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Tale of the Days of



HI YU BILL

and Its Royal Commission

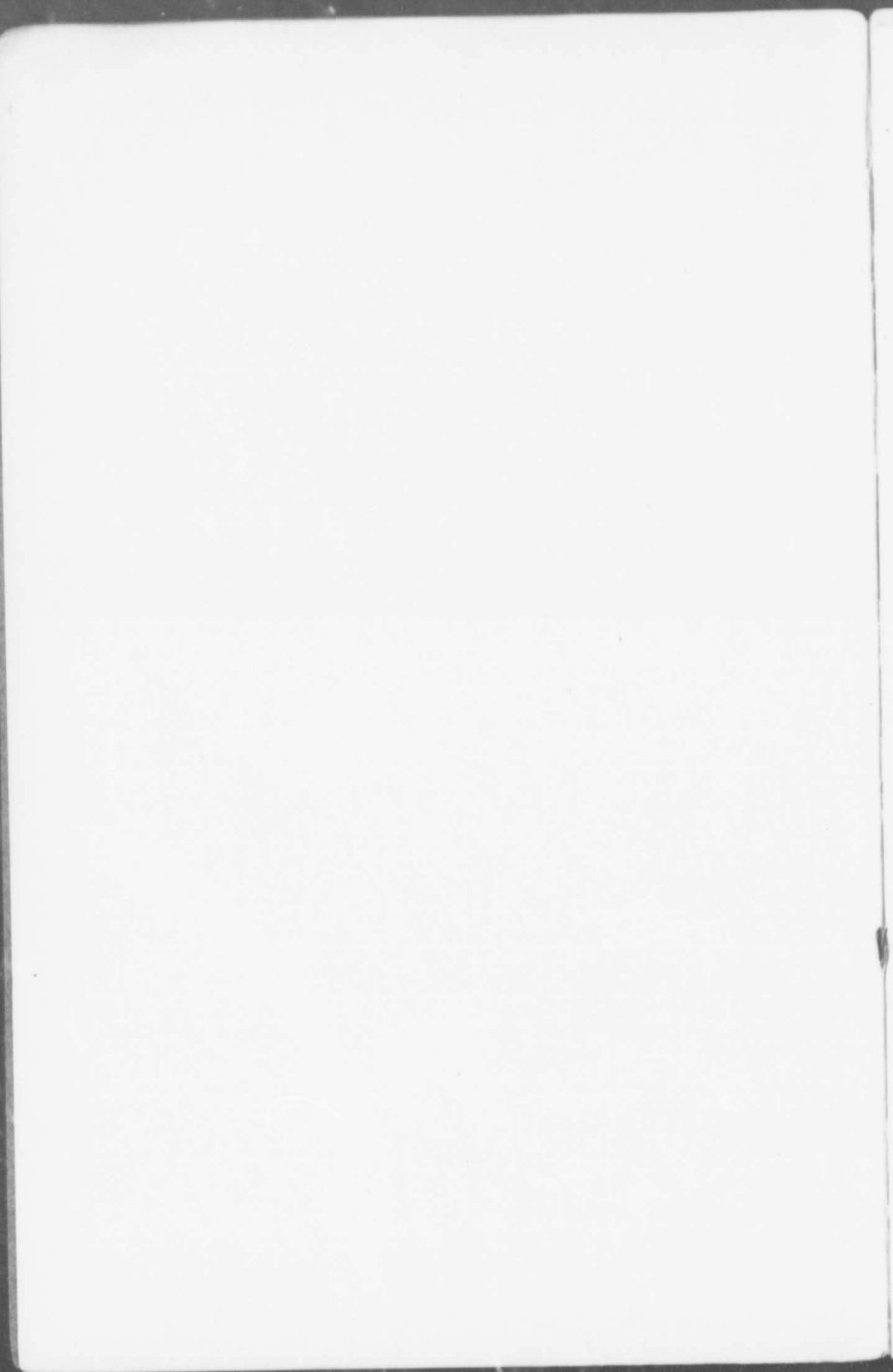
As told by

ISAAC, THE MOOSEHIDE CHIEF

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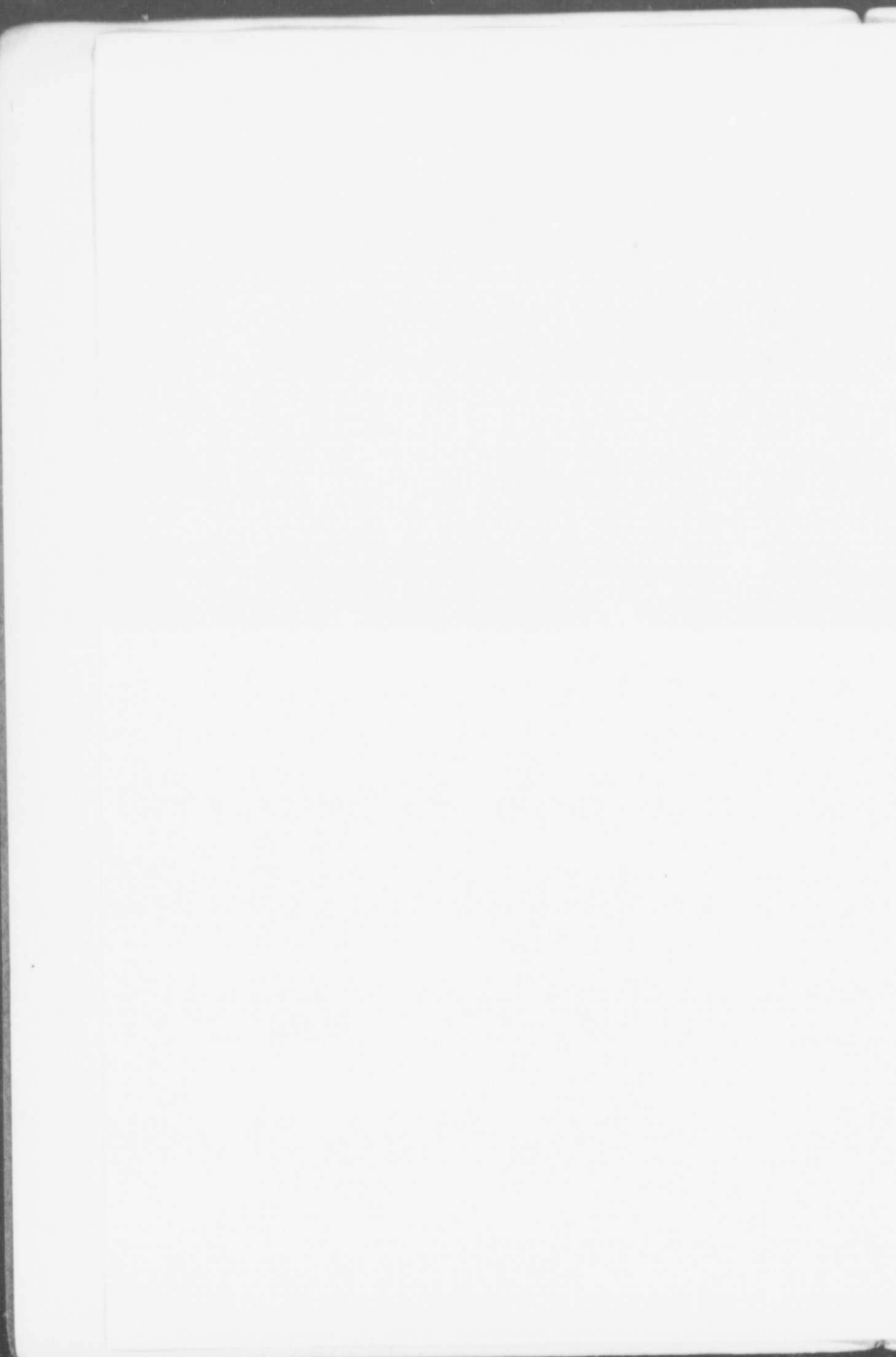
TORONTO
THE MOORE PRINT-SHOP
1908





