

The Klondike Nugget

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1911.

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KLONDIKE NUGGET.

From Friday's Daily. AN OVERLAND TRAIL.

Nearly ten days have passed since the arrival of the last mail in Dawson and it is apparent to the most casual observer that several weeks will elapse before it will be possible for anything in the nature of a regular mail delivery to be expected.

From the reports published in this paper yesterday from various points along the river it is clear that travel over the ice will be impossible for an indefinite length of time to come. Until the river is frozen, therefore, the community will be dependent for its mail service mainly upon such success as the mail contractors may have in navigating the river in canoes.

Experience has shown that the contractors will not exert themselves extraordinarily to help relieve the situation, and consequently the mail service is certain to be extremely unsatisfactory. As a matter of fact, under present conditions, it is almost a physical impossibility to maintain anything like a systematic mail delivery. The river is filled with running ice and slush and any attempt at bringing the mail either by canoe, scow or steamer must be at such risks as do not seem warranted.

This fact brings us to the point raised in these columns some time ago in connection with the necessity existing for the construction of an overland trail. The difficulties involved in such an undertaking are not nearly so many or varied as might be supposed at first thought.

The natural route for the proposed trail lies along the system of roads already partially constructed and extending from Dawson to Clear creek via Hunker, and thence to Stewart river. The distance across country to Fort Selkirk by the route indicated is approximately one-third less than the distance by the river and there is the additional advantage noted above that a considerable portion of the trail is already constructed.

From Selkirk to Lake Lebarge the cut-off trail constructed by the C. D. Co. would be available, and the balance of the distance to Whitehorse is so short as to require but a comparatively small cost to build a trail.

The necessity of an overland route becomes more and more apparent. The White Pass stockholders are opposed to further extension of the road and it will in all probability be a number of years before the railroad comes any nearer to Dawson than it is at the present time. This leaves the city of Dawson and the entire surrounding community dependent upon the freezing of the Yukon river to afford a means of winter communication with the outside world.

The Nugget submits to the people of Yukon and more particularly to the commissioner and council, that the existence of the above condition is in itself an utter absurdity. A population variously estimated at 15,000 to 20,000 souls is now waiting with all patience possible for the Yukon to jam in order that mail may be sent to and from Whitehorse and the Yukon river has the faculty of going things in its own good time and not considering the wishes of the people in the least. By the construction of an overland trail all such difficulties would be overcome and the mail service could be maintained

without interruption through the entire year. The present plan of waiting for the Yukon to freeze is wholly unsatisfactory.

THE MINERS' PROTECTION ORDINANCE.

The Nugget devotes a large share of its reading space today to the publication of the text of the ordinance for the protection of miners which was passed by the Yukon council yesterday. Owing to the exhaustive nature of the ordinance discussion of its provisions other than in a general way is impossible at this time.

It appears from a cursory inspection that the council has made a conscientious effort to accomplish an object which the press and public of the community alike have long agreed to be a necessity.

There will be no divergence from the opinion that the safety of men employed in and about the mines of the district has not been looked after as carefully as circumstances seem to require. Accidents have been reported from time to time, which, there is no doubt, might have been averted had proper safeguards been observed. The number of fatalities that have occurred has been comparatively small, but as the scope of mining operations increases and with the introduction of complicated machinery it is apparent that danger of accidents materially increases.

The ordinance under discussion has been designed for the purpose of averting as nearly as possible all such disasters. To what extent it will accomplish the purpose for which it is intended remains to be seen after it has been subjected to practical tests.

With the purposes of the ordinance there will be general sympathy, and there will be no hardships worked upon those mining operators who recognize the fact that the lives of the men in their employ, are to an extent in their charge.

To Reclaim Arid Lands.

