

A WYOMING THANKSGIVING

E. K. WOOLEY

"If there's anything I hate," said the First Traveling Man, "it's boneless turkey—and on Thanksgiving!"

"I was brought up on the shank myself," quoth the Second Traveling Man.

"Not even a wishbone to grace the occasion," growled the First Traveling Man, "and my favorite last-part-of-the-fence utterly lost in the chain."

"What's Thanksgiving in a hotel anyway?" disgustedly supplemented the Second Traveling Man. "Say, you watch me get off the road when I have a chance! I'll look like a comet. I'll go so swift!"

"We'll never leave our happy home no more," chanted the First Traveling Man. Then he sighed.

The Second Traveling Man also sighed, and regarded the boneless turkey with a mournful eye.

"Last Thanksgiving," reminiscenced the First Traveling Man, "I wasn't at home either—but I had the time of my life. I landed in a little town at the end of a railroad line in Wyoming the day before Thanksgiving—some 2,000 miles away and no taking in sight to be thankful for."

"But I must say that I'd rather be up against one of those little raw western towns any old day, for hospitality, than in a big city and a high-priced hotel. Here you turn in your money and they turn you out a dandified dyspeptic stomach, brain and temper. Out west there you can spend your money for much better whisky, and since I got married I don't go in for that sort of thing."

"Anyway, that day I guess I was a pretty fine photograph of home-sick Willy, and when I got done talking business to the man I had to see he sort of tumbled to the circumstances and asked me what I had on for the best day."

"Nothing but hotel," says I.

"Then," says he, with a clap on the back that made me cough, "then you'll come out to the ranch with us tomorrow—just a little party of the fellows and their girls—quiet little time, you know. Want to?"

"Did I? Oh, say, I didn't jump at that invite. I simply fell on it and held it there, so it wouldn't get away."

"We got off the next morning about 10 o'clock—two big springless wagons packed full of the liveliest crowd I ever got mixed up with. We had to sit pretty close, but I can't say I minded."

"Were they good looking?" innocently inquired the Second Traveling Man.

"Oh, yes! Well, they were tolerable—a little hefty when we made a sharp turn, and one of them looked so strenuously against me. I didn't feel much more important than a grass spot by and by—but that was all in the running."

"On our way out some of the boys suggested a race, but one of the wagons packed a keg of beer, and they were afraid it might be lost on the road. I can tell you that beer had more loving attention than any lady—beer's pretty expensive out Wyoming."

"I was pretty glad they decided against the race. The roads out there aren't any boulevards."

"The ranch was fourteen miles from town and we got there just about in time for the grandest dinner that my mouth ever watered over! We snatched that dinner two miles off, and we could actually see the fumes of it coming out of the cracks of the windows while we were unhitching. Say! I've been to twenty-course affairs, with all sorts of foreign languages on the bill of fare, and waiters who were slick at the now-you-see-you-don't-act-in-passing-the-tablets, but I never came across such richness as I saw piled promiscuously on those two tables in the ranchhouse. There was turkey, of course, mallard ducks, venison, fresh meat and mutton—not one or two ducks, but dozens of 'em, haunches of beef, a side of beef, and it seemed to me there was a turkey for every guest. And pie! Cake! Jam! Did you ever eat chokeberry jelly? Well, you don't know what's good. Gimme chokeberry jelly or gimme death!"

"I always thought I was a pretty good food punisher, but I wouldn't want to get in a race with one of those western cow-punchers. They went through the bill of fare like a Kansas cyclone. Fiercely the battle

raged—and through it all was heard the steady clump of jaws. Each map seemed to consider its bounden duty to surround as much edible material as his capacity would warrant, and they all acted as though the first one done would get a prize. Gass-tank Bill set the pace—to this day I don't see how he could eat so fast, so much, and talk so continually. I consider his abilities in that direction as most remarkable. Windy Charley was a pretty good talker, too. He held forth at the other table. "Not that the rest of us were at all silent—I should relate that we weren't! It sounded like a thrashing machine, a boiler factory and a saw-mill in full swing."

