The Klondike Nugget

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LETTERS

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KLONDIKE NUGGET.

MONDAY, MAY 18, 1903.

TREADGOLD SITUATION.

The latest developments in the Treadgold matter leave a clear duty before the board of trade which the public is justified in anticipating will be met with promptness and energy.

The board of trade is a non-partisan body, composed of the business men of the city and having for its object the furtherance of such public movements as are calculated to promote the general prosperity of the community.

The board of trade has recognized as one of the essentials to the progress of the district complete harmony and understanding between the mining and mercantile interests of the territory. On more than one occasion the members of the organization have asserted their determination to render all possible assistance and protection to the men engaged in the mining industry, upon the ground that all other interests in the territory are subsidiary in importance to those of the men who are engaged in the work of developing its natural resources.

In pursuance of this belief the board of trade has taken a strong and aggressive position upon the proposal of the government to confirm the rights granted in the famous Treadgold concession. By resolutions, petitions and through the medium of a widely circulated pamphlet the board has declared itself as opposed unalterably to the Treadgold grants as being calculated to injure the individual miner and place the entire district practically at the mercy of a gigantic monopoly.

Now comes the announcement of the fact that the government is convinced that the Treadgold concession is a measure calculated to promote the interests of the miners of the territory and as such it is proposed to secure the concessionaires in the rights which they at present hold by virtue of orders in council.

On the other hand, the conviction prevails in this camp that the government's attitude is wrong. The belief is held throughout the district that the Treadgold grants are a menace to the vested interests in the district and as such should be totally cancelled by the government rather than confirmed.

In this emergency, the public naturally looks to the board of trade for further suggestions. The people are unalterably opposed to Treadgold and the government appears to be convinced that the granting of the concession is a right and proper procedure. The board of trade has taken the lead in the opposition to Treadgold and having placed their hands to the plough it is not likely that the members of the organization will turn back at this juncture.

Hope is still held out that a properly accredited delegation sent to Ottawa to present the subject personally to the government may be able to accomplish the desired results. If total annulment cannot be secured, then such modifications may be suggested and adopted as will relieve the concession of its most burdensome provisions.

Such seems to be the logical and natural course to follow for it is quite apparent that everything that could be done in the way of sending petitions and resolutions has already been attempted. The occasion is not one for dealing in wild threats and extravagant language. No good accrues from such proceedings and much harm may be done. It is in such extremities as the one which now confronts this community that calm and unimpassioned counsel should prevail.

Let the board of trade take the leadership in the matter and supported by the unanimous voice of the people carry the opposition to Treadgold forward as long as there is the slightest reason left for belief that the same may prove successful.

CONVEY A LESSON.

Five deaths by drowning within a space of three days have been reported in the news columns of the Nugget. The record is a sad one and carries with it a lesson which should leave a lasting impression upon men who engage in river work.

Long contact with the dangers which lurk in the icy waters of our northern streams too often begets a carelessness which at any time may prove fatal. Constant watchfulness and caution are the only safeguards against the treacheries of such rivers as the Klondike and Yukon, whose innumerable under currents and numbing waters are ever on the watch for victims.

Two or three men are often seen floating down the Yukon on a frail raft of two or three logs—apparently courting every risk possible.

Small boats and canoes loaded far beyond their proper capacity are an every day sight, suggestive of perfect contempt for the dangers of the river.

The series of tragedies which have occurred in the past few days convey a warning which should be given heed.

Canada in the Eyes of Scotchmen.

To many of us Canada still remains our best, our cleanest, greenest, most attractive colony. It may be that India is the "brightest jewel in the Imperial crowd"; we read of the splendors of durbars and take it for granted; the sentiment is merely a phrase for most of us who are seldom privileged to see the crown or its jewels. Britons, as a rule, could never think of India as a permanent home, however convenient it may be for making money in, and that applies also to South Africa, which, in the common estimate of most of us, is a country barren of beauty, unromantic (save for such fierce romance as has been at the making there for a few years past), and somehow wholly alien in its atmosphere, spoiled by vulgar, soulless muck-raking for diamonds and gold, and suspected, rightly or wrongly, of being in the hands of the Jews. Australia and New Zealand come closer to the heart of the average Scotsman and Englishman than India or Africa, but we think of New Zealand as too remote, and of Australia as unhappy in an arid clime. Canada, of all our possessions overseas, with a climate like our own, yet infinitely superior, occupied for a century by our own race, made so largely by Scotsmen, as her geographical nomenclature indicates, and with a destiny better balanced between industrialism and the pastoral life than any other land gives promise of, is the colony that the Scot who is not a money-grubber and astray in his ideals, must most fondly contemplate. It is the "golden west" of our youth, "the new and happy land" of our fathers' songs; when we see its name in print we must think of the rich rolling prairies the huge forests, the vast cordilleras, great lakes, mighty rivers, sounding cataracts, the buffalo (alas! no more!), the redskin, snowshoe, moccasin, rifle, wigwam and trail, stockhouse and portage. Are these not infinitely more precious words to the unspoiled mind than "Gympies," "Jumpers," or "Rands"?—Glasgow Evening News.

