

THE KLONDIKE GOLD FIELDS

Mr. Charles H. Metcalf, writing from Dawson City on the Klondyke river, under recent date, says:

"Here I find myself at last in the midst of the greatest and most wonderful mining camp the world has ever seen. Gold is so plenty that it has to be carried about in cotton bags, and four or five men are required to pack and protect the products of many of the claims. I have seen the result of one day's washing on a claim in Eldorado creek, and the figure was \$18,000 for twelve hours' work of four men. This claim was sold less than six months ago for \$300, and will produce more than \$1,000,000 before the end of the year. The excitement is now so great that no one will sell at any price, so there is no chance for newcomers in this immediate vicinity. The country is full of prospectors, and every stream within a hundred miles is located and claimed from one end to the other. On the big creeks where the gold is found, namely Bonanza and Eldorado, there are many men who tried in every way to sell their claims for a few hundred dollars last winter but could find no takers. These men are in possession of great wealth, which is even yet beyond their capacity to realize. I could not even attempt to picture this camp or city to you. Thousands of men, and women, too, for that matter, are here living in tents, or log sheds, or houses of boards with cloth roofs, each habitation taking a position to suit itself with no regard for its neighbor or any form of regularity. The sawmill is running night and day, and men are rushing about at all times of day and night and buildings of all kinds are going up. Such is the power of gold that before cold weather comes in September this wilderness will be a city in fact of many thousand people. I shall go out to Bonanza creek in a day or two and look the ground over there. I doubt, however, if anything can be done while everybody is in this present state of excitement. Circle City is a city no longer; with one or two exceptions all the stores and shops are closed and the entire population has transferred itself to this new Eldorado, each and all full of hope in the great golden handicap. Prospectors are rushing all over the country looking for gold, but nothing of any consequence has been found outside of the two big creeks I spoke of. A few men will be made rich here, but everybody is spending money in the most lavish manner, and I am getting good prices for the goods I have to sell. You remember the two dogskin robes that cost me \$4.50 each, and which I wanted so much to bring a quantity of? Well, I sold them both yesterday at \$40 each, and could sell a hundred more if I had them; and this is a fair sample of prices. We had no trouble on the river this year, but I do not relish making another trip if I could help it. I don't mind the intensely hard work so much, but I find the worry and anxiety about getting the goods safely over the lakes and river very trying, and people tell me I am looking thin. I hear indirectly that Booth (a young man Mr. Metcalf took with him) is doing very well on my claim, No. 3, on Mastodon creek. The weather is very hot and will result in much sickness and suffering in this damp marsh. Dr. Le Blanc has begun business already, and will do exceedingly well I feel sure.

He will locate here for the winter. While this town is a wonder at present and growing fast, I think its life will be short.

At Dyea, one hundred miles from Juneau, the actual journey begins and this is the most difficult and discouraging part of the many miles to be traversed. The most favorable time for going into the interior is before the snow melts from the mountains, which does not occur till the middle of April, for the abrupt passages and what is known as the "summit" are better accomplished by hauling supplies on sleds, while the pass is covered with snow. After leaving Dyea goods must be hauled six miles over the Dyea Flats. From this point the route lies through what is known as the canyon where the trail leads up the steep and rugged sides of the mountains along a timbered shelf overlooking the canyon until Sheep Camp is reached, a distance of twelve miles. Here a rest is taken to await favorable weather, which at best is something terrible with the thermometer as low as 60 to 80 degrees below zero. This stop is to prepare one for the summit which is eight miles further up and 3,500 feet high and the most difficult and tedious part of the journey. The trail leads up a narrow and precipitous defile to Stone House, another well-known resting place, with a purely imaginative name. This place is at the beginning of the more abrupt climb and is three miles from the summit. In fact, it is nothing more nor less than a ledge. An extract from one of Mr. Metcalf's letters describing his first trip over the summit is interesting.

