

The Klondike Nugget

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KLONDIKE NUGGET. TUESDAY, MAY 19, 1903.

A DIFFICULT PROBLEM.

In estimating the possibilities of securing the revocation of the Treadgold grants from the Dominion government, consideration must be taken of all the circumstances which have led up to the situation as it presents itself at the present time. It is always well in any argument to understand as thoroughly as possible the position taken by the other side. Such information may often lead to the adoption of an intelligent course of procedure and in the absence of the same foolish or misguided action is likely to be taken. Briefly, therefore, it may be said that the government offers in explanation of the broad powers and privileges conferred upon Treadgold and associates the indisputable fact that the mining districts of the territory stand badly in need of an adequate water supply.

The necessity of a water system which will give abundant sluicing facilities to the hills and benches adjoining the various creeks has been a fruitful subject for discussion through the press and on the platform for several years past. The matter has been urged upon the government at different times and in varying forms, through the agency of petitions, memorials, addresses, etc. Usually the request has been made that the government undertake the work either directly or by guarantee, the belief prevailing throughout the territory that a private system would place too much power in the hands of its promoters.

To this argument the government makes answer that the importance of the water question is fully recognized and understood at Ottawa. It is said to be the desire of the cabinet to meet the wishes of the people in so far as the same is possible. The government wishes to see a water supply established but is unable to appropriate the money necessary. Therefore, the plan has been devised of liberally subsidizing a private syndicate who will undertake the desired enterprise upon their own responsibility. Furthermore, it is stated that the amended order-in-council, under which Treadgold and associates are operating, has been pronounced acceptable to the people by delegates who were sent direct from this city to confer with the government in regard to the question.

Thus it will be readily understood that the ministers of the government occupy a strong position of vantage in their present contention. They are able to say to parliament that they are taking practical measures to meet a demand which originated among the people of this district and that the method employed has been pronounced satisfactory by duly selected delegates sent to Ottawa by direction of a public mass meeting held in this city. Such is the situation as it presents itself, and it is at once apparent that the average member of parliament, lacking altogether in actual knowledge of the existing conditions in the territory will readily accept the views of the government's responsible advisers.

With the foregoing understanding of the facts as they now present themselves, the task of altering the government's policy is certainly a difficult one—if not one absolutely impossible of accomplishment. Certainly it demands that cool reason and judgment be brought to bear, rather than vague threats and appeals to passion. The Treadgold grants are no longer to be regarded as the pet scheme of a single minister but as a measure included in well defined government policy—having the voice and sanction of the premier and other members of the cabinet. Further dealing with the question, we earnestly suggest, should be approached in the light of all the lately developed phases of the situation.

The board of trade is the natural body to handle the subject, and as practical men its members may be expected to bring good sense and sound judgment to bear. In spite of the government's manifest determination to stand by the concession, it may still be possible to accomplish something in the way of substantial modification, and if total annulment is impossible, then the next best thing should be essayed. In its present condition the problem is essentially difficult, and well deserves the most careful thought and consideration.

EXCURSION RATES. The Nugget suggests to the Victoria day committee the advisability of approaching the different stage lines with a view toward securing special rates for those who come from the creeks to attend the celebration. It is undoubtedly a fact that many people from the mining districts will be compelled to forego a visit to town on that occasion owing to the fares on the stages. The various companies it would seem might follow the custom of railroads in outside communities where reduced rate excursions are always conducted on the occasion of similar celebrations. Here is an opportunity for the stage people to open their hearts to the public in a manner that will be appreciated. The manner in which new villages are springing up on the creeks is pretty fair evidence of the fact that the district is going ahead at a satisfactory rate. The youngest town in the territory is Granville at 244 lower Dominion which gives promise of becoming a very lively community. Several little towns will spring up in the Stewart district during the summer, all of them giving assurance of proving good patrons of Dawson merchants. Every new community means greater solidity to values in this city and should be welcomed accordingly. A brief dispatch in the Sun this morning announces that the government will send a special commission to Dawson to look into the Treadgold matter. The authenticity of the dispatch should be ascertained. If correct, anything in the nature of radical action at this time is to be deprecated.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

Communications for publication in this column are invited upon all questions of public interest. Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible and to sign their names, which will be withheld if desired.

