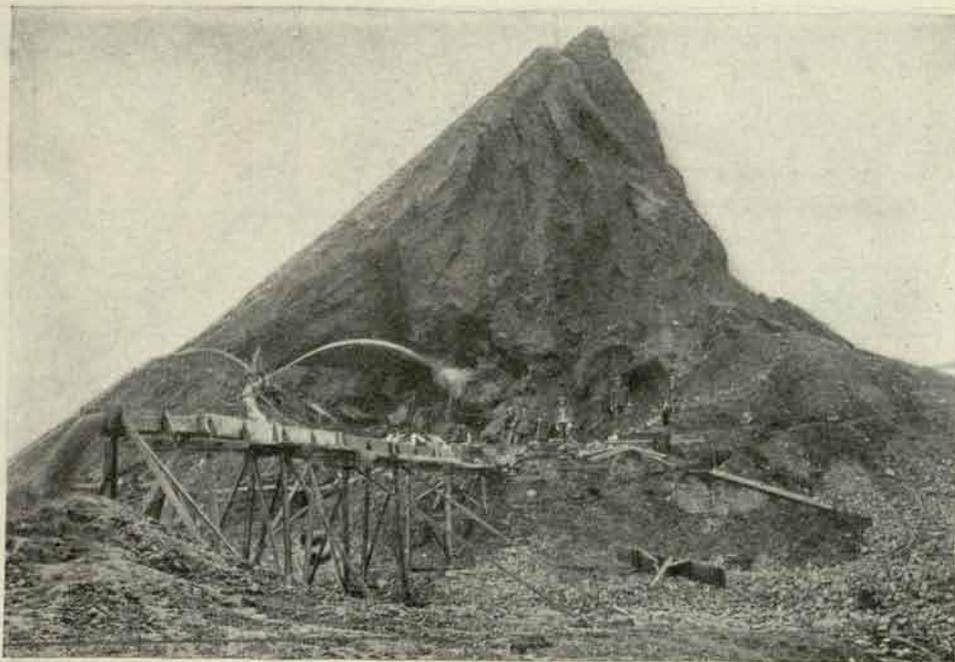
"PORCUPINE MARY," A WELL-KNOWN MEMBER OF THE HIGHLY INTELLIGENT CHILKAT TRIBE

From a copyrighted photograph by Case & Drafer



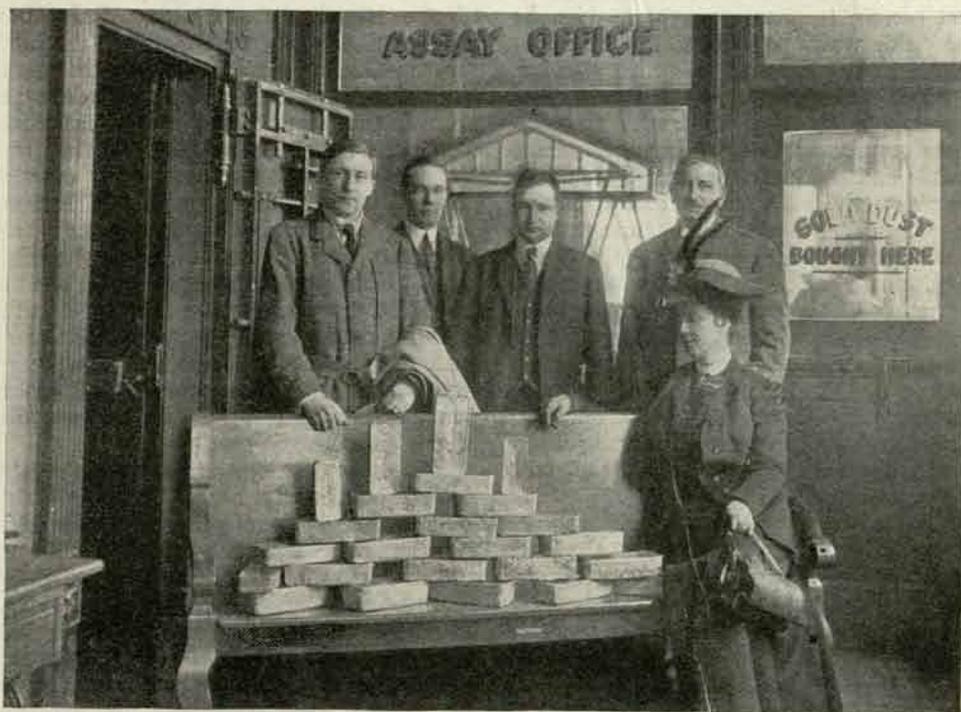
GATHERING OF CHILKAT INDIANS FOR "POTLATCH," A CEREMONY IN WHICH AN INDIAN OF SUBSTANCE BRINGS HIS FRIENDS TOGETHER AND DISTRIBUTES HIS PROPERTY AMONG THEM