ISAAC

THE MOOSEHIDE CHIEF



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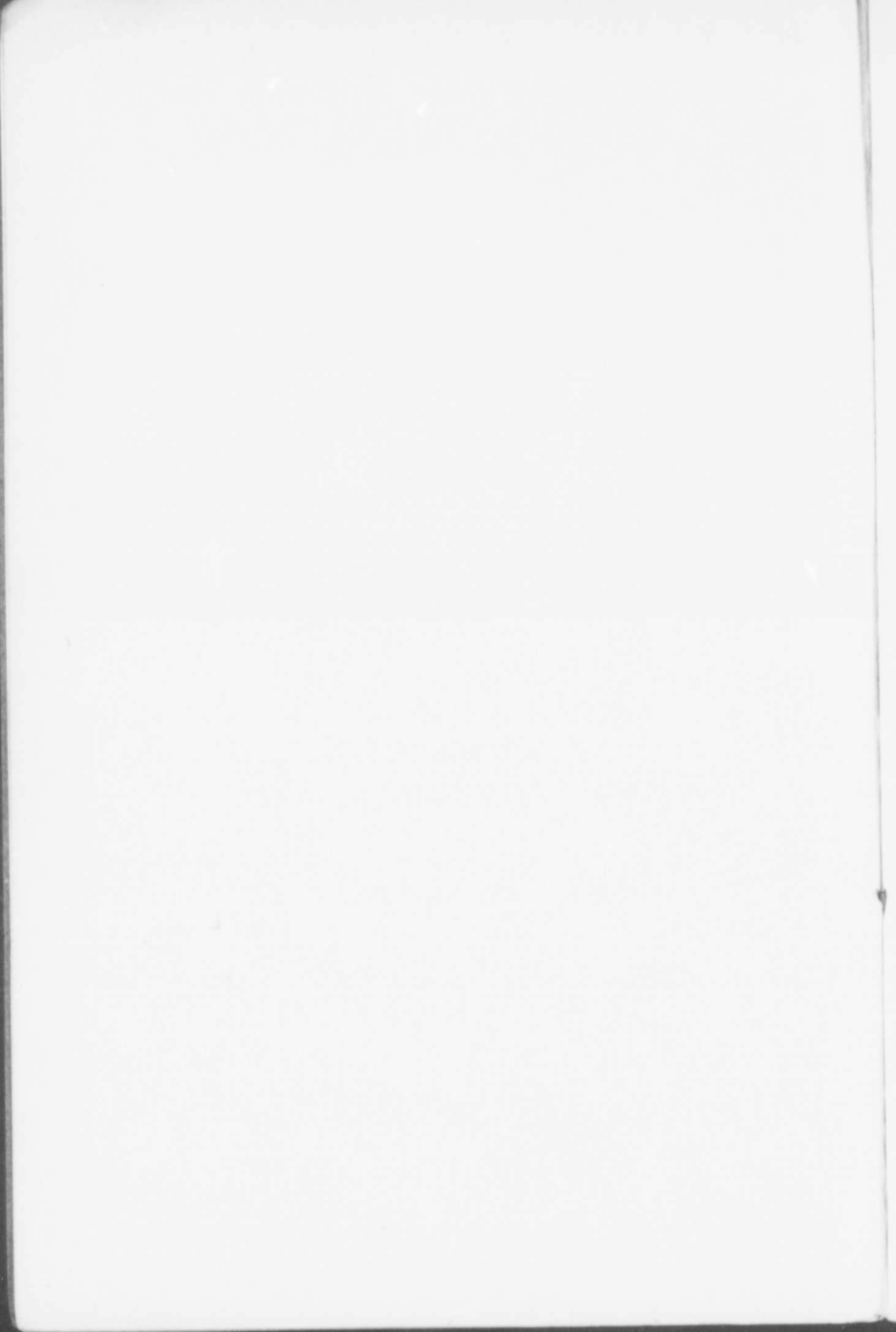
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Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, at the Department of Agriculture, by
S. H. Moore, Toronto, in the year nineteen hundred and eight