Treadgold Grant. (The following letter was declined publication in the Sun. It is cheerfully inserted in the Nugget in conformity with the policy of this paper to give the widest possible latitude for discussion of all matters of public concern.) To the Editor of the Yukon Sun:—Sir,—Do you not count too readily upon the severity of the Yukon people when you ask them to applaud your somersault on the Treadgold question and to imitate the performance? It is only now that the matter has come to possess another side, and does this "other side," ignored up to the present, represent the true view? "The people of intelligence," you say, "have admitted it for some time, but some of them have been carried away by the noisy clamor of those who have not a stake in the country and do not wish anyone else to have one."

The board of trade, the city council, the elected members of the Yukon council, the Liberal Association—every representative body in the territory has declared in strong and unambiguous terms against the transaction. The Ross campaign was fought on a platform, of which withdrawal of the concession "forthwith" was a plank. When Mr. Woodworth put to candidates the question, "Will you agree to advocate and insist upon the cancellation of the Treadgold concession?" Mr. Congdon, managing the government forces, replied, "I know the views of Mr. Ross as well as anyone can, and have no doubt he will advocate the course of action you suggest in your questions."

These utterances are the "clamor" which, you say, proceeds from "those who have not a stake in the country and do not wish anyone else to have it." Many Conservatives laid aside their party allegiance during the contest, willing to sacrifice the political associations of a lifetime for the accomplishment of reforms affecting this territory, and relying on the promises made on Mr. Ross's behalf that he would be the instrument of their patriotic purpose. It was generally admitted that a united opposition could sweep this constituency in any fair fight. What hope is there that these men will ever again rise above their political prejudices, to combine for the general welfare, when they have in memory the present instance of astonishing perfidy? No doubt, as you say, the concession is nothing but a water grant. The terms and conditions annexed to it, and the special privileges conceded, are everything. Had only the good of the territory been considered the government before committing itself to a contract would have publicly announced the matter as a subject for inquiry, the opinions and wishes of the practical miners of the district would have been consulted; discussion and investigation would have preceded action. When will the creek claims be worked out? When will a water system be required? What will be the cost? Should there be one system, or several? Under what circumstances can such a measure be safely introduced? Should it be a government work, or a private undertaking? These questions require careful and prolonged consideration under the search light of publicity, the only safeguard of popular rights against the rapacity of interested and unscrupulous schemers. Why then was an agreement, involving enormous franchises and vitally affecting the

material interests of every member of the community, made in the privacy of a minister's office. Why the indecent haste to bind the country to a promoter who is not compelled to take the first step for six years? Why was no opportunity given for competitive offers, by which the odious monopolistic character of the present arrangement might have been eliminated? "The very" worst feature of the concession," you tell us, is Treadgold's "personal propensity to hog all the claims possible." What have personal propensities to do with public business? Treadgold; it is true, holds over two miles of claims on Bonanza creek. The order-in-council is so constructed as to exempt these claims from representation. But what harm is that to the miner except that he knows himself to be the victim of inequality and injustice.

The privileged position Treadgold is able to command and enforce his order-in-council has become legally operative, and before he has dug a ditch or laid a pipe, or an intricate fortalice of what may be expected should the concession be allowed to stand. One instance of his superiority to the law has been cited; others readily occur. No one is ignorant of the scandalous and oppressive abuse of government authority by which he was able to force a transfer to himself of a controlling interest in the Rock creek water franchise. If he can do these things now, what limit will there be to his power over the fortunes of the country when fully established in his ascendancy? The government then will have raised up a Frankenstein monster when it cannot master this suffering community, deprived of representative institutions, the mining lands—its sole wealth—administered four thousand miles away by a minister not responsible to its people, will be reduced to the last condition of bondage, when "Treadgold, controlling the water, will control the mines and the miner, and will be able to give full swing to his boundless personal propensity to hog all the claims possible." Who can contemplate his growing greatness without being reminded of the picture given us in Shakespeare of the Roman dictator?

"Why, man, he doth stride the narrow world, Like a Colossus; and we petty men, Walk under his huge legs, and peep about To find ourselves dishonorable graves." Twenty years ago Clifford Sifton was one of those who tore up the rails of the C. P. R. and compelled Sir John Macdonald to exclaim, "We cannot check Manitoba." Let us profit by the example. Nothing will be gained by lying down and allowing ourselves to be trampled upon; much less by following the sycophantic advice to erect a monument to the "hog" as the Yukon's "greatest benefactor." Let us, rather, make Canada ring with our indignant protests, and the result will be, as in the case of the Mackenzie & Mann contract, that the government must bow to the force of public opinion.

