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KLONDIKE NUGGET.

AMUSEMENTS.
Standard-Vaudeville.

THE MUNICIPAL SITUATION.

The municipal election draws on a pace but as yet none of the candidates have brought to the attention of the electors any definite outline of policy. It may as well be understood first as last that the next city administration has before it a very difficult task. There is no disguising the fact that the expiration of the terms of the present incumbents will find the city exchequer practically empty. The current taxes which properly should be available to meet next year's expenses are either disbursed already or hypothecated and the new officials will be confronted with a situation essentially serious.

The low rate of taxation fixed upon by the city council has led many people to the belief that the finances of the municipality are in first-class condition. The facts are to the contrary, and it is well that the exact status of affairs should be thoroughly understood.

That the business of the city has been economically administered during the past twelve months will not be maintained by the most sincere admirer of the present regime. The fact may be pointed out that important public improvements have been made during the year and of them there can be no doubt. But it must be admitted that in so doing, expenditures have been incurred which the town could not afford, and it is this feature of the situation which in the opinion of the Nugget calls for adverse criticism. The city as a corporate body has no more right to indulge in luxuries for which it is unable to pay, than has any individual. Such a policy inevitably terminates in disaster and in the case of Dawson it has resulted in a depleted treasury. It is the future, however, with which the voters have now to deal, and they look to the men who are offering themselves as candidates for municipal offices to bring forward plans and specifications of their intentions.

The Nugget believes that it voices the sentiments of the ratepayers of Dawson in demanding pledges of candidates as to the methods which they will follow in extricating the city from its present decidedly unsatisfactory situation. Candidates will not be sufficient and those men who exclusively therein cannot hope to secure the support of the electors. A number of excellent gentlemen have offered their services to the voters but none of them as yet have given publication to any statement of policy which affords an intelligent forecast of what they expect to do for the city.

The voters as waiting to hear from them and will brook no uncertainty of language.

The men who display the most comprehensive grasp of the situation, and who bring forward the most practical measures for meeting what everyone must regard as an emergency, will be most likely to receive the support of those who pay the taxes and who enjoy the right of suffrage.

In the opinion of the Nugget it is merely a question of time until the short railroad system to be built in

the coming spring will be extended to join the White Pass at Whitehorse. Doubtless upon this point are requested to note that the Nugget has hazarded very few guesses in connection with the development of the Yukon which time has not verified.

SHOULD CHOOSE THEIR OWN CANDIDATES.

In order that the Yukon council may be properly representative of the various interests of the territory it is essential that practical mining men be chosen from the creek districts. The Dawson electoral division has been given two seats on the council board, and for the purposes of the city that is sufficient.

Two good and true men will be chosen to represent this locality, but in respect to the creeks the miners should bring forward their own candidates.

The Nugget does not believe, and will decline to believe until indisputable evidence to the contrary is advanced, that the mining communities are desirous of being represented by Dawson politicians.

Doubtless there are worthy gentlemen in the city who might acceptably fulfill the wishes of the creek voters, but we are of the opinion that the latter will be far better satisfied with their representatives if chosen from among themselves.

In this view we have found by some little investigation that the great majority of the miners are in hearty concurrence.

To select their candidates from the city would constitute a tact admission on that the mining districts are lacking in suitable legislative timber. Such is far from being the case, as the results we think will amply demonstrate. There are splendid men available who are prepared to give the time necessary to attend the council meetings, and if the creeks voters get together and exchange views they should have no difficulty in deciding upon candidates well suited to the positions.

Fortunately for the interests of all concerned, party lines are not and will not be drawn in this campaign, and the whole matter resolves itself into a question of selecting the right men.

Two weeks yet remain before nomination day, and there is still plenty of time to bring out desirable men, the law granting the right of electing five members to the council was designed purposely to give representation as nearly as possible to all sections and to every important interest in the territory.

The professional and business elements will look out that they are properly represented, and it remains for the miners to see that their interests are cared for in a similar manner.

Misinterpretation of the obligations assumed by the United States government in pledging itself to the enforcement of the Monroe doctrine, has led the Republic of Venezuela to no little grief. Venezuela is badly in debt and wishes, apparently, to repudiate the demands of her creditors. Uncle Sam never undertook to protect a recalcitrant debtor and it is very evident that Venezuela has an entirely mistaken idea of what the Monroe Doctrine implies.

Indications of approaching Christmas festivities are to be observed upon every hand. Local stores are well equipped to supply the needs of Christmas shoppers and Dawson will celebrate the great occasion in a manner fitted to the genius and traditions which surround the day.

Within another week the days will begin to lengthen out a trifle and the backbone of winter will be given a severe shaking up. Speaking of winter, the present season with the exception of a few days has been almost ideal.