L IST to a tale that Isaac told
To his listening braves in the land of gold,
Where the Mooshide Mountains, grimly grand
Like sentries stern o'er the Klondyke stand,
And the Yukon's waters rolling free
In their flight for home in the Arctic sea,
Would seem to linger a moment brief
To list the tale of the Norland's Chief;
The tale of Isaac, grizzled and bent,
In his last Big Talks in the Council Tent.

THE TALE

BACK in the days of Constantine
When Hi Yu Billy ran the line
And marked the posts that stand between
Old Uncle Sam and England's Queen
Then Reds met Whites with friendly hand,
And Reds, when white men joined their band,
This seal of friendship duly paid
With love of fairest Indian maid.

In white man's camp at Forty Mile,
The white man wed in white man's style
For helping hand or motherhood
The dusky daughters of the wood.
And oft I've seen on festal night,
With hall bedecked, 'neath candles' light,
The white man lead with loving pride
His laughing, lithesome Indian bride
In waltz, quadrille, or promenade,
To melody of music made
By ancient organ, to whose strain
Asthmatic bellows wheezed refrain,
While plaintive note of violin,
And merry whistle joined the din,
Or laugh and shout and wild haloo,
That marked the dance "Old Timers" knew.

Those were the happy tribal days,
The white man went the white man's ways;
Now delving near, now seeking far
On mountain summit, stream or bar,
With hearts unheeding storm or cold,
They searching sought their God—the gold;
While oft around the camp fires ring
This song I've heard the daring sing.

SONG.

"Out in the wilds, where the world is waste
Under the Arctic sky—
Low in a grave, with ice encased,
Where at midnight hour strange forms are traced,
Spectral shadows by shadows chased,
As the Northern Lights flash by—
Where phantom fingers have snow wreathes placed,
That's where the daring lie.

Far from the trails in the storm and cold,
Never a human nigh—
Restless seekers for earth's red gold,
Delving deep in the frozen mold,
In the very heart of the Ice King's hold
Where the glacier grim towers high—
Dreaming of sun-lit days of old—
That's where the daring sigh.

Starving in camp at the final stand,
Happy if comrades by—
Smiling at fate, or with freezing hand,
Waving adieu to a beggared band,
Sending soft word to some sunny land,
Bidding a last good bye—
With a nameless grave for the "pay" that's "panned,"
That's where the daring die.

The red man laden from the chase
At white man's fire was welcome face,
His haunch of caribou or moose,
Exchanged for articles of use,
Though somewhat savoring of mart
Were gifts in truth from heart to heart,
No price was named—all dealings then,
Were those 'tween man and honest men.

But all was changed when Carmack's tale
Came ringing down the Yukon trail,
And told of wondrous golden streak
On Rabbit, now Bonanza Creek;
It filled the white man's heart with greed,
In haste he joined the mad stampede
And left behind his Indian spouse,
With ruined hopes and broken vows.
No more along the trail of life
To list the loving name of wife,
While oft 'tween sobs, when heart was sad,
She cursed the gold that made men mad.

THE GREAT STAMPEDE.

FROM mountain's top I oft did view
In countless herds the caribou,
Or seen in air the honking geese
In lines that never seemed to cease,
Or when of Spring there comes the proof
And Yukon bursts its winter's roof,
I've watched the ice floes seaward trend
Processional with scarce an end.

'Twas thus the host of strangers came,
With minds alert and hearts aflame,
And willing hands to test the tales
Of hidden wealth in Klondyke vales.
Like flocks in Spring from out the South
They clustered round the Klondyke's mouth,
Till Dawson City sprang to birth
With citizens from all the earth.
And there did white man's law prevail,
From highest Court to lowest jail;
And ever swift on white man's tracks
Official gatherers of tax
Would from the toilers rudely wrest
Percentages on wealth possessed.

The weary woodsman's troubles o'er
With little raft scarce touched the shore,
Ere he with consternation saw
Some hired minion of the law
A seizure notice fix on same,
For some unknown, unheard of claim;
While protest met the speech, with frown,
"I represent," "I am the Crown."
The winter long—the needed fire,
Withheld his victim's righteous ire,
And wise was he who gave the balm
That white men use for itching palm.

Where miners thronged was writ no book
Of records on which men might look,
Or system by which could be found
If claims were closed, or open ground;

All entries seemed masonic work,
With secret held by single clerk,
Who office used to find aright
The questions paid for previous night.