Dawson, Y. T., May 18th. R. W. SHANNON. Dance at Magnet. A dance will be given at the Strathcona hotel, Magnet city, tomorrow evening. Miss Jennie Parry the proprietress is making preparations for a most enjoyable affair. Senator Smoot. Salt Lake, Utah, April 6.—Senator Reed Smoot, the Mormon apostle, delivered a strenuous sermon in the presence of 12,000 Mormons gathered in an annual conference from twenty states and ten foreign countries. Although the Mormon birth rate per husband in past years has been fourteen to the family, Apostle Smoot made a rather sensational address in support of President Roosevelt's race suicide theory. Smoot's argument departed radically from the lines of thought followed by the church leaders, but when he urged Mormons to rear more children he was applauded. "Harry and rear children. The best American citizen is the man who rears a big family and teaches his sons patriotism," thundered Smoot. "There are too many people who do not want to be bothered with children," he declared. "There are too many unwilling fathers and mothers. It was one of the first laws given to man. We ought certainly to love the children; better than we do the lap-dog. President Roosevelt has called attention to the question of race suicide. Mrs. Roosevelt is thankful that she is a mother and can bring her children up to be American citizens. I wish I could say to the world, 'Stop this race suicide, if you don't want families don't get married.'" The apostle, bearing in mind that President Smith of the Mormon church now has 1,000 descendants, said, "Don't be ashamed of big families. Let them say that a Mormon has thirteen families. That thirteen families are not a discredit to the father. President Roosevelt will tell you that when he comes here next month." Investigation following Smoot's speech showed that within twenty miles of Salt Lake there are now three fathers who have families ranging from fifty-one to seventy-one children. These fathers will be the first to greet President Roosevelt.

Stroller's Column.

How are the idols of childhood shattered? In youth we form ideals and opinions that are most rudely demolished by the experience and observation of after life. Before the Stroller had reached his fifteenth birthday he had read all the books and papers he could find treating on the North American Indians. His blood boiled when he read of the manner in which the Tuscarawas had been driven from their hunting grounds, how the Potawatamies had been deprived of their buffalo ranges and how the Sioux, Snakes and dozens of other tribes had been corralled on reservations and deprived of the privileges of practicing their former unrestrained habits and time-honored traditions.

At that time the Stroller's blood was just coming to the boil, otherwise he probably would not have looked at the matter so seriously. He had seen pictures of gracefully formed Indian maidens, with long strings of beads around their necks and a wealth of wavy, glossy hair hanging coquishly down their downy cheeks. In fact, before the Stroller was over twelve years of age his idea of a happy and romantic life was to have all the striped stick candy he could eat and a squaw wife. At that time he had never seen an Indian outside of Cornell's physical geography and his ideas were that a Laughing Water or a Cry-When-It-Thunders would be a charming article of furniture in any man's house.

But time, observation and an acute sense of smell have dispelled these delusions of youth and only yesterday when the Stroller saw a white man lingering around the entrance to the jail waiting for his Indian wife to complete a 30-day sentence for drunkenness he thought of his youthful imaginations, blushed to himself and then wondered what sort of bringing up the man who was lingering around the jail door had. The time was when an account of the pale face hanging like Spanish moss around a welcome with open arms his bronzed wife would have appealed to the Stroller as both romantic and heroic. Yesterday it appealed to him as being a case of bad taste, mental depravity, moral insanity and utter disregard for the rules of sanitation. The man did not seem to deplore his allegiance with the relic of a lost and undone race, but on the other hand appeared to be proud of his position in life and to admire the squaw's face which was evidently made for playing possum, in that it is not one which would show signs of either good or evil fortune.

The Stroller knew a young man in the State of Washington who answered to the name of Woodtick William. He acquired the name through his love for the study of entomology in home life. He was romantic by nature and loved a sedentary life with the result that he espoused a daughter of the Muckletoe tribe. His wife kept him digging claims much of the time with the result that sitting on the cold moist beach drove Woodtick William into consumption and finally into a rough pine box.