"As for me—I was hungry, and I started in to demolish things with a vim. I began with my coat buttoned, but it wasn't long before the situation grew strained. I had put on my Prince Albert, which is pretty tight anyway. The buttons actually popped open when I started to unfasten them."

"After dinner those never-tired cowmen and sheepmen and substantial western maidens repaired to the barn for a dance. Out there the barn is the chief feature, you know—biggest and best of all the ranch buildings. The loft had been nicely cleared, and while it was rather cool at first, we soon warmed to the work. In fact, the gentlemen discarded their coats, and the ladies perspired grandly in the cause."

"Well, I'd eaten until my eyes stuck out, but I was game. And I had the exercise of my life up in that barn loft. None of your fancy gliding over waxed floes to the undulating waves of a heavenly orchestra. We had an accordion, a harmonica and a two-stringed fiddle manipulated by a man with three fingers. Sometimes they disagreed about the tune, and occasionally the accordion got left on the way and then hurried to catch up, but on the whole they managed to keep things going at a lops."

"I hopped and I skipped and I jumped. I polkaed and I waltzed and I chassed. I grinned and I sweated and I ached, and when the word went around that the auspicious moment for opening the keg of beer was at hand—well, I was ready for the refreshments."

"But where was the beer? It had been carefully stowed in the safest of all places, but not a trace of beer or even keg remained. Man eyed man suspiciously. There was gnashing of teeth and much imprecation. There was some original and picturesque swearing—but no beer! When this fact was at last firmly established in the minds of all present there was sorrow in the camp. Somebody had taken the beer. Nobody knew who. Nobody ever found out that I know. So we went beerless, after all our painstaking care. It was a great trial to the thirsty—and we were all thirsty."

"It was the shady side of midnight when we began to think of home. Considering my aching limbs, as I piled into one of those springless wagons and thought of the road ahead, I prayed the out toward progress might be a slow and solemn one. But not so thought our driver who no sooner struck the open road than he challenged the other wagon to a race."

"Remember, my friend, that was a springless wagon. The Sorrows of Werther were as nothing to mine. Up hill, down hill, over rocks a foot high, through creeks, across d'raped bridges, clinging to the side of a hill on one wheel, bumpety-bump, rattle, clatter, thump-thump! Fortunately I had been placed for safety, possibly—between two fat damsels. I religiously and impartially held on to both."

"I didn't know which wagon was gaining, and can't say that I cared. I think I kept up a carelessly pleasant demeanor, and would have continued to do so but that our wagon suddenly upset, and the first thing I knew thereafter I was lying, face down, in a bunch of sage, with one of the fat damsels sitting demurely upon the back of my neck. I can't understand how it wasn't broken. I suppose it's been toughened in anticipation of the ax ever since I've been working for the trust."

The First Traveling Man paused and chewed reflectively.

"Did she get off?" inquired the Second Traveling Man.

"Who?"

"The fat lady. You left her sitting on your neck."

"I suppose you think it's as funny as she did? Let's laugh. Haw, haw. I feel like a funeral procession. That kid of mine is chewing his first drumstick today—and here I am in this beastly hotel eating boneless turkey and store mince pie!"

"Oh, say, let up!" growled the Second Traveling Man. "I've got a kid of my own. Don't make me any homesicker'n I am. What's on at the theaters this afternoon?"—E. K. Wooley in Chicago Record-Herald.

CONCESSION MUST BE ABOLISHED

Board of Trade Has Begun Aggressive Measures to Accomplish the Overthrow of Treadgold Octopus

Dawson, Y. T., March 6, 1903.