I've seen the wearied turn away
From waiting hundreds day by day,
And seek some source to gain their right
By channels other than in sight;
The man was met to intervene,
A smooth and silent "go between,"
The lore was lacked, the questions prayed,
They got forwith and duly paid;
Or if 'twere record wished for claim
He did the business much the same,
Conceding always on the staff
That some one held a silent half,
Which proven rich, meant wine with feast,
Or head from normal size increased;
If bed rock held no glittering store,
It lapsed, and ne'er was heard of more.

I've seen men standing in the snow
When frost was "sixty-four below;"
In hundreds lined at Postal door
For hours, till term of waiting o'er,
From hasty search, in careless way,
A clerk would answer, "None to-day."
To those distressed or others vexed,
The autocrat said sharply "next."

The simple sadly turned away
To wait in line another day.
The knowing swiftly sought the man
Had liason with courtesan,
And stated sum agree to pay
For longed for mail that came her way.
To all had eyes it well was known
To women preference was shown;
While men for days their time might bide,
No woman's entrance was denied,
Who had for partner in her work
The pass word of official clerk,
Who scanned her "list" and searched with pains,
And shared with her the ill-got gains.

The wise ones came and wisely saw,
Then hied away to Ottawa;
With Placer claim unsatisfied,
They there acquired a county side.
And it was deemed no idle tale
That methods here did there prevail,
And goodly share or princely fee
Was only door to powers that be.

The white man's press throughout the world
To all who dared, had welcome hurled,
And ne'er was seen on earth till then
Such host of strong and stalwart men,
The best of manhood's glorious prime,
From every land and every clime.
They sought the gold, but everywhere
Seemed held by some concessionaire,
And loud they cursed with ample cause
The travesty on British laws,
Till disappointed, sullen, sore,
They quit the land for evermore.

In Indian camp the braves who lead,
Are famed for noble thought or deed,
In white man's town it seemed alas;
Each office Chief was knave or ass;
And honest ass more trouble gave
By stupid rules, than artful knave.
Thus on and on for hours I might
The cruel wrongs I've seen recite,
That in the name of holy right
On Golden Yukon cast a blight,
When white men prayed their God above,
It seemed his special brand of love
Was meant to fill the faithful's heart
In Meeting House but not in mart;
E'en those who would like angels speak,
Had human nature's old wolf streak;
They'd feign and fawn if gifts were there,
And rend the hand if hand were bare.

THE WOLF STREAK.

It's dog eat dog when the huskies fight
In camp, when the grub runs low;
It's not a question of which has right
To that last lean bit of a bone in sight,
For the brute will beat that is best to bite
And drag his fellows low;
With the dog that's down—it is off that night,
Save for blood marks in the snow.

It's wolf eat wolf when a wolf goes lame
In the lonely forest track.
Though in wolfish ways he have chieftain's fame,
Though of loudest howl and of strongest frame,
Though his fangs fix first in the faltering game
When the skulking hordes attack,
Though he fighting falls—it is off the same,
He is food for the hungry pack.

And it's man eat man when a man goes broke,
Pretty much in the dog-wolf way.
Though a princely sort with a portly poke,
Though his world seems filled with a friendly folk,
That will list and laugh at each lightsome joke
At the wit of the words he'll say—
Yet it's off—and up like a wreath of smoke
When he hasn't the price to pay.

THE WHITE MAN'S TRIAL.

THE arm of the white man's law is long,
And it reaches far when it searches wrong,
And smites a vengeance swift and sure
On the guilty one, if that one be poor;
For the glint of gold it would seem oft-time
Gives a softening tinge to the hues of crime—
Till it's known as truth, what the wise express,
"As the Gold grows big that the guilt grows less."
The cowering poor in the Court rooms stand
While their sentence rings to a listening land,
That evil doer needs hold in awe
The majesty of the white man's law.
If the hungered steal he will slave a year,
If he robs in deal, he's a financier;
The rich if caught have a fine to pay,
While the poor break rock on the King's Highway.

But more than ever is Justice blind,
When it searches fraud of the government kind,
For the Judges job, with its princely fee,
Is the beck or nod of the powers that be,
And brave the sages in whose reports
Are found reproofs for their "Friends in court."
So marvel not that this trial ran
On a serio comical burlesque plan,
To right the gravest of wrongs to man
That the world has known since the world began.

PUBLIC MEETING IN DAWSON.

A motley crowd they were forsooth
From grey haired man to callow youth,
Of low degree and gentle birth,
Those argonauts from all the earth
Had met to voice in one demand,
Redress for ills that cursed the land.

Big Donald's towering form was there,
Mid wild acclaim he took the chair;
A trusted man he was, and true,
For it was said by those who knew,
That in the days of Caribou
When toils of many went to few,
He led his men in Sixty-seven
And cared not he if hell or heaven
Should be his fate, if just his cause
'Gainst man or man's oppressive laws.
No warring words, no wild disputes,
Save mild mix up 'mong malamutes
No single discord marred the day,
To which in seeming serious way,
With jest concealed in earnest word
The Chairman smilingly referred.

"It's not in order here to-day,
As they've no Royalty to pay
Nor claims to represent each year,
That malamutes should interfere;
It's only for the grieved to growl,
It's only for the hurt to howl,
So order please, and let's unite
To crush the wrong and win the right."