From a copyrighted photograph by Winter & Pond



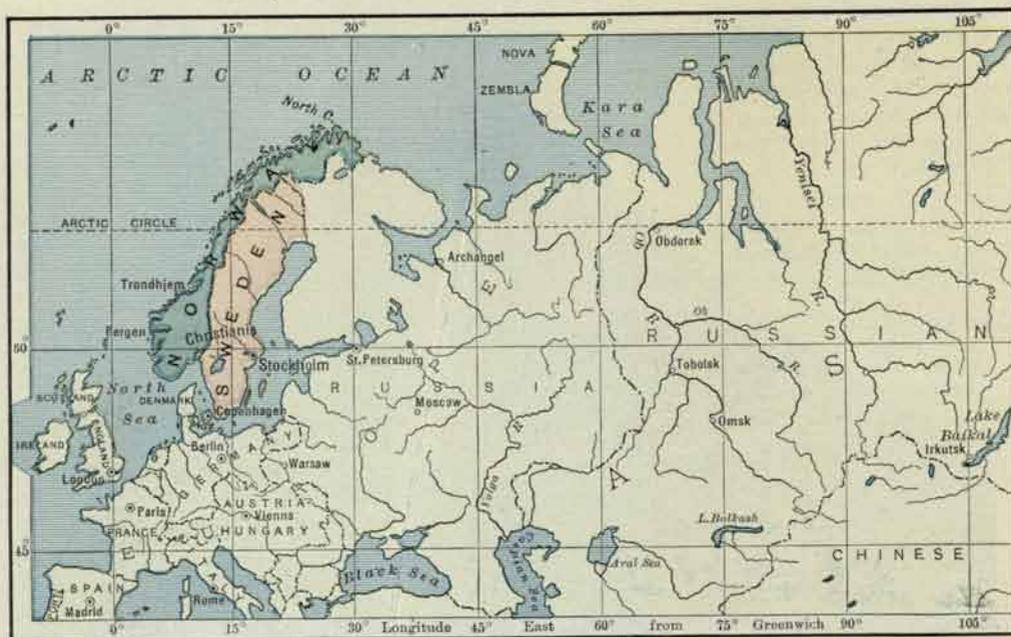
PIONEER MINING COMPANY'S ANNUAL CLEAN-UP AT NOME. THE WINTER'S DIGGING OF GOLD-BEARING GRAVEL IS CLEANED UP AS SOON AS THE WATER FLOWS IN THE SPRING

From a photograph by Dobbs



SOME GOLD BRICKS THAT ARE THE REAL THING. ONE WEEK'S OUTPUT OF THE PIONEER MINING COMPANY AT NOME, WORTH \$260,000

From a photograph by Dobbs



HERE IS THE MOST GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION THAT CAN BE GIVEN OF THE COMPARISON BETWEEN—
ALASKA LINES UP WITH SCANDINAVIA. IT IS EASILY CAPABLE OF—

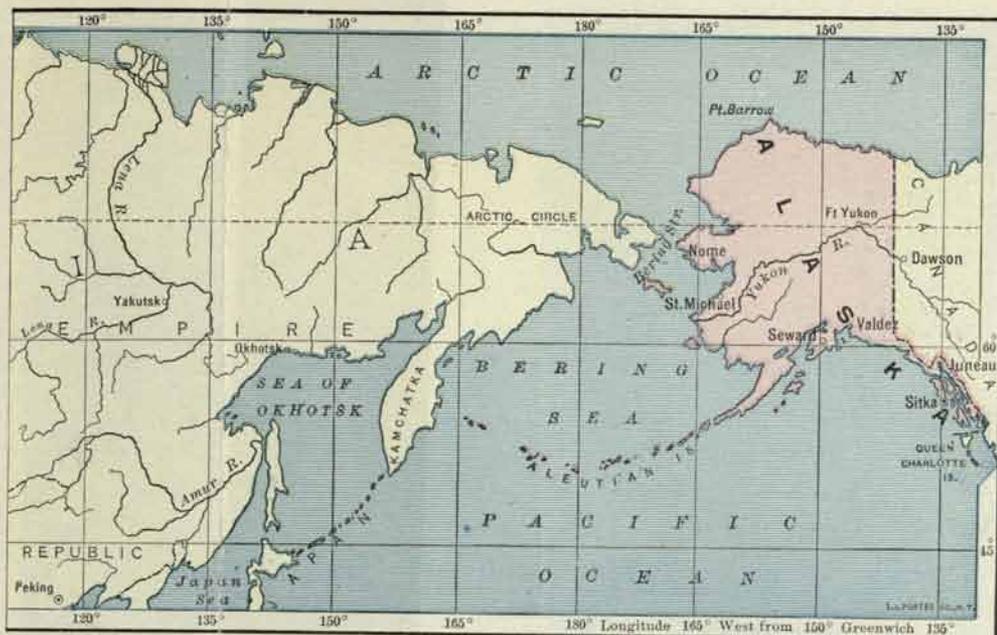
terior Lane to suggest that one of the lines of roads that would be built would be almost certain to pass through the Nenana coal field, which is one of the most accessible and is expected to prove also one in which mining will be cheapest. Mr. Wickersham observed that with this immense supply of coal at hand the most feasible and economical program would be to operate the road by electricity, having the government produce the current from its own power plant, producing the power from its own coal, dug from its own mine! Discussion of the project so far convinced Secretary Lane of its feasibility that he promptly undertook to have it investigated in detail. Mr. Wickersham is confident that the Alaska railroad system will be equipped and operated electrically from its opening, and will be strictly the most up-to-date system in the world.

The coal in this Nenana field will be taken from mountains high above the level of the railroad grade, so that with the very minimum of expense it can be carried in chutes directly down to the bunkers along the tracks. But attention has been so long centered on Alaska's coal that we have been wont to overlook or minimize other resources of even greater value.

The Territory is in truth one of the very

greatest repositories of mineral wealth in the whole world. For example, on some of the islands in southeast Alaska are wonderful deposits of the finest marble; far superior, it is said, to any other now known in America. What these deposits mean in the estimate of men who deal with marble, is suggested by the fact that the Vermont Marble Company has opened great quarries in these islands and is now shipping this marble to ports along the American Pacific, and even to the Far East. With the opening of the Panama canal it is confidently expected this Alaskan marble will find yet wider markets, because the cheap water transportation to which it is accessible will make possible its shipments to the eastern coast of this country and even to Europe.

Again, the development of Alaska's gold deposit has hardly begun. Most of the gold garnered there since the Klondike rush has come from the beaches of Nome and the placers which line the streams throughout a large part of the country. Geologists tell us that the great mother lodes from which these placer deposits are merely the scourings, are one day going to be located and developed by modern processes of mining and reduction and that they will produce gold in quantities



—ALASKA AND THE SCANDINAVIAN PENINSULA. THE PARALLELS OF LATITUDE SHOW EXACTLY HOW
—SUSTAINING AS GREAT OR EVEN GREATER POPULATION

far beyond the wildest imaginings of men who thus far have been dealing and calculating only by the crude methods and moderate figures that represent the limitations of placer production.