To the Editor 'The Klondike Nugget':

Dear Sir,—It is the wish of the Dawson Board of Trade that you forward a copy of telegram sent this day to Messrs. the Honorable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier of Canada; Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior; William Mulock, Postmaster General, and James Hamilton Ross, Member of Parliament for Yukon, and which reads as follows:

"Oppose any attempt to pass order in council or act in parliament that will in anyway confirm Treadgold concession. Are having monster petition signed and reliable data prepared to forward Ottawa asking government to aid in furnishing water for mining purposes. People are a unit in making demand and will insist upon government protection from monopoly of Treadgold Octopus."

"The Dawson Board of Trade," "If C. Macaulay, Pres."

And it is the further wish of said board that your influence, help and co-operation in assisting the people of this territory to make the necessary recommendations to the parliament of the Dominion of Canada to prevent the passage through parliament of the Treadgold concession and water grant from Klondike river and Rock creek such as is and has been contemplated.

"The Treadgold concession and water grant as granted by an order in council and which when ratified by the parliament at its next session will become law is in the opinion of this board one of the most iniquitous measures that was ever inflicted upon a people, and (in the consideration of the Dawson Board of Trade) will work a great hardship upon the people of this territory since it will mean the virtual bankruptcy of all the property holders of Dawson and surrounding territory, and instead of the Klondike becoming the prosperous country we expect it will virtually become the property of Mr. Treadgold and those who are associated with him in his scheme."

An immense petition to the Dominion parliament to cancel and disallow this measure is being prepared and circulated (a copy of which will be sent you) embodying the objections of the people of the Yukon to the granting of this measure and asking the government to provide water for the miners of this territory.

If this were done it would mean the commencement of a new era of prosperity for this camp, the population

Will Go Before Parliament With a Petition Asking for the Establishment of a Public Water System—Prosperity of the Country Depends Upon the Securing of Favorable Action.

of which would materially and rapidly increase and an immense avenue for Canadian manufactures and merchandise would be opened up and not only would this territory be benefited but the benefit would extend to the whole of Canada, by a measure of this kind.

It is our belief that the government should be urged to allow the Treadgold concession to become law if it would (in the opinion of the Dawson Board of Trade, and I might say) be a tremendous setback to the prosperity of this country.

Now, in order to convey to you some idea of the magnitude of the grant which Mr. Treadgold and his associates are looking for and which it appears likely they will receive, if the intention of the minister of the interior is allowed to be carried out, it having been recommended by him we believe, that the said Treadgold and his associates receive the sole and prior right to divert and take water from the Klondike river up to 5000 miners inches for distribution and use in the district, said district comprising the beds, benches, valleys, slopes and hills of the Klondike river, of Bonanza, Bear and Hunker creeks and their tributaries; also the right to divert and use the water of Rock creek, which water we are informed by Mr. Joseph McGillivray, a mining engineer of long experience, amounts to 8000 inches, natural flow, and which would give Mr. Treadgold and associates the sole right to divert and sell 13,000 inches of water. Now a miner requires with which to sluice his dirt 50 inches of water, which is the amount considered necessary to make a sluice head, and

should the Treadgold company at the rate which we understand, is the contemplated charge (25 cents per miner's inch per hour) it would cost that miner \$12.50 per hour or \$300 per day of 14 hours, which is the length of the working day here during the summer season. Now this grant of 5,000 inches from the Klondike river and the natural flow of Rock creek, amounting to 8,000 inches, making a total of water at Treadgold's command of 13,000 inches, or 260 sluice heads of 50 inches per sluice head, costing the miner in this country \$78,000 per day, or \$10,140,000 per year of 130 sluicing days, which is the length of the sluicing season here, would mean this: That the holder of the same would practically own the country, all the hill claim owners would have to come to him for water or allow their claim to remain unoperated for lack of same, and Mr. Treadgold and his associates would be receiving all the profits that would accrue from the thousands of hill claims situate on the immense and huge gravel deposits with which this country abounds.

He, Mr. Treadgold, is further allowed this concession. That the property of the grantee shall be exempt from representation. This the Dawson Board of Trade considers would enable the owners of non-working claims to evade the representation law by their turning over into the name of the Treadgold Company their properties.