Wants Annexation

New York, March 31.—The New York Sun says: "The question of fortifying Canada against attack from the United States is greatly agitating the military representative of Great Britain in the Dominion, Lord Dundonald, and also his superiors in the British government. Twelve million dollars is the initial sum asked to obtain the desired safeguards. A discussion of our relations with Canada is always welcome no matter what prejudice or purpose starts it. To raise the question at all is to point straight at the commercial and political absurdity of the fact that the 49th parallel of north latitude between the Atlantic and Pacific can be the subject of military defence or commercial distinction. Canada and the United States should be one American republic. To maintain an American continent north of the Rio Grande, such divisions as make Europe a perpetual fountain of warlike perils and expenditures, is an anachronism which the spirit of the twentieth century says cannot be terminated too soon."

McDonald's Wife

New York, April 12.—A letter has appeared in the Herald of this city from an old friend and ardent admirer, both of the late General Sir Hector Macdonald and his wife, Lady Macdonald. The letter casts much new light on the tragic suicide of the general. The communication reads:

"May I address you on a rather painful subject? In a section of the American press a grave injustice is being done to the late General Macdonald's wife and to his memory. A story was printed on Thursday that they had been separated for some years before he gained his commission.

"I had the privilege of the personal friendship of both, and know the facts of the case. Separated they certainly were, but only by the exigencies of military life. They first met at a dance in Edinburgh, and Sir Hector even at that time held a commission as lieutenant in her late majesty's forces. They were not married until he got his company and became a captain. Their son has just passed his fifteenth birthday. I had a letter from Lady Macdonald on Monday telling me that the general was expected to land next day and speaking with great joy about it. When the general was last in England two years ago, next month, he displayed the utmost devotion to both his wife and son.

"As for the conduct of Sir Hector's funeral, although the warm-hearted Highlanders deserve all praise for their laudable desire to give our dead hero such a funeral as a brave son of the highlands should have, and thus in some measure to show their disbelief of the foul rumors that drove him to his death, yet Lady Macdonald's wishes for a private funeral demand respect. All through her married life her one desire has been to respect her husband's wishes.

"Their devotion in life was wonderful, and I know there is no more brokenhearted woman in the world today than the brave general's no less brave wife. The disgrace lies with the British war office, that could allow so brave an officer to be so buried.

"May I, in closing, say that no one who had ever met the dead soldier would credit for one second the story that led to his tragic end, or have anything but horror for the people who hounded him to his pitiful death. What he did was exactly what any one who knew his low state of health and extremely sensitive nature would expect him to do, and it was probably in the vain endeavor to keep his dear wife and son from hearing such a thing even hinted at that he was driven to seek the peace of death."

Destroyed by Fire

Vancouver, April 3.—The Windsor Cannery was totally destroyed by fire last week. The news reached here from Skeena by a delayed wire. The total loss is $35,000, the entire cannery being burned to the ground. The cannery was owned by Findley, Durham and Ffrodie, and was the second one erected on the Skeena in 1877. The first pack amounted to 3,000 and the last to 17,500 cases. In the winter of 1895 the Windsor cannery was burned, but was rebuilt the same year.

Ladies' White Wear.

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REUNITED HOUSEHOLD

Wife Received by Husband at Jail Door

Hootch Brought Temporary Desolation to Wrongfont Family at Fortymile.

This morning at 11 o'clock Mrs. Annie Best, not Malamute Annie Best as her husband indignantly explained, was released from the barracks jail after serving a sentence of one month.

Annie is a native daughter and to the manor born in that none but Indian blood courses through her veins. She belongs to the Fortymile tribe and one month ago Captain Jarvis committed her from Fortymile for drunkenness. A white man, James Baxter by name, was sent up at the same time for six months, he having furnished Annie with the whisky on which she cultivated a lurid jag.