If Alaska is to become a great country, with that wide variety of interests which alone can insure lasting stability of citizens and institutions, it must develop an agriculture approximately capable of feeding a permanent population. The people who know Alaska best are confident that it will do this. The Alaska Railway commission comparison with Norway and Sweden is not enthusiastic enough quite to satisfy Mr. Wickersham, Alaska's delegate in Congress. He declares as his deliberate judgment that Alaska will one day maintain a prosperous population of ten millions. The studies of its soil and climate, and particularly the careful comparisons that have been made between its agricultural possibilities and those of Scandinavia seem amply to justify this.

St. Petersburg, with two million inhabitants, the capital of the vast western empire, might be moved due west along the very parallel on which it stands and set down in Alaska, blessed with a milder climate than it now possesses. The same may be said of Stockholm, the splendid

capital of Sweden. Any map of the railway system of Continental Europe will show hundreds of miles of railroads, some as far north and some even farther, than those which the government is preparing to build in Alaska.

Dairying is one of the principal industries in Norway, and there are millions of acres in Alaska better adapted by climate, soil, and their variety of vegetable products, to this industry. Yet Norway not only produces all of its requirements in dairy products, but exports them. The cattle of Norway are inferior, and the experiment stations which the department of agriculture maintains in Alaska are developing better strains than are to be found in any other country so far north. Around Fairbanks hogs are raised quite extensively and with excellent profit. The maintenance of successful dairy herds to supply Alaska towns with dairy products is the most ordinary matter of fact to Alaskans.

The vast prairies of the interior valleys are in no notable respect different from those of our central agricultural States. The summer is short but the days are very long and vegetation grows under the almost continuous sunshine with luxuriance that astounds people from more southern latitudes.



A GROUP OF NATIVE ALASKA SCHOOL-CHILDREN REPRESENTING COLUMBIA AND THE STATES AT A FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION IN VALDEZ.

From a photograph by P. S. Hunt



QUARTET OF ESKIMO BELLES AT CAPE PRINCE OF WALES. FROM THEIR VILLAGE THEY CAN LOOK ACROSS BERING STRAIT ALMOST TO ASIA

From a copyrighted photograph by Dobbs

In connection with this reference to the long daylight hours of the northern country, though it has nothing to do with Alaskan agriculture, it may not be without interest to refer to the great annual

midnight baseball game that is played at Fairbanks every year. The crack local team always plays some other contender for the Territorial championship on the night of June 21, the game being called at the stroke of midnight, when the sun is still swinging well above the western horizon. In a period of ten years or more that this annual contest has been a Territorial event, the midnight sun game has never yet been called on account of darkness.

Throughout these interior valleys of Alaska excellent crops of barley, oats and timothy are grown, while the native grasses furnish excellent forage for stock. Horses thrive throughout the country, and are fed on native grains and for-

age. Root crops, particularly potatoes, turnips, carrots, and beets are grown with ease by the truck-gardeners for the towns, and an experiment with sugar-beets at Fairbanks produced such a tremendous yield and high sugar contents that enthusiastic Alaskans insist that the Territory will be found producing its own sugar supply before many years!

A number of years ago the national government imported several hundred reindeer from Siberia, in the hope that they would multiply and replace some of the game that had been recklessly destroyed because of the unrestricted license that had too long been enjoyed by hunters. This herd has prospered beyond all expectations so that at the end of last year its descendants numbered sixty-two herds scattered about the Territory, numbering about 46,000 animals and multiplying at an average rate of thirty per cent annually. The importance of this may be judged from the fact that in Norway, Sweden, and Lapland, the meat of reindeer is a large part of the staple food supply while the skins are very valuable. Lapland exports reindeer meat and hides very extensively, and there is no doubt that they will be very important among the products of Alaska before many years. The best authorities calculate that Alaska will easily maintain 10,000,000 to 20,000,000 head of live stock, and that exports of meat will reach a very considerable figure.

For a long period of years the Department of Agriculture has maintained Prof.



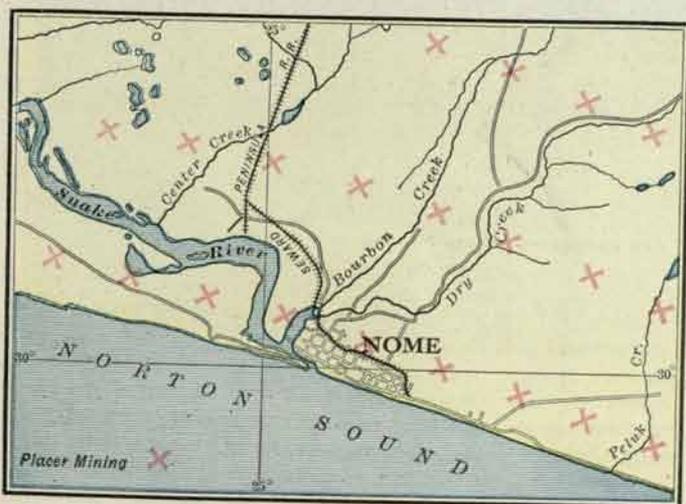
THE DAWSON-KLONDIKE MINING REGION ON THE ALASKA-CANADIAN BORDER

C. T. Georgeson in charge of its experiment stations in Alaska. A native of Scandinavia, and an expert in the facts and methods of agriculture and stock raising in northern Europe, he has proved exactly the man for the work assigned to him. He has demonstrated the possibilities of agriculture in widely separated parts of Alaska.