For an instance of how this would work, we will suppose that 5000 hill claim owners not working their properties and not wishing to expend on their properties the \$200 per year necessary by law in order to hold their claims in his name, thereby exempting them from representation, the government would lose the fees charged in lieu of representation and the country would lose the expenditure of that amount for labor in representation of said claims, amounting in all to \$1,000,000, of which amount Mr. Treadgold will say would receive \$750,000, the claim owners would save \$250,000 and the government and the country would be done out of the expenditure of the \$1,000,000, not to speak of the fees for affidavits of representation and renewal, amounting to \$17 per claim per year, or a total of \$85,000 per year for the 5,000 claims.

But on the other hand if the government will only listen to our plea,

cancel or disallow this infamous Treadgold grant and themselves supply the water to the miners of this territory at a figure that will enable the government to get the cost of the installation of the necessary plant for supplying said water out of the water supplied, we will say in about eight years, it would we know give the miners cheap water and enable them to recover the precious metal from the immense low grade gravel deposits that we have in this country and would mean a greatly increased population and prosperity for this country and would cause and bring about an immense trade with and throughout Canada.

And now in conclusion I might say that this letter being hastily written, as we thought it necessary to act quickly in the matter, does not permit us to go into details of the matter as much as we would like. (These details will come later, a copy of which will be sent you), but I think sufficient has been said to show you the iniquities of this concession and to point out to you the firm and positive objections that the Board of Trade and the people of this territory have to said concession, and which objections will be exemplified in the petition about to be prepared and sent to Ottawa, and that the granting of this concession would be prejudicial and greatly detrimental to the best interests of this country and we ask you for your sincere and earnest co-operation and assistance in helping us to prevent this measure from becoming law. Yours truly,

DAWSON BOARD OF TRADE

PETITION

To the Honorable the House of Commons in Parliament Assembled:

The petition of the undersigned residents of the Yukon Territory humbly sheweth:

1. That by order in council on April the 21st, 1902, certain privileges are granted to Malcolm Orr King, A. N. C. Treadgold and Walter Barwick, in connection with the proposed establishment by them of a system of water supply for washing out gold-bearing gravel in the district therein described, including the Klondike river, Bonanza, Bear and Hunker creeks and their tributaries.
2. That the benefits conferred upon the grantees are of incalculable value and involve an enormous exploitation of the public resources of this territory for the benefit of a few favored concessionaires.
3. That in the opinion of your petitioners the accumulation of extraordinary powers in the hands of a single corporation such as is effected by the above order in council, will lead to the paralysis of the independent commercial and industrial life of the community and will prove in the highest degree oppressive and injurious to the public welfare, since the grantees are thereby enabled to crush out competition and to reduce to a position of practical servitude the individual miners in the extensive

district affected which includes the richest portion of the Klondike.

4. That the need of this territory is not the creation of monopolies but their prevention, and the encouragement of the individual miners by securing equal privileges and opportunities to all as far as the law and the administration can provide them.
5. That for the promotion and development of the mining industry of the Yukon a cheap, abundant and effective water supply, furnished at a minimum of cost by the government at the earliest possible moment, is absolutely essential.

Your petitioners therefore pray—

- (1). That the order in council of April 21st, 1902, may be cancelled completely, and that no special privileges shall hereafter be granted within this territory with respect to wood, mining, water or any other class of rights affecting the general public; but that all persons shall be restricted in such matters to the rights conferred upon every member of the community by the mining regulations.
- (2). That the supply and distribution of water for general mining purposes within this territory shall not be controlled by any private person or corporation, but either that it shall be undertaken by the Dominion government as a public work, or that power shall be given to the commissioner of the Yukon Territory in council to construct such a system and to raise the necessary funds by bonds guaranteed by the Dominion.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

St. Louis estimates that the sums to be expended on its Midway at the coming exposition will represent something like \$5,000,000. There is no doubt the sums will represent considerable "altogether." — Boston Globe.

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