

And every day in passing seem'd the worst,
Until the last day faded from the sky,
And the long, inexorable Night had come,—
Interlock'd with cold, and weird stars, and dumb as a
corpse is dumb.

VI.

I work'd awhile that Winter on a lay ;
Sixty below, and sleeping in snow-bank'd tents,—
Say, that was the hardpan of experience !
Just earning enough to live, and make a play
On some infernal card that never won ;
Or easy by some dance-hall beauty done
For all the dust I had—you know the way :
Snow-blind once, once frozen to the bone,
While mushing with the mails between the creeks ;
Then typhoid laid me on my back delirious for weeks.

VII.

The river-ice was breaking in the Spring
When first I heard them tell of Lonesome Bar,—
A haggard region hidden in the far
Blank reaches of the North past reckoning.
But the Sun was warm again, 'twas afternoon,
And I was lounging in the Log Saloon,
Ready to turn my hand to anything,
When in two strangers came with a tale that soon
Drew round the restless crowd, forever fond
Of newer strikes, and farther fields, and the luck of
things beyond.