"I had ten men working at the summit hauling up goods with a windlass, which we made, and about 4,000 feet of rope which I brought for the purpose. The work had been delayed quite a time by storms, which are very frequent on the mountains, but on Sunday night last I concluded that the work was far enough along so that we might break camp the next morning and come to Lake Lindeman. I had taken the precaution to send over a small tent the day before in the event of trouble in getting down on the other side, but did not expect any. I had not been over here up to that time but the trail was being used constantly and was hard and well marked. Well, Monday morning came and with it a clear sky and no wind. I was up at 3:30 and while Booth was getting breakfast I had one load of our camp outfit and my dog team ready to start. Breakfast consisted of fried bacon, cold bread, coffee and beans. Soon after 4 o'clock I started for the summit, three miles away, up the steep mountain side. I was early at the foot of the summit or last great rise, which is so steep that everything must go up on men's backs or by windlass. The angle is so great that one might think the mountain was leaning over and would fall that way. Of course everything is covered with many feet of snow. No men were working yet, so I left my load to be taken up when the windlass started and returned to camp. The round trip had taken four hours. Booth had been taking down the big tent and getting the last things ready while I was away. Breaking a camp takes some time so that 10 o'clock found us but just ready to start. The sun was quite warm and

the snow soft when we started but I could see that there were light clouds on the mountain and some indication of wind. As we went up the wind began to blow a little from the south or at our backs. As we came nearer the summit we began to meet the Indian packers coming down, having quit work above as the wind was getting so strong. There are two benches or narrow flat places up the side and our windlass was placed on the first one about 1,000 feet from the foot. We arrived at the foot a little before 1 o'clock to find that the first load which contained our beds, had gone up, but before this time the wind had gained such velocity above that our men had all quit work and left. We could not turn back now so concluded to follow our beds. After making everything fast I unhitched the dogs and calling them along we started to climb to the top. This is no small task, I can tell you, and when we arrived at the first bench it was after 2 o'clock. Here the wind was blowing very hard and cold and the small particles of ice that came with it cut my face and hands so that I could not face it or take off my mittens. Here we found our beds and I also managed to find a can of frozen corn beef which tasted very good while we sat for a short time behind a pile of goods to rest. We packed our beds from this bench to the next. The wind had now become so strong that it would almost carry me up the side. I believe it would have been next to impossible to go down again even.

of nine miles through the snow and wind storm to this camp.

"Before the first few miles were passed the drifting snow had so covered the trail that the dogs could not follow it and I had to go ahead and keep the road while Booth looked after the team. To find and keep a blind trail we use a long sharp stick and by constant punching we can tell the hard trail from the soft snow at the side. I broke trail that day most of the time on the run for nearly seven miles, through a snow storm so thick that nothing could be seen and the wind howling at our backs like a pack of hungry wolves. At the top of the canyon the wind was less severe but the snow was drifting and the gathering darkness made our trip down the gorge rather uncanny.

"We arrived safe and well only to find that our tent was not yet up. Two hours more, at 10 o'clock, our regular meal of bacon, beans and bread found a very hearty reception, after which I went to bed very tired, of course, after nineteen hours of constant exertion but comfortable in the feeling of good health and strength which successful combat with these grand and rugged mountains must give to any one, and not sorry to have seen this strange land and its elements while at play in one of their wildest moods.

A trip to the interior abounds in many such hardships and adventures. The safest way to get there is to cross Lake Lindeman in February or March, while it is frozen, and stop at Lake

ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF SCENES ATTENDING GOLD EXCITEMENT IN THE KLONDIKE DISTRICT.