Helena, Mont., Oct. 11.—What seems to be a good beginning in the solution of the great arid land problem was made yesterday by the state of Montana. The state arid land grant commission, which was created by the legislature with power to reclaim lands donated to the state by the general government under the Carey act, celebrated the opening of the great canal system in district No. 4. There were present, besides members of the commission and other state officials, members of the press, including a representative of the Associated Press and many representative engineers and business men. The canal, intended to irrigate 33,000 acres of land, was opened and water sent on its mission of making homes for the small farmer. District No. 4 comprises 33,000 acres of splendid land in the beautiful Dearborn valley in the northern portion of Lewis and Clarke county, of which Helena is the county seat. The state proposes to sell this land in tracts of 160 acres to actual settlers at only the cost of placing water upon the land, giving ten years for payment, in ten equal annual payments at 6 per cent. interest. Eleven thousand acres are now ready for settlement, and it is fair to say there is no more delightful spot in the Rocky mountain region. The picturesque main range of the Rockies skirts the western edge of the valley and abounds in grand scenery, fish and all kinds of game and timber, and the land lies in small valleys surrounded by low-lying hills that supply rich grass for stock. The state is building the canal system and will own and operate it in perpetuity for the sole benefit of the occupants of the land, and without profit to any one, making the enterprise entirely co-operative in nature. This is the first irrigating canal on the American continent to be built and operated by a state government, and undoubtedly marks an epoch in the great irrigation problem.

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Stroller's Column.

The weather has beyond doubt been the one theme of conversation during the week as its present mildness is something new to the people now here. It has been around the firesides of homes and on the streets in the clubs, and, in fact every place, and yet no theory has been advanced for the present mildness or precedent mentioned in which the weather acted similarly at this advanced period of the winter season. A number of gentlemen were in a local resort when one of them, a very methodical and observing man, addressed his associates as follows: "This will make seven winters for me in the Yukon, two at Circle and



LIMPIN GROUSE WENT KERPLUNK AND DISAPPEARED UNDER THE ICE.

Here, and during all of that time I have kept careful watch on the weather, and I have also a very accurate account of the sort of winter weather which prevailed in this country for several years previous to my coming, having received information from old-timers such as trappers and early day prospectors, Jack McQueen and the others, who preceded me, and I think I can say without fear of contradiction that for the weather to turn cold like it did ten days ago, remain so for three days and then suddenly warm up to the thawing point and keep that way for a week as it has done and is now is wholly without precedent in the civilized and

all about, but in future, please spare my feelings by keeping such words as "unprecedented" and "phenomenal" to yourself when talking in my presence about the weather of this country. This here warm spell ain't nothin' unusual, but it ain't happened in your limited experience, that is all.

"It was in '74 that, arter a midlin' sort of a summer and a fair fall, the weather turned quite cold in October and on November 4th the river closed. In the course of two weeks there was a good trail between our camp where Klondike City now is and Moosehide and me and Limpin Grouse was in the habit of runnin' down to see our

broke and down she went kerplunk into the water and down with the current under the ice."

"Poor man! And did you never see her again?" asked the man with the weather statistics.