One private gardener is credited with producing half a ton of cabbages on a half-acre of ground in the season of 1910. Rutabagas, carrots and other root crops, cauliflower, parsnips, celery, rhubarb, radishes, onions, cucumbers, peas and tomatoes are grown readily and regularly. The crops of these compare for quality with those found in the markets of all the United States cities, though they are grown as far as 1,500 miles north of the latitude of New York.

Dr. Georgeson declares that all these crops can be raised successfully under normal conditions and with proper culture throughout all of the country south of the Arctic circle and even beyond it.

Not only is Alaska capable of producing all the timber and lumber it will require, but it will have a surplus. It is estimated that about one-fourth of the Territory's area is in forests and woodlands and that the area of good merchantable timber is rather larger than that of the State



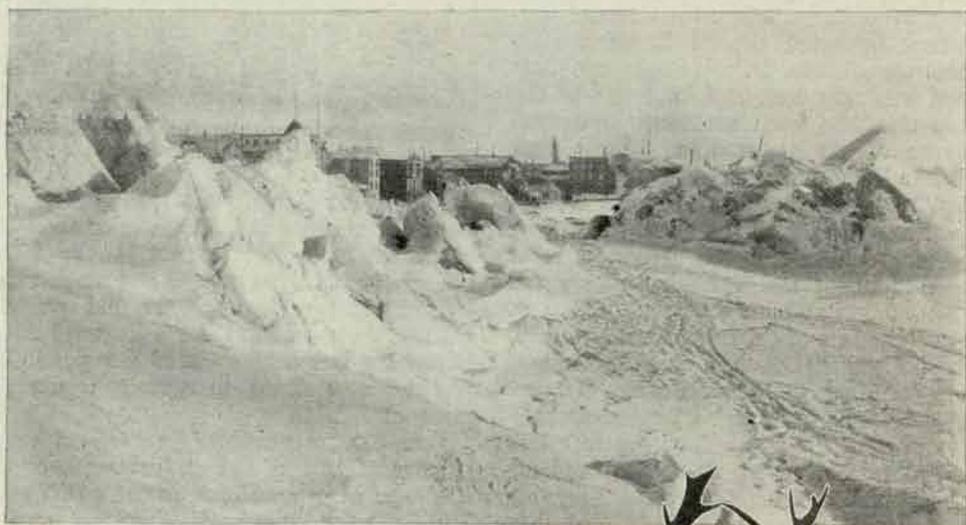
MAP OF THE REGION IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO NOME

of Maine. Besides this there is an immense tract which produces timber of a quality not useful for lumber, but capable of being converted into wood-pulp, in quantities that will give the Territory a huge paper-making industry.

The fisheries industry of Alaska has long been well developed, though it is

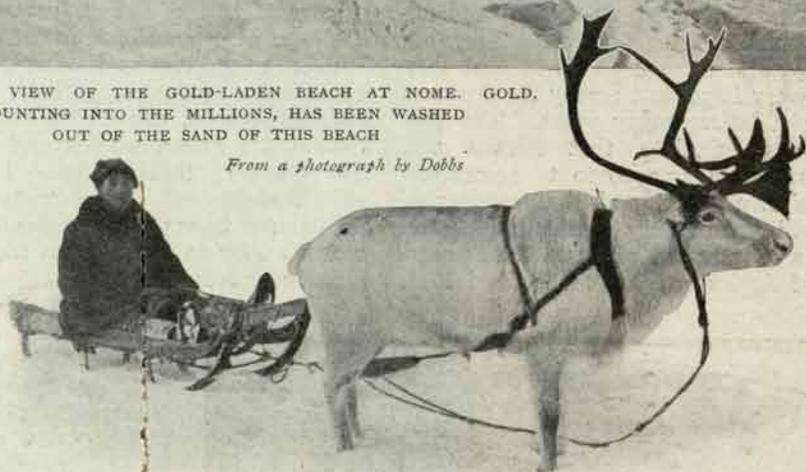
ful that the catch is limited only by the demand, while the whaling industry along the coast and among the islands is growing constantly.

It is well known that the world's fur seal supply practically all comes from Tribilof and St. George islands in Bering Sea. Under the old system of leasing the fur-



A WINTER VIEW OF THE GOLD-LADEN BEACH AT NOME. GOLD, MOUNTING INTO THE MILLIONS, HAS BEEN WASHED OUT OF THE SAND OF THIS BEACH

From a photograph by Dobbs



NATIVE REINDEER HEADER AT NOME. ALASKA'S REINDEER WERE BROUGHT FROM SIBERIA BY THE GOVERNMENT AND HAVE BECOME VERY NUMEROUS AND VALUABLE

From a photograph by Dobbs

capable of much greater expansion. In 1912 its products were valued at nearly \$18,000,000, and the fishing grounds along both the north and south shores of the peninsula are said to be the most extensive in the world. In 1912 twenty-six new salmon packing establishments were built. Salmon, halibut, cod, herring, and other varieties of commercial fish are so plenti-

ful that the catch is limited only by the demand, while the whaling industry along the coast and among the islands is growing constantly. It is well known that the world's fur seal supply practically all comes from Tribilof and St. George islands in Bering Sea. Under the old system of leasing the fur-sealing privilege the herd of seals was so rapidly depleted that the Federal government has recently taken the whole business directly under its own charge. The herds are now said to number only about 125,000, whereas in former years there were 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 of the seals. Reckless destruction of the animals, poaching, and open seal killing have been responsible



JAMES WICKERSHAM, DELEGATE IN CONGRESS FROM ALASKA, WHO HAS DONE GREAT WORK
FOR THE TERRITORY

From a photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington



for this frightful decimation of the herd. Since the government has assumed direct control of the industry the numbers of the animals have already begun to increase.

This very general and inadequate survey of the immensity and variety of Alaska's resources can do no more than suggest the grounds for the confident belief that Alaska is perfectly capable of sustaining a population of several millions of people. But in every consideration of the Territory's resources and possibilities the logic inevitably travels around in a circle and returns to the conclusion that monopoly of transportation must involve monopoly of the resources, because these are so absolutely dependent upon transportation.