"At the second bench I had hard work to keep my feet at all but managed to bind our beds on a sleigh, get the dogs in and start for the last climb. I never again expect to see such a storm as was raging at the top! Snow was now coming with the icy wind and drifts were forming in all the protected places. The noise of the storm was so great that no other sound could be heard. The war of contending elements was magnificent but I felt quite too insignificant long to be a witness and was glad to get away as soon as possible. The decent on this side is very steep but not so long. After letting the sleds go down we just sat down in the soft snow and slid or dropped to the level below, which is quite a large body of water called 'Crater Lake,' supposed to be the site of an old volcano. It lies far above the timber line and is always frozen. Just at the foot there was very little wind and we stopped for a short time to rest before starting out on the long run

Bennett to build boats and wait for the ice to break up. The journey is then continued by drifting down a series of lakes and down the Yukon river. Before the traveler can realize it he is at the much talked of and treacherous 'White Horse Rapids' going through which many men have lost their lives. As soon as the warm weather begins gnats, poisonous flies and mosquitoes make life a burden. The stories told of the numbers and voraciousness of the native mosquitoes are almost incredible. Lieut. Schwatka states in his report of a voyage down the Yukon that he has seen mosquitoes in such numbers as to cloud the sun and obstruct the vision. Dogs and game have been killed by the bites of mosquitoes; even the huge black bear is not exempt from the pest as the continual bites produce inflammation of the eyes, causing blindness. Judging from reports an asbestos mosquito net should be in the outfit of every miner. Mining operations cannot begin until the ice melts, from June 1st to the 15th. About the middle of September the sun drops so low that ice soon forms and active operations must be discontinued until the following season. The season is short, yet from June 15 until Aug. 1 the sun shines twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four, and during the remaining two hours work can be done. Accordingly when a rich claim is found two or three sets of men are employed and work goes on continually.

The Yukon country is no place for a man without money. Every man who goes there must expect to work and work hard. No credit is given on a man's face. That day is gone, Mr. Mitchell says that before men make a rush from Michigan to the Klondyke gold fields, it would be well to remember that while miners make from \$15 to \$20 a day, it is at the most for only about sixty days, and provisions are about 50 cents an ounce; that there are 2,000 men existing in about 150 log huts, and thousands more were expected during the spring and summer and that the mails are most infrequent, and uncertain. Gold is there in abundance to be sure, but the difficulty in getting it is exceedingly great. Mr. Metcalf cannot emphasize too strongly the difficulties and dangers and hardships of a trip to the interior and would warn everybody to keep away unless provided with several hundred dollars and clothing and provisions to last for at least one year.

After wit is everybody's wit.

OUR SMALLER COLLEGES.

In Many Respects They Are Doing Better Work Than the Larger Ones.

"There are a few striking facts about the small American college," writes Edward W. Bok in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. "One striking fact is that 60 per cent of the brainiest Americans who have risen to prominence and success are graduates of colleges whose names are scarcely known outside of their own states. It is a fact, also, that during the past ten years the majority of the new and best methods of learning have emanated from the smaller colleges, and have been adopted later by the larger ones. Because a college happens to be unknown two hundred miles from the place of its location does not always mean that the college is not worthy of wider repute. The fact can not be disputed that the most direct teaching, and necessarily the teaching most productive of good results, is being done in the smaller American colleges. The names of these colleges may not be familiar to the majority of people, but that makes them none the less worthy places of learning. The larger colleges are unquestionably good. But there are smaller colleges just as good, and, in some respects, better. Some of the finest educators we have are attached to the faculties of the smaller institutions of learning. Young girls or young men who are being educated at one of the smaller colleges need never feel that the fact of the college being a

SILVER GOING DOWN.

COLORADO EXPERTS DISCUSS THE MATTER.

Conceded that the Metal Must Go Down Until the Production Is Curtailed—Silver Dollars Now Worth Only 43 Cents—Comment of the Press Here and There.

The Decline in Silver.

DENVER, Col., Aug. 7.—The effect of the decline in silver to fifty-five and one-half cents per ounce and the probable further fall to as low as fifty cents, which seems to be conceded by those in the best position to judge, is current topic of conversation among mining men, and while some are greatly discouraged at the general opinion in Colorado the general opinion seems to be that the decline of silver will have no very serious effect upon the mines because there is comparatively little silver mined in the state except in connection with copper, gold and lead. There is a possibility that some of the Aspen and Creede properties will shut down, but outside of these there will be little change in the situation.