Annie's husband, F. W. Best, a white man, has been very unhappy during the period of his wife's incarceration. He was standing outside the entrance of the guardroom to receive her on her release this morning and, while there was no outward manifestation of love and affection, the look that each gave the other was indicative of two minds with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one. Annie wore a smile almost as wide as the trail she left in the dust and that portion of her wardrobe not working at the time she carried in a white pillow slip. After looking fondly into each other's eyes for a moment the husband stepped over to a couple of reporters standing by and tacitly explained that his wife's name is Annie Best and not "Malamute Annie" as was stated in one of the papers at the time of her commitment to jail. He seemed greatly pleased that his wife was once more free, that his household is reunited and that the dove of peace will once more lodge in the branches of his fig tree.

Annie also looked happy. She was sober and on her face was that look which indicated a strong resolution to shake off the drink habit, release herself from the clutches of hootch, turn out her toes and be somebody.

Guatemalan Eruption

San Francisco, April 1.—Louis Hirsch, of this city, whose coffee plantation in Guatemala was destroyed by the recent eruption of the Santa Marie volcano, has just returned from an inspection of the devasted districts. He says that the accounts of the cost to Guatemala of the Santa Maria eruption were not exaggerated, and it will take two years, and perhaps longer, for the coffee industry to recover from the blow. "This year's crop will be pretty fair," he added, "although much of the coffee is damaged, some of it badly. Next year's crop will be poor. The laborers released from the ruined plantations would have done much to save the situation, but, unfortunately, these laborers and others for whom there is plenty of work waiting are at present in the military service of the republic. It will be several years before Guatemala recovers from the volcanic outbreak, and some of the plantations will never be anything but barren wastes."

The New Tax

Washington, April 2.—Commissioner General Frank P. Sargent of the Immigration Bureau has returned to Washington from a trip to Canada, where he went to confer with the Canadian railway and steamship officials on the subject of immediately enforcing the $2 head tax on aliens coming into the United States through Canada, provided for in the new immigration law. The Canadian transportation companies had an agreement with this government under the old law, whereby the $1 head tax was collected by them and turned over to this government. The point was raised by the railroads that this agreement contained a clause whereby the higher rate of taxation could be made effective without sixty days' notice. Commissioner Sargent dissipated this impression by the statement that the new tax was made effective by an act of congress, and superseded any agreement that could be drawn up at once, approved and put into operation.

Nuns of Brittany

Quebec, April 3.—Thirty-five nuns of the order known as the Daughters of Jesus, who had been expelled from France by the French authorities, arrived here on Monday, and obtained temporary shelter with the nuns of the Ursuline convent. They come from Brittany. Upon the invitation of Bishop Cloutier, of Three Rivers, a number of these sisters left for that place yesterday afternoon, where they will settle down as teaching sisters in accordance with the rules of their order.

Employer, giving directions — Are you sure you have it all down pat?

New Groom—Me name's Barry sor.

An Elevator Cupid

The inhabitants were chary of entrusting themselves to the elevator in the Bailey Building, for it was connected with an electric motor of such unstable character that the initiated had lost all confidence in it as a means of transportation.

Katherine, however, was not an inhabitant. In her own town elevators pursued the even tenor of their way without vagaries of any sort; so, when her business with the photographer on the top floor was completed, the young woman, with every reason to expect a swift and uneventful journey to the street, stepped confidently into the elevator.

At the fourth floor the elevator stopped to admit a second passenger, a man named Westcott. Westcott differed from Katherine in that he entered the cage-like apartment with a full knowledge of its treacherous tendencies, but Westcott was that morning in a frame of mind to court disaster. He assured himself as he stepped in that it was a matter of complete indifference to him whether the elevator shot suddenly upward and crashed through the skylight or dropped without warning into the basement.

The elevator, however, did neither of these things. Under the guidance of a chubby, blue-eyed youth, it pursued its downward career until it reached the space between the first and second floors; there it stopped.

At sight of her fellow-passenger Katherine had turned pink with embarrassment. The man had muttered something under his breath and bowed frigidly; for, before courting disaster, he had courted Katherine—apparently it had amounted to the same thing. They had parted forever only the evening before, and the ring she had worn for three months was at that moment in Westcott's trousers pocket, where he had thrust it savagely at the end of their quarrel.

"Why are we stopping here?" asked Katherine, turning to the elevator boy of cherubic countenance.

"'Cause we can't go on," returned the boy, producing a bag of peanuts and a dime novel, and proceeding to make himself comfortable.

"The blamed power's off."