Throughout the land t'was not till then
Such speech was heard from brainy men;
They spake of climes they left afar
To fortune seek 'neath Northern star;
They told of hills and valleys fair
And all made life worth living there,
Of home and love—until their fate
By contrast seemed most desolate.
And then with sense of outrage strong,
They'd burst in eloquence on wrong,
While different phase to different ear
Caused some to curse and some to cheer.
But passion past they wrote appeal,
And underlined, "Thou shalt not steal."
The business done—committees named
Address prepared and duly framed,
Subscribed by waiting hundreds hand
Unto the Head Chiefs of the land.

ADDRESS.

My Lords: From out this wilderness,
The miners prayer we would express,
Save—save us in our dire distress,
Not from the icy Arctic cold,
Nor from our sufferings manifold,
But from thy wolves—thy servants bold.
We waive their robbings on the trail,
Their trafficking in private mail,
Their public offices for sale—
And for the present just would name
That den of infamy and shame
Where favorites record a claim.

And like the breath of tempest strong
The mighty chorus swept along;
The call of white men from the wild,
Poor pleadings of the self-exiled.

CHORUS.

We hail thee, Lords, in thunderous tone,
And pray its echo reach the Throne,
Investigate—let all be known.

Refrain—

Yes, Verily, Investigate,
Let all be known.

THE WHITE MAN'S COUNCIL TENT.

NOW moons had passed, and far away
Where white chiefs hold their fitful sway,
In city, termed surpassing fair,
Close by the Falls of Chaudiere;
There stands the white man's Council Tent,
By white men called their parliament;
Great granite piles that pierce the sky,
With vaulted chambers wide and high;
Dark dungeons deep, where lurk Guy Falkes,
High halls, to hark the chiefs big talks,
With galleries lined to lend applause
Or show the world the white man's squaws.

There white men war with lies and tricks,
And call the business politics;
Most awful names each other give—
I marvel men speak thus and live—
Yet all their battles seem about
The difference 'tween the In and Out;
The Outs their need still win with craft,
While Ins their greed surfeit with graft.

And there in ever constant line
As Moslems cling to Mecca's shrine,
Are men who'd railway charters steal
To hundreds hungry for a meal,
A cringing, fawning, flattering crew,
Protesting loud allegiance true,
All quick to shape to shifting view,
And ape the acts their masters do.

In portal door is hollow stone,
Deep worn by human foot alone;
The ceaseless, oft recurrent tread
Of him, who seeks the easy bread,
The empty, aimless life that's led
By patriots, when public fed,
There strong men, supplicants for years,
Beseech with reasons, threats and tears,
Some paltry privilege of power,
That scarce were worth the wasted hour.
Such atmosphere! Methinks that I
For freedom's breath would choke and die.

But to my tale—The Chieftains all
Assembled, met in Council Hall.
In solemn tone was read them there
By ready clerk, the Miners' Prayer;
Each questioned each, but no one knew,
All marvelled much could tale be true?
Till anxious glances searching rest
On the Young Lion of the West,
Who swift, as from the flint fly sparks,
Sprang to his feet with these remarks:

“Provoking, just to think, when we
Have saved our necks as Traders Free
By master stroke diplomacy,
That far away
Out somewhere round the Northern Pole
Where fortune lures the daring soul
And men are beasts beyond control,
There's hell to pay.

“I wouldn't mind so much what's done
To Yankees, who have fortunes won—
The trouble is Cannucks—each one
Knows how to write,
And private mail and public press
Are filled with tidings that express
A state of things I must confess,
A holy fright.

“The world demands—so let us bow
The why and where, the when and how,
Investigate—and do it now
With ready will.
And for the work permit me name
A man untouched with breath of blame
Whose friendship our opponents claim,
My Uncle Bill.”

As rose of dawn illumines the night
Each darkened brow was lit with light,
As courteously, with low bowed head,
They clasped the Lion's paw and said:
“Your Uncle Bill is our saving star,
His reputation is away 'bove par,
We're satisfied he's the ablest far,
We are—we are—we are.”

PROCLAMATION AS POSTED IN DAWSON CITY.

I, termed Commissioner, and other appellatives,
Do by the Grace of God and my wife's relatives,
Herald to land that in mis-rule is wallowing,
Signed by my hand Proclamation, the following:

Greeting: Know all men that I,
Instructed am by powers on high
An outraged world to notify.
That one and all are free hereby
To state their case and testify
To any wrong 'neath Yukon sky,
That to official source can't lie.
What ear hath heard, or seen hath eye,
Or tongue hath told, that would descry
An act where justice seemed awry,
Or deed, that scandal would imply
Officials profited thereby.
So be you far, or be you nigh,
Who being wronged for justice sigh,
Come hither and your cause we'll try.
Signed, I,

Then there was consternation dread
From lowest clerk to highest head;
But soon was stilled each wild alarm;
For it was clear but little harm
Was meant to men the most to blame,
To stint their purse or smirch their fame,
When each reflection on their name
Besmeared the government the same.
While Proclamation, law defines,
Yet novice read between the lines
That rather than elicit facts,
Its purpose was to cover tracks,
And more than all, that no disgrace
Should rest on those in highest place.

The miners oft the notice saw
With silent curse, or loud guffaw;
I mind me words that one did speak
'Mong men on Eldorado Creek.

"Say, Boys! If that ain't richer far
Than any Eldorado dirt—
For all the lads I'll buy the bar—
Yes, blame me, if it takes my shirt.
To think that men have spent their time
To crush and damn official rot,
And with its innocence sublime
That rag is all the rights they've got.

"For if 'twere meant the deal were straight,
They'd quietly go round the mines,
And all those tales investigate
Of fraud and wrong on proper lines;
They can't expect that men 'll squeal
And travel miles to testify,
When they themselves were in the deal
And richly profited thereby.