Between the hostility of public sentiment and the Eldorado gusher, Mr. Treadgold's scheme seems to be calculated for complete failure. No capitalists will be found who will invest the necessary amount in an enterprise which is confronted with such obstacles.

The postal authorities have issued official notice respecting the establishment of a second class mail delivery. It may therefore be anticipated that newspapers will arrive hereafter as regularly as first class mail.

There will be general rejoicing throughout the territory when the territorial election is over and political agitation for the time being has ended.

Absorbing Story of an Epsom Jockey

HOW HE IMPERILED HIS FUTURE RATHER THAN PULL HIS MOUNT AND SELL THE RACE.

"I tell you the beast must be pulled."

The slightly built man, who looked little more than a lad, fixed a pair of sad, hollow eyes upon the ground between the pointed toes of his boots and listened to his companion's imperious directions in mute despair.

"It's done every day for much less than this affair means to either you or me," the other urged. "It means beggary to me and prison to you if the beast gets home. If it doesn't, you shall have that unfortunate cheque together with a hundred-pound note the evening following."

"I never pulled a mount yet, Mr. Hull, and I'm hanged if I do now!" the jockey ejaculated through his set teeth.

"It will mean prison for you, then."

"I dare say it will!" cried the jockey in a shrill voice. "You kept that cheque until you knew it was too late for me to prove I didn't forge it, and now you come and threaten me with it unless I do your dirty work. I won't do it, prison or no prison, so I tell you straight. Besides, who told you I'm riding Merrymay?"

"Do you take me for a mole?" said Mr. Hull. "I know you have been asked to ride the beast, and if you refuse or fail to pull him—well, you know how unpleasant will be the consequences."

"I suppose you've got on to the Baker for all your worth?" Stillings said thoughtfully.

"That's none of your business. The Baker's got to win, that's all you need worry about, and if you pull Merrymay, all will be well."

"For you—yes; I don't doubt it. But what about Lord Shannon? Perhaps you don't know that he backed my mount for all he's worth and that Merrymay is relied upon to pay off the mortgage upon his estate? A win to the Baker would be absolute ruin to his lordship."

"More fool he! I can't be expected to drop all my money because a friend has backed the horse to win. Now, look here, Joe, don't let us have any more words about the matter. Will you get ride and pull?"

"No."

"But! Confound you! What do you think Mastman will say when you're thrown into jail and branded a felon? What will he say when she knows that you have been courting her with the crime of a forger upon your conscience, such a high-minded young woman as she, too?"

"She'd think less had of me than if I pulled Merrymay," Stillings returned in a huffed voice.

"Well, put it another way. How can you marry her after three or four years in prison? You may not get 'beefy' in jail, but your skill will be spoilt, your name will be ruined, your career, which at present promises to carry you into the first rank of jockeys, will be cut short. In a word you will be hopelessly ruined."

"Surely the Prince of Tempters might come to you for hints!" the jockey hissed. "But even if Merrymay loses, the Baker may not win. He may go all wrong within the next three days. Then where will you be?"

"Fool! I have not backed the Baker. I have laid against Merrymay. If the Baker turns up fit on the course, then I may back him. But that is quite beside the point."

There, apparently, was Joe Stillings' last hope gone. No compromise between him and his tempter was possible. He had to choose between prison and ruin, the loss of the girl he loved and degradation in her eyes, which was perhaps even worse than losing her, and the mere tightening of a rein.

"Which will you do?"

"I'll think it over, and you shall see," the jockey replied weakly.

"Can't you decide now? Think what 'No' means to you."

"Can't you decide in your own mind what I shall do when the time comes?" Stillings replied doggedly.

"Yes, I think I can, Joe," said Mr. Hull, smiling quietly. "You're a wise man, Joe. The pros are out of all proportion to the cons."

"Have you anything else to say?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Then get out of my paddock, Cuthbert Hull."

Mr. Hull knew he had succeeded in

his mission, and therefore took this insult with better temper than he would otherwise have done.

He went away without a word but with a smiling face and a light heart. Stillings watched him disappear and groaned.

He was in the hollow of the man's hands, and how could he surrender a successful career, a life's possibilities and a life's love to racecourse ethics? Yet it was not merely a question of racecourse ethics. Was it not rather an ephemeral effort which would be reflected by his conscience through all his life, an effort which would run many a home and wreck many a life?

On the other hand, there was no certainty in horseracing, and those men who had backed, or would back, Merrymay to win; knew they might lose; and if he pulled the horse, and the world knew why, would not his reason justify him before all except those who had lost by his act?

He wandered through his stables, his heart lonely and sick within him, debating with himself which course he should take, and it suddenly occurred to him that if he could discover the whereabouts of his old friend, John Granger, all would yet be well; John could prove that he never committed the forgery.