To make this empire what it ought to be and can be made, it is proposed that the government shall build the railroads necessary to open it for development. A rough, general idea of Alaska, geographically, may be given in a few words.

Chop off, first, the long, panhandle strip that extends southeasterly along the Pacific coast. Then blot out the long Alaska peninsula that runs off five hundred miles southwesterly into the Pacific. You have left a rectangular territory, lying almost "square with the world," bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the east by Canada, on the south by the Pacific, and on the west by Bering Sea.

You can now cut off approximately the northern one-fourth of your rectangle, that is, the great northern plain that drains off into the Arctic Ocean. About midway between the Yukon river and the Arctic Ocean is what Alaskans call the northern mountain barrier, a great mountain

range extending from southwest to northeast, which divides the basin of the Yukon from the Arctic slope. Everything south of this mountain barrier is in the watershed of the Yukon. And it is the Yukon valley that is the real heart and body of Alaska.

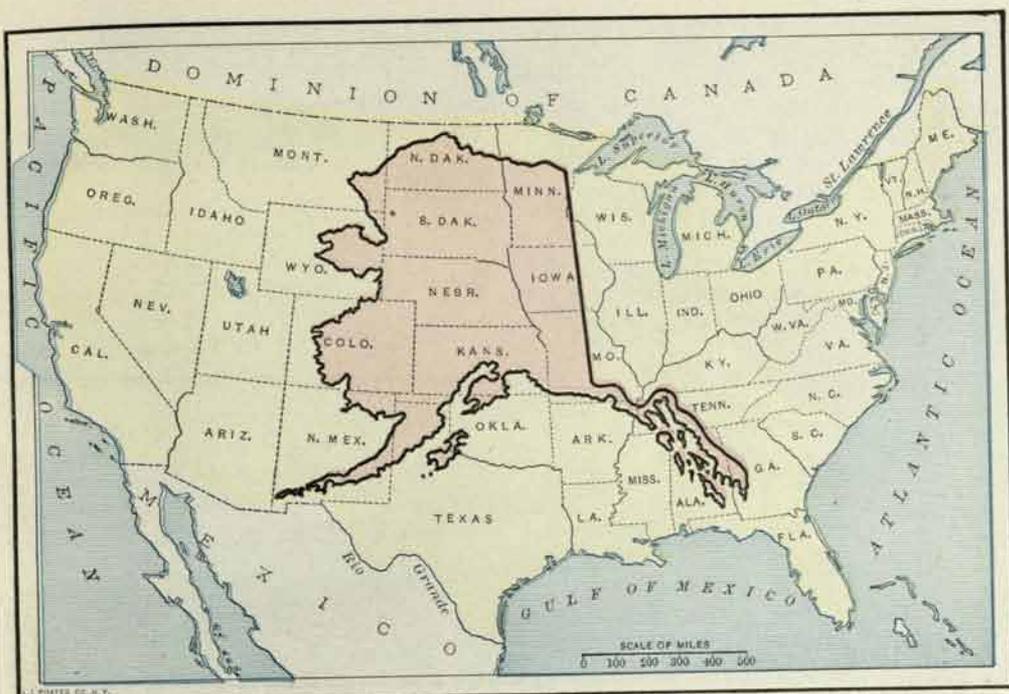
For the purpose of present consideration, we may now forget all about the region north of this mountain barrier. Much of it, indeed, is useful and available. Some day it will be developed. But it is not available for development at this time, and is not included in present plans for railroad building.

These plans concern exclusively the valley of the Yukon. We must now attempt to get a general idea of the physical aspects of this southern three-quarters of Alaska which Uncle Sam is about to open



THE GRAVE OF A MEDICINE-MAN, THE MOST POWERFUL MEMBER IN AN INDIAN COMMUNITY

From photographs copyrighted by Winter & Pond



A STRIKING SUGGESTION OF THE SIZE OF ALASKA IS HERE CONVEYED BY SUPERIMPOSING THE MAP OF THE TERRITORY ON ONE OF THE UNITED STATES, BOTH DRAWN TO THE SAME SCALE

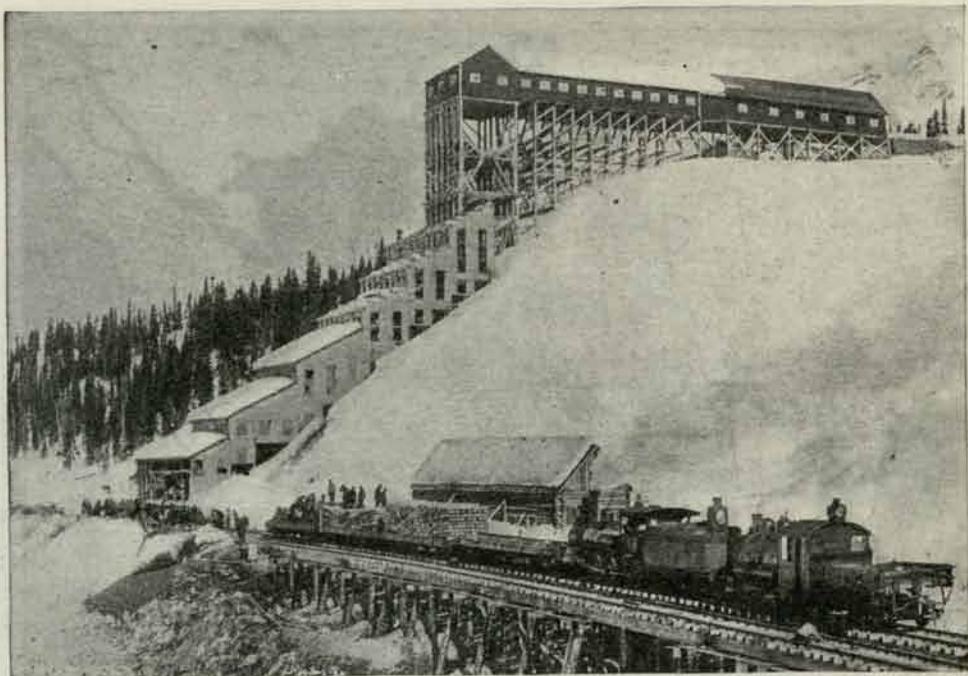
up by the bold project of supplying it with government railroads. East and west, the Territory is about six hundred miles long; north and south, it varies from four hundred to five hundred miles in width. Along the southern littoral are the coast ranges of mountains, running down close to the broken shore line. Temperamental rivers bent by glacial torrents burst through these mountains and empty into the Pacific. The mountains are filled with Alaska's metal and mineral wealth in copper, coal, gold, tin, marble, and almost everything else that the mineralogist might enumerate. Along the southern coast are some good harbors.