"Are miners fools, when well they know
Their title lasts from year to year,
And at its close they're forced to go
To those 'gainst whom they now appear?
And this at all their own expense,
Their time they lose, the trails they mush,
To countenance this huge pretence,
This truly Royal White Wash Brush!

"It isn't earnest—isn't fair,
And plainly reads between the lines
That all who haven't acted square
Are pardoned for their monkey shins.
'Twas never meant that they'd be hurt,
'Twas only done for Party sake,
To cover up its Yukon dirt
And hide behind this Royal Fake."

Again I've marked a listening crowd,
Stern faced, in deep dejection bowed,
Would brightening hark to who'd beguile
The hour with witty word and smile.
For tale provocative of mirth,
For sense to size the objects worth,

Those cosmopolitan of earth,
The Yankee bred and Yankee birth,
Were smoothest, quickest, brightest there—
It was acknowledged everywhere,
For coolest impudence and gall
That artful race surpassed them all,
For void of sentimental rot,
They wanted, and they simply got,
While half in earnest, half amused,
This wisdom tendered the abused.

“It's just like shooting fish
Or to lose out in a fight,
For to win the wants you wish
If you but get started right,
You must simply understand
Should you have your sailings clear,
That a dollar in the hand
Beats a dozen in the ear.

“It is fun to hear the roar
'Gainst the whole official class,
When they designate the door
Where one antes up to pass.
You may threaten and command,
But I tell you, boys, right here,
That a dollar in the hand
Beats a dozen in the ear.

“It's like sliding down a hill,
Or like rolling off a log,
For to bask in the good will
Of the sly official hog!
You may promise all that's grand
But success will not appear,
For the dollar in the hand
Beats the dozen in the ear.

“It's as easy as to lie
And you have yourselves to blame,
Just cut out your cuss and cry
And get in and play the game.

Here's the pass word to the band,
It's a maxim cost me dear,
'Tis a dollar in the hand
Beats a dozen in the ear."

I noted one, who'd sought relief,
Gaze on the scroll a moment brief,
Then hitched his dogs to laden sleigh
And down the Yukon made his way,
Yet paused, ere town was lost to view,
And turning, waved a last adieu;
As grieved to leave the place behind
His parting words came down the wind.

"Farewell, you hapless, hootch bewildered hole
I gave to you a worse than wasted year,
And leave you now with scarce a shred of soul,
Of health, or wealth, or aught that man holds dear.
Let transportation companies chant your praise,
Let bunko mining sharks your glories tell,
Poor remnant of the dying century's craze,
I bow to you and gladly say, "Farewell."

Huge satire on those boasted British laws
That masquerade as the inspired plan
Before the world, to shield the weakest cause,
Or stand a bulwark for the rights of man.
The world had listened to that story old
And confident entrusted to their care
Each hardy son, who braved the storm and cold,
To find them a delusion and a snare.

They came to find that "Fair and Bonny play,"
That boastful Britons have extolled through space,
And claimed its merits all, be what they may,
"Exclusive heritage of the Saxon race."
They sought in vain, and deemed the tale a brag—
An idle vapping—a jest—a sound—
For 'neath the shadow of the British flag,
They justice sought, and this is what they found.

They found incompetence with a trust combined,
They saw the arrogance and the rude display
That evidenced the henchman and the hind,
Or horse-backed beggar of but yesterday;
They saw the mis-fit dignity of frown,
They heard the amateur at lordly tone,
Dilate on regulations of the Crown,
With incidental rulings of his own.

They saw the door by legal usher kept,
Denied in anger to the honest man,
While 'fore his eyes across its portal swept
The lowest type of foreign courtesan.
They saw in all the grossest, saddest sight,
By hardy pioneer e'er yet descried,
Those outraged miners saw the death of right,
Then saw its ruthless stranglers glorified.

THE AUSTRALIAN'S COMMENT.

"The flag that floats above me here
Waves o'er my old Australian home,
I heard a brother calling clear
A brother's welcome 'cross the foam.
With hopes I sought this frozen land,
Where brother's welcome met me "Nit,"
For when I clasped a brother's hand
I found I held a grafter's "Mit."

"My mates and I have told them how
We ran the camp at Ballarat;
The right, that there the laws allow,
Show miners always where they're at.
We've preached on well established rules,
Dilated long upon their worth,
Till the Australians, like the mules,
Are called the kickers of the earth.

"Official life's a farmer's feast,
From honest clown to artful scamp,
Fool derelicts from way back East,
In charge of God's best mining camp.
They cannot, care not, will not know,
Nor list to right, perhaps till when,
We act as once at Bendigo,
We riddance made of better men."

COURT, AND INCIDENTS AT TRIAL.

'T WAS gala day in Pioneer Hall
Where flags of Britain draped the wall,
To hide the rough hewn logs from view,
And chinks through which the North winds blew.
A platform served for Judge's throne,
A dog skin robe gave added tone,
While high backed chair made gaudy show
O'er furnishings all Sour Dough.
Like statues, vigilant for peace,
Were natty, stalwart, stiff police;
While high o'er all, to view the scene,
In portrait framed, was England's Queen.
The whole, though savoring of sport,
Resembled much the white man's court.

