

THE KLONDIKE NUGGET.

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DAWSON, Y. T., SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1898

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IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE JURY.

Case of the People vs. Incompetent Public Officials.

AND THE VERDICT SUSTAINS THE "NUGGET" IN ITS FIGHT

Public Opinion Brings to a Long Suffering People a Change of Officials.

Summing Up the Evidence Which has Been Produced Before the Bar of Public Opinion—A Resume of the Past—A Complete Corps of New Officials Soon to Be in Office—Hopes for the Future are Bright With Anticipation of a Correction of Wrongs.

The arrival of Mr. Senkler, the new gold commissioner as announced in the Nugget on Wednesday last, and who will shortly take the chair and office of the Hon. Thomas Fawcett, who by suzerance still holds his position only until the new appointee familiarizes himself with the duties and details of the office, brings to mind the fact that when the Hon. Thos. Fawcett retired and with the arrival of Mr. Clement, the new legal advisor to the council, and Mr. Gosse, the new land and timber agent, not one of the old regime of officials remains in power in this territory. From the Yukon commissioner down, all will be new men, and the administration of Major Walsh will pass into history. It has only been the constant hammering away at the wrongs and ills with which this country has been afflicted, that has caused these changes, and the charges by the Nugget, made single handed, are now being taken up by the press of not only the Dominion but of the Imperial domain. It is well amidst the general good feeling prevailing over the existing state of affairs to review briefly the evidence and facts which have brought about these changes.

Hardly had the Nugget been launched upon the sea of journalism, before it was being made perfectly familiar with the "ways and means" by which this "hard grafted" territory was being worked for "all there was in it," and recognizing this fact, visible to the most wilfully shortsighted being, an editorial under date of its issue of June 28, stated as follows: "The Nugget has not only fulfilled all the expectations of its friends * * * but with this issue begins the publication of a semi-weekly, and enters upon a fearless and aggressive policy against all enemies of the people. Look out for the Nugget." There will be some interesting reading.

This sounded the tocsin of war against all crookedness in high places, and gave warning that wherever the people were being wronged, as wronged they were, the Nugget would make the attack, and carry on the fight against corruption wherever found, come whatever might, and regardless of all or any circumstances. On July 2, under the caption of "What Strange Things Do Happen," it was there stated that "the city of Dawson is full of strangers and the air for two weeks past has been full of unanswered questions and wonderings concerning the why and the wherefore of certain doings by the various commissioners and others in authority at this place." "That valuable ground on the Klondike and tributaries was being held for entry." "The sudden removal of Sergeant Richards from the marshaling of this place." "The collection of a \$2000 liquor license from some dealers and none from others and saloons springing up like mushrooms." And all will remember Major Walsh's replies to questions of the Nugget and their reference to Thomas Fawcett, the gold commissioner, for at that time loud murmurings were heard upon every hand against the despicable manner-honest, independent miners were treated by the hirelings and understrappers in Mr. Fawcett's office.

So much only is quoted above to show that this paper was fully aware at that time, as always, regarding the situation of affairs in this portion of her majesty's domains. It would be impossible in the limited space at command to enter fully and specifically into all the details which covered each of the various charges constantly arraigning the powers in authority, simply to review and sum up the case at the bar of public opinion, leaving it to the care of a jury of common sense and justice as to whether a case has been made out, and so energetically has this been done that the wrongs committed against the people of the Yukon territory as shown forth in the Nugget have re-

verberated around the entire world as the British drum roll, until today comes back the echo, for none are so fond and vigorous in the attack upon those wrongs and support of the Nugget, as the London Times, the voice of the Britishers everywhere, and the Thunderer of Journalism. None will accuse the Times of sensationalism. None will charge it with speculative and advertising motives, and none but the cringing, cowardly pap-pulling organs at the bottle of official purse and favor, who, for paltry gain, refused to aid in the consummation of a work now being attained, and in which the Nugget takes an honest pride.

These things being brought to public attention and all will remember the crowded streets and walks of the past summer, knots of men stood upon the corners and in whispers, with darting, glancing eyes, told each other of their wrongs at the hands of certain one office, and that the gold commissioners. So great was their abject fear of those in authority, that big, strong-hearted men fairly quaked lest the very air they breathed, might convey to those with "authority" their very thoughts, and they be suddenly, as before an inquisition, brought before the high and mighty for even thinking of living. When some member of the Yukon council, or holder of an office walked forth upon the streets, men bowed their heads lest their eyes might fall upon them, and with a soft and gentle "Sh—! sh—!" point toward them and remark upon the great office and power held by them. These things were wrong, utterly wrong. There is no flag on earth under which every man, honestly and politically, is freer than the grand old Union Jack of Great Britain. Never did she wave over a despotism. Never did British government confer upon men or set of men power, breeding such an abject fear. The Nugget knew and knows today, that men assumed power were granted them in their commissions. It had a hard task, singly and alone endeavoring to lead the people from this terrible feeling of fear.

