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IMPROVEMENTS GOING ON IN DAWSON

The Enormous Plant of the Alaska Commercial Company

Identifying its interests with this city in the most substantial manner—what popular management can do.

The marvellous growth of Dawson has been a wonder to the entire world. The eyes of people at every nation, and in every quarter of the globe have been eagerly turned towards the city located on the Yukon, whose name is more extensively known and advertised than any city in the world.

It is not more astonishing to think that in a place where only a little over a year ago there lived but a few hundred people, there now reside tens of thousands in the city proper. There have been towns of course which have experienced the fascinating, tingling touch of the word "boom." The spring of 1898 saw Dawson prove no exception, but on the contrary in a more stupendous fashion than has ever before been witnessed. Disappointment of course came to some. To others the settling down to "making the best of it" while to still others, armed with ambition, with a keen perception of the country's possibilities, every energy was brought to the front, and the result is the building up of a great city, which has many years of permanency and prosperity ahead, and a substantiality about it which bodes well for this metropolis of the Northwest.

Marking these steps of progress, the point of observation must naturally turn towards the plant of the Alaska Commercial Company, whose warehouses and properties, now completed and under course of construction preparatory to winter, have assumed proportions described only by the word enormous. The affairs of such a concern are in the hands, as a general rule of clear, level headed business men seeking a fair return upon the capital invested, and nothing must be more convincing to even the doubtful minds of an abiding faith in the future permanency of the country in general and Dawson in particular, as a great distributing center, than to see so vast a corporation as the Alaska Commercial Company making improvements requiring the outlay of many thousands of dollars, thus more closely identifying themselves with the city's interests, which is the welfare of every individual.

We believe there are but a very few individuals in this country who have any conception of what the A. C. Co.'s plant consists of, of its various departments, of the system prevailing, of the heads of departments which keep the cogs of progress revolving, and the steady hand and mind which guides the ship of trade through the channels of daily commerce. It was the pleasure recently of a NUGGET representative, who, in making his rounds, dropped into the company's store, and through the courtesy of Captain J. E. Hansen, the manager, was shown over the plant of the concern, and we feel sure the thousands of readers of the NUGGET will be more than interested in the tour then made of what may be inelegantly termed the "grub pile" of Dawson.

It will be remembered that on the second day of June, one year ago, not a stick of timber, not a house-log was owned by the A. C. Co. in Dawson. The great storehouses of the company which the people now see, have been made possible by the people themselves, who, appreciating the broad, liberal, clean-cut policy of the company have been loyal, faithful patrons. It has been the studious attention to every minute detail, the careful carrying out of broad-minded plans of a management respected by all, the honest distribution of necessities when in their power to give, the absolute refusal to take advantage of the purchasing public when opportunities afforded, that have made the affairs of the Alaska Commercial Co. assume its gigantic proportions in this district. A perfectly organized department store in Dawson one would scarcely expect to be told of, yet here we have one and in proportions much superior to many in more pretentious metropolises than our own.

Entering the door, one is immediately impressed with the general good order, the personnel of the corps of clerks and employees and the system prevailing in every department. Instead of hardware and dry goods, molasses and haberdashery, groceries and hosiery being neighbors to each other, everything has been systematically arranged that would add to the convenience of the shopper and buyer.

Naturally the great volume of business at present in this section is with the miner and for his convenience the first floor is arranged. On this floor are arranged the general offices, each window having the attention of a courteous employe, such as outfits, transportation, mail, cashier, etc., where those having business therewith may speedily be waited upon. In connection with these offices also are the great safe deposit vaults of case-hardened steel, built into a solid wall of concrete and masonry, containing 22 private boxes, where guarded night and day, depositors may always feel assured their valuables and papers are safe from pillage or fire. Next came the grocery department containing everything in the line of staples, and specialties not excelled by any house in the United States. Again comes the

hardware, china and glassware departments, and there has just been added a drug and clock department complete in every detail. It will thus be seen that the necessities are placed most conveniently for those naturally in a hurry. Proceeding to the second floor the improvements there made by the increase in business is at once apparent. Here is the gentlemen's furnishing goods department, under the supervision of Mr. Lindsay, the counters and shelves groaning under their loads of new goods.