Around were men, who learned in law,
Burlesque judicial, smiling saw;
Yet bowed their heads, subdued their will,
To rules of court proposed by Bill.
For pride of place his head had swelled
And all opinions by him held
Were proof against precedent reports
So cited oft in white man's courts.
Oh God! to see, is piteous sight
In weakling's hands the cause of right;
For privileged, puffed up pomp of power,
When accident of fleeting hour,
Will oft undo the toils and tears
Of honest men for countless years.

I thought that day and think it still
That worthy chiefs estranged to Bill
Were meant to meet untimely fate,
For Bill could love and Bill could hate.
'Twas known of old, that round his camp
He always favored worthless scamp,
Who'd flattering fawn his want to win
And laugh at yarns that Bill would spin,
While independant men were barred
By petty lies or service hard,
And peace was only where with will,
All sang the praise of Hi Yu Bill.

But now in name of holy right,
He vested was with fullest might
To blacken name and put to flight
His rival Chiefs for some old spite,
Or fill the luckless one with fear
Who chanced to criticize or sneer,
Or unbecoming tale relate,
Reflecting on affairs of state,
Or failed to find most fulsome praise
For wisdom of his wifely ways.

The Court was stilled, the Judge arose,
Assurance marked in every pose,
With cool self-satisfied address
Self eulogy did thus express.

ADDRESS.

"I have travelled unnoticed this land,
While I fed on the hog and the bean,
But now, I am doing 'The Grand,'
At the special request of my Queen.

"As the Judge, and the jury in fact,
I complacently sit on my throne,
Knowing well I'm equipped for the act
By a training, distinctly my own.

"For the most of my life has been spent
In the study of nature and laws,
Many years I have lived in a tent,
While I've jabbered and argued with squaws.

"I have studied most intricate points
On questions supremely immense,
While locating the original joints
In some old aboriginal fence.

"I have travelled through wilderness lone,
Where the foot of no human hath trod,
And whose wonderful wealth is but known
To my Siwash, myself, and my God.

"I have followed the wolf to its lair
And my rifle its hundreds hath slain,
While I've often dealt death to the bear
I'd a record for hitting a crane.

"I have paddled and sailed a canoe,
Through the White Horse I've ridden a log,
In the flight of the fleet caribou
I've outdistanced my injun and dog.

"I have slept on the mountain at night
Without blanket or food to support,
And a man can do that is all right
For to handle most any old Court.

"So name me officials that sin,
And bring on your proofs in each case—
I'd suggest though, before you begin
That I'm in rather a delicate place.

"For 'twas never intended, you'll note,
That a verdict of guilty I'd find,
For 'tis said that I'm in the same boat
And in need of a precedent blind."

Mid beat of hands and stamping feet
From faithful few, Bill took his seat.
Then waited patiently and long
For earnest plea, or protest strong
'Gainst recent carnival of wrong.
He thought to list the miner's prayer,
But lo! no man who mined was there
To dignify, or interest take
In what was deemed official fake.
And so foresooth Bill needs must act
On idle tale in lieu of fact,
And thus the world's suspicion quiet
'Gainst carpet baggers running riot.

Hence turned the inquisition loose
On Aleck, termed in jest "The Moose"—
A careful, cautious, silent man,
Built on the elephantine plan,
So wise he was, the tale was told,
That all he touched was turned to gold;
His simple ways and kindly heart,
His generous hand, so swift to part
With ready coin, if proof were sure
'Twas needed aid to sick or poor,
Made him in land, not deemed his home,
A Citizen, a Knight of Rome.

Of him 'twas thus the story ran
How once, when in the Vatican,
In special audience with the Pope
For some religious brand of dope,
He turned abruptly as to go,
Said, "Mr. Pope, let's kiss your toe,
Y' see I've little business rush,
My time is short, I'll hae t' mush."
Though this be jester's tale or not,
It much were like the worthy Scot,
Who, bred in rough ways of the hills,
Had little use for courtly frills.

RE DOMINION CREEK.

There seemed an opinion, that out on Dominion
This son of New Scotia was first in the swim;
And facts went for showing, that favors then going,
Denied unto others were granted to him.
'Twas not intimated, nor insinuated
That interests were given, or money was spent,
It was only Big Aleck, who "spokit the gaelic,"
But the boys in the office knew just what he meant.

While hundreds were chasing like mad men, and racing
To get to the Creek for to stake and record,
With chance just a "toss it" this wise Scot on Flossit.
Depended his hopes, while he prayed to the Lord.
No vestige of glamor, no shout or no clamor,
Did herald the fact he secured his intent;
He was simple Big Aleck, who "spokit the Gaelic,"
But the boys in the office knew just what he meant.

There were countless advices and endless devises,
With this scheme and that scheme to win at the close,
Contestants were many—he cared not for any—
This canny, big, innocent product of brose.
While some thought him sleeping, keen watch he was keeping,
And won what he went for without a dissent.
He was kindly Big Aleck, who "spokit the Gaelic,"
But the boys in the office knew just what he meant.

There were whispers of booty, malfeasance of duty,
A push, or a pull, or a cinch, or a grip,
When down by the River a certain law giver
Decreed him the Lord of the water front strip.
The few facts disjointed, showed all disappointed,
His contracts were legal, though lightsome his rent,
He was Klondyke's Big Aleck, who 'spokit the Gaelic,'
And all the officials knew just what he meant.

'Twas said a certain legal light
Had ran a course afar from right;
An able, brainy man he was,
The Chief 'mong those who lived by laws,
And poor attempt to mar his fame
But added lustre to his name.
Yet lacking proof of wrongful ways
Bill damned him still with doubtful praise,
And loud, in ostentatious tone,
His verdict to the world made known.