Did ever in any civilized country such a state of "graft" exist as under the past regime in the Yukon territory? A miner could possibly stand the license and recording fees, and timber "touches" and royalty, and so on ad infinitum, but "down the line they cut a shine" in every direction. The commonest hiring drawing a dollar a day salary had to be "seen" before anything could be done. The long looked for letters from home and friends, to be obtained had to endure the "tax" imposed upon them before they could be "found and delivered." But what can be said of the gold commissioner's office? Language refuses to express, words fail to convey; paper will not contain the absolute and loathing contempt held by every honest miner in the whole Yukon territory for the clique and band of "held ups," which infested the office of Thomas Fawcett. When men strove for days and weeks, knocking at the door of the commissioner to record their claims, the favored ones were being admitted through doors marked "private" and "positively no admittance." Guards stood at the door keeping back the "common herd," the men who honestly staked, issuing numbers which took days and weeks to reach. While it is in evi-

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dence, and is in possession of the Nugget, by one man's own statement in this city to-day, who attempted to defend Mr. Fawcett, but suddenly disappeared from public notice, it is "he had made over four thousand transfers in Mr. Fawcett's office, without the payment of one cent of extra pay to the gold commissioner or any of his assistants," but no living soul has ever appeared to accept the Nugget's offer made in reply to a statement so utterly absurd. The public did not know then, nor probably does it until now, that at the very moment it was arraigning this office, that it had in its possession passes, bearing the official stamp of the office, admitting "the bearer" to the gold commissioner's office, which, through those employed by the Nugget were used to prove the facts it so persistently stated. More than that, this paper well knew that meetings of "officials" were held in ways and means discussed as to how to close the Nugget up, and knowing well the "gang" with which it had to deal, fortified itself thoroughly with every form of evidence necessary for self-protection, and still holds that evidence in a good safe place for future reference. Thousands of men will bear out the statements openly made in this paper concerning the haughty and openly discussed acts of Messrs. Clark and Craig and Bolton, the "main push" of Mr. Fawcett's office—and right here, as a further evidence of what the Nugget has in its possession, will relate one instance concerning the staking of a claim on one of the largest adjacent creeks, and with which Mr. Bolton will be familiar.

A bench claim was staked on July 9, 1898, bearing on the up-stream side of the stake the name of E. D. Bolton, on the down-stream side the name of another party, both in the same handwriting, and yet the Nugget can prove that E. D. Bolton was not out of the city on that date; that the claim was relocated by another party; and that a letter was sent back, written on that very claim on the following date addressed to the gold commissioner's office, and that all of the above circumstances were witnessed by seven persons, five of whom are at present in Dawson and the party carrying the letter. What was done with this claim? Was it ever recorded?

Will the people forget the Nugget's prophecy of July 9th, when these words were used, referring to Major Walsh's interview that he had the power to remove the royalty. "Things seem to be at fever heat. The air is full of murmurings, like distant thunder, before an approaching storm. Business is growing stagnant, ambition is becoming dormant and energy is relaxing. * * * On every hand you hear the royalty, crown claims, the withdrawal of creeks from prospecting, the small claims, and the reverting of claims to the crown, etc." Then what followed? Can any reader of the Nugget ever forget the Special Edition issued July 9th, and the well-stated "rottenest piece of business and rankest injustice the gold commissioner's office has yet perpetrated," which caused even Major Walsh to use this exact language: "The administration of affairs on Dominion creek has been a mess from start to finish, and I am sick and tired of the whole business," which practically said "that the gold commissioner is incompetent to hold the office he now holds." None here, they will ever forget the excitement of that moment, as the thousands of men became familiar with the bungling incompetency at least of those acts of the commissioner and where in all Christendom, despite all the power of official pomp and show would men in silence submit to such outrages other than in this, then thoroughly overawed community.

Incidents and circumstances of official incompetency, imposition, extortion, and rottenness continued to flow as regularly as the days rolled around. The Koch incident will refresh the minds of any who are inclined to be forgetful. The article of August 27th, which is certainly specific enough for people who cry "specific," wherein was fully explained the modus operandi of gaining admission to the gold commissioner's office. Then came the most specific of charges and exposés, and which came as near producing a riot in this territory despite soldiers, police and guns as will ever be seen again; when 5,000 earnest men stood in front of the A. C. Co.'s building and listened to the damning evidence furnished by the Nugget, from its issue of August 31st, fully detailed under the caption "A Prosecutor is an Ass," wherein was fully portrayed the experience of a Nugget reporter in the office of then Crown Prosecuting Attorney Wade and member of the Yukon council, and his negotiations with the office stenographer, Mr. Kellum, and assignment of a claim on Gold Bottom, after an exposé in these columns of the plan of the "gang," to jump Dominion creek and it needed at that moment but one courageous leader to say: "Who will follow me?" to have rid the country of those bringing about such a state of affairs.