But where was John? Perhaps a thousand miles away; perhaps in the very next town. He had not heard anything of him for three years, and knew no one who had John might be dead. Still, there was hope in this idea. He would endeavor to find John before the day of the race, and if he failed—then he would have to choose.

Late in the evening of the following day Cuthbert Hull was hurrying about his chambers in Sloane street, preparing everything as far as he could to enable him to get down to Epsom early, without the necessity for rising before his usually late hour.

He was in high feather, flushed and not absolutely sober. He was looking for the morrow as a day that would see his making, a day of events which would wipe out his financial difficulties and a day too, which would forever ruin the chances of his friend, Lord Shannon, redeeming his fortune sufficiently to marry Clair Dudley.

Mr. Hull was not the man to play half the game; he laid a plot to enrich himself and developed it to ruin his rival. He had schemed for months to reach these ends, and he had omitted nothing which could further effect his object.

He had even forged a note to meet a creditor, whom he could easily have paid, to husband for a day or two a few hundred pounds, which he would lay to his own gain. Then he would redeem the note, he decided, and wipe the matter out.

It was all planned to the finest point, and he was naturally elated. It was the honey of satisfaction to him to prepare for the eventful morrow.

At last, when all seemed done, he paused and pondered to know if there was nothing else he could do to anticipate the next day. Then he sat down at his writing table, and took a cashbox from a drawer. From the cashbox he extracted a folded cheque.

He satisfied himself that it was the one he wanted, took a sheet of plain note paper, and—pinning the cheque to it, wrote, "The B. N. follows tomorrow." He folded the two up, slipping them into an envelope, which he closed, addressed and stamped.

"He shall have the hundred tomorrow," he said, glancing down at the letter upon the blotting pad, as he rose and lit a cigarette, "meanwhile I can make four or five of it. I will take this with me, post it at the station on my return to town, and he will see that I am a man who keeps his word in either way."

He smoked the cigarette half through in restless meditation, and then as if struck by a sudden thought went out of the room, picked up a hat and stick from the hallrack and passed out of the building.

He had not been gone three minutes when his man entered the room. His heavy eyes wandered over the room from one object to another until they rested upon the letter.

Picking it up, he read the superscription apathetically, and he glanced at the clock on the mantel shelf.

"Jiggins!" he muttered calmly. "I thought he was a bit wavy to-night. Two minutes to 12. I can just catch it, and if I don't I suppose I shall catch it—in another way."

Reluctant to cross the muddy road in his indoor shoes, he made a detour to the crossing, and posted the letter at the box opposite the chamber buildings. He returned by way of the crossing, staid himself of the lift and entered the flat just behind his master, who had used the staircase.

"Been out, Pink?" Mr. Hull enquired.

"Posted your letter, sir."

"Post—my—You blithering idiot!" cried the master, white with fear and rage. "Where did you post it?"

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Pink told him, and followed him down the stairs three steps at a time and across the road.

With fumbling fingers Mr. Hull struck a match and looked at the little enamelled plate, which indicated the time the box would next be cleared.

"Eight-twenty. The box is cleared. Oh, you vast fool!" he cried, turning passionately upon Pink.

He sprang into a hansom and drove to the district sorting office with all possible haste.

"By mistake a few minutes ago my man posted a letter in the pillar box at Camden street corner," he said to an official who came forward. "It is of vital importance that it should not be delivered. It was addressed to Mr. Joseph Stillings, Darcy Lodge, Epsom. The box has been cleared."

"Are you sure it was posted?"

"Absolutely."

"Then I cannot help you; once posted, the letter belongs to the postmaster-general until it is delivered at the address of the addressee."

"But I must have it, man."

"Out of the question, sir."

"It was useless to argue; the official was obdurate.

"What time will it be delivered?" Hull asked anxiously.

"Epsom, you say? Between 11 and 12—about 11."

And Joe Stillings would not be on the course until 1 or 2 o'clock! He would probably get the letter before leaving home. Why, in that case, should he pull Merrymay?

Hull strode out of the office in a frenzy of rage and despair.

Somehow he must draw Stillings away from the house before the letter arrived there, and keep the letter from him after the race. But how?

"Pink," he said, when he had got back to his chambers, "I want you to send a telegram for me."

"Stillings, Epsom. Meet me at Leatherhead station 11 sharp, Wednesday. Important. John Granger." Was how he worded the message.

"That will draw it nothing, else will," Hull said as he affixed a sixpenny stamp.

But even when this was sent off he was uneasy in his mind. He knew Stillings would be at Leatherhead station at the time appointed, that he would wait anxiously for the appearance of Granger, and that chances were a thousand to one against Stillings returning home before the race was run.