"Has it ever—does it often go off like this?"

"Oh, yes," replied the boy, cheerfully. "There's nothin' to be scared of. Sometimes she runs all right for as much as a week, then, again, she won't budge for six or seven hours at a stretch."

"Six or seven hours!" gasped Katherine.

"Yop," replied the boy, settling himself more comfortably on his stool. "Once it was longer, but gin'rally they get her goin' in an hour or two. There's no danger at all, Miss."

The boy gently discouraged further conversation by burying himself in his book. Katherine moved to the end of the long, leather-covered seat. Westcott, at the extreme other end, stared gloomily at the wall.

Katherine looked at her watch; it was already past luncheon time, and she had been too miserable to eat much breakfast. Still—she brightened at the thought—she should not starve, for she had with her a box of chocolates she was taking home to her sister's children.

She looked at her watch again. Only four more minutes had passed, but the pangs of hunger were becoming unendurable. The chubby boy munched peanuts with apparently no thought of his fellow-sufferers. Katherine untied the pink string that bound the candybox, unfolded the paper, lifted the lid and ate a chocolate.

When she had eaten three she glanced at Westcott. He was still gazing at the wall. The walls in elevator shafts are seldom interesting; this one was tinted a bilious green—a color that Westcott abhorred.

"How he must hate me," thought Katherine, eating another chocolate, "when he'd rather look at a wall like that than at me. I wonder what I ought to do? If we were utter strangers, cast away on a desert isle, and he had one biscuit and three drops of water, I should think him horrid if he didn't offer me half. I suppose I ought to offer him some of these chocolates, even if we're not on speaking terms."

Katherine, sitting very straight, and with her eyes straight ahead, pushed the box along the seat. Westcott paid no attention.

"Will you have a chocolate?" asked Katherine, somewhat unsteadily.

Westcott was so sure that he was dreaming that he did not make any answer.

"The lady spoke to you," prompted the elevator boy.

Westcott looked inquiringly at Katherine.

"Will you—will you have a chocolate?"

"No, thank you," replied Westcott, returning to the contemplation of the green wall.

There was another long pause. The neglected box remained half way between the suspended passengers.

"I think you're very—ungentlemanly," said Katherine, at length.

"So you said last night," responded Westcott, coldly.

"You're more so today!"

"How so?"

"You—you know I'm too polite to eat those chocolates and let you go hungry—and I'm fairly starving!"

Westcott, with an air of exaggerated politeness, took a chocolate and ate it, with his eyes fixed unsociably upon the green wall. He dared not trust himself to look at Katherine. Katherine nibbled a bonbon, waited in silence for ten minutes, and again offered the box to Westcott, who gravely helped himself. This operation was repeated until only one remained in the box. The remaining was heart-shaped.

"It's a heart!" exclaimed the elevator boy, who had read too many dime novels not to recognize an interesting situation when he was face to face with one, and who was unable to contain himself longer. "You'll have to toss up for it, I guess. It is a heart, ain't it?"

"Why, so it is," replied Katherine. "Will you have it, Bobs—pardon me—Mr. Westcott?"

Westcott shot a quick glance at Katherine, who had gradually moved two feet away from the end of the leather-covered bench, and was consequently that much closer to the man she had jilted the previous evening.

"Do I understand that you are offering me a heart?" asked Westcott.

"It's your turn," said Katherine, flushing a beautiful crimson.

"Westcott took something that glittered from his pocket, laid it in the box beside the chocolate heart, and pushed the box toward Katherine.

"Do we trade even?" he asked, with his eyes on Katherine's.

The elevator boy, agog with excitement, retired discretely but with reluctance to the pages of his novel, but not before he had recognized in the glittering object a ring.

And when he looked again the box contained two hands, although only one was visible; that man was no longer gazing at the wall.

The hand of the indicator above the boy's head was leaping from number to number in a curious fashion, sounds of ringing bells and impatient voices drifted from the elevator shaft; but the man paid no heed.

Then the boy moved the lever slowly, even reluctantly, and the elevator dropped gently to the ground floor.

"Oh!" exclaimed Katherine, drawing her hand gently from Westcott's and giving a long sigh. "We're actually down."

"Yop," beamed the boy, "and you might have been down fifteen minutes ago just as well as not; but I seen how things was goin', and I thought I'd help 'em along."

"You shall come to the wedding, Cupid," said Westcott, slipping a heavy coin into the cherubic boy's hand. And he added, as they stepped out of the elevator on to the solid ground, "If I ever own an elevator you shall run it."

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