But why continue further about the incompetency of the gold commissioner and his office. The good work has been accomplished. His career as a mischief-maker for hard-working and tolling men is over for his successor is on the ground. Let him therefore drop into the oblivion from whence he came.

COULD NOT BE TAKEN IN.

Belated Travellers Refused Admission on the Steamer John C. Barr.

An Unfortunate Man Is Compelled to Lose Both Hands and Feet—He Will Probably Not Live.

Mr. A. J. Eldred, just from Circle City relates a story which shows the difference in the character of men. A cold, bitter night found his party abreast of the John C. Barr laid up in winter quarters. They went aboard and were received heartily by the crew. They asked permission to lay their blankets on the floor for the night and 17 out of the 18 people amongst not only consented but were anxious to see the travellers under shelter. But the captain was to be seen, and gruffly commanded that the travellers "move on." They begged him to name a reasonable charge, as they had both money and food but desired shelter. Prayers and protestations alike were in vain and the party were ushered out into the darkness.

There are some things which are wrong only under certain circumstances and the recent arrivals in Dawson who experienced the inhospitality of the captain of the John C. Barr believe this to be one of those cases. Mr. Eldred says this is not at all the first occasion of the kind, for other passers-by, and at least two of them with frozen feet, were greeted with the captain's autocratic "No! d'yer think I'm keeping a hotel?"

Contrast the foregoing with the actions of the master of the Rock Island No. 2, laid up in winter quarters at Forty Mile. On the night of Nov. 26 a peculiar cry of moaning distress was heard by anyone going on deck. A cursory examination around the ship showed all clear and no cause for the occasional moan. The captain was still unsatisfied and directed a search with lanterns in an ever widening circle. At last in a deep slough near by was found a man in a badly frozen condition, semi-conscious and weakly calling for help. Tenderly yet hastily, by the captain's orders the unfortunate man was hoisted aboard the ship and the ship's surgeon, Dr. Marshall, hurriedly summoned. Everybody volunteered into a corps of assistants and everything was done to restore the circulation in those poor frozen extremities. For days and nights the attentions on the sick man were unremitting but on the third day the doctor decided both hands and feet to be dead and endangering the life of the unfortunate Madison. On November 29 both feet and both hands were removed and only a helpless trunk left to fight the battle of life. The poor man was heartbroken and determined he would rather die than live such an awful life of helpless uselessness as is now before him. Fearing that a powerful frame and strong constitution would pull him through, he was refusing positively to eat anything at all when the last arrivals here were leaving Forty Mile on November 30th.

The unfortunate Madison has a brother on Forty Mile river who owns some properties considered to be good. Madison had been drinking a little upon the night of his misfortune, but it is not known whether he fell down the slough in which he was found or whether he wandered down there and went to sleep. An inquiry into the doings of the saloon keeper is pending, as some evidence there is of criminal negligence in allowing a man to leave the house with a low temperature prevailing outside when he is not fully able to care for himself.

Christmas Eve Ball.

A grand Christmas Eve ball will be given at the Pioneer Hall on the evening of Dec. 24th under the management of H. A. Laylor. A fine orchestra has been engaged and an elegant supper will be served at the Fairview by Miss Mulrooney. The souvenir program to be used on the occasion will be the first of the kind seen in Dawson. There will be a prize wait at 2:30 a. m. the judges to be selected by the audience. The prizes, two handsome gold medals, made and donated by Gorham the jeweler, are now on exhibition in his show window on First Ave., first district.

Didn't Get Paid.

EDITOR NUGGET: As it has been rumored around town that I was paid \$200 for breaking the trail up Humana creek, I beg leave to assert in your columns, that I never asked for aid nor received any, and that instead of getting \$200 for the job I paid out and lost about \$200; and, furthermore, that I broke it for my own benefit, and to avoid paying toll, and anyone is welcome to use it. I have freighted a number of years with dogs and three years with horses, and I have found that if you want a trail, the only way is to break it and say nothing. I followed the same rule this time. I have heard since that there was \$200 subscribed to be the trail; but up to a few days ago I had not seen any fixing done. Very respectfully yours,
CHAS. SONNERBOM

All persons wishing to send mail or have me transact any business for them on the Sitka de will please perfect arrangements on or before the 15th of December as I will leave early on the 15th of December.
JACK NIXON

For Sale. A limited number of Japanese cash boxes with strong locks. Nugget office.

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