Baldheaded men will learn with regret that already the festive mosquito has made his debut for the present season and that the bill appears to be longer than usual, also that the howl in the back is more pronounced than in former years, the new mosquito somewhat resembling a young bicycle rider who tries to scorch and otherwise show off before people who are out walking on Sunday. Another feature of the mosquito of this season that the Stroller never noticed in former years is the shape of the hind feet which bear a striking resemblance to ice creepers, thus preventing any slipping in case the diamond drill strikes a hard place or a claim is being prospected on one of those slippery, shining crowns that we have all our lives noticed on front seats of variety theatres.

Portland, Oregon, April 14, 1903. Dear Stroller,—For some time past I have been writing for publication but thus far I have not seen any of my articles in print. Only last week I sent a poem on spring to the Oregonian but it was returned to me as not desirable for publication. I was very much disappointed as I considered the poem the best effort of my short literary career. The poem started off this way: Now the merry goatlet jumps, And the trifling yaller dog With the tin can maddly bumps— Like an acrobatic frog.

There were 18 verses of the poem and it all bore on spring in the same strain as the first verse. Do you apprehend my style would take in Dawson, or do the people there appreciate my class of ability? If you think there is an opening for me there I will go in and strive to carve out a name for myself. I am twenty years old. A reply will greatly oblige.

ALGERNON H. SAMPSON. It is openings you are looking for, Algeron, the country is full of them, everywhere except on concessions where nothing is being done. They are part of the government. There is a glaring possibility that your style of writing would take well with the people here. That of

H. Pinkiert AUCTIONEER

And Commission Merchant Front St. Opp. L. & U. Dock. come, beware of the tab man. It beats the world, Algeron, in what extent tabs are used here. That is, they were used more extensively in the recent past than they will be again in the future. Time was, Algeron, when a team of paper and one Faber No. 2 were good for 1,786,967 drinks. You will also note that this is a great country for people to stand around holding bags. They have been at it nearly six months and are still at it. They will tell you "I took tabs for my goods and was left with the bag to hold."

There is no reason why you should not be able to sling hash for your passage from Seattle to Skagway. From there take a breakfast bag Whitehorse. Then board a steamer and read one of your spring poems to the "captain." If the boat is crowded he will give up his own room to you. Your poem might start out: Oh Spring, Spring, You giddy young thing.

Is Prospering. In spite of hop dreams to the contrary the Aurora club is daily adding many new names to its roll of membership which now comprises nearly 300 regular members. As a reading and recreation resort the Aurora club is filling a long felt want in Dawson.

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Summ

As the train pulled out of Skagway Lydia leaned back in her cushioned seat and watched the porter busy with her luggage. She seemed to be seeing the fellow passengers through a heavy indifference. Lydia was so apathetic which gave her an oppressive as to be noticeable weight. Would she ever again feel an interest in people at home she ever again be able to do the affairs of life with a minimum of effort? She asked herself these things and the answer came that she was like a dead man.

She turned an absent face toward the landscape. "I did the honorable thing," she told herself, with satisfaction. "I made him believe that the other girl wouldn't let him come down to Skagway to see me off." The sight again, they met a letter amusement. "It wouldn't have been any of my business," her reflections were full of us to be engaged—she could not have played a truer part. For my part, I was willing to break with the boy! It seems heartless, but what course could I take? I would have broken with you, but as for taking Lydia out the other girl—I couldn't do it. No, I could never, never do it!"

After a time Lydia struggled to find some way of watching the people as they were all dumfounded by her. She bought a magazine to read. But the stories were tame, innocent of point. Lydia put the book aside and looked at the people as they passed. All she was destined to do was to appear before the world. At one of the stations a young woman boarded, and having evidently the other section of the coach occupied by Lydia, took the only sitting her. What a sweet, delightful girl! Lydia's apathy forestalled her. She was something—so pretty in the young woman—something—yes, she had a sorrow come but wound unhealed but she was that suggestion which appealed to Lydia seemed at once to be a current of sympathy. The newcomer looked as if she would not be afraid to do the usual and unconventional things. Lydia's face was not touched upon close to her. Lydia, out of a longing to confide in the young woman, she looked the subject that Lydia's heart.

She spoke generally, talking her companion's name. Almost at Lydia a glow of sympathy came into her eyes. "I understand!" Lydia said. "She knows she is suffering now, I know." Lydia repeated the girl's name. "I have done so, to play with you on our day, and then proving to me that the first attraction of the last and only one."

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