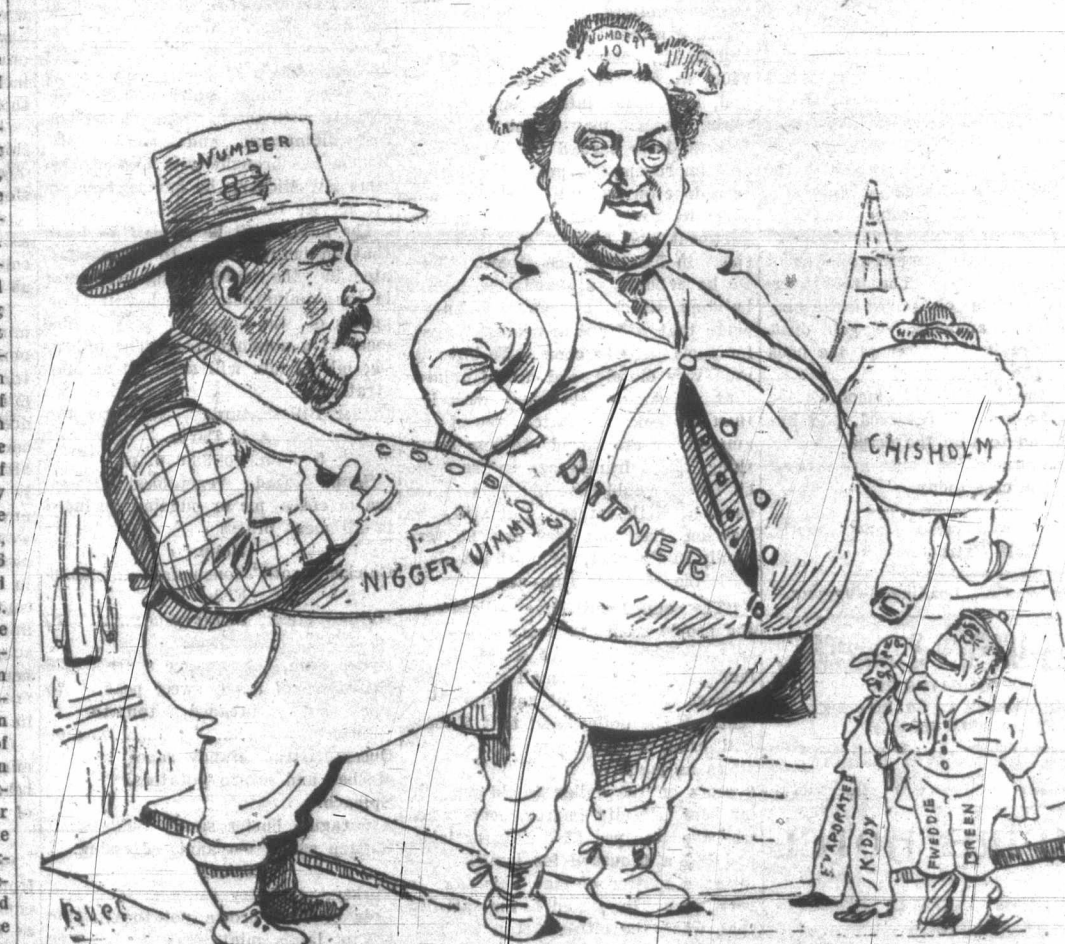
"Say stranger," said the sourest of doughs, "do I look like a man who would lose his head in case of 'mergency? The ice, you see, had melted up from the bottom leavin' the top just like it was when the river first froze and leavin' fully a foot of open space between the ice and the water. I knew that a place in front of Moosehide was 'tilos open so I just pulled the old sled and dogs onto the water, unharmed the malamutes and walked leisurely back down the river to the open place and stood by the edge of the water with a rope and afore I had been that three minutes out popped Limpin Grouse from under the ice none the worse for her bath; in fact, it was just what she had needed for upwards of a year."

The silence that followed the old man's closing sentence was becoming painful when the statistician mildly ventured the question: "And did you have no more cold weather that year?" "Well, I reckon it got a little frosty afore passin' 'bloomed" was the reply, "for in just eight weeks from the day the ice gave way from meltin' under Limpin Grouse and her visited the same spot again and that was no ice there, but it had gone from a different cause. It had been set up by ice worms and they was never known to begin to even nibble till it got 70 below zero. But say, pard, you had better donate them statistics of yourn to the Yukon museum I have been talk about. Other cheetaks like yourself would look at it as phe-e-nominal!"

Everybody drank at the expense of the statistician but the relic of Limpin Grouse and he declined because the bartender had no sulphuric acid with which to supply a dash for his whisky. However, the change was left on the bar and later it kept company with a hunk of dried moose meat in the old man's pocket.

By several pounds the heaviest man in Dawson is actor Bittner of the Auditorium. In fact, were he and Freddy Breen to impersonate the leading character in the "Two John's Comedy" the incongruity of the situation would be appalling. However, Mr. Bittner is not entirely alone in the matter of big men, as he himself remarked in the presence of the Stroller one night this week that he had never been in a town of Dawson's size that had more large men.

A gentleman yesterday evening



DAWSON IS LONG ON BIG MEN.

uncivilized history of this country. Without precedent did I say? It is more than that, it is phenomenal. That is the word, gentlemen, it is nothing short of phenomenal. "Phe-e-hell!" Everybody turned and looked toward the dark corner behind the stove and there, reclining on a pile of cord-wood with his three-legged dog for a pillow lay the three star, double X sour dough. Seeing that his sneezing comment had drawn attention to him he sat up straight and began: "I'm dummed glad you've got sick

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