Just back of this coast range of mountains and occupying most of the area of our Alaskan empire, lie the great plains which constitute the valley of the Yukon. It is well-nigh impossible to give a description of the Yukon valley that in brief space can convey an impression of its immensity. Though their names sound strange in our ears, yet the great tributaries of the Yukon are streams which we can compare only with the Ohio, the Missouri, the Tennessee, and the other chief confluent of the Mississippi. The Yukon

itself is one of the first three or four rivers of the world; calculations have been made which show that it actually empties more water into Bering Sea than the Mississippi carries into the Gulf of Mexico.

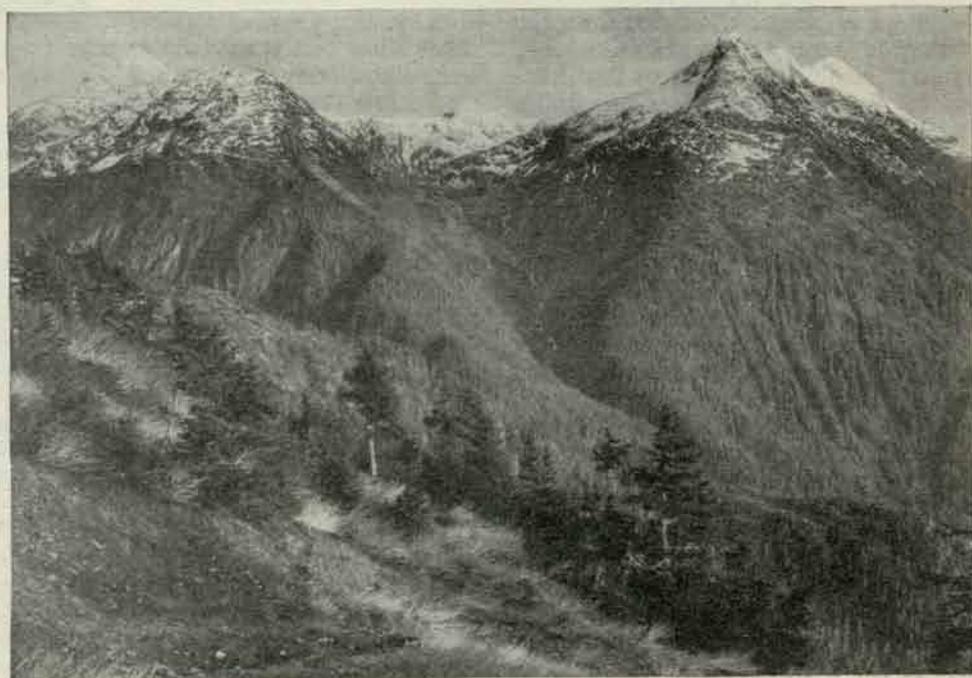
In a general way the course of the Yukon is from east to west, its rise being in northwestern Canada and about two-thirds of its length in Alaska. Its great tributaries include the Tanana, the Koyukuk, the Kantishna, the Beaver, the Porcupine, the Pelly, the Stewart, the Lewes, the Teslin, the Chandlar, the Innoko, and a long list of others that might be named, all of them navigable for great distances. Altogether the Yukon and its navigable tributaries provide Alaska with more than 6,000 miles of excellent water routes available for commercial transportation by large steamboats.

This network of rivers reaches to all parts of the Alaskan interior between the southern mountain range and the northern mountain barrier as already described. These rivers are ice-free and available for navigation from about the middle of May until about the middle of November each year. It is safe to count on five months of good, safe, open water in them annually.



RAILROAD STATION AND SECTION OF THE UPPER WORKS OF THE BONANZA COPPER-MINE, SAID TO BE THE RICHEST OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD

From a photograph by E. A. Hegg



ETERNAL SNOWS ON THE MOUNTAINS OF BARANOV ISLAND, BACK OF SITKA. SOME OF THE NOBLEST SCENERY IN THE WORLD LINES THE COAST FOR THOUSANDS OF MILES

From a copyrighted photograph by Merrill

Present projects for building railroads in Alaska deal only with the southern half of the Yukon valley, that is, with the country south of the great river. It is therefore necessary to inquire about this portion of Alaska lying between the Yukon on the north and the Pacific Ocean on the south. It is a region of perhaps 300,000 square miles. In its eastern section the valley of the Tanana, and in the western section that of the Kuskokwim are the controlling physical features. The Kuskokwim is not a confluent of the Yukon, though it is a stream that might fairly be compared for volume and length to any of the rivers in the United States aside from the Mississippi and the Missouri.

The Tanana rises in the extreme southeast and flows northwest, emptying into the Yukon. The Kuskokwim rises in the central section and flows southwest into Bering Sea. Each has something like 600 miles of navigable length, besides many navigable confluents. For length, volume, and navigability either may be compared to the Ohio.

There is an outline of the region which is to be opened by the new transportation system. Keep in mind, now, that the mighty Yukon lies all along the northern border. Measure it with a rule on the map, and it is 600 miles from where it enters Alaska on the east to where it flows into Bering Sea on the west; perhaps 2,000 miles as you would navigate it.