It may be noted here that unlike what is termed as the "outside," there are but two seasons in Alaska—summer and winter, their being no spring or fall—and but two classes of goods are ever permitted to enter the store and shelves of the A. C. Co., and those, either the very useful or the very beautiful; with but one quality, and that the highest that is obtainable and Captain Hansen, explains this fact, which must be reasonable to every thinking person.

In comparison, the first cost of the article figures very little with the cost of transportation, consequently it must be apparent that there can be no object in buying either a poor article or poor quality, so that, marked in plain figures, the oldest man, or the youngest child may always know that he purchases only the best quality his money can buy, and every one at the same price to all. Nothing so marks the progress towards civilization and its influences as to see fancy and dress shirts, beautiful neckwear of latest designs, Knox and Stetson hats in assortments equal to any shown in the avenues of New York, Chicago or San Francisco. In this department also are the blankets, fur robes, gents' underwear, hosiery, Arctic socks, boots, shoes and rubber goods.

What will delight the heart of the ladies are the pleasant shopping facilities now afforded by the opening of the new show rooms devoted to the dry goods and ladies' department. In making the purchases of dress goods, wraps, costumes, etc., ultra styles are demanded and anticipated in the fashion-producing markets of the world, such as Paris, Berlin, Vienna, London and New York, and ladies can obtain in Dawson in this store the same styles at the same time as produced in any of the fashionable cities of the world. Everything conducive to pleasant shopping has been placed there, and when completed fully will be most attractive and pleasant. Retiring rooms, where fitting may be done, lavatories, etc., will be appreciated by the feminine shoppers. The ladies' department is in charge of Miss Lucie, a most courteous and pleasant little lady of large experience in this line.

Figuratively speaking it must make the very mouth water to see the beautiful line of silk waists, and dainty crepons for street and evening wear, elegant broad and black more separate skirts, novelties in dress goods, silks, trimmings of every description, hosiery, kid, cloth and fur gloves and mitts, variety of sweaters, etc. The housekeeping department is specially attractive with a full line of table linens, table cloths, napkins and towels. Hand-some new show cases display the delicate colorings and styles of waists and wraps most effectively and ladies may well imagine themselves seated in their favorite shopping places of the East.

Leaving this building, the thoughtful care of the manager for the miner and his interests are shown in what may be known as the delivery court. Here will be located the sleds of the packer with his outfit, carefully watched night and day and as he starts early in the morning with his dog team his loaded sled is taken away at the hour he fixes for his departure. From this court we step into the office of the warehouse checker, which might be called the "indicator," appropriately. The pages of the warehouseman's check book at all times is the inventory of the stock on hand and shows where each article is located. Adjoining this is the warm storage building with a capacity of 500 tons containing articles subject to freezing. Next is the ice house where the company stores its own ice. We now enter the assaying building containing one of the most complete plants possible, with forge furnaces and every requisite necessary, connected with which are a mining engineer and two assayers who devote their entire attention to claims, reports on same and assaying. Next we enter the three immense warehouses, each containing 1500 tons of merchandise.

So carefully is every detail watched that in each warehouse a division or "proportion" of each article of provisions is made, so that in case of fire—the only thing to be feared—all of one kind of edibles cannot be consumed, or at least are protected to that extent.

We spoke early in this article of the personnel of the employes. The experience of Captain Hansen as a ship's master has led him to carefully consider the comfort of his employes. Nothing so goes to make a perfect esprit du corps in employes as a thoughtful consideration of their comfort. That this has been more than carefully done by the kind hearted manager, one has only to enter the home occupied by the company's employes: A handsomely furnished parlor, with easy chairs, music-box and everything that would make home congenial are here. The dining-room is a model of neatness and good order—best wood furniture for the occupants, tables clothed in white linen, napkins and bounteous good food constitute the comforts provided here. A kitchen which even the graceful housekeeper must feel proud of is the provider of the room just mentioned

Then there is the laundry, with stationary wash tub, bathrooms and lavatories. The bedrooms are all neatly carpeted, the walls papered and comfortable beds for their occupants. This building is under the supervision of Mrs. Rapp, a lady of great energy, and whose affable manners must be always pleasing to her large family of boys and girls, who seem only too anxious to hasten home to her hospitable board. A new building is now being completed with additional rooms, and in which will be a large social hall and billiard-room. As Captain Hansen states, a loyalty to the company and its interests are given without exception, when an interest is taken in their welfare—no man need ever leave the company's employ who is thus loyal, and a faulty is gratuitously given knowing they are thus cared for. Think of a thoughtfulness that provides water boiled and then used for drinking purposes and you have an idea of what is thought of and you help!

