

SOLOMON'S VIEWS OF NOME.

He Fully Discusses the Situation as He Sees It.

Thinks It May Settle Down to a Small But Prosperous Camp—Now Greatly Overdone.

(From Wednesday's Daily).

Nome, July 10, 1900.

Low Craden, Dawson, Y. T.

Dear Sir: Obediently to my promise, I now give you my impressions of this locality.

I arrived here on June 17th. There were then some hundreds of wooden structures erected along the main street and a few on the second and third streets, and some thousands of tents scattered along the beach between the buildings and stretching out for nearly four miles along the beach on either side of the town. The number of buildings is now about doubled and there are perhaps half as many more tents. No more passengers, practically speaking, are being brought by the boats and there may be 25,000 or 30,000 souls dwelling in the town and scattered out over the country.

At the time of my arrival and for about ten or twelve days after there was activity in real estate and in business generally. This seems to have been due to the fact that many of the people who were landing from the boats were absolutely obliged to procure locations in which to handle their large stocks of merchandise. At all events since that time this flurry of business has completely subsided and there is practically nothing doing in the town at the present time, in spite of the hordes of people surging through the streets. Of course, they eat and sleep and buy a few little things, which makes business for those who cater to such necessities. Of course also, there are a few people who are engaged in the transaction of ordinary business of a mining camp, notably the people interested in the few developed mines near by. The crowded restaurants and saloons and the debarking and storing operations of the large concerns give an air of activity to the external aspect of the town, but this is wholly misleading for obvious reasons. The people as a whole, whether Dawsonites or rank chechakos, are either doing nothing or are getting quietly ready to operate in due course. I at once established a mining, real estate and general brokerage office with Mr. F. C. Bernoudy, and I am also in partnership in the practice (prospectively) of the law with Mr. S. J. Lazarus, who arrived here somewhat tardily by the quarantined Ohio.

If one were to ignore prospective conditions, that is to say, the mining probabilities, the present conditions in the town would be discouraging in the highest degree. Now, the situation of affairs appears to be just this, the possibilities of Nome as a place in which to do a rushing business depend very vitally on the showing of the surrounding country. Of course, at first blush, this is a very obvious truism, but what I mean is this: In Dawson, for instance, there was any quantity of business over districts which absolutely petered out and finally became worthless. This was rendered possible, in my judgment, by the fact that the Klondike excitement was the first thing of its kind in the north and confidence in the richness of the country was very great and very blind and speculation in these worthless creeks was prolonged. Here it is different. The Klondikers are wise from experience and the outsiders from example and precept—and are moreover rather impecunious. Of course, there will always be business on speculative values as there is bound to be when the subject of business is under opaque ground. But this is a wise, skeptical and conservative mob and while things will howl if the gold is found widely diffused throughout the country, yet it appears pretty certain that the business of the town will not grow any faster than the development of the country compels or at least warrants. Before proceeding to speak of what these prospects are I had better note what perhaps is destined to be an exception. I refer to certain litigations over town property and mines which is impending in something of a mass. This is on like a flood and while it is held in check by reason of the fact that the courts are not yet organized, but when they do get to business it will rush forward and the law business and other business on which such litigation depends will have a temporary activity. Aside from this, I think that my proposition is a safe one to bank on, that the whole future

of the town depends on the development of the country round about.

Now, what are the probabilities of the development of the country round about? Of course, this is what we all want to know. You will see from what I have already said that nobody is "late" in Dawson as yet. The fact is we are all too early—we grafters. We should have sent 20,000 or 30,000 miners into the country two years ago to develop the region for us before coming here in person to reap the profits. I have just made a map of the country and mastered the essentials of its topography. The country is far less prospected proportionately than Dawson was in '98. Anvil, Dexter, Glacier, Extra Dry and perhaps one or two other small creeks are on the whole amply rich. Some spots on them are payable in a higher degree than was Eldorado (from the cheapness with which they may be worked). There are one or two other creeks on which really good pay has been struck, beyond any question as to authenticity and accuracy of the reports thereof. Further, there are a dozen or more localities in which strikes are reported and vouched for by different people, in the orthodox way of mining camps, which, as you know, is a way which invites the skepticism of us old sourdoughs who have suffered. Then there are creeks all over the country on which "good prospects have been struck." The beach one does not hear much of. People are working on it here and there but those of them whom I have seen wore very ragged clothes and anxious expressions. Here and there along the beach people make quite a bit of money. At Topkuk, 50 miles east, several thousands of dollars to the man were rocked out in a few weeks, but the vicinity is now about rocked out. Until further discoveries are made or means found to work the beach below the present water line or the trunda back of the beach, the beach diggings are not likely to cut much ice in the general problem of Nome's future. If half the creeks on which excellent prospects are reported turn out even fair, this will be a strong mining camp for years. But just now there has been almost nothing of real value done outside of the three or four creeks discovered and worked last summer. However, the Dawson people and other miners—many being from Colorado and Montana—are now getting out into the country and careful prospecting will be done. Many people won't sell claims they hold at the moderate prices which they occasionally get a chance to sell for, and large offers for certain properties on the kind of creeks I named second in the above enumeration have been refused, which argues great confidence on the part of those who should know the country best. On the other hand most of the claim owners are anxious to sell some of their claims, but as they are mostly poor men this is natural, especially where they refuse to sell all their holdings.

