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of from five to seven cents a pound, or about one half what was formerly charged from Skagway to the summit of White Pass. This road has been surveyed as far as Fort Selkirk, but there is little reason why it should be extended beyond its present limit. With the expenditure of a few hundred dollars in improving the channel at Miles Canyon, and at Squaw, White Horse, and Five Finger Rapids, light draft boats will take freight and passengers down through the lakes and rivers to Dawson easily, safely, and speedily.

No one can know better than the Canadian officials the rich possibilities of this rugged country when properly developed. If she should obtain a seaport, Canada will hold the key not only to her own vast mineral country, but to Alaska as well.

She is willing to wait for time and toil to reveal this hidden wealth. If the rich veins of pure copper reported by capable prospectors in the Copper River district are ever worked, the ore will probably have to be taken out some other way, but the great bulk of the Alaskan business will be transacted by way of Skagway.

So this little ambitious city, with its push and enterprise, its fairly good harbor, and its accessibility from other ports, is of more importance to the United States and to Canada than hundreds of square miles of mineral territory yet unexplored and unknown. The day is not remote, but nigh, when Skagway will be the metropolis of Alaska, and the strange country that surrounds her, crowded as it is with wonders of scenery and of nature, will pulse and throb with human activity.

THE MIDNIGHT MINUET.

It is dark and dull and gloomy, with its windows facing north,
This the old colonial mansion from its ivy peering forth.
There's a flintlock o'er the mantel, and a flag above the door,
And a harp with strings that dangle in the dust upon the floor.
But when falls the purple twilight, then the silver sconces flare,
Comes a hand upon the knocker, and a step upon the stair,
And she courtesies from the threshold in her sweet, patrician grace,
As he grounds his moldy musket by the fireless chimney place.

Here and there the yellow laces from her sleeves have dropped away,
And her pearls have lost their luster in the darkness and decay;
Brown and scentless are the roses that are clustered on her breast,
But her gown is gold embroidered, and her hair with powder dressed.
He is clad in tattered garments that were once of buff and blue,
On his temples is a bandage where the blood is oozing through;
Sash and plume are grimed with battle, spur and saber red with rust—
But the harp is faintly sounding from its covering of dust.

It is played by unseen fingers that with touches soft and slow
Gently wake the mournful music of a century ago;
Quaint old tunes that were in fashion in the days of patch and puff,
Periwigs and ostrich feathers, lace cravats and perumed snuff;
And they walk with prim precision through the stately minuet,
Though her faded satin slippers with the grave dews glisten wet,
And he moves a little stiffly, since beneath the flower and vine
He has slept a hundred summers on the field of Brandywine.

Hark! The ancient clock is striking in the dim deserted hall,
Slowly, as with age grown weary, twelve deliberate strokes in all,
And the tinkling harp is silent, and the lady lifts her train.
And the soldier takes the musket to his shoulder once again;
Dies the candle in the socket, loudly creaks the crumbling stair,
Swings the door on broken hinges with a rush of chilly air.
But the mouse behind the curtain and the spider in her net
Still remain to tell the story of the midnight minuet.

Mina Irving.

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