Ex-Governor J. B. Grant of the Omaha and Grant smelter said: "I am of the opinion that silver will continue to go down until there is a marked decrease in the production in some parts of the world and it remains to be seen which of the silver-producing countries will give way first. If the present volume of silver production is maintained, it will go lower until the supply and demand are nearer together. Of course there will come a time when it will stop falling, but I do not think that will come until there is a very marked decrease in production, unless in the meantime silver should be remonetized. It will have no serious effect upon the production of lead, for I have figured out that with lead at \$3.60 and silver at 55¢, it is just about as profitable to the miner as when lead was \$3.25 and silver 45¢."

Ex-Senator N. P. Hill of the Boston and Colorado smelter thinks that the decline will be seriously felt in many quarters. "The aggregate loss will be quite large," said he. "Last year the average price paid our company for silver was 66.86 cents per ounce, and the difference between that price and to-day's quotations amounts to about \$120,000 in our production of last year. In 1892 the price was much higher and the loss compared with to-day's prices would be nearly \$750,000."

LONDON, Aug. 6.—The Times in its financial comments this morning admits its inability to explain the persistent weakness of silver, but thinks it is due, perhaps, to a well grounded belief that the results of the American bimetallic commission, headed by Senator Wolcott, are not likely to prove satisfactory to silverites here and in the United States.

NEW YORK, Aug. 7.—The decline in silver yesterday carried the price to a new low mark—25½ pence in London, and 55½ cents here. Mexican dollars sold at 42½ cents, and Peruvian soles and Chilean pesos at 38½ cents.

At the present price the silver in a United States dollar is worth 43.1 cents.

ENDS IN A TRAGEDY.

An Aged German Shoots His Newspaper-Secured Wife and Takes Poison.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Aug. 7.—Last April H. A. Dailey, a well-to-do German of Jenson, aged 70, sent a letter to Mayor Swift of Chicago saying he wanted a woman of mature years as a wife. The mayor gave the missive to the newspaper as a literary curiosity. The result was Dailey received nearly 500 answers. Out of the lot he selected Mrs. Hattie Newton, a Chicago widow aged 45, and three months ago they were married. Dailey became very jealous when his wife returned to Chicago for a long visit, and they quarreled bitterly and finally separated. Dailey then gave his wife three days to return. The time was up last midnight but she refused to resume wifely relations and Dailey forced his way into her bed chamber and pressed his old musket against her heart and pulled the trigger. The woman seized the muzzle and pushed it aside, but the charge penetrated her right side. She staggered from the house in her tight gown and fell bleeding on the door step of Luman Jannison's house, where she was found.

Dailey was arrested, and as there is no jail in Jenson, remained in the custody of the officers until this morning, when he was to be taken to Grand Haven. Before taking the train he was allowed to enter a saloon and drink several glasses of beer. At the bar he fell backward in spasms and was dead in a few minutes. He had managed to slip strychnine into the beer.

A Maniac After Dr. Hale.

NAUBURG, N. Y., Aug. 7.—William Collier, a young maniac and young divinity student from Memphis, Tenn., is under arrest at Kingston on the charge of having threatened the life of Dr. Edward Everett Hale, the famous preacher-author.

Lower Missouri Insurance Rates.

MEXICO, Mo., Aug. 7.—The local insurance agents of this city have received notice of large reductions in insurance rates, and it is understood that the rates are to be lowered in most of the cities in Missouri where there are good systems of water works.

Canada Bars American Laborers.

TORONTO, Ontario, Aug. 7.—Commissioner Metcalf has informed the Canadian Pacific railway authorities that any American laborers engaged for work would be deported to their own country.



THE GOLD FIELDS OF ALASKA—THE DIRECT STEAMER ROUTE FROM SEATTLE TO CIRCLE CITY. The Klondike district, which is in British Columbia, lies to the eastward of Fort Yukon and Fort Reliance. The nearest approach by steamer is Circle City, from which point the journey is made overland.