The values placed on property differ greatly, as is usual at this stage of a camp's growth. One man wants \$5000 for a claim. His neighbor is willing to take \$500. Neither can sell now, but perhaps in a few weeks when the strike, that one or the other of those men know, has been made is verified and more prospecting done, the \$5000 man will get just what he deserves and the \$2000 man will be selling for a ridiculously low price. Of course there is the cry of fake going up all over, as is natural. But the old timers, most of them, and especially all the intelligent well-to-do men, the business men show by their operations that they have no doubt at all of the richness of the country. The big companies are building warehouses and other buildings on a proportionate scale to those in Dawson, but in general, aside from the big companies, there is not very heavy investment in town improvements. No wharf has been undertaken, but this may be due to the belief that is prevalent that either Port Safety or Port Clarence will be used as a seaport, and that a railroad will bring the goods to Nome. Lots in the town were held at a high figure, which was prohibitive to many, who thereupon jobbed off their goods. Now prices have fallen to about half, and yet there are no takers. But as the season progresses and any considerable mining is done, confidence will return, I presume, and people will buy lots and move on to them from their tents on the beach. Much of the disinclination to invest in real estate is due to the uncertainty of titles. A shocking condition was revealed when we landed here. Lots were freely jumped, and possession was taken points of the law.

To sum up—there seems to be an immense country here which it will take time to prospect, and in the meantime the town will be conservatively handled—the surplus of people and goods meeting inevitable fate of loss and sacrifice. But this overplus has really nothing to do with the real conditions and prospects any more than the overplus in the Klondike did. There will necessarily be distress. Smallpox and typhoid are started, but the healthy breezes will keep them down, I think. At all events they do not seem to increase. It is chilly here when the wind blows, but we have had more delightful than disagreeable weather during the last three weeks. Powers of attorney "went" and still "go," as the U. S. laws permit—the local law being valid only where not in conflict with the U. S. statutes. The lack of water on the creeks seems to be almost as great a detriment as the shallowness of the diggings is a benefit; and again, the country does not thaw out as early as in Dawson by at least two or three months, thus reducing the working time in summer to about 90 or 100 days. All sorts of machinery are here, but we do not hear very much as yet of its being used on the much-talked-of tundra claims, and the most divergent opinions are entertained of the value of this kind of ground. The town of Nome is chaotic; it is impossible for any individual to know very much of what is going on, for even the newspapers, on which we largely depend, in spite of our distrust of them, labor under as great difficulties as private individuals in learning what is going on. The camp here has more people in it than Dawson ever did I think, and there is a larger country in which good prospects seems to have been found, but if all these peter out and leave only the few creeks now worked (as was the case in Dawson), these few creeks will not be nearly so much ground as has been found payable in the Klondike and Nome is bound to dwindle to less size than Dawson. Personally I am inclined to believe in the country. Everything is overdone just now.

THEODORE S. SOLOMONS.

Made Paderewski.

The subjoined story narrates in an interesting manner how Paderewski, the renowned pianist, took the first step that led to his present fame and fortune.

At the age of 27 Paderewski was in Paris—whither seem to go all poor musicians, not when they die, but when they struggle to live. He confesses that he was miserably poor, that he owed nothing for him.

But the day came when he met a Polish princess, who was so impressed with his powers that she offered him the sum of 100 francs to play at her house. Unable to indulge in the luxury of a carriage, he walked there, and played—well, as Paderewski only can play.

At the end of his performance his hostess, observing the young man's fatigue (he was probably in those days more at home in the cafe where the fragrant cup at three sous, of which Alphonse Daudet speaks lovingly, was vended), offered to send him home in her carriage. But with pride in his eye and defiance in his mien, the pianist declined.

"Madame," he said, "my carriage is at the door."

And with that he walked out.

Such an attitude was one to win a woman's sympathy. His new patroness was delighted both with his marvelous gifts and his graceful bearing. She spoke of him in the salons. Engagements began to come swiftly. In a few years his name was ringing through the city. And from that time he never looked back.—Golden Penny Magazine.

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