Fire is the one apparition constantly in the minds of the officials. So carefully must the interest of this community be studied and cared for, aside from the financial loss which would ensue from fire, that a block of land has been taken 200 by 500 feet, on which have been erected four additional warehouses 35 by 195 feet and the nearest neighbor can possibly build is eighty feet. Here also is another building for the use of employes, carefully constructed, comfortably finished. Two of these warehouses are for the exclusive use of miners' outfits which are stored free of charge until January 1st, and under the care of watchmen day and night. There is also connected with the establishment a police department under the command of Capt. F. D. Klein, divided into regular watches covering each hour of the day.

The new office building to be completed this week is a substantial evidence of Dawson's prosperity. Singly or in suites they are handsomely finished, being papered, heated and in the constant care of a janitor. The B. L. & K. N. Co. prominently, Messrs. Barlow, Bro. and Messrs. Rurrit & McKee, attorneys at law, are already located there, to be followed shortly by Capt. Davis with the Canadian customs department.

We regret exceedingly that the innate modesty of the manager will not permit us to speak at length of Captain Hansen, a gentleman whose brain has remained, and whose energy has so rapidly gathered together this enormous plant. We cannot refrain, however, from saying what almost every man in this city and region knows, that his uniform courtesy, his careful consideration of the man who has the right to be served in the goods, in a profitable and necessary, this man, who is a bundle of nerves, enjoys the confidence of the public as probably does no other private or public citizen of Dawson. Far seeing, quick to act, a thorough disciplinarian, of high honor and strict integrity, easily approached, does this man with all the vast details of so great a concern on his mind, always have a cheerful "good-day" to his humblest employe, a courteous greeting to those with whom he is doing business and his great pride is the company he represents and the growing prosperity of the city he is doing so much to build up.

An Ordinance Drafted

The standing committee of the Miners' Association held a special meeting at the office of Attorney Lisle on Thursday evening. The principal business before the committee was the consideration of an incorporation ordinance which is to be presented to a public meeting for consideration.

Pres. Armstrong stated that the town committee had signified a desire that the miners should draft an ordinance and in accordance with that request Mr. Lisle had kindly undertaken the work. The ordinance is an exceedingly voluminous document and quite beyond the scope of a public meeting to deal with in toto. The more important points, however, covering the limits of the proposed city, the qualifications of office holders and electors, etc., are matters in which the public is vitally interested and which will be discussed at the meeting on Monday night.

It was the unanimous opinion of the committee that the right of suffrage for the first election should be as liberal as possible and recommendation to the public meeting to this effect will be made. The matter of securing local representation in the Yukon Council was brought up and it was announced that on Wednesday next the committee will wait on Mr. Ogilvie and present the resolutions passed at the last general meeting of the Miners' Association. After further informal discussion the committee adjourned.

The First Masquerade

Pioneer Hall was the scene of a brilliant gathering last Wednesday evening, the occasion being the first masquerade ball of the season. By 8 o'clock the hall was filled with maskers and with the wee sma' hours high revelry held full sway. Many of the costumes were elegant and those who were awarded prizes were justly entitled to them. Managers Kline and Cowley are to be congratulated upon the success of the affair and it is to be hoped that this is but the beginning of a series of pleasant entertainments.

PERSONALS

Miss Edith Robinson is a recent addition to the postoffice force. The young lady is in the registration department.

Louis Allenberg is going to start for Boston before the freeze-up if possible and intends returning in the spring with a large stock of goods.

The boys say Louis Allenberg went out to stake a claim on one creek Monday night but found it occupied so returned without driving his stake.

Mr. C. W. Tabor and Mr. H. D. Holme, of Toronto, have entered into partnership, and will carry on the practice of law in the offices of Mr. Tabor. The offices have been enlarged and are opposite the Monte Carlo.

Dr. E. B. Merchant, the dentist who has been confined to the Good Samaritan hospital for the past six weeks is again able to be about. The doctor speaks highly of the treatment received by him while in the hospital.