These great rivers must be made to carry a vast part of the heavy traffic of the country; and they will do it if railroad rates are so adjusted as to let them do it. Government ownership, we are assured, means such an adjustment of rates as will permit the rivers to do their share of the work. With private ownership of the railroads, it has been argued, the traffic would be driven off the rivers by the unfair competition of the railroads, or else the boat lines would fall into the hands of the railroad interests and their competitive value would be lost.

The problem of Alaskan railroad development, in brief, is to make the most of the coastwise and river routes, and to connect and supplement them with the railroad lines. This is exactly what has been in the minds of the men who formulated the project of railroad building which Congress has adopted.

Here we confront one of the most im-

portant aspects of this revolutionary experiment the government is undertaking. Can the rivers and the railroads be made to work together, to harmonize, to supplement each other in the perfection of a transportation system? Especially, can a system of rivers which are available for navigation only half the year, be fitted into such a system?

For answer, the advocates of this experiment admit that this has not been done in the United States. The railroads have taken the business away from the rivers. But in Germany, where the railroads are mostly state-owned, the rivers have been utilized with great success. They have been systematically improved, deepened, canalized, slack-watered by dams, and connected together by canals. There, the government controls both railways and rivers, and makes them work together in a common service.

LINKING RAILWAYS WITH RIVERS

Certain kinds of traffic are largely surrendered to the rivers, because a big boat on an improved river has been found to do the business most economically. Germany doesn't encourage the railroads to monopolize the business at the expense of sound economics. It is freely charged that this country has permitted just that. The Alaskan experiment looks to determining whether we can make railways and rivers cooperate and supplement each other. If it shall demonstrate that we can, people will inevitably demand to know why we don't make more use of the great rivers in the States. That is one of the lessons our Alaska experiment is to teach us. The Alaskan system of roads will be built with special reference to this purpose and experiment of unifying railroads and rivers in one harmonious transportation system.

It will be of interest to know the manner in which these railroads are to be built. Before committing itself to the plan of government railroads, Congress had the whole subject investigated with great care by a special body of experts, the Alaska Railway commission, which studied and reported on routes aggregating 2,500 miles.

To begin with, there are already about five hundred miles of railroad in Alaska, all privately owned. The most important of these is the Copper River and Northwestern, running from the southern port of Cordova, 197 miles, up the valley of the

Copper River to the Bonanza copper mines. The railroad and the Bonanza mines as well are owned by the Alaska syndicate.

The Alaska Northern road starts at the port of Seward, also on the south coast, and has been built seventy-one miles north. These are the only two existing lines that seem likely to have important relationship to the development of the government railroad system. It seems likely that the Alaska Northern will be bought by the government and extended, while present indications are that the Guggenheims will be left undisturbed in possession of their Copper River and Northwestern.

THE CHICAGO OF ALASKA

One line suggested by the commission and recommended as feasible would start at Chitina, on the Copper River and Northwestern, and extend north three hundred and thirteen miles to Fairbanks. Fairbanks is the great interior center of Alaska and seems likely to be the center of the railroad system. Indeed, a study of the map of proposed routes strongly suggests that Fairbanks will one day be to the railroad system of Alaska about what Chicago is to that of the United States.

There is opposition to the construction of this Chitina-Fairbanks line on the ground that Chitina is not itself a seaport, but is connected with the coast by the Copper River and Northwestern. Thus if the government should start at Chitina it would really be building a branch of the Guggenheim road, and from the very outset would be more or less dependent upon that line. There is grave objection among Alaskans as well as government officials, to any plan that would make the government's road tributary to and dependent upon a line controlled by a private corporation. It is feared that complications resulting from this anomalous relationship might hamper the very purpose of independence which has inspired the whole project of government railroads. Therefore present prospects seem to be that the Copper River and Northwestern will be left in the hands of its present owners and the government roads will all be entirely independent.

A line from Kern Creek, near the head of Cook's Inlet, running northward to open up the valley of the Susitna River, 115 miles, is recommended by the commission.

This would be the extension of the present Alaska Northern. In case this route were adopted, the Alaska Northern would be purchased or condemned and taken over by the government. A branch of the foregoing line is also recommended by the commission, about thirty-eight miles long, to open up the Matanuska coal field.

Another road which the commission strongly favors would run northwesterly from some point in the Susitna valley, 229 miles, to open up the extensive valley of the Kuskokwim River. A line from the harbor of Valdez on the southern coast is also suggested, to connect with the main through line to Fairbanks, and thus give Fairbanks an outlet to the excellent harbor of Valdez.

Yet another route suggested and discussed by the railway commission, though its present construction has not been recommended, would start at the harbor of Haines, in southeast Alaska, and run northwesterly to Fairbanks. This line would be about 638 miles long and would be an excellent route for opening up the valley of the Tanana River. The objection to it is chiefly political and lies in the fact that while the road would run from the American harbor of Haines to the American town of Fairbanks, about half the mileage would have to be in Canada. Obviously, it would be impossible for the American government to operate its own independent railway through Canada and the difficulties of achieving a satisfactory international agreement are such that for the present the route does not appear feasible.

Some other possible routes are discussed by the Alaska Railway commission in its report, but the ones here outlined seem most likely to include all that will be undertaken under the authority of the present legislation. Indeed, the present program places a limit of a thousand miles on the construction, and it is expected that the appropriation of \$35,000,000 will have to be employed with the utmost economy if it produces the entire thousand miles. This would be at the rate of \$35,000 a mile for construction, terminals, and equipment. If the government is able to build railroads in the far north at that figure it will really be a monumental achievement, for the Copper River and Northwestern, the Guggenheim line, is understood to have cost just about \$100,000 a mile. It, how-

ever, is built on about the most expensive route by which the interior of Alaska could be reached, passing through the coast range of mountains, by way of the narrow and tortuous cañon of the Copper River.