But there was the bare chance that the prematurely posted letter would get to Stillings' hands in some way before Merrymay was paraded, and Hull could do nothing to obviate this contingency.

Next morning, however, refreshed by sleep and no longer muddled by drink, Hull was perfectly anguine. On his way down to Epsom he had sent a telegram to Stillings' head groom to ask where his master was, and at the Epsom telegram office he found awaiting him a reply to the effect that Stillings had gone early to Leatherhead to meet a friend.

This was good news, indeed, but opened an ugly doubt for Hull.

Stillings' groom was almost certain to attend the race, and the letter must already have arrived at Darcy Lodge, and might not the groom take it to his master? It was a tortuous doubt.

By chance, however, Hull met the groom just outside Epsom station, and satisfied himself that the man had not brought the letter, which had not arrived when Stillings left home, and that no one was coming from Darcy Lodge to the meeting.

Loathing about the paddock some considerable time later, Hull caught sight of Stillings out of the corners of his eyes.

The jockey's face was pale and haggard, and there was a hard, sad look about his mouth.

"What a fool the man is!" Hull said to himself. "One would imagine he was required to do murder."

Shortly afterward Merrymay passed by where Hull was standing. Stillings was up in his purple and white silk.

Instinctively he turned his head, and as he caught sight of Hull he gave him a look of mute despair. But Hull did not see it.

He was running his eye over The Baker and admiring the horse's wonderful condition, which so impressed him that he moved off and laid every penny he had with him upon the animal.

By the time he had edged himself into a good position for viewing the race the starters were already off. He could just make out the colored jackets of the jockeys' bobbing along in the distance.

The Baker was third to get off, and Merrymay was running in a batch of five of the field behind the first three.

"How-d'ye-do, sir?" said a voice over Hull's shoulder.

Hull turned and blanched as he recognized the sunburnt, chubby face of John Granger.

He could find no words to speak in his surprise and alarm.

Fate was surely trying to unbind his mind, first by the hideous mistake about the letter and now by John Granger, the vanished man, turning up at such a time. If he had seen Stillings the day was lost, the lifetime ruined?

"I only arrived from South America last night, sir, but seeing my old friend, Joe Stillings was up on a favorite in the big race, I was bound to come down," Granger explained. "Have you seen Stillings?" Hull enquired hoarsely.

"Not to speak to, but I've just a pony on his mount, you may be sure."

Hull turned his head away and shuddered. Fate had played a waiting game with him; the thought, he luck was all on his side.

Twice in twenty-four hours he had been within an ace of ruin and had been saved by chance.

There was a roar and a passing forward of the crowd and a passing course, as the horses swerved round the bend and began to come down the straight.

"Harefoot!" roared half the crowd. "Harefoot!" yelled the other half as five horses broke from the leading five and challenged each other.

There was a panting pause, then a roar that made the blood tingle in Hull's flushed cheek.

"The Baker!" shouted the crowd together, as another horse overtook Marcus and Harefoot and threw them his heels.

A moment later a fluttering haze of white and purple seemed to pass forward.

It flashed past Marcus and Harefoot, and began to overtake The Baker.

"Merrymay does it! Merrymay!" Inch by inch Merrymay drew away upon The Baker. The shadow of a favorite's nose flickered on The Baker's thigh, then upon his flank, and shoulders, and then The Baker nose began to fall back from the heel of Merrymay's shoulder to his thigh, when suddenly Merrymay seemed to pick himself up and leap forward a hundred yards—two hundred yards, and Merrymay had won.

Half an hour later Hull was haggard and aged by many a year, too desperate to hurry from the scene of his ruin without understanding with Stillings, not his eyes to face.

Stillings was no less pale and haggard than Hull, but he had a triumphant light in his eyes which was naturally waiting for Hull's.

"You blackguard!" Hull half half raising his stick.

"You can't honestly call me that, said Stillings quietly. "Not for at least. I've given all my money to keep faith with Merrymay's backers, and I gave you the chance to help. I know what it means to me, unless I can find John Granger."

"To hedge?" Hull ejaculated.

"Aye, I sent you a telegram to tell you that Merrymay was so fit as might be, but if the race could win he should."

Hull turned and slunk away.

He crept to the station, his train. He crawled to his chamber by back streets to avoid meeting acquaintances.

Pink greeted him.

"There's a telegram for you, sir," he said. "It came a few minutes after you'd gone."

Hull snatched it up and read.

"Merrymay none too fit. But race win, shall—Stillings."

Hull groaned.

At precisely the same moment Stillings at Darcy Lodge was burning a cheque he had found waiting him.

He watched it crumble away in flames, and smiled up at John Granger, who stood by watching him.

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