CARRIED THE DEED IN HIS POCKET.

Sour Dough Tells of Mr. Craig of the Gold Commissioner's Office.

How Joe Daroles Comes to Be in Court With a Disputed Claim Case—Failed to Record a Valuable Document Until Months Elapse.

Mr. Ches Charko happened to meet Mr. Sour Dough one day last week, as he was passing the barracks and both were well pleased to meet. "Fine police system," remarked Ches as he caught a glimpse of the young fellows in uniform briskly stepping about. "A fellow gets his deserts here in quick order I hear."

"Yes!" said Sour laconically. "Yes indeed," replied Ches gushingly. "No delays and long drawn out trials here."

"No!" inquired Sour again. "Never heard of fellows being held in jail for months after month and many a judge in the whole Yukon Territory to try them and turn them loose if they happened to be innocent did you?"

"Why, you don't say!"

"Never heard of men being held in this region until they get frozen in for the winter simply from some little matter on a congested docket which they were unable to get disposed of one way or another until the government in its wisdom shall decide to relieve the situation?"

"Well, Sour, old fellow, I didn't know a thing about it."

"Never heard of claims all muddled up on which no preparations for winter can be made until some one with the proper authority can say the necessary few words which will free them from what is often merely a lawsuit hold?"

And Sour had become really so earnest in relating grievances that he had buttonholed his friend in front of the office of the clerk of the court, and was speaking in that intense but cautious whisper that marks the "old timer."

"Ches was thoughtful and wore an inquiring expression and Sour remained stentily smoking for full two minutes when he suddenly whirled around and dragged his friend towards the office of Clerk Thiel.

"Where are you going?" expostulated Ches endeavoring to shake himself loose.

"Thinking about the absence of a court at this place!" said Sour, "reminded me of poor old Joe Daroles and I want you to look over the records. I understood from some of his friends that things are in shape to proceed with as soon as the good Lord allows us to have a judge."

"I think I heard of Joe. He's the fellow that failed to record his bill of sale in time to prevent its sale to another party, ain't he?"

Sour looked at his friend a minute in silent contempt. "Yes, you know all about it, do you?" and proceeded to lend him away toward the Aurora where they dispense drinks guaranteed to contain no fever germs. Comfortably ensconced with their front feet on the foot rail Sour looked around to see that no one was listening, and then told his story.

"You know the Phil Miller claim on Dominion? Well, they call it No. 32 below. The first of last January Phil sold it on an option to Joe Daroles. Well, Joe was a rather pugacious Frenchman, and was rather disliked by Mr. Fawcett and his clerks as he had crossed them several times in making a "grand stand" play for what he considered his rights. What do you suppose I'll bet you don't know what Craig did with the document when it was given for record?"

"What good would it do Craig to tear the document up? He couldn't get the claim himself, could he?"

"Who said he tore it up? You 'blooming clump! He didn't tear it up, he just put it down in his pocket."

"What good did that do?"

"Can't you wait till I tell you? Fawcett's man kept that paper in his pocket unbeknown to Daroles until after August 5, on which day a man named Kepner presented for filing a similar document and was allowed to record it by the complainant officer."

"And Joe hasn't got his claim?"

"No, and the Lord knows when he will get it for there is no sign of a judge in the land to open up the case," and Sour turned round with a look of supreme disgust and had to drink two large glasses of "Tom Chisholm's" germicide before he could get the bad taste out of his mouth.

Notice

The standing committee of the Miners' Association having been directed to employ a permanent secretary, notice is hereby given that applications with credentials may be submitted for said position to Mr. H. C. Lisle, secretary pro tem, Victoria building.

The following extract from the constitution of the Miners' Association relates to the secretary:

"He shall be required to deposit with the association a bond as security, amount of bond to be fixed by the committee and shall devote his whole time to the interests of the association and also act in the capacity of organ. He will receive such remuneration as may be decided upon by the standing committee."

(Signed) GEO. J. C. ARMSTRONG, Pres.

Notice

On Monday evening next, a public meeting will be held at Pioneer Hall for the consideration of an incorporation ordinance to be presented to Mr. Ogilvie. All citizens are requested to attend and present their views on this important matter.

Poultry and game at Portland Market.