Reading the legislation under which the Alaska roads will be built, one thinks of Panama more often than of Alaska; of the tropics more than the Arctic. For the plan is borrowed bodily from Panama. There is going to be another huge job for another George Washington Goethals of the far north. If the President can find the right man, he will be made the czar of Alaska railroads, just as Goethals was made the dictator of canal building.

The Panama canal has been built under the eye and orders of the President—starting with Roosevelt, continued by Taft, and completed by Wilson. The President was ordered at the outset to make his organization, select his personnel, exercise the widest discretion, and do the business. The real point was to give him full responsibility and full power. He got both, and made good.

Precisely that plan has been written into the Alaska railroad law. The President is to have surveys made, is to pick out the routes, to build the railroads, to sell the securities with which the necessary money will be raised.

When he has his railroads built he will decide whether they shall be operated directly by the government, or leased to some operating concern for operation under government espionage. The President is authorized, further, to buy any railroads now built in Alaska if he wants them and can get them on terms that satisfy him.

If he can't buy any existing road that he wants, he has power to condemn and take it!

More sweeping and comprehensive powers to do a big work with a free hand could hardly be imagined. The President, of course, will do just what was done in the case of the canal. He will pick his subordinates and make the kind of organiza-

tion he wants through which to do the work. But at every point and in every detail he will be the supreme authority.

Already Alaska, and for that matter our entire Pacific coast, whose interests in Alaska are intimate and extensive, has responded to the encouraging message from Washington. Alaska sees the end of its long era of suspended animation. We have seen that between 1900 and 1910 the Territory gained less than 1,000 in population. Its gains in the next decade will be numbered by tens of thousands. There will be development such as Alaska has not known before; development of the solid, substantial, permanent sort, based on the assurance that at last the right kind of institutions and facilities are to be provided.

No presentation of the facts concerning this new Alaskan era would be either complete or just if it omitted acknowledgment of the great services rendered to his constituents and to the nation by James Wickersham, delegate in Congress from the Territory. It has been the peculiar good fortune of Alaska that in its pioneering epoch it was able to command the services of a man who can combine all the elements of practical statesmanship in the measure that Mr. Wickersham has proved himself to possess.

Mr. Wickersham first went to Alaska when McKinley was President, being appointed by Mr. McKinley as one of the Federal judges in the Territory. He knows Alaska to-day better than any other man in the world. He had the first real vision of the wonderful future that is now so manifestly assured.

The government railroad system will open the door of opportunity to Alaska. After that, the pioneering genius of the race which has carved this country out of a wilderness, and has done most of the work in a little over a century, may be depended upon to give Alaska the place it deserves and is splendidly worthy to occupy among the great new dominions of the world.

THINKING OF YOU

Your life may be the richer just to know
That anywhere and everywhere you go—
My thoughts, like homing birds, wing flight to you
And follow—follow—all the wide world through!

Florence Earle Buek

THE SPINSTER QUESTION

(DISCUSSION No. 4)

Because of the greater length of our novel this month and a very long article on Alaska, we are not giving so much space in this issue to the Spinster Question as we did in April. The one paper we are publishing, however, strikes us as extremely well expressed. Moreover, it comes from a spinster of tender age, giving us the view-point of a novice in bachelor womandom. For this reason it has a distinct value in the series.

The contributions to this discussion are multiplying rapidly, some of them coming from as far away as South Africa. This shows a very wide interest in the theme, and naturally there should be a wide interest in it, as it is a great human theme, none more so.

Of course we cannot print all these articles, and it would not be worth while to do so, as many of them present practically the same arguments. It is surprising to find the number of writers still contending for the ready-made children panacea for spinsters and for their consecration to uplift work.

Then, too, there is the other side to the discussion where feminine writers give their reasons for not marrying. And while these reasons differ with different individuals, they are much the same in essence in that, in the last analysis, all alike have thrown away their chances because the men didn't measure up to their ideals.

It is on this point that *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE* injects another thought into the discussion. Isn't it a good deal better for a woman to make a rational compromise than to stand out for the ideal and never marry at all? Ideal chasing is a precarious business at best.

It is a great thing to recognize the law of compromise. Everywhere, from the cradle to the grave, in every phase of life, we must bow to this inexorable law of compromise. We recognize its force in our expenditures, in the food we eat, in the clothes we wear, in the place of our abode, in our life-work, in our social environment, in our religion, in our politics, and in everything except marriage.

Spinsters, for the most part, are spinsters because they have not reasoned straight. As girls they have compared the marriages open to them with their girl life, not with their life when youth has left them. If a girl could always remain a girl, retaining her spirit, her impulse, her temperament, and youthful charm, it would be quite another matter.

But this isn't according to God's scheme of life. The years of youth pass quickly, and then the long stretches of middle life and old-age. These are the periods to reckon with, the periods for girls to consider in determining whether they shall marry or not. The young woman abounding in youth and fancy and health who compares her present life with the life she would probably have, marrying as she could marry, might well turn away from it. But comparing such marriage to spinsterdom and to an isolated, childless old age, she would reach a different conclusion. This is the thought *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE* wishes to emphasize.—*The Editor*.

AS A YOUNGER SPINSTER SEES IT

WOULD you harken to the voice of one of the younger spinsters?

I am just twenty-six years old, but I use the title "spinster" advisedly, for I have passed safely through my young loves and now, having reached a reasonable maturity, I confess that there is not a suitable mate for me anywhere within my horizon.

I live in a very dull, pretty little suburb,

twenty minutes' train-ride from a large city, and our male population consists of boisterous schoolboys, numerous young men about the age of twenty-one, and a host of settled, respectable husbands of settled, respectable wives.

I am employed as a stenographer in the city, and in my place of business there is an absolute dearth of eligible men. I have never been guilty of the practise of ma-