"If Tories, snakes and other hissing creatures,
That all this hue and cry of wrong hath made,
Could only gaze upon thy placid features,
Their ragged ranks would hide their heads dismayed
Nor dare have painted thee that dark Mephisto,
That portly Poobah of the princely fee,
Who stooped to stake on salted Monte Christo,
As first in foul official infamy.

"Nor told of franchise deals and other errors,
Of water fronts—all charges, which if true,
Not hell itself, with all its bristling terrors,
By working over time could fix your due.
But I rejoice, 'tis mine the pleasant labor
To find 'tis false, for thus do I regard,
That good, in Klondyke way, you did your neighbor,
And virtue here should have a great reward.

"For it has been and so will be forever
That men of mighty minds must needs provoke
Poor midget souls, whose slanderous endeavor
Doth but illumine what they would darkly cloak.
So rest assured, though called the great graft giver
By envious, carping, pin head, Tory foes,
That wert thou black as tainted Yukon River,
I hereby wash thee white as Arctic snows."

For pathos pure, the final scene
Ere close of Court, occurred between
The Judge, and Judge's protegee,
His dearest friend and nominee
As Chief of Mines, which certain place
He filled with absolute disgrace.

"I knew you, Tom, before this bloomin' strike,
Before dark discord marred this happy land;
Long ere those kickers ever crossed the Pike
We both as survey 'soups' rose hand in hand,
Until to-day, before the world we stand,
You the reviled, the butt of taunt and spleen,
And I, on honor's proud pedestal grand,
Commissioned as your Judge by England's Queen.

“Though I regret the fates gave me success,
Should on your record write one great ‘Alas!’
And though I strive to make your sinning less,
On every hand proof rises up en masse
To such extent, that it has come to pass,
That I, your friend, in Time’s immortal book
Must write you down a simpleton and ass,
Or as the dying century’s crowning crook.

“Yet mark it well and bear with me I ask,
I like it not to stigmatize my friend,
For did not I bespeak for you the task,
And must I now my Royal powers lend?
And all for what. ‘Tis brutal plain the end,
A feast of fraud, or error’s ugly stains
Would be disclosed, and thus would Tories rend
My precious nephew o’er your poor remains.”

The trial o’er, the pliant Court
Suppressing truth made deft report,
Which told that tales of fraud but meant
The ravings of the malcontent.

He found officials able, pure,
Investments safe and life secure,
And Chiefs that ruled had wondrous cause
To bless the wisdom of their laws,
That bred ‘mong men such peace, goodwill,
Then signed, Your faithful Hi Yu Bill.

This sped, ‘neath guard, in tight sealed box
To white man’s Chief, the sly Frank fox,
A wondrous man, if truth they tell,
Who oft protest to know him well;
Who would as rock a statesman pose,
Yet shifts to every wind that blows;
Who weeps o’er Erin’s wrongs of yore,
Yet nails the fetters on the Boer;
At times the Lodges’ favorite son,
Again the Pope’s annointed one;
Who fought ‘neath “Trade and Freedom’s cry”
Yet placid rests ‘neath tariffs high,
Who bruited thrift throughout the land
Doth millions deal with lavish hand,
And who for every voice and vote
Cites previous act as antidote,
And wins the ways his craft may choose,
By language such as angels use.

To him, in white man's council tent,
This Royal Traversity was sent
To show the world that all was well;
And White Chief told, as he could tell,
With word that soothes and word that stings,
A beatific state of things,
And Yukon's pity, sorrow, shame,
But added lustre to his name;
While those for justice sought, for pains
But tighter riveted their chains.

FINIS.

Think'st man, who chance o'er man to rule
Can'st wanton wrong as wrong he may,
Though proudest prince or piteous tool,
And hope to 'scape the reckoning day?
Think'st man's unfeeling acts to man,
That springs the oath, that swells the tear,
Go unrequitted in the plan
Of Him, who holds the suffering dear,
If man his fellows thus betrayed,
Think'st thou was nigh no other aid?

Think'st God, who shaped the beaver's tooth
And holds the wild waves in his hand,
Did'st not in anger note forsooth
The pilfering, petty larceny band,
Who pledged to trust, did'st basely plan
To rob the daring of their toil,
Then prostitute the name of man,
By living riot on their spoil;
Could'st God be just and those things know?
No God was just would have it so.

And hence it happ'd that Spirit Great
In angry mood came down;
Within His hand the Book of Fate,
Upon His face a frown;
Mid circling hosts, from His high state,
He saw the White Man's town.

He saw the dance dens gleaming bright,
The red wine flowing free;
A painted harlot queen of night
In wildest revelry,
While honored men in mad delight
Applauded in their glee.

He saw the green cloth laden high,
The games all open wide;
He heard the winner's cheering cry
For friends with him to bide;
He saw the loser lifeless lie,
A wretched suicide.

He saw pale virtue drooped in shame,
While sin-flushed, flaunting vice,
Held forth in every form and name,
Its shield official price;
He saw in dance and wine and game,
Sufficient to suffice.

A sign unto each spirit bright
His stern commands convey;
From stream and hill they tore that night
The richest golden pay,
And through the heavens in fiery flight
They bore it far away.

Across the mountain, over plain,
Their serried hosts I saw,
In ceaseless never ending train
Towards the Tanana,
Where loved of God—the poor—might gain,
And right, not might, was law.

The old men oft now tell the tale
How never more since then,
Has gold been known in Klondyke vale,
In streaks so rich, as when
The Miner's Justice did prevail
'Tween man, and honest men.

